

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**CABINET MEETING**  
**27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2005**

**MINERALS & WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**  
**Preparing the Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire:**  
**Moving towards the identification of preferred options**

<b>OPEN ITEM</b>	
<b>COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME</b>	Better Environment
<b>CORPORATE PLAN THEME:</b>	Managing the Local Environment
<b>KEY PRIORITY:</b>	Forward Planning
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Councillor James Dudley Councillor Marcus Hart
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	Head of Planning, Health and Environment
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Ken Harrison ( Ext. 2557) Email: Ken.Harrison@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<p><b>Appendix 1:</b> Consultation Paper: Waste Core Strategy: moving towards the identification of preferred options*</p> <p><b>Appendix 2:</b> Sustainability Appraisal Waste Core Strategy: Scoping report (version 2), September 2005*</p> <p><b>Appendix 3:</b> Sustainability Appraisal Waste Core Strategy: Issues &amp; Options, September 2005*</p> <p>* All of the Appendices have been placed in the Party Group Rooms</p> <p><b>Public inspection copies are available on request.</b></p>

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet about Worcestershire County Council's proposals for the Waste Core Strategy and associated consultation with Wyre Forest District Council.
- 1.2 To agree representations to the County Council in response to the consultation.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

- 2.1 The comments and questions listed in paragraphs 5.2 to 5.5 below be submitted to Worcestershire County Council as formal representations to the Waste Core Strategy consultation paper.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Following the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the County Council remain the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority for Worcestershire. Under the requirements of the 2004 Act, planning authorities must prepare similar types of document for their respective functions. For example, the District Council must prepare a Local Development Scheme (LDS) setting out the timetable for the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDD's) and, similarly, the County Council has published a Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (April 2005).
- 3.2 The County Council has a responsibility to set out minerals and waste strategy, policies and proposals and these contribute towards the overall 'Development Plan' for Wyre Forest District. Under the new system, the Development Plan will consist of the following elements:
- Regional Spatial Strategy
  - Local Development Frameworks (prepared by District Council's)
  - Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks (County Council)
- 3.3 The process of preparing Development Plan Documents (DPD's) and their subsequent content should conform to national planning policy. For the preparation of waste planning documents, PPS10 (Planning for Sustainable Waste Management) and PPS12 (Local Development Frameworks) are particularly relevant.
- 3.4 The consultation period for this pre-submission consultation stage commenced on the 19 September and will close on the 28 October 2005. The Preferred Options consultation stage is expected in April/May 2006.

## **4. WORCESTERSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

Worcestershire County Council:  
Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (April 2005)

- 4.1 The County has a Minerals Local Plan (adopted in 1997) that can be 'saved' under the 2004 Act. However, there is no equivalent plan covering waste planning for Worcestershire and the need to make progress on this has become a priority for the County. The development scheme highlights the fact that the preparation of the waste core strategy will be the main planning policy output from the County Council over the next 3 years. The Waste Core Strategy is due to be adopted in December 2007.
- 4.2 In many instances there is an expectancy that authorities will prepare 'Site Allocations' Development Plan Documents (DPD's). However, the County Council's Minerals and Waste Development Scheme clearly states that the Worcestershire County Council does not currently intend to produce a Site Specific Waste DPD, although it will keep this under review.

### Planning Policy Statements (10 & 12)

- 4.3 Planning Policy Statement 10 requires waste core strategies to “*set out principles and proposals for waste management in line with the RSS and ensure sufficient opportunities for the provision of waste management facilities in appropriate locations including for waste disposal...*”
- 4.4 It goes on to say that “*waste planning authorities should identify in development plan documents sites and areas suitable for new or enhanced waste management facilities for the waste management needs of their areas...*”
- 4.5 Through the national waste management policy, that PPS10 will help to implement, the government aims to move waste management up the hierarchy from a tradition of disposal to reduction and reuse. It is suggested that some of the alternatives to landfill are more suited to urban areas and although all site types can be found in both urban and rural area, it seems likely there will be a shift from rural disposal to waste processing on brownfield sites in urban areas.
- 4.6 The provisions of PPS12 largely relate to the process of preparing development plan documents.

