

Local Development Plan - Steering Group Annual Monitoring Report 2018/19	27th November 2019
---	--------------------------------------

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Outcomes
Leader and Champion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Elected Members will provide leadership to our citizens, working to promote the Borough as an attractive place to live, work, invest and visit. • We will establish key relationships with Government agencies and potential strategic partners in Northern Ireland and external to it which helps us to deliver our vision for this Council area.
Protecting and enhancing our environments and assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All environments in the area will benefit from pro-active decision making which protects the natural features, characteristics and integrity of the Borough. • Our citizens will have the maximum opportunity to enjoy our natural environments. • Our natural assets will be carefully managed to generate economic and social returns without compromising their sustainability for future generations.
Lead Officer	Local Development Plan Manager
Cost:	N/A

For Decision

1.0 Background

1.1 Members are aware that the Council's Development Plan team is currently preparing a Local Development Plan (LDP) for the Borough. This is a statutory requirement for the Council. In preparing its LDP the Council must provide a 15-year plan framework to support the economic and social needs of the Borough in line with regional strategies and policies, and with the objective of promoting sustainable development.

2.0 LDP Steering Group

2.1 In line with the Council's published 'Statement of Community Involvement in Planning' (SCI), the LDP Steering Group was established, comprising the Planning Committee and the Head of Planning (see Terms of Reference at Appendix 1).

3.0 LDP Timetable

- 3.1 It is a statutory requirement to prepare, and keep under review, a timetable for the preparation and adoption of the LDP. The timetable must include indicative dates for each stage of the LDP preparation and the publication of the Preferred Options Paper and the development plan documents (Draft Plan Strategy and Draft Local Policies Plan) as well as accompanying documents such as the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- 3.2 Members approved a revised LDP Timetable at the 25th September 2019 Planning Committee, which has been agreed with the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) on 8th October 2019. The Council is currently awaiting agreement from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) before publishing the revised LDP Timetable.

Preferred Options Paper (POP)

- 3.3 The Council received a total of 101 POP representations during the 12 week consultation period (a number were also received outside of this period). The issues raised varied, in terms of both their topics and level of detail/evidence submitted. Whilst the Development Plan team has no control over this, it has resulted in a greater workload than was originally anticipated.
- 3.4 In addition to this, one of the key representations received was from the Department. Due to their key role in overseeing the production of LDP's across all 11 councils their commentary is assisting the Council in determining the most appropriate way forward in the preparation of its draft Plan Strategy. Discussions are ongoing with the Department in relation to this, however, it has also resulted in a greater workload than originally anticipated.
- 3.5 A Report on Representations Received to the POP was presented to the 27th February 2019 Planning Committee. This interim (factual) report detailed the responses received to the public consultation documents. It was presented for information only. It did not provide an analysis of the representations received nor did it suggest possible policy approaches, as this requires further evidence gathering and consultation. The report was sent to all adjoining councils and made available for public viewing on the Council's website (for information only).

Draft Guidance: 'Development Plan Practice Note (DPPN) 10: Submitting Development Plan Documents for Independent Examination'

- 3.6 In preparing its LDP the Council must take account of guidance issued by NI government departments.

- 3.7 The Department carried out research into LDP preparation in other jurisdictions. In response to this it published Draft DPPN 10 on 2nd July 2019. This practice note introduces a new, non-statutory (good practice), stage known as 'Focussed Changes' to the Northern Ireland LDP process. This guidance may have an impact on existing LDP Timetables (as it was not previously anticipated by the Department or local councils). It was presented and agreed at the 25th September Committee that the Head of Planning would issue a response on behalf of the Council (issued on 24th October 2019).

Landscape Character Assessment

- 3.8 Members will be aware of the recent Landscape Character Assessment: Award of Tender paper approved at the 26th June 2019 Planning Committee. The Council requires the expertise of external consultants to undertake a comprehensive review of the existing local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) identified in the borough, to provide an up to date and 'sound' evidence base for the preparation of the Council's LDP.
- 3.9 The tender process was much longer than originally anticipated as the first advert yielded no bid submissions. Given the level of expertise required to complete this work it was considered necessary to repeat the tender process. Following further research on potential sources of such expertise, a second tender exercise was undertaken (including an advert in the UK Landscape Institute's website). Two bids were received in response to this and the winning bid has been awarded.
- 3.10 On completion this key document will provide the robust 'sound' evidence base that will inform the draft LDP policies and proposals to protect the landscape.

