



**REPORT of  
HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES**

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to  
**PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE**  
**13 NOVEMBER 2008**

**MALDON DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF) –  
PROPOSED REVISION TO SCOPE AND CONTENT OF CORE STRATEGY**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Members on the scope and content of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and to make recommendations accordingly.
- 1.2 The proposed changes to the scope and content of the Core Strategy set out in this report have been supported by Planning Policy Panel at its meeting on 30 October, 2008.

**2. AREAS FOR DECISION/ACTION**

- 2.1 These involve:
- Core strategy progress and outstanding issues;
  - Proposed revision to the scope and content of the Core Strategy.

**2.2 Core Strategy**

- 2.2.1 The approach to developing the Core Strategy for the District is proposed for revision to take account of advice contained in the new PPS12: *Local Spatial Planning* and the recommendations of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) ‘critical friend’ service which assessed the soundness of the LDF process in November 2007 and concluded that (post the 2<sup>nd</sup> Issues and Options consultation) it remained ‘...a fundamental concern that the treatment of these matters (the policy issues and options considered in CSIO1 and 2) is often superficial and lacks sufficient depth. This is evident in the lack of detailed discussion of many issues, and failure to articulate a realistic range of choices and actions’.
- 2.2.2 The Core Strategy should establish a policy framework to manage change, provide services, deliver infrastructure, protect the environment and ultimately deliver the District’s vision. It therefore must evidence where we are, where we want to get to, and what needs to happen through policy to drive changes and/ or maintain the status quo, whilst questioning ‘what if?’ to develop a contingency for each of the policy options.
- 2.2.3 The Core Strategy should seek to address three critical questions that will help shape the future of Maldon District. These are:

- i. What do we want to achieve?
- ii. Where are we now?
- iii. What do we need to do to achieve this?

2.2.4 In order to articulate this there is a need to clarify the vision to set out what we want to achieve, evidence to ascertain the current situation and identify issues and thematic policy drivers to facilitate the realisation of the vision.

## 2.3 The Vision

2.3.1 The overarching vision for Maldon's Local Development Framework is for Maldon District to be:

*A sustainable coastal District, with a rich rural identity and heritage, underpinned by a vibrant local economy and active community life.*

The vision has been subject to a number of consultations as part of developing the LDF and is adopted by the District's Local Strategic Partnership. The realisation of this vision will contribute to securing Maldon District Council's corporate vision "**to encourage and maintain a District which takes pride in itself**".

2.3.2 This LDF vision identifies the District's key characteristics, namely:

- coastal, in view of over 60 miles of coastline;
- the rural nature of the district;
- a rich historic maritime settlements;
- a strong economy; and,
- cohesive communities.

## 2.4 Evidence

2.4.1 In order to gain a better appreciation and understanding of the existing issues across the District there has been a need to establish a comprehensive and robust evidence base. The body of evidence has come in the form of published research and other studies combined with the results of the Council's engagement with different stakeholders, residents and businesses.

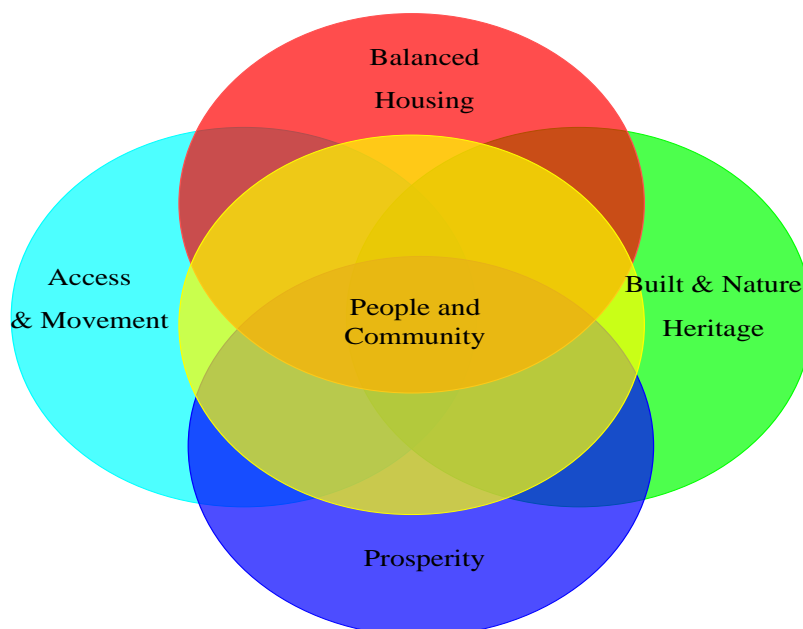
2.4.2 The LDF is an evidence-led process therefore in progressing it is important that evidence from a range of different sources is considered to inform the policy focus to required drive change, manage, conserve or enhance the assets across the District over the next 15 years. A list of the evidence is set out in **Appendix 1**.