### Waste Core Strategy: Moving towards the identification of preferred options

- 4.7 The key purposes of this consultation period are helpfully summarised in the consultation paper. This being to give the District Council the opportunity to comment on the approach being taken towards the preparation of the waste core strategy and to ensure that the County Council are aware of all the possible options.
- 4.8 The sustainability appraisal documents and the consultation paper includes a proposed vision, objectives and preliminary conclusions for the core strategy to form the basis of the consultation. The paper states that responses will help to inform the development of preferred options for further consultation next year (April/ May 2006).
- 4.9 Proposed ‘vision’ statements fall under four main headings as follows:
- Waste should be recognised as a resource with value
  - Communities within Worcestershire should be responsible for their waste
  - Waste development should be integrated with other spatial planning concerns, ensuring it is placed in appropriate locations
  - Waste management should be conscious of the environment and human health
- 4.10 The consultation paper identifies four key issues where different options exist on how to move forward. These include the location of facilities in the greenbelt; location with urban or rural areas; the size of any facilities; and whether locations should be centralised or dispersed. Having undertaken a sustainability appraisal of the various options, the document indicates what, on balance, is considered to be the most sustainable option under each of the four issues as follows:
- Green Belt – “new waste development is appropriate anywhere when in accordance with the objectives of PPG2” (Green Belts)
  - Urban and Rural – “preference for urban locations with minimal rural locations for waste management facilities which is the option that reflects current practice.”
  - Small or/and large facilities – “primarily large facilities.”
  - Central and/or dispersed pattern – “focus on centralising of facilities with few dispersed facilities.”

- 4.11 Details of the sustainability framework are detailed below. The approach towards identifying the issues and options set out in the main consultation paper raises a number of questions, particularly in the context of the main requirements of PPS10 and the need to identify capacity and locations for development.

#### Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.12 A detailed sustainability appraisal process has been undertaken including a scoping report and the analysis of key issues and options relevant to the Waste Core Strategy. They identify and in some instances rank in order of priority key sustainability issues and objectives. It is intended that this framework will be used to inform the preparation of future plans and proposals. One of the consultation questions asks whether consultees agree with the order of priority of the sustainability objectives.
- 4.13 The scoping report sets out the sustainability objectives which are ranked in order of importance and in areas of conflict it is suggested that the objective higher up the hierarchy would take precedence. The objectives and rankings have been determined having regard to the relevance for the County and the Waste Core Strategy. Some of the objectives do not have any direct relationship to waste planning.
- 4.14 Of the 14 objectives listed in the scoping report that are relevant to waste, health is ranked 12<sup>th</sup> behind biodiversity, access to services and participation by all. Therefore, public health seems to be given a surprisingly low priority given the vision statement (see paragraph 4.8 of this report) and the seriousness of the potential implications of waste management. Very little regard appears to be paid to residential amenity, which seems inconsistent with a trend towards locating facilities in the main population centres. On the issue of health, the baseline characteristics outlined in Appendix 5 of the scoping paper seem limited to mental health and fly tipping. Whereas, Appendix 4 and 6 highlight allergy and respiratory related illnesses.

### **5. KEY QUESTIONS**

- 5.1 The District Council may want to raise the following points:

5.2 Site selection:

- i. In the absence of site specific proposals, broad areas of search or indeed proactive criteria based policies for site selection, it is not clear how the proposed Waste Development Framework will ensure the adequate provision of waste management facilities through the Core Strategy.
- ii. For the above reasons the Core Strategy only appears to present a framework for reacting to development proposals rather than taking a proactive lead. In consequence it is unclear how existing proposals or sites will be safeguarded.

5.3 Transport:

- i. Centrality to the catchment of waste arisings or a waste stream does not seem to be taken into account, yet this could have important implications for sustainability and reducing the need to travel
- ii. How appropriate/ efficient is rail for the transportation of waste on a self-sufficiency (largely within County) basis? Is it dependent on the scale and catchment of the facility and is it only applicable for regional facilities and even then at locations that are central to a given catchment area.

#### 5.4 Urban & Rural Regeneration:

- i. Poorly selected brownfield sites may undermine the mixed use or high value redevelopment potential of surrounding areas and may consequently have a negative impact on urban regeneration and residential amenity. This issue needs to be fully considered in the Core Strategy.
- ii. Issues such as urban/ rural, small or large etc are dependent on key variables including type of waste stream e.g. toxic/ non-toxic; catchment area; and possible health impacts.

#### 5.5 Health:

- i. Throughout the consultation paper and sustainability appraisal there appear to be conflicting messages about the importance of health and the implications of waste management facility. In particular references to toxic particulates, respiratory and allergy related illnesses need to be made but the seriousness of the issues may suggest that it should be placed much higher in the hierarchy of sustainability objectives.
- ii. There appears to be no reference to the precautionary principle anywhere in the documentation. A consideration in the past, the precautionary principle is particularly important when considering the unknown impacts on public health i.e. certain waste streams and processes may be better kept away from the main population centres or aquifers.

### 6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal issues arising from this proposed consultation.

### 7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 It is important to make broad representations at this stage, there will be future opportunities to comment on detailed policies and proposals as they emerge next year.

### 8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The County Council's general approach towards preparing the Waste Core Strategy appears appropriate and consistent with the latest guidance. However, the proposed content of the emerging strategy and the associated appraisal framework do raise a number of questions and the District Council may want to make representations and seek further clarification accordingly.

### 9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 Corporate Management Team.

### 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Worcestershire County Structure Plan, 2001
- Worcestershire Minerals and Waste Development Scheme, 2005
- Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management, 2005
- Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks.

10<sup>th</sup> October 2005

Cabinet 27/10/05