

Eden District Council

Executive

4 December 2018

Penrith Strategic Masterplan - Public Engagement Update

Portfolio:	Eden Development
Report from:	Deputy Director Technical Services
Wards:	Penrith North, Penrith East, Penrith Carlton, Penrith West, Penrith Pategill, Penrith South, Langwathby, Eamont, and Kirby Thore
OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on the public engagement for the Penrith Strategic Masterplan, which was concluded on 2 November 2018 and the intended next steps required to inform a review of the Eden Local Plan.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That progress on the scale and depth of the community engagement process for the Penrith Strategic Masterplan, and the next steps in moving towards a review (in full or in part) of the Eden Local Plan be noted.

3 Report Details

- 3.1 In December 2016, the Leader and Political Group Leaders of the Council and, the then Leader of Penrith Town Council agreed a vision for the Council to look beyond the current Local Plan to 2050 and produced a discussion paper: Vision and Opportunities for Eden to 2050.
- 3.2 In October 2017, the Executive approved a supplementary estimate of £45,000 to commission a Strategic Masterplan for Penrith. The intention was for the Masterplan to provide a spatial framework for new development, showing the opportunities and benefits of this growth, whilst also enabling the area to retain its character and quality of place.
- 3.3 In January 2018, following a competitive tendering exercise of work to develop the strategic masterplan the Penrith was awarded to Land Use Consultants Ltd (LUC). The scope of work by the consultants comprised four stages:
- Stage 1 – Project inception, familiarisation and engagement strategy;
 - Stage 2 – Demonstrating need for growth;
 - Stage 3 – Spatial implications; and
 - Stage 4 – Preferred option
- 3.4 At the conclusion of each stage, LUC provided a presentation to a stakeholder group comprising the Chief Executive, Council Leader, Political Groups

Leaders, representatives of Penrith Town Council, Highways England, Environment Agency, Cumbria County Council, a landowners' group representative and a representative from the office of Rory Stewart MP. A final draft masterplan was presented to the stakeholder group on 30 May 2018 and due to the complexity of this report a further round of consultation was undertaken with the stakeholder group. As a consequence further work was required to refine this draft which culminated in the production of the Penrith Strategic Masterplan: Technical Appraisal at the beginning of August.

- 3.5 Questions have been raised regarding the selection of the consultant. The piece of work undertaken by LUC for a local land owner in 2010 was a discrete piece of work not related to the Masterplan. The piece of work would not be considered as providing a barrier to LUC working on the Masterplan
- 3.6 The Council also received £250,000 from the Government to support multi-agency working on reviewing infrastructure and associated issues in relation to the future growth of Penrith, as was reported to Council in April 2018. The government funding has enabled the undertaking and commissioning of the work necessary to take the Masterplan forward, such as the production of a Strategic Food Risk Assessment (SFRA) and an update of the Penrith Transport (Saturn) Model.
- 3.7 The SFRA, although district wide, is focused on Penrith and is considering the potential implications for development of sites around Penrith which were part of the option appraisal process within the LUC 'Technical Appraisal'. This is expected to be completed at the beginning of 2019. The Penrith Transport (Saturn) Model will be the model used to analyse transport data and forecast growth scenarios within and around Penrith. An update of the 'Saturn' model was commissioned in May 2018 and is expected to be completed in January 2019. The model will be available to assess the impact of new developments coming forward and appraise their potential transport requirements and this process is expected to be completed by March 2019.
- 3.8 During the stage of the stakeholder review meetings, it was agreed that the Penrith Strategic Masterplan: Vision 2050 would be the subject of an eight-week community engagement exercise to bring the plan forward and engage with and seek the views of the residents of Penrith and Eden.

The Community Engagement Exercise

- 3.9 The engagement exercise commenced on 10 September 2018 and concluded on 2 November 2018. It was preceded by local press releases commencing from 7 September 2018, in addition to a half page advert and an advert in the public notices section of the Cumberland and Westmorland Herald on 8 September 2018. All such information confirmed the form and nature of the community engagement process, together with non-statutory status of the Masterplan.
- 3.10 The engagement exercise was resource intensive and comprised of the use of a 'Pop-up Shop' at 3 Middlegate Penrith, during September and a series of 'Pop-up events' both within Penrith and around Eden during October. This comprised:

