

Agenda Item No.7

CAMBRIDGESHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS

To: Leaders and Chief Officers

Date: 23rd November 2011

From: Alex Plant, Executive Director: Environment Services, Cambridgeshire County Council
Malcolm Sharp, Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects), Huntingdonshire District Council

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Public Service Board have agreed to put in place a small joint unit to ensure we maintain the positive and joined-up approach to spatial planning that has served us well in recent years. Applications have been invited for a Head of Unit and Support Officer to be based at South Cambs at Cambourne. This paper is to agree the governance arrangements to guide the joint work.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Directing the work of the proposed unit will require a democratic mandate from all of the District Authorities and the County Council. This is similar to the direction provided jointly in respect of the response to the Regional Spatial Strategy undertaken by CRESSP. This body was chaired by the County Council recognising their statutory role in responding to the RSS review.
- 2.2 In the circumstances of the new statutory planning regime, the County Council no longer has that statutory strategic planning responsibility, although it does, of course, retain the role of minerals and waste planning authority as well as having a key role in relation to transport strategy. The role of the County Council also remains critical in terms of the planning and provision of key infrastructure, especially in ensuring a stronger link between spatial planning policies and sustainable transport provision.
- 2.3 It is therefore proposed that each District Planning Authority and the County Council nominate up to three Members to be part of a Board to be known as the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Planning Board (CJSPB).
- 2.4 In view of the significance of the issues being discussed and to ensure individual members have the necessary authority, it is envisaged that representation would likely be either the Leader or the Planning Portfolio Holder from the Councils' respective Cabinets. Each Council to consider individually the allocation of places across the Council's political groups.

- 2.5 Whilst decision making on policy issues would remain within the constituent local authorities, the CJSPB would be the primary means by which the authorities fulfil their 'duty to co-operate' in line with the statutory requirements of the forthcoming Localism Act. All meetings would be open to the public and agenda papers, and minutes of each previous meeting, would be published at least five days before each meeting.
- 2.6 The CJSPB would be supported by the JSPU, and by Cambridgeshire Chief Planning Officers (CCPOs). CCPOs would co-ordinate the secondment of staff time to support the work of the JSPU as necessary. CCPOs will also report quarterly to PSB to ensure that Chief Executives are fully informed about emerging strategic planning issues.
- 2.7 Proposed terms of reference for the CJSPB would be developed prior to its first meeting. It is assumed the Group would elect a Chair when they first meet and would probably meet quarterly or as needed.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the above governance arrangements be agreed and arrangements made to call a meeting of the proposed CJSPB when appropriate.