

Cheltenham Borough Council
Cabinet – 13 March 2012
Stroud Core Strategy – Preferred Strategy Consultation

Accountable member	ClIr Jordan, Leader of the Council
Accountable officer	Tracey Crews, Strategic Land Use Manager
Accountable scrutiny committee	Environment
Ward(s) affected	All
Key Decision	No
Executive summary	<p>The Stroud District's Core Strategy, has been prepared by Stroud District Council to cover a 15 year period up to 2026.</p> <p>The Stroud District Core Strategy - Preferred Strategy consultation has been formally published and Cheltenham Borough Council has been invited to comment on the current proposals by Monday 19th March 2012. The proposals in this document build on the work done to date by Stroud District, though this has been revisited in light of the revocation of the South West Regional Spatial Strategy through the provisions of the Localism Act.</p> <p>This version of the plan is the 'preferred strategy' and sets out the distribution of 3,200 new homes and approach to providing 6,400 jobs.</p> <p>Draft comments on the Core Strategy are provided at appendix 2 of this report.</p>
Recommendations	<p>I recommend that Cabinet</p> <p>(i) approves the comments set out at Appendix 2 of this report for submission to the public consultation on the Stroud District Core Strategy.</p> <p>(ii) requests that Stroud District Council meet with the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy Project Board to discuss cross boundary implications and for these discussions to be reported to the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy Member Steering Group.</p>
Financial implications	<p>None arising from this report</p> <p>Contact officer: Paul Jones Head of Financial Services, paul.jones@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 775154</p>

Legal implications	<p>Pursuant to Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011, local planning authorities have a duty to co-operate with each other in maximising the effectiveness with which the preparation of development plan documents are undertaken so far as relating to sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas.</p> <p>In particular, the duty requires local planning authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in any process by means of which the preparation of development plan documents are undertaken.</p> <p>Contact officer: Jonathan Noel, Solicitor jonathan.noel@tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272690</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>No direct HR implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Sarah Baxter, HR Advisor sarah.baxter@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 775215</p>
Key risks	<p>See risk summary at Appendix 1</p>
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>Development to the south of Gloucester within Stroud District, which is not contributing to meeting Gloucester's needs, could have potential implications on the number of other sites required for development through the Joint Core Strategy.</p>
Environmental and climate change implications	<p>Development to the south of Gloucester could impact on facilities and infrastructure in Gloucester and the wider Joint Core Strategy area. Stroud District is currently a net exporter of jobs and environmental impacts associated with increased vehicle movements may be experienced.</p>

1. Background

- 1.1 The Stroud District Core Strategy, has been prepared by Stroud District Council to cover a 15 year period up to 2026. The Stroud District Core Strategy - Preferred Strategy has been formally published and Cheltenham Borough Council has been invited to comment on the current proposals by Monday 19th March 2012. The Strategy has been made available for a period of 6 weeks.
- 1.2 The proposals in this document build on the work undertaken to date by Stroud District in their Key Issues (March 2009) and Alternative Strategies Consultation (February 2010).
- 1.3 Given the intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies, the amount of future employment and housing development suggested in the Preferred Options is no longer led by targets set by the South West Regional Assembly and instead Stroud has assessed the need for housing locally. Stroud District Council resolved in November 2011 to consult on the basis of a district wide housing requirement 2006-2026 of 9,350 houses. This figure has been derived from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) household projections (November 2010) and a conversion factor applied to determine a dwelling requirement. It should be noted that many of these homes have been built or have existing planning permissions and as such the resultant housing requirement is set at 3,200 dwellings over the remaining period of the Core strategy.
- 1.4 A copy of the Stroud District Core Strategy can be accessed at http://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/http-consultation-stroud-gov-uk-planning_strategy/consult_view

