

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report To: Communities and Neighbourhoods O&SC – 14 December 2010
Executive – 22 December 2010

Subject: Local Development Framework:
Core Strategy Publication

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive (Regeneration)

Summary

All Unitary Development Plans are to be replaced by Local Development Frameworks, the key document of which is the Core Strategy. Following extensive consultation at various stages of development, the draft Core Strategy (Publication) has been produced. The intention is to publish the Core Strategy for a statutory 6 week consultation in January 2011. The Core Strategy can then be submitted (May 2011) to the Secretary of State for examination in public. If the Core Strategy is found to be sound it can then be adopted by the Council early in 2012.

Recommendations

That the Executive

1. Approves the draft Core Strategy Publication (attached) for public consultation in January/February 2011 followed by submission to the Secretary of State for examination in public.
2. Delegates to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair of Executive and the Executive Member for Environment, the approval of any amendments prior to the start of consultation and the approval for consultation of the Sustainability Appraisal report and Infrastructure Plan.

Wards Affected:

All

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	The Core Strategy sets a framework for economic, residential and all other new development across the City.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	The Core Strategy promotes good access to education and employment and will guide programmes of development for schools and other educational facilities

Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	The consultation process for developing the Local Development Framework encourages all residents and other stakeholders to get involved and influence decision making.
Neighbourhoods of Choice	The Core Strategy sets a framework for development of neighbourhoods including residential areas, mixed use schemes, centres etc and sets standards for the provision of open space.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Manchester Core Strategy (Publication) - attached
- Manchester's Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Sustainability Appraisal of the Manchester Core Strategy Publication document (currently being produced, latest draft can be made available)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Following the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Unitary Development Plans are to be replaced by Local Development Frameworks, a collection of statutory planning documents.

1.2 An LDF Project Board was established in July 2008 to oversee production of the spatial planning framework for the City and to ensure that all departments' interests and views are represented. The Board meets regularly and is chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive (Regeneration) and attended by the Executive Member for Environment and Senior Officers from Regeneration, New East Manchester, Strategic Housing and Economic and Urban Policy.

1.3 The key document in the Local Development Framework is the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is the overarching spatial vision document for the City. It should be the spatial expression of the Sustainable Community Strategy. Its approach is therefore rooted in the objectives of the Community Strategy. The Core Strategy addresses how the need to achieve economic success is to be supported through the LDF, and is particularly concerned with the delivery of Neighbourhoods of Choice.

1.4 The approach in the Core Strategy is to:

- Set out the long-term spatial vision for the City (up to 2027), and the overall strategy for delivering that vision;
- Identify the overall level of different types of development (including housing, employment, retail, and leisure) that is envisaged in the City during that period, and the broad distribution of that development;
- Identify the main improvements in infrastructure that are required to support that scale and distribution of development;
- Define the City's hierarchy of centres;
- Illustrate the strategy through a Key Diagram; and
- Identify the links with, and support the delivery of, other key strategies and plans, including the Sustainable Community Strategy.

1.5 There are a number of direct and indirect links to wider Council priorities. Effective spatial planning has the potential to lead to improvements in housing and neighbourhoods, access to jobs and services and management of climate change. The implementation of the Core Strategy is therefore an important element of delivery across the Council's work.

2.0 Background to the Core Strategy

2.1 Preparation commenced in 2005 and with initial consultation on the Core Strategy Issues and Options from December 2007 to February 2008. The Issues and Options stage described the issues for the City and outlined two strategic options. In April/May 2009 the 'Refining Options for the Core Strategy' stage added further detail and developed the issues into policy approaches. From December 2009 to January 2010 a further consultation was held which presented the Core Strategy Proposed Option, a draft of the final Core Strategy document, although a range of options were still considered to manage the expansion of Manchester Airport. In August 2010 a

partial consultation was undertaken to finalise certain policy issues, including the approach to Manchester Airport.

2.2 Consultation on the publication document is proposed for six weeks, commencing in January 2011.

2.3 After this consultation stage it is proposed that the Core Strategy will be submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2011, with a view to adoption in early 2012.

2.4 The coalition government has indicated the intention to make changes to the planning system. An example is the removal of the regional tier of strategic planning policy. Although the Regional Strategy remains for the time being, the Secretary of State has stressed that the intention to abolish this level of policy remains and will be delivered through the Localism Act. The government has also signaled a different approach to local planning, but within this approach Core Strategies remain important and local planning authorities have been encouraged to proceed with their preparation, taking reasonable account of whether proposed changes give them cause to reconsider any issues. The Planning Service does not perceive a significant level of risk to the Core Strategy emerging from the changes to the planning system, and therefore is hoping to progress with its production.

3.0 Core Strategy Development Process

3.1 The Core Strategy is the spatial representation of the Sustainable Community Strategy, and therefore it is closely aligned with broader policy priorities set by the Council. In particular, the Core Strategy complements the aims of the Council's Strategic Regeneration Frameworks, and has taken these documents as a starting point for its approach to the spatial organisation of the City. There is also a requirement that documents in the LDF are produced through a procedure set by national legislation and policy, which has necessitated significant stakeholder involvement at all stages of production. There is also a requirement for conformity with national planning policy.

