

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	6 November 2012
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/12/234

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present a draft of the Proposed Strategic Development Plan (SDP) to the Committee for information prior to its consideration by the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) on 9 November 2012.
- 1.2 After consideration and agreement by the SDPA, the Proposed Plan will be referred to both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council for ratification. It is anticipated that this will be at the Council meeting on 19 December 2012. There will then follow a period for representations before submission to Scottish Ministers.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
  - (a) Note the contents of the draft Proposed Strategic Development Plan (Appendix 1);
  - (b) Note the contents of the draft Minute of the Strategic Development Planning Authority on 21 September 2012 (Appendix 2);
  - (c) Agree to attach the Minute of this Committee to the report to Council following approval of the draft Proposed Plan by the SDPA.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The financial implications arising from this report are met from within the SDPA's budget.

#### **4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This is a significant piece of work that has involved and will impact upon many other council services, public bodies, the business and development industries and the citizens of Aberdeen.

#### **5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 5.1 The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in August 2009. It was the last structure plan to be approved in Scotland before the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 came into force, introducing a requirement to prepare SDPs in the four largest city regions (including in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire).
- 5.2 Both councils have now adopted local development plans consistent with the structure plan. This was a significant achievement given the scale of change required from the previous local plans.
- 5.3 Although not applying directly to the first SDP, there is a statutory requirement for future plans to be submitted to Scottish Ministers within four years of the approval of the previous plan. The current and previous development plan schemes have presented plan preparation timetables which set this as a target for the first strategic development plan. This means that submission is required to Scottish Ministers by 17 August 2013.
- 5.4 The SDPA started work on the preparation of a replacement plan in late 2010. This has involved the preparation of a range of studies and assessments as well as monitoring of the current structure plan and engagement with stakeholders and agencies. The SDPA approved a Main Issues Report at its meeting of 23 September 2011 and consultation took place between October 2011 and January 2012, with 85 responses received.
- 5.5 All members of both councils have been invited to two informal seminar sessions during the preparation of the plan to date. The first took place on 10 June 2011 on the proposed content of the Main Issues Report while the second took place on 10 September 2012 on the content of the Proposed Plan itself.
- 5.6 An early draft of the Proposed Plan was shared with the Key Agencies for comment and their feedback was useful in informing the final draft attached.

#### **Proposed Plan**

- 5.7 The preparation of a Proposed Plan is a key stage in the preparation of the SDP. The proposed plan builds on the monitoring of the previous plan, engagement with stakeholders and Key Agencies, responses to

the Main Issues Report and the various studies and assessments prepared in support of the plan.

- 5.8 The Proposed Plan presented in Appendix 1 represents a significant level of continuity with the current structure plan. This was the view clearly expressed by the majority of stakeholders, Key Agencies and those responding to the Main Issues Report.
- 5.9 The plan continues to present an ambitious strategy for growth for the area while also focusing regeneration activity in those parts of the area with particular challenges. A common view throughout engagement and consultation was that the focus should be on implementation rather than making changes to a plan which was widely welcomed and still only a few years old.
- 5.10 As identified in the Main Issues Report, while by no means immune from the consequences of the global economic turmoil since 2007/08, Aberdeen City and Shire has been one of the most resilient parts of the UK. Aberdeen City and Shire is consistently identified as one area in Scotland and the UK which has the potential to drive economic recovery. It is important that the SDP supports this and helps deliver on this opportunity.
- 5.11 Housing and employment allowances up to at least 2026 have already resulted in allocations being made by the two Local Development Plans so there is already a clearly defined pattern of growth. The focus is therefore rightfully on the implementation of these plans.
- 5.12 As indicated in the Main Issues Report, the opportunity has been taken to expand the 'Spatial Strategy' section of the plan and at the same time include more diagrams to explain the effect of the plan on different areas. At the same time the text retains the Crystal Mark from the Plain English Campaign for its clarity.
- 5.13 The main changes from the current structure plan relate to five additional proposals and the policy positions around waste management and the strategic transport fund. These are addressed below after a consideration of the housing land supply position.

