

# **Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee**

## **EPC(2) 14-06(p7)**

**Date: 26 October 2006**

**Venue: National Assembly for Wales, North Wales Visitor Centre, Colwyn Bay**

**Title: Preparation and Progress of Local Development Plans**

### **Purpose**

1. The Committee is asked to note the paper.

### **Summary/Recommendations**

2. The paper – which is presented at the request of the Committee – contains an update on preparation and progress made by Local Planning Authorities and the Planning Division in implementing the Local Development Plan system in Wales.

### **Background**

3. Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires each authority in Wales to prepare a Local Development Plan for its area (Section 62). In addition to this, the procedures for the local development plan preparation are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005. Section 62 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that Local Development Plans have regard to specific documents, which include current national policies, community strategies, and the Wales Spatial Plan.
4. Every LDP requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment under the Environmental Assessment of Plan and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations).
5. Annex 1 provides a brief overview of the LDP process.

### **Progress**

6. Among the 25 Local Planning Authorities in Wales, 14 have now embarked on LDPs, nine of which started early in 2005 under the April 2005 Commencement Order as a "pathfinder group", there are now 10 adopted plans in Wales and 2 others had already adopted UDPs. Ynys Mon have had their local order confirmed by the Assembly, permitting their move from UDP to LDP and two other authorities have requested the order. The remaining 11 will need to apply for a similar order

when they are ready to start their LDPs.

7. The Assembly Government publishes on the web site every six months a table that charts development plan progress. This has been adapted to include progress on LDPs when compared with each LDP Delivery Agreement timetable.

8. Of the nine most advanced in the new process, ten have had their Delivery Agreement (timetable and Community Involvement Schemes) agreed by the Assembly Government indicating when they will reach various stages of the LDP process. Once agreed by the Assembly Government, these are published on each local planning authority's web site.

9. At least three lpas propose to have a deposit LDP in place by 2007 and an adopted LDP by 2009 (as indicated in the timetables in agreed Delivery Agreements).

### **Related Activity**

10. In October last year, the Assembly Government subsidised bespoke training for local planning authorities on community engagement. In the autumn as well, the WLGA, funded by the Assembly Government, provided training on LDPs in 3 locations across Wales for local authority Members. In April, the Assembly officials held 2 seminars (North and South Wales) on aspects of the LDP system that are new and early in the plan preparation process. Officials also participated in regional Wales Council for Voluntary Action workshops this spring. CCW provided training on Strategic Environmental Assessment over the winter.

11. The Division is ensuring that those lpas that are leading the way are receiving support at each stage by officials.

### **Relevant LDP Policy and Guidance**

12. LDP Wales (2005) provides Assembly overall policy for the new local development plan system. The document sets the context for LDPs and provides advice and guidance on plan form and content as well as the process of plan preparation.

13. LDP Manual (to be published in July 2006 but available to lpas in the English version currently) provides practical and technical Assembly advice on how to prepare local development plans to ensure they are sound documents. The Manual is not national policy but a reference document aimed at practitioners implementing or contributing to the LDP preparation. The manual is designed to be updated in order to incorporate new material over time.

14. Planning Your Community (July 2006), an Assembly brochure will provide information on the new local development plan systems to the public. It should enable them to confidently put forth their thoughts about their area to their local authorities at correct stages of plan preparation.

15. A Guide to the Examination of Local Development Plan (PINS Document) (October 2006) will provide information and advice on the way that examinations of the new Local Development Plans

will be conducted by the Planning Inspectorate. The Guide is aimed at all those involved in the new local development plan process in Wales. It will also explain the soundness tests that will be applied to Local Development Plan.

16. Planning Policy Wales - LDP Companion Guide (June 2006) is an Assembly compendium of PPW policy for use in assessing what should be included in an LDP. It separates PPW policy into national policy that should not be repeated in plans, policy explanation or detail that is more appropriate for Supplementary Planning Guidance and policy that needs local interpretation in an LDP.

### **Action for Subject Committee**

The Committee is invited to note the paper.

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