

# CITY OF PLYMOUTH



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### Scrutiny Report on the Local Plan

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Local Plan**

**January 2003**

'Overview and scrutiny is potentially the most exciting and powerful element of the entire local Government modernisation process. It places members at the heart of policy-making and at the heart of the way in which Councils respond to the demands of modernisation. In addition, overview and scrutiny is the mechanism by which Councils can achieve active community leadership, good governance and by which Councillors can become powerful and influential politicians.'

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: 'The Development of Overview and Scrutiny in Local Government', September 2002

# CITY OF PLYMOUTH

**Report:** Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**Subject:** Local Plan

**Committee:** Scrutiny Commission  
Executive

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> February 2003  
11<sup>th</sup> February 2003

**Ref:** 5/LP/SP/DE

**Part:** I

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**Executive Summary:** The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to submit recommendations to the Executive following a meeting of the scrutiny panel responsible for reviewing the Local Plan.

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**Corporate Strategy:** The establishment of Overview and Scrutiny Panels forms part of the corporate strategy for implementation of that part of the modernisation agenda relative to new democratic arrangements.

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**Financial Implications:** None arising from this report.

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## Recommendations

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Local Plan Scrutiny be referred to the appropriate panel;
- (3) the new Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the Local Plan meet as soon as possible;
- (4) the terms of reference be determined by the new panel;
- (5) a summary of the presentation be sent to all Members, updating them with the position on the Local Plan.

# REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – LOCAL PLAN

## Overview of Current and Future Development Planning System

### 1.0 Introduction

The Scrutiny Commission agreed a work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Panels at 'its' meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2002. It was agreed that a number of topics would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Local Plan – the first of which would be the Overview of Current and Future Development Planning System.

- 1.1 The Panel met on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2002, to consider the proposals for the Overview of Current and Future Development Planning System. The Transport and Planning Manager presented details of the strategy and members were given the opportunity to comment and ask questions. Their views and recommendations would subsequently be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2003 and the Executive at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2003.
- 1.2 In view of the changes to be made at City Council on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2002, the Panel resolved that the Overview of Current and Future Development Planning System be brought back for determination of terms of reference, dates of meetings and further discussion once a new panel had been formed, on a date to be agreed.

### 2.0 Panel Structure

#### Councillors

Councillor Mrs. Harden, in the Chair.  
Councillor K. Foster, Vice-Chairman.  
Councillors Mrs. Angel, Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Nelder and Smith.

#### Officers In Attendance

Paul Barnard	Transport and Planning Manager
Mike Palmer	Planning Policy Manager
Graham Skedgell	Strategy Co-ordinator
Daphne Evans	Democratic Support Officer

### 3.0 Objectives

To consider key work programmes and issues relating to the Local Plan as presented by the lead officers, with a view to formulating a report of recommendations to be submitted to the Executive Committee meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2003, subject to approval by the Scrutiny Commission.

#### **4.0 Background papers:**

First Deposit Local Plan: General and Policy Representations

Local Plan Member Working Group (Terms of Reference) – Planning Committee of 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2000

Proposed Special Scrutiny Panel for Local Plan Scrutiny Commission

#### **5.0 The Detail**

##### **Overview of Current and Future Development Planning System**

5.1 The Transport and Planning Manager reported on the background to the establishment of the current and future development of the Planning system highlighting that -

- (i) the priority issue was the development of policy, with presentations being made to a cross-section of the political parties, in the form of a meeting being held once every two months and two sets of Supplementary Planning Guidance being submitted to the Executive in March 2003;
- (ii) the Local Plan had been placed on deposit in December 2001, with 3,500 representations being made. The area specific representations had been reported to the relevant Area Committees in the summer;
- (iii) a review of the planning system had been initiated by central government enabling planning departments of local authorities to become a strategic pro-active force;
- (iv) the planning department was required to work within a hierarchy of planning guidance including planning policy guidance notes issued by central government;
- (v) regional planning guidance covered the whole of the South West from Gloucestershire to Cheltenham to Bournemouth, and including the Scilly Isles;
- (vi) key issues on the distribution of housing and employment land, and the development of the transport infrastructure, were required to be taken into consideration;
- (vii) there was also sub-regional guidance for the Plymouth sub-region;
- (viii) sub-regional planning would become far more important with the regional body having more influence on what happened locally;

- (ix) in essence, structure and local plans would be abolished, and replaced by a Regional Spatial Strategy, and a Local Development Framework;
- (x) the Local Development Framework would be part of the new system to be introduced by the new act, which is expected to commence in 2004;
- (xi) the Local Development Documents would be more strategic, supported by supplementary planning guidance;
- (xii) there was a clear need to link to the community strategy, with involvement of the local community;
- (xiii) the government would like local authorities to move as quickly as possible to the new system, to maintain continuity, and to achieve a seamless change at minimal cost;
- (xiv) the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill had been put before Parliament on 4<sup>th</sup> December;
- (xv) consideration would be given to re-crafting Local Plans in the form of the new Local Development Frameworks;
- (xvi) once the re-deposited plan had been through the new procedures this would formally change to a Local Development Plan;
- (xvii) as far as substantive issues were concerned, the inspector's report would in future be binding on the authority.

### **First Deposit Local Plan: General and Policy Representations**

5.2 The Transport and Planning Manager submitted a report –

- (i) concerning the general and policy representations received in relation to the 'First Deposit' version of the Local Plan;
- (ii) indicating that these representations had not yet been fully evaluated and that together with the area specific representations previously reported to the Area Committees, they would therefore be the subject of a further report, as the Local Plan progressed.

### **6.0 Member Question**

The Panel having considered the information presented to them, raised the question of the role of the City Council in sub-regional planning.

## **7.0 Officer Response**

The Transport and Planning Manager responded by indicating that sub-regional planning would come under regional planning guidance, which would be more specific and cover important sub-regional issues for example border issues affecting both Plymouth and Bristol.

## **8.0 Recommendations**

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Local Plan Scrutiny be referred to the appropriate panel;
- (3) the new Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the Local Plan meet as soon as possible;
- (4) the terms of reference be determined by the new panel;
- (5) a summary of the presentation be sent to all Members, updating them with the position on the Local Plan.