

**Joint Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning**  
Meeting to be held on 23 March 2011

Electoral Division affected: All
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**Joint Lancashire Minerals & Waste Development Framework: Report Back on Regulation 27 Consultation for Site Allocations and Development Management Development Plan Documents**

Contact for further information:  
Niamh O'Sullivan, 01772 530695, Environment Directorate,  
[niamh.o'sullivan@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:niamh.o'sullivan@lancashire.gov.uk)

**Executive Summary**

This report describes the consultation that has taken place between 10 January and 21 February 2011, relating to the Submission version of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies for the Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

It sets out in broad terms the number of responses and the next steps. Given the number of responses it is not yet possible to give a definitive report on the representations received.

A separate report elsewhere on the agenda sets out the main issues raised by the consultation.

**Recommendation**

That the Joint Advisory Committee considers the initial feedback from the consultation exercise and notes the proposed next steps.

**Background and Advice**

Members of the Joint Advisory Committee were previously briefed on the consultation that was to take place on the Submission version of the Minerals and Waste Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Document.

**What Happened?**

Copies of the Councils' Framework Update newsletter were sent out in October 2010 to all registered Consultees, this provided the date of the consultation and what it was about, including a "jargon buster" of planning terms.

A briefing note was sent to Chief Executives, Chief Officers, District Councils and Parish Councils to inform them about the consultation and availability of documents.

Officers sent out over 1651 letters to residents and businesses that had previously shown an interest in the Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework. These letters drew peoples' attention to the consultation, and where documents could be found, the link to the dedicated website, and gave a phone number to call and some letters had details of drop-in sessions.

Three drop-in sessions were held, in the areas of Whitworth, Nether Kellet and Skelmersdale. Officers were there to help people fill in the Representation Form.

Press releases were sent out and a public notice was put in three main papers covering the Plan area. Display posters advertising where the document was available was displayed in colleges, universities, municipal buildings and Libraries across Lancashire.

A leaflet was produced which has already been circulated to Members of the Committee setting out how to fill in Representation Form, a brief introduction and a plan showing proposed sites in a diagrammatic form. This was made widely available.

The Local Development Framework newsletter was sent to all stakeholders and made available at 113 deposit points, and on the website.

The dedicated website was set up and publicised the drop-in sessions as well as hosting the supporting documents. During the consultation period this has received over 829 hits from 428 visitors.

Paper copies of the documents were also placed on deposit at all the libraries in the County and in Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen libraries, as well as the deposit points of the County Information Centres, Town Halls, District Planning Departments, and County Hall. Additional hard copies of documents and CDs were sent out on request.

### **Success of the Consultation**

The Joint Planning Authorities have taken the approach throughout the development of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework to be as transparent as possible (over and above the statutory minimum requirements for consultation).

The consultation generated considerable publicity, with several press articles. One article caused concern in Heasandford as the policy was misinterpreted by the paper suggesting that an industrial estate would be become a large landfill tip.. We received many telephone calls about this but were able to alleviate people's concerns.

The approach of directly contacting the public has been successful in raising awareness. Officers within the Minerals and Waste Policy team were on call to answer enquiries, and help people fill in the Representation form.

However, as might be expected there have been times when the Council has been criticised. This has mostly related to problems with the post; expectation that at this stage of the process that there would be wider publicity; confusion around what the consultation was about; the limited number of drop-in sessions; as well as criticism of the actual proposals themselves.

Three drop-in sessions were held in Skelmersdale, the Kellet Villages and Whitworth during the consultation. These were held to provide information on the proposals, explain what will happen next and to help fill in the representation forms.

The Environment Agency attended the event in Skelmersdale. In addition, officers from Lancaster City and West Lancashire District Council were in attendance. In response to a request from Middleton Parish Council officers will meet with parish council representatives to explain the policy and discuss their concerns.

Both the Whitworth and Kellet Village events were well attended.

At the time of writing the report your officers have processed over 298 representations from over 264 separate individuals, or organisations. The content of these representations is discussed in a separate report.

### **Next Steps**

This Consultation is concerned with publishing the Councils' proposals for inspection and for other parties to express their views on the soundness of the proposals, in terms of the proposal's effectiveness, justification and compliance with national policy; and their reasons for finding the proposal's sound or unsound. Other parties are also able to express their wish to rely on written representations or to appear in person or be represented at a hearing session during the examination. The Councils' role during this time is to receive these representations, in effect on behalf of the Secretary of State, and submit these alongside the Plan's proposals and any other supporting information.

There is also the opportunity for the Councils to consider the content of representations and to take a view on any matters of significance that may warrant additional work, evidence gathering or partner consideration by the authorities, or any other matter that may warrant small changes that might improve or clarify the content or meaning of the proposals. The matters raised by representations received during this time are reported separately.

The project plan to the MWDF anticipates that the Plan's proposals and all other information to be submitted, including representations, will be submitted to the Secretary of State. This is the formal start to the Examination in Public. The oral part of the Examination in Public is due to take place in September 2011 with proposed adoption in March 2012.

All representations will be analysed and forwarded to the Secretary of State.

## **Consultations**

N/A

## **Recommendation**

That the Joint Advisory Committee considers the consultation exercise and notes the proposed next steps.

## **Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

## **Risk Management**

The Joint Authorities are convinced that they have followed procedures relating to the publicity surrounding the plan.

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A