#### Housing Land Supply

- 5.14 While housing completions in Aberdeen City and Shire have declined since the start of the global economic turmoil in 2007/08, they have been more resilient than elsewhere in Scotland. The 2012 Audit indicates that completions are likely to rise again over the next few years as the new LDP allocations are developed. The Proposed SDP does not require additional housing or employment land to be identified in the subsequent LDPs for the period to 2026.
- 5.15 The housing requirement and allowances in the Proposed Plan are based on the outputs of the 2011 Housing Need and Demand

Assessment (HNDA). Recent projections prepared by the National Records of Scotland (formerly the General Register Office for Scotland) suggest a significantly higher rate of population and household growth than was used as the basis for the HNDA. The Housing Market Partnership met earlier this year and recommended that the HNDA continue to be used as the basis for the SDP. The Proposed SDP continues to provide a generous supply of housing and employment land and is robust enough to accommodate higher levels of growth such as those projected by the National Records of Scotland in the medium-term (i.e. to 2026 at least and probably well into the final phase of the plan).

- 5.16 Monitoring of population and household growth as well as the rate of new house building will be important on an annual basis to inform the review of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment and the SDP in five years' time to ensure that the SDP continues to provide a robust plan for the future.

#### Waste Management

- 5.17 The publication of Scotland's Zero Waste Plan in 2010 set a different context for planning for waste management to that contained in the current structure plan. This was anticipated in the structure plan which stated that the new framework would be reflected in the first SDP.
- 5.18 The urgency and significant of the change to a more sustainable approach to waste management expressed in the structure plan remains. This plan seeks to facilitate the development of the required infrastructure, viewing waste as an important resource.
- 5.19 The MIR presented a series of options to deal with the area's waste and the preferred option has largely been carried forward into the proposed SDP. The proposed SDP emphasises the objective of meeting our waste management needs locally as far as possible, in line with the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle and the Zero Waste Plan.
- 5.20 While we currently have sufficient landfill capacity, there is a need for at least an additional 300,000 tonnes of capacity in new waste management facilities in the area. These are likely to be facilities such as material recycling and composting plants as well as energy from waste facilities. The plan directs most of this capacity to the strategic growth areas within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area to reduce the environmental and financial costs of transporting waste and maximise the opportunity for using the heat generated by such proposals. Given the nature of modern waste management facilities, sites identified for employment purposes in the two local development plans are likely to be potentially suitable, along with sites adjacent to existing waste management facilities. Sites outwith the strategic growth areas may also be suitable, particularly where they meet a more local need or require a rural location.

### Strategic Transport Fund

- 5.21 The SDPA approved Supplementary Planning Guidance on a Strategic Transport Fund (STF) in December 2011 and this was subsequently ratified by both councils in early 2012.
- 5.22 Financial contributions from development have already been received and a number of planning agreements have been signed which require a contribution to be made at a future date. Most of the contributions to the fund will come from new sites allocated in the two recently approved local development plans so it can be expected that the number of planning agreements with STF contributions will rise significantly as sites come forward for development over the next year or two.
- 5.23 Engagement with the development industry is due to take place over the next few months around the timing of implementation of the individual interventions. This will also seek views on the implementation of the guidance and how it can be improved. A review of the guidance will be carried out over the next six to twelve months with reports to future meetings of the SDPA. Consultation will be carried out as part of this process and enable the guidance to be adopted as statutory supplementary guidance alongside the approval of the SDP. The existing guidance will continue in force until that time.

### Proposals

- 5.24 All of the proposals contained in the current structure plan have been carried forward to the Proposed SDP with one exception. The proposal for a new prison at Peterhead has been removed as construction is well underway. All other proposals are still awaiting implementation and there is value in retaining the plan's support for them until that stage has been reached.
- 5.25 A number of additional proposals have been included in the Proposed SDP. Most of these were highlighted in the MIR, although the Scottish Government's Infrastructure Investment Plan gave a commitment to dualling the A96 north of Inverurie and this has also been included.

