

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME 2012
Meeting: ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Date: 6 MARCH 2012
Author: DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As part of the new development planning system provided by the Planning, etc (Scotland) Act 2006, planning authorities have to prepare a Development Plan Scheme at least annually. The purpose of the Development Plan Scheme is to set out the authority's programme for preparing and reviewing their development plans, and to explain how the authority will go about consulting people and agencies during the preparation of the plan.
- 1.2 Falkirk Council's first Development Plan Scheme was approved by the Council in 2009, with annual updates in 2010 and 2011. These confirmed the Council's intention to progress with the replacement of the two tier arrangement of Structure and Local Plans by a single Local Development Plan (LDP), as required by the Act. This report presents the 2012 update of the Development Plan Scheme for consideration and approval by Members. It highlights the main changes to the 2011 version, namely amendments to the programming of the LDP and an update on the work which has recently been completed as part of the Main Issues Report stage.

2. DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME

- 2.1 A copy of the proposed Development Plan Scheme 2012 is attached as Appendix 1. In summary it:
- explains the current development plan framework covering the area;
 - confirms that the Council is preparing a single LDP which will ultimately replace the current Falkirk Council Structure Plan and the Falkirk Council Local Plan;
 - explains what the new LDP will comprise;
 - highlights the key stages in preparing the new LDP;
 - details the work involved in preparing the new LDP, including those steps already undertaken, and the likely content;
 - sets out a timetable for each key stage of preparing the LDP; and

- explains how the Council is involving, and will continue to involve, people and agencies at each stage of preparing the LDP – the participation statement.

2.2 Section 3 of the Development Plan Scheme explains the various stages and outputs in the LDP process. The Main Issues Report (MIR) stage, which is the main focus of public engagement, has recently been completed, as reported in paragraphs 3.1 - 3.4 below. It has considered the options for development across the area and set out preferred, and alternative, sets of proposals and policies. The Proposed Plan, expected to be published in March 2013, will be the point at which the Council reaches a settled view of what should be in the final plan. There is then the opportunity for parties to submit objections, and the possibility that the Council will modify the plan, prior to its submission to Scottish Ministers and the holding of an Examination (equivalent to the Local Plan Inquiry). Following the Examination, and consideration of the examination report, the Proposed Plan as modified is submitted to Scottish Ministers and then adopted.

2.3 The key change from the 2011 Development Plan Scheme relates to the timetabling of the LDP, as set out in Section 4. A slippage of 2 months in the completion of the MIR stage was mainly due to an extended period to ensure effective Member engagement. This, combined with a reassessment of the scope of technical work involved in taking the LDP to the Proposed Plan stage, has resulted in the expected date of publication of the Proposed Plan moving to March 2013, compared with the estimate of October 2012 in the 2011 Development Plan Scheme. This would mean the final adoption date for the LDP slipping by five months to the end of 2014.

Publication of Proposed Plan	March 2013
Submission of Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers	November 2013
Examination	November 2013 – July 2014
Submission of Proposed Plan as modified to Scottish Ministers	October 2014
Adoption	December 2014

2.4 Section 5 sets out the Council's intentions with regard to consultation and public involvement in the process. This remains largely unchanged from the 2011 version.

3. PROGRESS WITH THE FALKIRK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

3.1 Progress with the preparation of the LDP reached a key milestone over the past year, with the Main Issues Report having been approved for consultation by the Council in October 2011, and published in November 2011.

3.2 Consultation on the Main Issues Report was carried out during a 12 week period between 18th November 2011 and 10th February 2012, and used a range of participatory approaches to involve people and organisations. The consultation exercise comprised:

- Publicity for the Main Issues Report and the community roadshow events through the local press, the Council's 'Falkirk News' magazine, the Council's web site, posters in libraries, one stop shops, supermarkets and other community facilities, and some schoolbag drops;

- Consultation letters to over 800 organisations and individuals on the Council's development plan mailing list;
- 19 community roadshow events held at libraries, community centres, schools and supermarkets across the Council area;
- 3 stakeholder workshops considering the key themes of the Main Issues Report;
- Presentations to 6 Community Councils in response to an offer of briefings to all community councils;
- Documents available on-line and in local libraries, one stop shops and Council offices for inspection; and
- Development Plan newsletter, containing summary of the Main Issues Report, distributed widely through mailing, deposit locations and roadshow events.

3.3 The community roadshow managed to draw in over 600 people. Although some of the drop-in sessions in schools, libraries and community sessions were poorly attended, sessions in supermarkets and shopping centres proved effective in reaching out to larger numbers of people who did not necessarily have an awareness of the LDP. Some 140 people attended the Community Council meetings, and 54 agency representatives attended the 3 stakeholder workshops. Over 3000 visits to the LDP web page have been recorded.

3.4 Just over 1000 written responses were received to the Main Issues Report. These, along with the notes from the roadshow events and workshops, are now being logged and analysed to inform the process of preparing the Proposed Plan. It is intended that a report will be published in due course summarising the comments received.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Legal: The requirement to prepare a Development Plan Scheme is part of the Planning, etc (Scotland) Act 2006 and its secondary legislation and is binding on the Council in carrying out its development planning functions.

4.2 Financial: None

4.3 Personnel: None.

4.4 Policy: The Falkirk Council Structure Plan and the Falkirk Council Local Plan will remain as the Development Plan policy framework for the Falkirk Council area until replaced by the new Local Development Plan.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That Committee agrees to recommend to Falkirk Council that the attached Falkirk Development Plan Scheme 2012 is approved and formally adopted.**

Director of Development Services

Date: 23 February 2011

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Falkirk Local Development Plan, Main Issues Report, November 2011

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