

**Report to** Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum  
16<sup>th</sup> February 2017

**Report of** Norfolk Strategic Framework Project Manager

**Subject** Norfolk Strategic Framework

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### **Purpose**

To update members on progress of the Norfolk Strategic Framework since October. It includes brief progress on each of the task and finish groups, timescales and any likely future budgetary implications and a summary of progress made on the drafting of the framework.

### **Recommendation**

To note the contents of the report and agree either:

- a) That subject to satisfactory progress being made on drafting the Strategic Framework during February, that the Members of the Forum agree to seek authority from their Councils to publish the draft version of the Strategic Framework for public consultation in early May; or
- b) That subject to satisfactory progress being made on drafting the Strategic Framework during February, that the Members of the Forum agree to seek authority from their Councils for the Member Forum to agree the draft version of the Strategic Framework for public consultation at a meeting in late May with consultation commencing in early June.

### **Financial implications**

No financial implications and no additional budget required.

### **Contact officers**

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### **Further Information**

None.

## Report

### Purpose

The purpose of the Norfolk Strategic Framework Project is to produce a non-statutory framework to:

- Agree shared objectives and strategic priorities to improve outcomes for Norfolk and inform the preparation of future local plans;
- Demonstrate compliance with the duty to co-operate;
- Find efficiencies in the planning system through working towards the establishment of a shared evidence base;
- Influence subsequent high level plans (such as the Strategic Economic Plan); and
- Maximise the opportunities to secure external funding to delivery against agreed objectives.

### Summary

1. The Norfolk Strategic Framework (NSF) project has continued to progress well. All task and finish groups are meeting on a regular basis. The key tasks for the project since the last report have been to:
  - finish compiling the evidence for the document
  - complete the writing of the first draft
2. The initial drafting of the report has been completed and the draft document is now with members for review. There has been some areas of evidence which are not completed yet and this will mean that the draft document provided to Members will require updating as this further evidence becomes available. This updating will be ongoing until the document is made available near the time of public consultation in May or June
3. The production of HELAAs based on the agreed methodology has progressed more slowly than anticipated and no authority has a completed HELAA to date. However we will look to ensure all authorities either have confidence that they can meet their own housing need or have agreements in place with neighboring authorities before the NSF is published for public consultation.
4. The NSF has been produced with only one external study being commissioned (for Green Infrastructure). There is the possibility that one additional study is commissioned for the delivery group which may require some funding. The limited external work has meant that the project will have a significant underspend.

### Steering

5. The initial drafting of the Norfolk Strategic Framework document is ongoing. An emerging 1<sup>st</sup> draft version has been produced to inform an informal briefing session of the Forum immediately following this meeting. The draft will be updated in the light of this discussion, further comments from the working groups and other local authority officers and to reflect the content of the housing white paper (which had not been published at the time of writing of this report but was expected in early February) and any other evidence that continues to emerge.

6. Assuming Forum members are broadly content with the direction of the early working draft of the documents it is suggested that they agree to report the draft document through individual authorities decision making processes in March and April in order to gain authority to publish a draft version of it for consultation in May. The timing of the commencement of consultation will depend on whether members wish to formally agree the consultation version at the next meeting of the Forum in late May or whether they wish to publish the Framework before this in early May following the end of the County Council purdah period.
7. The implications of this decision on the timetable for NSF preparation are set out in the attached appendix. Plan A would see the Framework published for consultation in early May and result in the process being completed in September. Plan B would result in consultation not commencing until early June and as a result completion of the process would be delayed until late October or early November.
8. In either case the emerging working draft version of the Strategic Framework would come into the public domain when reports are published to inform discussion at the Council meetings planned in March and April. The first such meeting anticipated is the County Council's Environment, Development and Transport Committee scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> March.
9. Plan B is favoured by Officer's.

