



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Development Control Committee

27 September 2007

Local Development Framework Consultants Brief for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Study Joint Working

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number: 7 (a)
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NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

The Borough Council is required to carry out an Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Study to serve as essential evidence in support of the Local Development Framework core Strategy and Allocations Development Plan Documents. The work would undertaken jointly as part of a partnering agreement between Blaby District , Harborough District, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough, Melton Borough, North West District and Rutland County Councils, with Melton Borough acting as lead authority.

Recommendations:

- (1) That Members note the requirement to appoint consultants to undertake work in support of the Local Development Framework
- (2) That approval is given to appoint consultants as part of a partnering agreement to carry out work on an Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Study.

Level of delegation: Delegated to Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: No comments.
 Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: Included in the report.
 Monitoring Officer: No comments.

Appendices Attached: None.

Impact Assessments:

Health: The Study will ensure the Local Development Framework has a positive impact on health.
 Environment: The Study will ensure the Local Development Framework has a positive impact on the environment.
 Community Safety: The Study will help to ensure the Local Development Framework has a positive impact on community safety.
 Human Rights: All those with an interest in the Borough will have numerous

opportunities to comment on and influence the preparation and content of the Local Development Framework.

Equal Opportunities: The Local Development Framework will seek to ensure that developments will be accessible to all.

Risk Assessment: If the Study is not undertaken the Local Development Framework would not conform with national and regional planning policy and would be therefore found unsound.

Commentary:

The Need to appoint Consultants

- 1 The Planning and Compulsory Planning Act 2004 has made it necessary for Councils such as Oadby and Wigston to appoint numerous consultants to prepare studies, surveys, assessments and reports in support of the Local Development Framework (LDF). This is because unlike the old Local Plan system, every policy in every Development Plan Document (DPD) needs to be based on sound 'Evidence'. If the Council cannot demonstrate that this evidence exists at Examination, then the DPD will be deemed unsound and the Council will have to start the process again from scratch. The work that the Council commissions from consultants provides us with the essential evidence that is required.
- 2 Unfortunately, it is not possible for the Council's own officers to undertake this work. The Council has a small Forward Plans team consisting of just three officers and their time is taken up with progressing general policy work in relation to the Local Development Framework, the Regional Plan and so on. In addition, in order to provide sound evidence in relation to a particular topic, detailed knowledge in that subject area is required which the Council's own officers would not be expected to have, but which can be provided by a specialist consultancy.
- 3 It is proposed that the work would be carried out jointly as part of a partnering agreement between Blaby District, Harborough District, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough, Melton Borough, North West District and Rutland County Councils, with Melton Borough acting as lead authority. This would provide significant cost savings and a consistent approach in responding to climate changes and planning for energy efficiency and renewable energy across much of Leicestershire.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Study

- 4 Central government expects local authorities to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and play a significant role in contributing towards national targets to reduce carbon emissions and increase the amount of energy generated from renewable sources. It is also paramount that local authorities effectively plan to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- 5 Each of the authorities named in the proposed partnering agreement are currently in the process of preparing Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) which will provide spatial planning policies to 2026. The individual LDFs will contain policies to positively plan for the future of each Authority area, including the location and nature of future employment and housing development. All of the Authorities expect to include policies which will contribute to energy and carbon targets as well as comply with national and regional climate change guidance.

Climate Change

- 6 The Government has reviewed the delivery of national energy policy and has recognized that the two major long term challenges are tackling climate change and delivering secure, clean energy at an affordable price (The Energy Challenge, 2006). The 2002 Energy White Paper includes a goal of putting the UK onto a path to cut UK CO₂ emissions by some 60% by 2050, with real progress by 2020. The UK also has a binding target under the Kyoto Protocol

to reduce emissions of six greenhouse gases by 12.5% from 1990 levels in the period 2008-2012.

- 7 The Government has an additional goal of a reduction of 20% in emissions of CO₂ from 1990 levels by 2010 and has signaled a policy and legislative move towards 'carbon neutral' development, with strong support for incorporating renewable energy technologies at the building and development scale. The Government is committed to ensuring that low carbon energy generation, including renewable technologies, makes an increasing contribution to UK energy supplies. It has set a target of 10% of UK electricity from renewable sources by 2010 and 20% by 2020.
- 8 Regional policies on energy are underpinned by the following 'energy hierarchy':
 - to reduce the need for energy
 - to use energy more efficiently
 - to use renewable energy
 - any continuing use of fossil fuels to be clean and efficient for heating and co-generation
- 9 The Regional Targets and Scenarios for Renewable Energy Report indicates that a 20% renewable energy mix by 2020 can only be achieved by adopting energy efficiency improvements and challenging micro-generation targets as well as a mix of large scale grid connected renewable energy.
- 10 Discussions are currently underway between officers of Blaby District, Harborough District, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough, Melton Borough, North West District and Rutland County Councils to jointly commission consultants to undertake this work. £15,000 is budgeted from the Planning Delivery Grant funding towards this project.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:

Draft East Midlands Regional Plan, East Midlands Regional Energy Strategy, East Midlands Carbon Footprint-Determining Baseline Energy Consumption Data, PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS1 – Climate Change supplemental consultation, PPS3 – Housing, PPS22 – Renewable Energy, PPS22 – Companion Guide, Building Greener Future (consultation draft)