

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council 27 November 2008
AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Planning Policy Manager

REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY REVIEW IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT REVIEW PANEL

Purpose and background

1. Although adopted as recently as May 2008, a review of the East of England Plan which currently provides a strategy for the region until 2021 has already commenced and when adopted in 2011 will provide a strategy for the region for the period up to 2031.
2. The review of the East of England Plan will be led by the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) until it is submitted to the Secretary of State in 2 years time. After submission the Secretary of State is responsible for adoption.
3. This is not a key decision, however in accordance with Article 4 of the Constitution, appointments to outside and joint bodies are a matter reserved to the Council for decision.

Considerations

4. The East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) is required to seek the advice of County Councils in the region on the policies and proposals for each County Council area. In the exercise of this requirement Cambridgeshire County Council has decided to set up a countywide member forum, to help lead the review, which will enable District Councils to be involved in the preparation of this advice.
5. The County Council considers it important that this forum should have the following characteristics:
 - All Cambridgeshire local authorities to be involved,
 - Opportunity for a wide representation of political groups to engage,
 - Integration with existing meetings as far as possible,
 - Transparency, with meetings in public and papers widely available,
 - Dedicated web pages to be introduced,
 - Other stakeholders to be consulted, and communities involved.
6. In accordance with these suggestions, the County Council proposes to establish a joint Cambridgeshire RSS Review Panel (CReSSP) with the following terms of reference:

The Panel has been established to provide a public forum for local authority members to discuss issues arising from the Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

The Panel will have no decision making powers, but the views and recommendations of the Panel will be taken into account by the local planning authorities and by the County Council in making its statutory advice to the East of

England Assembly under Section 4 (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004 .

The Panel will comprise councillors of the local authorities of Cambridgeshire and will be politically representative. Cambridgeshire Horizons will attend to provide to support the Joint Member Panel in respect of the delivery issues involved with different planning options. Representatives of key stakeholders may be invited to attend particular meetings.

The meetings will be held in public with the press to be invited. Where petitions or questions are submitted in advance by members of the public, by community representatives or by other stakeholders, a specific session of the meeting will be allocated to debate the issues raised.

The Panel will meet initially in the Autumn of 2008 and will continue to meet at key stages of the review until the new RSS (intended to become the Integrated Regional Strategy) has been approved by the Secretary of State.*

The Panel will consider the implications for Cambridgeshire of proposed policies and development options under consideration in the RSS review, including the economic, social and environmental implications and the consequences for transport and other infrastructure. The Panel will take into account the impact of any proposals on the communities of Cambridgeshire. The Panel will comment specifically on the joint studies being undertaken the Cambridgeshire Local authorities and emerging conclusions from that work. The Panel may also comment on requests for advice and proposals issued by EERA or by other bodies with a regional remit.

All papers of the Panel will be published on the Cambridgeshire website. Dates and venues of meetings will be made known well in advance.

Options

7. Council is requested to nominate 3 members to the group, and, in accordance with normal practice and the above terms of reference, it is recommended that these appointments be made in accordance with the rules of political proportionality. As such, Council is requested to nominate two Members of the Conservative Group and one Member of the Liberal Democrat Group.
8. It is further recommended that 1 member should be the Portfolio Holder for New Communities, whose responsibilities include regional planning.

Implications

9. There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations in this report, other than the appointment of three Member representatives will enable the Council to contribute fully to this important review.

Effect on Corporate Objectives and Service Priorities

10.

Work in partnership to manage growth to benefit everyone in South Cambridgeshire now and in the future

Contribution to the review through the appointment of Members will enable the Council directly to engage with partner authorities to contribute to planning for the future growth of the district.
Deliver high quality services that represent best value and are accessible to all our community
None specific
Enhance quality of life and build a sustainable South Cambridgeshire where everyone is proud to live and work
None specific

Recommendations

11. Council is **RECOMMENDED** to appoint three Members to the Regional Spatial Strategy Review Panel, in accordance with the Council's political proportionality and including the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Regional Planning.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

None

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