Stroud District Core Strategy - Preferred Strategy

- 1.5** The Stroud District Core Strategy is at a reasonably advanced stage of its preparation, having reached its Preferred Options stage. This document sets out the preferred locations for development of homes and employment land to 2026.
- 1.6** With the anticipated abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) there exists no strategic direction for the Stroud District Core Strategy; this direction needs to be determined locally. As Cabinet will be aware through the ongoing work in developing the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy; this may include cross boundary development when considering all realistic development opportunities.
- 1.7** The Stroud District Core Strategy identifies key locations for development. This version of the plan is the 'preferred strategy' and sets out the distribution of 3,200 new homes and approach to providing 6,400 jobs. The distribution of development within the proposed strategy is to focus at six key locations;
- Hunts Grove (south of Gloucester at Hardwicke/Haresfield) 500-750 homes,
 - North East Cam 200-500 homes & up to 1,500 jobs,
 - West of Stonehouse (Eastington) 1,000 - 1,500 homes & up to 3,000 jobs,
 - Aston Down (former airfield) 100 - 200 homes & intensification of employment,
 - Sharpness 200-250 homes & intensification of employment, and
 - Along the Stroud Valleys 300 - 800 homes & up to 1,600 jobs
- 1.8** With regards to any implications on the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy the most relevant preferred location for growth within the document is the proposal to provide 500 - 750 homes at Hunts Grove, Hardwicke. Part of the justification for providing development at this location is given as its proximity to Gloucester and its primary level of services, facilities and major employment hubs and development at this location would have the potential to be easily integrated into the existing and planned development.
- 1.9** This element of the Core strategy is being brought to the attention of Cabinet as the proposed allocation as proposed is designed to meet Stroud District Council's housing needs and none of Gloucester City's. It is considered by officers of Cheltenham Borough Council that if the site was to come forward, then it should be contributing to meeting Gloucester City's needs and therefore contributing to the housing needs of the Joint Core Strategy area, much in the same way that sites in neighbouring Tewkesbury Borough Council may potentially meet a proportion of the needs of Gloucester (and also Cheltenham) through the Joint Core Strategy.
- 1.10** The consequence of this is that it may have a bearing on i.e. a reduction in the need for additional development to be provided within the Joint Core Strategy area which could include within Cheltenham Borough. However, it should be noted that whilst not potentially insignificant, as a proportion of the 500 – 750 figure proposed, this would have a relatively small bearing on the contribution to meeting the overall Joint Core Strategy figure.
- 1.11** It is considered that this approach is consistent with the new duty to co-operate introduced by the Localism Act in seeking to arrive at the best solution in plan-making for all of the aforementioned councils.
- 1.12** The Joint Core Strategy operates within a programme management framework, it would be reasonable to ask Stroud District Council to formally engage with this framework through the Joint Core Strategy Project Board (relevant Directors of Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury) and

if required the Joint Core Strategy Cross Boundary Programme Board (Chief Executives of Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Councils). Both these groups report to the Joint Core Strategy Member Steering Group (Group leaders of political parties of Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury).

- 1.13** Cheltenham Borough Council does not have to make a representation to the consultation and this is an option. However, given the issues highlighted, it is felt that a representation using the officer comments attached at Appendix 2 would be sensible.

Alternative Options Considered

- 1.14** In arriving at the development strategy set out in the Stroud District Core Strategy, it needs to be demonstrated that alternative options have been considered and that the emerging strategy presents the most sustainable and robust option in accordance with the overarching vision. Several alternative options were considered and the reasons for not selecting them as the preferred locations for growth have been provided within the plan.
- 1.15** Following this consultation period, comments will be considered by Stroud District Council and in July/August 2012 a publication version of the Stroud District Core Strategy will be made available for further public consultation. Further key milestones are set out below.

November 2012 – Submission to Secretary of State

February 2013 – Independent Examination

Spring 2013 – Receipt of Inspector's Report

Summer 2013 – Adoption of Core Strategy

- 1.16** Whilst this and the previous stages of public consultation invited comments to be made on issues and details arising from the Stroud Core Strategy, the next stage (the publication stage) will be limited to whether or not the document is legally compliant and that it satisfies the 'tests of soundness'. To be considered sound, the document must be justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

2. Consultation and feedback

- 2.1** This report has been prepared following review of the draft Core Strategy consultation document by the Council's strategic land use team. Should members of the public and other stakeholders wish to comment on the strategy they may do so within the consultation period, which runs between Monday 6th February and Monday 19th March 2012, a period of 6 weeks.

3. Performance management –monitoring and review

- 3.1** Recommendation 2 of this report is that relevant officers of Stroud District Council are requested to meet with the Joint Core Strategy Project Board to discuss cross boundary implications arising from the proposal to develop between 500 - 750 homes at Hunts Grove, Hardwicke. The outputs of this discussion to be reported to the Joint Core Strategy Member Steering Group.

Report author	Contact officer: Tracey Crews, Strategic Land Use Manager tracey.crews@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264382
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk Assessment 2. Officer Comments
Background information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stroud Core Strategy – Preferred Strategy consultation http://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/http-consultation-stroud-gov-uk-planning_strategy/consult_view

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-4	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	Further development south of Gloucester could impact on service and infrastructure requirements for the Joint Core Strategy area.	JCS – programme manager	23/02/12	2	4	8	Transfer to 3rd party	Engage with Stroud District through JCS Project Board	31/05/12	Tracey Crews	
	Allocating land south of Gloucester within Stroud District to meet Stroud’s housing requirement, rather than Gloucester’s may have implications for higher requirements elsewhere in the Joint Core Strategy Area	JCS – programme manager		2	4	8	Transfer to 3rd party	Engage with Stroud District through JCS Project Board	31/05/12	Tracey Crews	