## **Housing**

10. All authorities are in the process of completing HELAAs based on the Methodology agreed in mid-2016. This process has taken longer than expected and other than the Broads Authority, no authority has a completed HELAA to date. We will look to ensure all authorities either have confidence that they can meet their own housing need or have agreements in place with neighboring authorities before the NSF is published for public consultation.
11. A number of Joint studies have been or are in the process of being commissioned including an update to the central Norfolk Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Gypsy and Traveller study and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Work is also on going to use the data from the Norfolk Accommodation for older people – current supply, current need and future needs study to inform the NSF on Elderly housing needs.

## **Infrastructure**

12. Much of the evidence has now been collected for the Infrastructure task and finish group. Evidence for roads, rail, public transport, flood defence and telecommunications is complete but there is some outstanding work to complete around water disposal, electricity network and health. The group have not been able to obtain any information around education that can be used within the NSF document.
13. The group are working closely with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Anglian Water to produce a set of evidence that can also be used as a high level

water cycle study resulting in savings over this work being commissioned externally. All evidence gathered will help identify any constraints to land use in these areas, assisting the production of the HELAAs, and highlighting potential issues for growth.

14. The work to produce a strategic green infrastructure map for Norfolk is now underway and a third party has been commissioned to support this work. This work will not be fully completed within the timescales of the NSF but we expect the mapping phase to be completed for inclusion in the version produced for the public consultation.

## **Economic**

15. The Economic group have completed their work to produce an number of supporting document which include:

- A review of the latest run of the East of England Forecast Model (EEFM)
- The collation of Strategic tier 1 employment sites across Norfolk
- A report on the Strategic Economic Planning Matters that cross authority boundaries and ways to address these for each district.

16. The Group is continuing to work with the New Anglia LEP to ensure any evidence is aligned to their work on updating the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), and to highlight where there are opportunities for joint-working.

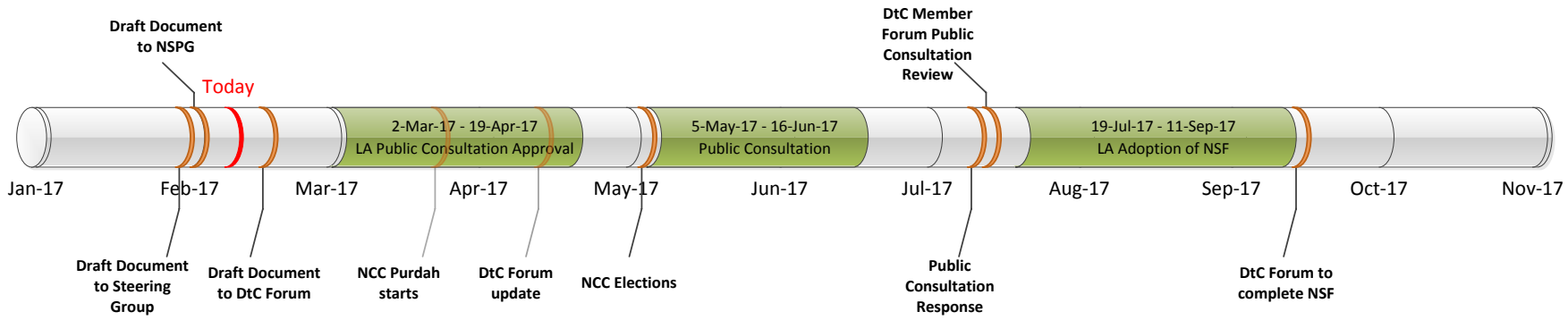
## **Delivery**

17. The delivery group has continued to analyse the data collated around site progression where sites have been allocated and not progressed, further evidence is also being collated to support the conclusions that are being made from the findings.
18. The delivery group were looking to commission some external work around a deep dive of larger development sites across Norfolk looking for positives and negatives in their progression. It had been proposed to use Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) at the Homes and Communities Agency for this work but they are unable to support this. At the time of writing of this report it had not been decided how to progress this matter but the Delivery Group is due to meet again prior to the Forum so a verbal update will be given.

## **Budget**

19. The only committed external work remains the £20,000 allocated for the Green Infrastructure study. There is likely to be some additional cost around the consultation of the final document and some website costs. Because very little external work is now required the project is likely to be completed with a significant project surplus.

### NSF Adoption Process Plan A



### NSF Adoption Process Plan B