New LDP Guidance and Procedures

- 3.11 It is important to note that the NI LDP process is totally new. Although it was anticipated that the new regime would take some time to settle down, it is fair to say that it has been a much steeper learning curve than was originally anticipated, for all 11 council's and the Department.
- 3.12 As an evolving process it is inevitable that further up to date departmental guidance will emerge throughout the lifetime of the LDP preparation. The Council has a statutory duty to take account of such guidance, and a failure to do so could result in the LDP being found 'unsound' at IE or potential legal challenges.
- 3.13 This, in turn, has the potential to impact on the LDP timetable as it may result in additional stages of LDP preparation and/or increased workloads.

LDP End Date

- 3.14 In preparing its LDP the Council must provide a 15-year plan framework to support the economic and social needs of the Borough in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing for the delivery of sustainable development.
- 3.15 To plan for this the LDP is given what is known as a “notional” end date. However, the Plan will not suddenly end on this date, unless a replacement plan is adopted.
- 3.16 Work on the LDP commenced in 2015 following the transfer of planning powers to the Council. Based on that commencement date, the original LDP end date was 2030. However, given that the LDP timetable has been amended it is important that the LDP end date also changes to reflect the extended period. Given this, and previous timetable revisions, a new end date of 2035 will be adopted.
- 3.17 Due to the ongoing work outlined above, the Steering Group has not formally met throughout this reporting period. However, it will be reconvened in the New Year to take forward draft policies for the Council’s Draft Plan Strategy.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that Members accept this LDP Steering Group Annual Monitoring Report.

Local Development Plan Steering Group

Terms of Reference

NAME

The name of Steering Group will be the 'Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP) Steering Group'.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Steering Group is to oversee and co-ordinate the delivery of the Local Development Plan (LDP).

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure overview and strategic input in the Plan process, on behalf of the whole community, as well as from planning officials and the wider council.
- To deliver the LDP in accordance with the published Timetable whilst meeting statutory requirements and various tests of 'soundness'.
- To ensure the engagement of Elected Members in the LDP process.
- To agree policy options to be taken forward for assessment under the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE STEERING GROUP

In line with Council's published "Statement of Community Involvement in Planning" (SCI) the LDP Steering Group will comprise of:-

- The Planning Committee; and
- Head of Planning.

Heads of Service within the relevant sections of Council will be invited to participate in the Steering Group meetings.

The Head of Planning will chair the Group.

The Plan Manager will act as Secretary to the Group.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members of the Steering Group should declare **any** personal interest that may exist or may be perceived to exist, in relation to any decisions or recommendations made by the group.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

In the conduct of their duties, members of this group will be privy to material that is confidential, or which should reasonably be regarded as being of a confidential nature. This material must not be distributed outside of the group.

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The Steering Group will normally meet on a quarterly basis. However, there may be occasions when an ad hoc meeting is required to ensure that we meet our published LDP Timetable. In this instance at least one week's notice will be given (via e-mail).

The Steering Group shall take minutes of all meetings. These may be open to public scrutiny, subject to the Environmental Information (EIR) Regulations 2004.

Minutes of the meeting will be circulated to all attendees within one week of the meeting being held.

REPORTING STRUCTURES

The Group will supply an annual monitoring report to inform Council on progress in meeting the Plan Timetable and identifying the causes of any significant delay.

The Group will be required to complete its objectives within the timescale for the adoption of the Plan, as per the agreed LDP Timetable.

SIGNATURES

1. Chairperson in group: DEWISE DICKSON 5/10/17

Signed: DeWise Dickson

2. Name and Position in group: ALD KING - VICE CHAIR.

Signed: Will King 5/10/17