- Penrith 'Pop-up Shop' (Series of 7 display boards with a 'Graffiti wall' for observations, information leaflets and brochures, manned by at least two officers to answer questions and promote engagement).
Monday, 10 September 10am – 4pm and 6pm – 8pm
Wednesday, 12 September 10am – 4pm and 6pm – 8pm
Thursday, 13 September 10am – 3pm
Saturday, 15 September 10am – 2pm
Tuesday, 18 September 10am – 4pm
Thursday, 20 September 10am – 4pm
Monday, 24 September 10am – 4pm
Wednesday, 26 September 10am 4pm
Friday, 28 September 10am – 4pm
- 'Pop up Events (Series of display boards depending on size of venue with postcards for observations, leaflets and brochures manned by one or more officers to answer questions and promote engagement).
Monday, 1 October - Kirkby Stephen Local Links 10am – 1pm
Wednesday, 3 October - Penrith Leisure Centre 5pm - 7pm
Thursday, 4 October - Alston Local Links 10am – 1pm
Thursday, 4 October - Langwathby 2pm – 6pm
Friday, 5 October - Lazonby Co-Op 10am -4pm
Monday, 8 October - Ullswater community college 10.20am – 11.20am
Monday, 8 October - Ullswater community college 12.45pm – 1.30pm
Tuesday, 9 October - Gt Salkeld 10.30am – 12.30pm
Tuesday, 9 October - Newton Rigg 5pm – 6.30pm
Tuesday, 9 October - Scaws Residents Group 6.45pm – 8pm
Wednesday, 10 October - Ullswater community college 11.25am – 12.35pm
Thursday, 11 October - Appleby Hub 10am – 2pm
Saturday, 13 October - Penrith Leisure Centre 9.45am - 3pm
Wednesday, 17 October - Newbiggin Village Hall 1.15pm – 4.00pm
Wednesday, 17 October - Pategill Simm Court 6.30pm – 8pm
Tuesday, 30 October - Penrith Leisure Centre 5pm - 7pm

3.11 Over the engagement period the Penrith 'Pop up Shop' was visited by some 997 visits and was the subject of a protest group demonstration on the first day and in addition, some 242 comments were made on the 'Graffiti wall'. It should be noted that these were not unique visits as some members of the public visited the shop on a number of occasions to place comments on the wall.

- 3.12 The response to the 15 'pop-up events' varied enormously from those at Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Alston which were visited by between 1 and 8 people, to small groups around Penrith of between 8-10 and Ullswater Community College where the three events attracted a total of some 260 young people. The 'Pop-up event' at Langwathby was the most successful rural event attracting some 42 people. As no 'Graffiti wall' was available at these mobile events interested parties were asked to fill in postcards which had a 'tick box' response for the preferred level of growth and whether there was agreement or not to proposals for Housing, Employment and the Beacon, together with an open comments box. Overall, some 230 postcards were received.
- 3.13 In addition, during the engagement period the Council ran a dedicated website which included maps, documents and information relating to masterplan, updated news releases, frequently asked questions and answers and a survey monkey which included both tick box responses and a series of open comment boxes. The Council also provided a dedicated email address relating to the masterplan to enable residents to contact the policy team directly. The survey monkey attracted 667 responses. The total number of visits to the website was 4,787 with 8,686 page views. Notices and press releases were also placed in the Herald and within the Eden Local Magazine.
- 3.14 In response to the dedicated Local Plan email address has had some 72 responses from the public, in addition to 14 consultation responses from consultees such as Cumbria County Council and United Utilities and the Environment Agency etc. The dedicated Local Plan email address has also confirmed that 79 respondents specifically wish to be kept informed of progress on the strategic masterplan.
- 3.15 The Council ran in a dedicated Facebook page and tweets through the corporate Twitter account, enabling contact and discussion through these media sources. This saw 225,000 impressions (number of times the posts or tweets were seen) and 1,620 comments or likes.
- 3.16 In addition to the above the Council has commissioned independent market research company to undertake survey of residents within Penrith about the general objectives contained within the Strategic Masterplan proposals. The results of this are currently awaited.
- 3.17 Two petitions have been received and validated by the Council. The first petition submitted by 'Friend of the Beacon' confirmed that *'we the "friends of Penrith Beacon" petition Eden District Council to take the necessary action for all of the Beacon Forest to remain as it is now, a wild place with no development and accessibility to all residents'*, and was the subject of a debate by Council on 8 of November 2018. This petition was received shortly after Lowther and Lonsdale Estates formally withdrew the Beacon Forest Area from the Masterplan proposals.
- 3.18 The second submission, comprising of prepaid postcards containing statements and comments, an online petition containing a statement of objection and a series of signed petition sheets, reflecting the online petition, has been received as a formal petition from 'Keep Penrith Special' (KPS). The petition seeks rejection of the Masterplan of Eden District Council

Accordingly, this petition will be debated by Council at its next meeting on the 10 January 2019.

