

Planning Committee

26 June 2020

Agenda item number 13

Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework – update

Report by Planning Policy Officer

Summary

The report updates Members on the progress of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework Version 3. The report is for information only.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF) has been produced by all the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in Norfolk, with the involvement of relevant bodies such as the Environment Agency. The NSPF sets out guidelines for strategic planning matters across the County and beyond, and demonstrates how the LPAs will work together under the Duty to Co-operate, through a series of agreements on planning related topics. The Framework has been put together by officers from the Norfolk LPAs, under the oversight of a member level group comprising representatives from all the authorities.

- 1.2. Although the Framework is not a statutory planning document, not having been through the full process required to achieve such status, it sets out the strategic matters to consider in the production of Local Plans by the constituent Norfolk LPAs.
- 1.3. The Framework sets out a proposed Spatial Vision and shared objectives for the Norfolk LPAs, having regard to the main spatial planning issues of population growth, housing, economy, infrastructure and environment. There are a number of “agreements” which explain how the LPAs will seek to deal with the matters through their spatial planning role. These agreements are set out in bold in the document, so are easy to identify. While the Framework is not an adopted planning document in its own right, it can be seen as a guide for future planning work.
- 1.4. The NSPF will be reviewed regularly, as the duty to co-operate requires authorities to work together in ‘an ongoing and meaningful way’ and Statements of Common Ground must ‘reflect the most up to date position in terms of joint working across the area’.

2. Current NSPF and endorsement

- 2.1. A revised NSPF was considered at the July 2019 Member Forum when it was agreed that the NSPF could be taken forward for endorsement by each authority. Since then, each authority has taken the NSPF to their relevant cabinet or council meetings for endorsement. This process was completed in October 2019 and the NSPF is now endorsed by all partners.
- 2.2. The document also continues to be endorsed by the New Anglia LEP, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Anglian Water.
- 2.3. The revised version of the NSPF is available at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/partnerships/strategic-member-forum/norfolk-strategic-planning-framework.pdf?la=en>

3. Progress of the next version of the NSPF

- 3.1. The current work aims to provide a refreshed NSPF (version 3) in early 2021. This will enhance areas deemed to need improvement and deliver a number of new joint studies to inform local plans. Details of progress with the various workstreams are given below.
- 3.2. Through the NSPF update process, the programme will also:
 - Ensure all evidence and housing needs calculations are up to date following publications of updated data and the new Housing Standard Methodology
 - Ensure the NSPF is aligned to the Water Resource Management Plan being prepared by Water Resources East
 - Ensure the NSPF is aligned to any strategic work of neighbouring authorities and links to neighbouring counties are maintained.

- Maintain links to public bodies and Utilities involved in the NSPF

4. Green infrastructure and recreational impact avoidance and mitigation strategy

4.1. Place Services were commissioned earlier in 2019 to produce a county-wide Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. This work is progressing well, and we expect the output to include:

- a. A review of the strategically significant opportunities for the provision of new and/or enhanced Green Infrastructure in the County
- b. Understanding of the current management measures for visitors to the sites designated as of European interest for conservation and evidence for recreational disturbance, including any disturbance 'hotspots' or particular concerns with locations proposed for housing growth
- c. Develop the mitigation necessary to avoid significant adverse effects from 'in-combination' impacts from residential development, and identify a detailed programme of strategic mitigation measures which will be recommended to be funded by developer contributions from residential development schemes.

4.2. It is important to note that:

- a. Evidence indicates that all dwellings in Norfolk are likely to result in a significant effect on protected sites, through recreation disturbance.
- b. To mitigate the impact, there is potentially the need for a tariff charged per dwelling that could be collected and spent county-wide. This tariff could be around £200 per dwelling.
- c. There will be a next phase of work that looks into implementation and delivery of the report.

5. Older persons accommodation and support needs study

5.1. Three Dragons have been commissioned to complete an Older Persons Accommodation and Support Needs Study. The study will:

- a. Provide a robust evidence-based demand assessment of older people's accommodation until 2036 to inform local plans
- b. Provide context on viability and how LPAs can support development
- c. Develop site identification criteria which can be used consistently across Norfolk

5.2. Work on this project is now well underway and consultants are looking at the demand modelling at a local level. They have also surveyed some providers of accommodation to help inform the study.

6. Climate change

- 6.1. The Climate Change group was set up late Summer in 2019, and the group has reviewed information in relation to climate change with a specific focus on the role and impact on Local Plans and the planning system generally. It has also explored some of the emerging policy work around climate change and background information, such as the Report from the Committee on Climate Change that helped inform the Government's changes to the Climate Change Act 2008, and the adoption of the 2050 net zero target. The group will identify the key areas of influence for planning and recommendations to be taken forward across the county for reporting back to members at a future member forum. The areas currently being explored includes water, energy usage, electric vehicles, community lead heating schemes, movement, location of development, point sources, parking and design standards.

7. Economic review

- 7.1. A number of economic development officers and planners from the County and District councils are reviewing the Economic section of the NSPF for the next version of the document.

8. Health

- 8.1. Local Authorities continue to work with health colleagues to understand how we can ensure a better health provision for the communities of Norfolk:
 - a. Regular meetings are continuing to take place covering West Norfolk, Central Norfolk, and Great Yarmouth and Waveney to:
 - i. Review Local Plan progress
 - ii. Provide updates on current and forthcoming key development schemes
 - iii. Provide updates on key healthcare developments and new facilities
 - iv. Review production of health Infrastructure Delivery Plans
 - v. Review key planning changes/legislation/S106/CIL
 - b. The Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) have adopted a new model (HUDU) to provide a comprehensive and detailed response in relation to the health impacts arising from proposals in a planning application. The response encompasses all health partners, including acute, mental health, community and primary care.
 - c. The STP are working on producing Health Infrastructure Delivery plans for each of the local planning areas in the county. LPAs will continue to work with the STP to support their production.

9. 5G shared guidance and the Broadband guides

- 9.1. New guidance and joint policies to support the roll out of 5G and broadband to the county have been produced. However, recent government consultations on 5G have resulted in the need to review these before they are taken forward, and this review has yet to take place.

10. Overall programme timetable

- 10.1. The high level programme of work for the NSPF remains on target to produce a draft version for the document for review by the Norfolk Duty to Cooperate Member Forum in September/October 2020. However, the programme will continue to be reviewed in light of any Government announcements, papers or legislation that might impact on the areas covered by the NSPF.

11. Financial implications

- 11.1. The Authority contributes £5,000 annually to this process.

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Date of report: 11 June 2020