The new proposals include:

- Upgrading the A96 to dual carriageway north of Inverurie;
- Carbon capture and storage infrastructure at Peterhead as well as infrastructure for the transport of CO<sub>2</sub> to St Fergus from outwith the area (either by pipeline or ship);
- Electricity transmission infrastructure to the south of Peterhead including an extension to the electricity substation and converter stations required for offshore transmission (subject to a development framework for the area);

- Proposals to realise the potential of the ports at Aberdeen and Peterhead, particularly in the context of the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan; and
- Strategic transport interventions required to address the cumulative impact of new development in and around Aberdeen. These interventions were identified and will be funded through the Strategic Transport Fund.

## 6. IMPACT

- 6.1 The Strategic Development Plan contributes to the following Single Outcome Priorities:  
 1 – We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe; 2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people; 10. We live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.
- 6.2 An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment was carried out on the Proposed Plan by the SDPA and is attached for information (Appendix 3).

## 7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

**Appendix 1** - Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan: Proposed Plan

<http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=982&sID=556>  
 Diagrams

<http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=983&sID=556>

**Appendix 2** – Draft SDPA Minute 21 September 2012  
 Attached at end of this report.

**Appendix 3** - Proposed Plan - EHRIA  
<http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=988&sID=556>

## 8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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Appendix 2

DRAFT/

## **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY**

ABERDEEN, 21 September, 2012 – minute of meeting of the STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY. Present: Councillor Milne (Chairperson), Councillor Argyle (Vice Convener); and Councillors Cormie (as substitute for Councillor Corall), Donnelly (as substitute for Councillor Thomson), Graham (as substitute for Councillor Grant) and Taylor (as substitute for Councillor Finlayson) (Aberdeen City Council), Bellarby, Cox, Merson, Norman Smith and Topping (Aberdeenshire Council).

**The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located at the following link:**

[http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/AboutUs/Agendas/2012\\_09\\_21\\_Agenda.asp](http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/AboutUs/Agendas/2012_09_21_Agenda.asp)

### **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

1. With reference to article 1 of the minute of its previous meeting of 22 June, 2012, the clerk to the Authority invited nominations for a Chairperson, and explained that in terms of the constitution of the Authority, a Chair and Vice Chair would be elected by the members attending the first meeting of the Authority following local government elections, which would be this meeting, as the previous meeting had not been quorate; the Chair and Vice Chair could not be from the same Council and they would hold office for a period of two years from the date of today's meeting. At the end of the Chair's term of office the Vice Chair would automatically assume the role of Chairperson and a new Vice Chair would be elected.

#### **The Authority resolved:**

that Councillor Milne be appointed as Chairperson.

**At this juncture, Councillor Argyle assumed the Chair.**

## **APPOINTMENT FOR VICE CHAIRPERSON**

2. The Chairperson invited nominations for a Vice Chairperson.

### **The Authority resolved:**

to appoint Councillor Argyle as Vice Chairperson.

## **MINUTE OF MEETING OF 9 MARCH, 2012**

3. The Authority had before it the minute of its meeting of 9 March, 2012. It was noted that the previous meeting of the Authority (22 June, 2012) had not been quorate, and therefore members had not been in a position to approve the minute of 9 March, 2012 as a correct record at that time. It was further noted that only the Vice Convener and Councillor Cox had been in attendance at the meeting of 9 March from the attendees on this day, and they confirmed that the minute was a correct record.

### **The Authority resolved:**

to approve the minute as a correct record.

## **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 22 JUNE, 2012**

4. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 22 June, 2012. It was again noted that this meeting had not been quorate.

In relation to article 7, the Strategic Development Plan Manager advised that the Scottish Government would like to meet with the Authority to hold a seminar on the National Planning Framework.