- 3.19 The engagement process has enabled lively debate and highlighted some of the issues that Eden face in relation to the decreasing working age population, the low wage levels, lack of genuinely affordable housing and a wish to improve the vitality of the Town Centre.

The next steps

- 3.20 The next phase of the process will be to assess the results of the public engagement exercise, taking into account the responses from stakeholders such as Cumbria County Council, Highways England, Environment Agency, National Grid etc. The conclusions from the 'Saturn' traffic modelling for Penrith and the Eden-wide strategic flood risk assessment will need to be obtained and considered. This is part of a longer process that will develop over the forthcoming months to be concluded in the early part of 2019.
- 3.21 The Council is keen to continue engaging with businesses and residents of Eden recognising the importance and benefits from Community and Stakeholder contributions and will use the feedback from all the engagements to inform the Council's thinking on the run up to any review of the Local Plan.
- 3.22 The initial engagement was the start of a process and the depth of initial feedback supports further engagement and consideration. In terms of timescales the initial timelines proposed by Officers are to be reviewed and extended.

4 Policy Framework

- 4.1 The Council has four corporate priorities which are:

- Decent Homes for All;
- Strong Economy, Rich Environment;
- Thriving Communities; and
- Quality Council

- 4.2 The proposals within this report are relevant to the first 3 priorities.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 At the different stages of the development of the Strategic Masterplan, presentations have been given to the stakeholder group, who have been involved in its development as it moved towards its final draft at the end of May 2018 and a further consultation round in June 2018. Following the development of the Penrith Strategic Masterplan: Technical Analysis by LUC the officer working group has developed the Masterplan Vision to 2050 which has been subject of an extensive eight week community engagement exercise concluding on 2 November 2018.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial and Resources

- 6.1.1 Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the Council's stated priorities, as set out in its Council Plan 2015-19 as agreed at Council on 17 September 2015.

6.1.2 There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources. The funding approved in 2017 – 2018 has been rolled forward to 2018 – 2019 (Ref F24/18; Executive 3 April 2018).

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council has a statutory duty to prepare planning policies, which has been reinforced through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF July 2018) and the Localism Act 2011.

6.2.2 The proposed Penrith Strategic Masterplan currently has no formal status and is not intended to be part of the current Local Plan. The Eden Local Plan has just completed a separate lengthy process leading to its adoption on 11 October 2018. The Penrith Strategic Masterplan has become a vision to be used by Council (in its current or amended form) to inform a review of the Eden Local Plan (in full or in part) which is required to be considered in any case under the regulations on the five yearly basis, as an extension to the Local Plan beyond 2032 and for future decision-making.

6.3 Human Resources

6.3.1 There are no human resources implications arising out of this proposal.

6.4 Statutory Considerations

Consideration:	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	There are no equality and diversity implications arising out of the proposals within this report.
Health, Social Environmental and Economic Impact	There are clearly likely to be health, social, environmental and economic impacts, but it is too early in the process to identify what those impacts are likely to be.
Crime and Disorder	Any proposals within the masterplan would need to consider the need to reduce crime and disorder.
Children and Safeguarding	There will be requirements to provide adequate infrastructure in terms of schools, nurseries, healthcare provision and a safe and healthy environment as part of the proposals within the Masterplan.

6.5 Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
Eden will continue to grow beyond the current Eden Local Plan period to 2032 and there is no clear long term strategic masterplan beyond that	The district could lose out on opportunities to grow the economy and maintain the sustainability of existing communities	To have a long-term plan for supporting transformational long-term economic growth

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7 Other Options Considered

- 7.1 The sites which have been identified for development within both the Penrith Strategic Masterplan: Technical Analysis and the Vision to 2050 have been the subject of an option appraisal exercise involving 32 sites in and around Penrith which supported the current proposal.

8 Reasons for the Decision/Recommendation

- 8.1 To update the Executive on the scale and depth of the community engagement process for the Penrith Strategic Masterplan and to identify the next steps in moving towards a review (in full or in part) of the Eden Local Plan.

Tracking Information

Governance Check	Date Considered
Chief Finance Officer (or Deputy)	19 November 2018
Monitoring Officer (or Deputy)	21 November 2018
Relevant Assistant Director	21 November 2018

Background Papers:

Appendices: None

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