## 2.5 Proposed Thematic Policy Groupings

2.5.1 Based upon the vision and evidence the Core Strategy is proposed to contain five policy themes (as illustrated in Figure 1 below), namely:

- Access & Movement;
- Balanced Housing;
- Natural & Built Heritage;
- Prosperity; and,
- People & Communities.

Figure 1



2.5.2 The themes align with the priorities set within Facing the Future; Maldon's Sustainable Community Strategy, establishing the key drivers for change, which will enable the District to identify a range of credible choices and actions, thus addressing the issues raised by the PAS in their report (as summarised in paragraph 2.2.1). The themes should not be considered in isolation, rather they reinforce one another.

2.5.3 The scope and SCS priority objective for the five policy groupings are as below:

- **Access & Movement**

**Scope:** The theme has as its focus transport and movement in general and issues associated with accessibility. **Facing the Future priorities:** To improve and sustain transport and access to services and facilities in rural areas.

- **Balanced Housing**

**Scope:** The theme covers issues related to future housing development in Maldon District. It addresses the questions of how housing needs can be addressed across the District with regard to varying social, economic and environmental circumstance. **Facing the Future priorities:** To increase the supply of affordable housing in the District.

- **Natural and Built Heritage**

**Scope:** The theme covers issues in relation to the preservation and enhancement of natural and built environment of the District. **Facing the Future priorities:** To protect and enhance the distinctive environment of the District and encourage enjoyment of it.

- **Prosperity**

**Scope:** The theme covers issues which are mainly in relation the economic development but also include skill and education in the District. **Facing the Future priorities:** To promote a diverse, sustainable and vibrant local economy and to continue to raise educational attainment and skills levels.

- **People and Communities**

**Scope:** The theme is about quality of life in its widest sense of individuals and communities. For the purposes of the LDF it specifically covers health and safety and it will aim to promote the physical and psychological wellbeing of people and

communities in Maldon District. **Facing the Future priorities:** To improve the health and well-being of residents; To make the Maldon District a safer place; To strengthen and encourage opportunities that will sustain and develop active communities with a strong community spirit.

### **3. LINKS WITH CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

3.1 The LDF Core Strategy has potential to support all of our corporate priorities.

### **4. IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) Corporate risk – Progressing the LDF is a corporate project and part of the basis for the assessment of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant.
- (ii) Sustainability – The LDF is a key part of delivering sustainability in the approach to the spatial development of the District.
- (iii) Resource – The recommended proposals are subject to achieving and maintaining a full staff complement and necessary working and growth budgets for 2009/2010.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

5.1 The proposed change of approach will build on the work that has already been undertaken in the past with the aim of developing a long term comprehensive spatial strategy for the District. This will build on the links between the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the Local Development Framework (LDF), with the Core Strategy being the high level, key spatial implementation document for the SCS.

### **6. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee supports the proposed approach taking forward the LDF Core Strategy.

#### Background Papers

DCLG, 2008. *Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning*.

Maldon District Council Core Strategy: progressing from Issues & Options to Preferred Options. Assessment of Soundness: main conclusions, November 2007.

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## Appendix 1: LDF evidence

### Studies

- Gypsy and traveller sites return (half-yearly from Environmental Health)
- Habitat Directive Appropriate Assessment Stage 1 (2007!!) WS Atkins
- Health Care Facilities (GP, Dental, Pharmacy, Optician) Mapped
- Historic Environment Assessment
- Housing Condition Survey
- Housing trajectory, Annual Monitoring Report,
- IMD 2007, 2008 (CLG)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2008 (Primary Care Trust)
- Landscape Character Assessment (2006) Chris Blandford Associates
- Local Transport Plan 2006 (Essex CC)
- Natural Conservation Study
- Older People Strategy Draft 2008(MDC)
- Qube Study Maldon Design Guide
- Retail Study 2006 (GVA Grimley)
- Retail Update Draft 2008 (MDC)
- Sewage capacity Map 2008 (Anglian Water, MDC)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2008 (Scott Wilson)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 (David Couttie Associates)
- Ward Profiles (2001 Census Mostly)
- Water capacity 2007/8 ( Essex & Suffolk Water)
- Other Evidence: Previous Consultations and topic papers (various) MDC

### 3.3 Gaps in evidence

- Call for sites (underway) MDC
- Conservation Area Review and Management Plan
- Design Template (Related to above) MDC
- Employment Land Review (underway) Roger Tym & Partners
- Estuary management plans (EA)
- Gypsy travellers site report ECC?
- Impact and Landscape concept statements
- Infrastructure Audit & Funding Options (underway) Essex CC
- Marine and Coastal Strategy (Crown Estate)
- Mineral and Waste LDF (ECC)
- PPS 17 Open and Green Space Study
- Rural Facilities and Services Survey
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (on-going) MDC
- Town centre health checks (underway) MDC
- Update Tourism Study (underway) East of England Tourism
- Water Cycle Study?
- Water resources management plan (Environment Agency)