3.2 The Core Strategy has therefore benefited from a substantial consultation exercise, through which the engagement of members, residents, businesses and other stakeholders has been achieved. Consequently, the Planning Service has gained a thorough understanding of the issues which are important to stakeholders, and has been able to prepare the Core Strategy to ensure that where possible these are reflected in policies. In areas where there is divergence with some stakeholders' views, the policies are supported by a robust evidence base.

3.3 The development of the Core Strategy has in particular involved close working with other services in the Council. This has helped to ensure that the approach in the Core Strategies supports and adds value to other areas of Council policy. A particular example is the delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan.

3.4 The approach to policy development has been underpinned by the development of a comprehensive evidence base, the aim of which is to demonstrate that all policies are clearly justified.

4.0 Core Strategy Publication Document - Summary

4.1 The Core Strategy focuses on the key development issues facing the City. The format of the document addresses issues thematically, including the economy, housing, centres and the environment.

4.2 For the economy, the Core Strategy emphasises the importance of the City Centre and sites in the Regional Centre (such as Central Park and Sportcity/Eastlands). It also recognises the role of the Airport in fulfilling the City Region's economic potential, both as a piece of key transport infrastructure and as a location for employment growth. There are also policies which focus on the creation of strong neighbourhoods, in terms of housing and place-making, and recommendations on the development of the City's district centres.

4.3 The housing chapter focuses on the distribution of housing development across the City, with emphasis on the regeneration of areas currently within the Housing Market Renewal area and the growth of City Centre residential opportunities. The broad area within which a number of key housing proposals sit has been identified as a Strategic Housing Location. Policies addressing housing also consider the types of housing that the Council should be promoting, recognising the relationship between the City's housing offer and its economic well-being. A further key policy area is environmental protection and enhancement, focusing especially on the opportunities the City is pursuing to face the challenge of climate change. As such, the Core Strategy complements the Council's wider priorities, providing a channel to connect these with other stakeholders.

4.4 In terms of centres, the Core Strategy establishes a framework for the improvement of the City's district centres. This is mainly based on the potential for further retail development, but the Core Strategy also builds on work within Strategic Regeneration Frameworks and Local Plans to ensure that new development can contribute to the overall function of the centres in terms of the range of uses they support and environmental enhancements.

4.5 The chapter on the environment considers the quality of the City's environment, looking at quality of new development, preservation and enhancement of character and protection of key open space. A new element has been introduced to establish "Character Areas" across the City. This helps to ensure that the design policies in the Core Strategy are based on local distinctiveness, and reflects comments made by consultees through previous consultations. It also looks at key environmental protection issues, most notably engaging the issue of climate change but also considering the issues of air and water quality and flood risk management.

4.6 There are a number of more specific issues addressed in the Core Strategy, the most notable of which is the framework it provides for the growth of Manchester Airport, a key driver of the City's economy. There is also a policy to control the concentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation, which will support the implementation of the Article 4 Direction the City has recently announced (8th October 2010). Although the Core Strategy is typically a high-level strategy

document, these policies have been included to enable the Council to effectively address issues which are priorities that warrant a timely response.

4.7 The Core Strategy Publication document is currently a draft document, and it is expected that some changes will be appropriate before it is published. Primarily, these changes will focus on ensuring stronger presentation within the document, including editorial cohesion and a clear visual style. The Planning Service is currently working with M4 to agree a presentational approach to ensure that the document is easily understood and accords with the corporate style. There may also be minor amendments to take account of changes in the evidence base in particular suggestions from the Sustainability Appraisal.

5.0 The next steps

5.1 It is proposed to carry out a statutory 6 week consultation on the Core Strategy (Publication). Following the consultation, the final Core Strategy will be submitted to the Secretary of State (likely in May 2011). A date will be set for an Examination in Public to consider representations to the Core Strategy, which will be run by an inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. Following an Examination in Public the Secretary of State will decide whether the Core Strategy is sound. If so, the intention is that the Council will adopt the Core Strategy in early 2012.

6.0 Contributing to the Community Strategy

(a) Performance of the economy of the region and sub region

6.1 The Core Strategy sets a framework for economic, residential and all other new development across the City.

(b) Reaching full potential in education and employment

6.2 The Core Strategy promotes good access to education and employment and will guide programmes of development for schools and other educational facilities

(c) Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect

6.3 The consultation process for developing the Local Development Framework encourages all residents and other stakeholders to get involved and influence decision making.

(d) Neighbourhoods of Choice

6.4 The Core Strategy sets a framework for development of neighbourhoods including residential areas, mixed use schemes, centres etc and sets standards for the provision of open space..

7.0 Key Polices and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

7.1 The consultation programme for the various stages of the Core Strategy has been designed to be as inclusive as possible with a variety of events both in the City Centre and in venues throughout the City.

(b) Risk Management

7.2 The main risk to the Core Strategy is that it is not found sound at Independent Examination. To minimise this risk an LDF Project Board has been established to oversee the process and ensure that all departments' interests and views are represented and Counsel has been appointed to advise as required.

(c) Legal Considerations

7.3 This stage of Core Strategy is statutory and all representations made will be considered when the Core Strategy is subject to an Independent Examination. Legal advice has been provided by Counsel.