### **The Committee resolved:**



- (i) to note that “planed” on article 7, resolution (ii) of the minute should have read “planned”;
- (ii) to note that Councillor \_\_\_ apologies had not been recorded;
- (iii) to ratify the annual report, as per article 5, resolution (i) of the minute;
- (iv) to note that the recommendation regarding the £34,000 payback to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils would be considered at a later point in the agenda (article 8 of this minute refers);
- (v) to agree to meet the Scottish Government jointly with Nestrans at a date to be agreed between the clerk and the Chairs to the SDPA and Nestrans in relation to the National Planning Framework; and
- (vi) to otherwise note the minute.

## **ORDER OF AGENDA**

5. The Chairperson suggested that item 7 of the agenda (Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan) be considered as the next item of business.

### **The Committee resolved:**

to agree to consider the Strategic Development Plan as the next item of business.

## **ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

6. The Authority had before it a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which presented a draft of the proposed Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for consideration.

The report provided a background to the Plan and a synopsis of the draft Plan, which was appended to the report along with (1) a number of indicative plans and diagrams, (2) a draft habitats regulation appraisal record, (3) a sea environmental report, (4) a strategic flood risk assessment, (5) an equalities and human rights impact assessment; and (6) a document outlining responses which had been received to the October, 2011 Main Issues report.

A letter officers had received from the Harbour Board, which presented suggested wording to be incorporated into the Plan, was circulated to members.

**The Authority resolved:**

- (i) to commend the draft of the proposed Plan (appendix 1) and the associated supporting documentation (appendices 2 – 6) for further consideration by elected members, subject to (1) the “detail maps” etc on pages 41 - 49 being renamed “indicative diagrams”, and (2) officers considering how the comments in the letter received from the Harbour Board on 20 September, 2012, could be reflected in the Plan;
- (ii) to defer approval of the Plan, and recommendations (b) – (e) for consideration at an additional meeting of the SDPA to be convened on 9 November, 2012.

**HOUSING LAND AUDIT 2012**

7. The Authority had before it a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which advised of the results of the 2012 Housing Land Audit (which was appended to the report), and explained its implications for the housing land supply position.

**The Authority resolved:**

to note the content of the 2012 Housing Land Audit and continue to monitor the land supply and rates of house building over the next few years as required by the Structure Plan.

**AUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2011/12 AND INDEPENDENT AUDITOR’S REPORT**

8. The Authority had before it a report by the Treasurer which presented the audited Statement of Accounts for 2011/12 and the independent auditor’s report on

the audit. The Statement of Accounts was appended to the report. The Authority heard Karlyn Watt (Audit Scotland) in relation to the independent auditor's report.

**The Authority resolved:**

- (i) to welcome the Statement of Accounts for 2011/12 and the independent auditor's report;
- (ii) to thank officers for their prudent financial management of the accounts over the past year;
- (iii) to return £34,000 excess contributions to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils; and
- (iv) that a £10 charge for a printed copy of the Statement of Accounts be made, and to note that the Statements could be accessed and downloaded free of charge from the SDPA website.

**BUDGET MONITORING**

9. With reference to article 5 of the minute of its meeting of 9 March, 2012 the Authority had before it a report by the Treasurer which advised on the forecast position for 2012/13, as at 31 August, 2012.

**The Authority resolved:**

to note the budget monitoring position and forecast outturn as at 31 August, 2012.

**DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

10. The Authority had before it proposed dates and times of future meetings.

**The Authority resolved:**

- (i) to note that the next meeting would take place on 9 November, 2012 (article 6, resolution (ii) of this minute refers); and

- (ii) to agree that the Authority would meet on 14 December, 2012 and 22 March, 2013 at 2pm, whilst noting that a date for the additional joint meeting with Nestrans and the Scottish Government would be confirmed at an early date.

- **COUNCILLOR MILNE; Convener**