
STRATEGIC PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 14th SEPTEMBER 2026

TITLE: Strategic Development Plan Position Update

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To provide Members with an update on the position reached with the Strategic Development Plan (SDP).

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That Members note the content of this report.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. To bring Members up to speed with the progress with the SDP.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. This report follows on from the position and work programme for the year that was set out in the report to this committee in July of this year ([Link to report](#)) and provides a brief update on progress since the July meeting.

- 4.2. Members will recall from that report that an important first task that had already commenced at the time of the committee meeting was the first stage in developing an evidence base for the SDP. This specifically involved a two-stage process of auditing the existing information and evidence already available in databases and in Local Development Plan evidence bases.

- 4.3. In terms of this matter, the previous report referred to this as follows:

- a. **Evidence base preparation** – Work is already underway to prepare an evidence base for the SDP. Initially this primarily involves an audit of the information that already exists in the evidence gathered by Local Planning Authorities for the preparation and review of their LDPs, alongside other relevant housing, employment and transport data and forecasts. A scoping meeting has already been held with officers from each Local Planning Authority and individual meetings are also diarised to review and discuss each authority's evidence in turn. This will include an assessment of how up to date the information is as well as whether gaps exist in the evidence needed. Recommendations including proposed scope, methodologies and programme for additional evidence base work will allow the CJC to focus resources accordingly, for example on the preparation of any new evidence needed to fill these gaps on a regional basis, or work with Local Planning Authorities to co-ordinate updates of local evidence bases. This is likely to be undertaken alongside the corresponding data collection*

exercise, with the CJC working closely with national and local stakeholders, which will inform development of the SDP and its impact assessments.

- 4.4 Whilst this work is well advanced, the draft recommendations and report is not yet available to report to this committee meeting but will form part of the agenda for the next meeting. To illustrate the basis on which the evidence audit has been conducted, appendix 1 to this report sets out the scope of the Evidence Audit and is based on the 'core issues' outlined in the LDP manual. This framework has then been used as a benchmark to assess the available information and evidence in order to determine the up datedness of this, and whether gaps exist that will need to be addressed by commissioning specific evidence gathering work.
- 4.5 The scoping meetings held with each LPA policy team were also invaluable in identify the location and accessibility to respective LDP evidence bases which are all being assessed, as well as the position reached with LDP reviews.
- 4.6 Whilst the full audit report is yet to be provided by the CJC's consultants, appendix 2 provides a high-level summary of some of the emerging key finding of the review of LDPs in terms of growth patterns, infrastructure priorities, and indicates where the evidence base remains robust or where an update is likely to be required. Members are invited to review this high-level summary and provide their thoughts and feedback at the meeting, which can then be fed into the finalisation of the recommendations and audit report.
- 4.7 The next steps involve the finalisation of the Evidence Audit report and recommendations for further work. Alongside this work is being commissioned on the Integrated Impact Assessment scoping report and the need to analyse and summarise the content of the evidence identified in the audit, and for this to be written up in a Main Issues Report to guide the next stages of SDP development.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Costs will be drawn from existing North Wales CJC budgets where provision has been made to support this work, with the necessary support from the CJC's Legal and Finance teams. The CJC will also seek to secure all opportunities for further funding support from Welsh Government.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The specific requirements and steps to produce a Strategic Development Plan are set out in The Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2021.

APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1:** Audit Scoping Topics
 - Appendix 2:** High Level Audit Summary
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STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. **Monitoring Officer:**

“The CJC has a statutory duty to prepare a Strategic Development Plan and the statutory framework has been considered by this Committee. The recommendations are for noting only and do not approve any substantive policy position, preferred strategy, site allocation or consultation document.

As the SDP progresses, future reports will need to further identify the relevant statutory stage, consultation requirements, assessment duties, etc. Informal Member workshops may assist the development of the SDP, provided they are used for engagement and discussion only, with any material outputs fed into the formal reporting and decision-making process.”

ii. **Statutory Finance Officer:**

“I have no objection to the decision sought and the estimated costs of delivering the Strategic Development Plan is under continuous consideration. It will be included in our work as part of the regular budget reviews, annual budget process as well as in the medium-term financial plan.”