

**Luton & South Bedfordshire Joint Committee**

**29<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**Agenda Item No. 6**

<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Acting Joint Technical Unit Manager (Alan Storah)</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Analysis of Consultation Response to Core Strategy : Issues and Options document</b>
<b>PURPOSES</b>	<b>To provide quantitative and qualitative analysis of the response to the extensive consultation exercise</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>To note the findings of the analysis</b>
<b>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>To enable the Joint Committee to have due regard to the findings of the consultation exercise as an evidence stream in the next stage of the process which is the formulation of the Preferred Options document</b>

## **1. BACKGROUND**

The analysis report appended provides a summary of responses made by stake-holders, interest groups, statutory bodies and the general public to the Issues and Options consultation, which took place between the beginning of July and the end of October 2007. It was produced to help stimulate discussion amongst the local community and stakeholders and highlight the challenges that exist in the delivery of growth. Its production also supports the new approach of 'front-loading' the planning process and thus allowing the public more involvement at the earliest possible stage, in accordance with the Joint Statement of Community Involvement. The Issues and Options paper is the first consultation document prepared as part of the process of adopting a Core Strategy and Key Diagram Development Plan Document for the Luton and South Bedfordshire Local Development Framework (LDF), which is the new generation of development plan at a local level, comprising a folder of documents in place to guide future development.

The findings of this consultation represent one evidence stream, which must be considered along with the findings of other studies including those relating to housing needs, urban capacity, employment land, flood risk and transport, to inform the production of a Core Strategy Preferred Option paper.

People were invited to respond to the consultation by a variety of methods including a detailed questionnaire as part of the Issues and Options paper, a shorter questionnaire as

part of a householder summary leaflet and an exhibition questionnaire, which accompanied staffed exhibitions. Other comments were received by letter, email and fax, along with the findings from various workshops held with stakeholders and hard to reach groups.

The Issues and Options paper consultation was undertaken in conjunction with consultation for the emerging South Bedfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy being prepared by the South Bedfordshire Local Strategic Partnership. When produced, the strategy will contain local priorities and objectives that the Local Development Framework must help to achieve through effective land allocation.

## **2. STRUCTURE OF THE ANALYSIS REPORT**

The report sets out the response to each of the five issues identified in the consultation material, which were:

- Issue 1**      Where will the development go?
- Issue 2**      Where will people work? And in what sorts of jobs?
- Issue 3**      How will people travel?
- Issue 4**      What role will our town centres have?
- Issue 5**      How can our communities and neighbourhoods be more inclusive, sustainable and healthy?

It seeks to identify the overall nature of the responses received drawing particular attention to the comments or views of these bodies with a detailed knowledge and/or influence over what might happen. It therefore focuses on a combination of the findings of the statistical analysis in combination with the general comments made by respondents by use of the 14 questions in the Issues and Options document. It does not seek to provide a fully comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis of all the responses to each of the various questionnaires.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications as a consequence of the consultation response. However, the manner in which they are utilised in progressing the LDF, in terms of land use allocations, could have financial implications for the delivery of the LDF. These implications were agreed by the Finance Manager (Environment & Regeneration) on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

This is a non-statutory part of the plan-making process and there are no associated legal implications for the Joint Committee. These implications were agreed by John Secker on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The report concludes by a brief analysis of the equalities questionnaire. This is with a view to determining a picture of the nature of people who are both responding to the consultation and choosing to complete this part of the questionnaire. The findings will be used in the future to determine whether and, if so, how the Joint Committee can reasonably seek to engage with a wider range of people in order to gain a more representative response from the community.