

Item 5(c) – LDF Core Strategy Adoption

Cabinet’s Recommendation to Council

At its meeting on 10 February 2011 the Cabinet considered the matter as follows:

The Cabinet considered the Local Development Framework Core Strategy which was also to be considered by the Council on 22 February 2011. It was noted that the Core Strategy was the key document setting out the planning framework for future development in the District setting out the Council’s general strategy towards future development, including what development was likely to take place, when and where it would take place and how the Council would make it happen. The Core Strategy also provided the basis for other Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. Members were reminded that the preparation of the Core Strategy had involved extensive public consultation which resulted in the Core Strategy Draft for Submission to the Secretary of State being agreed by the Council in January 2010. Following a deposit period, during which representations were received from a total of 98 individuals and organisations, the Core Strategy was submitted for examination on 3 June 2010. Public examination by the Planning Inspector took place between 5 and 22 October 2010. The Inspector’s Report was received on 18 January 2011 and the Inspector found that the Core Strategy was “sound” and the changes recommended by the Inspector were generally minor and did not alter the thrust of the overall strategy.

The Portfolio Holder for Continuous Improvement and Strategic Planning commended the Core Strategy and reminded Members that the production of the Strategy marked the culmination of a long and arduous process and that the Council was now in a position to replace the outdated Local Plan with a complete, working planning document which had been subject to extensive consultation and been accepted by the Planning Inspector. It was stressed that the only options available to the Council at this late stage in the adoption process was either to adopt the Core Strategy or to reject it. If the Core Strategy was rejected the entire drafting and consultation process would have to start again and this would mean that the Council would not have a viable planning framework.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that he had received a letter from the Chairman of Chevening Parish Council and had already replied to this. Further correspondence had been received and a further reply would be sent. The Leader noted that the Parish’s concerns related to the definition of the urban area and the density of development. It had been a considerable achievement to produce the Core Strategy which would deliver a comprehensive and clear planning framework and provide enhanced protection for existing communities. The Parish Council’s concerns had been fully considered during the extensive consultation process and had not been supported by the Planning Inspector. In view of this there could be no justification for not adopting the Core Strategy.

The Planning Inspector's key findings were noted and Members reflected that the Inspector had made changes where she felt this to be appropriate. The rejection of proposals for development at Fort Halstead and the protection for the Green Belt were significant achievements.

The concerns expressed by Chevening Parish Council were discussed and noted but no further change was proposed.

The Cabinet thanked Officers for their hard work in producing the Core Strategy and in taking it through the protracted consultation and public examination process.

Resolved: That Cabinet agrees and recommends to Council that:

(a) the Core Strategy Draft for Submission be amended to incorporate the recommended changes set out in the appendices to the Inspector's Report;

(b) the Core Strategy, as amended, be adopted as a Development Plan Document; and

(c) the adopted Core Strategy be published and that copies be made available at a price to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder.

