

Title of Report:	Local Development Plan: Steering Group Annual Monitoring Report (2023/24)
Committee Report Submitted To:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	25th September 2024
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Our elected members work collaboratively and make decisions on an evidence led basis and in line with its policies.
Lead Officer	Principal Planning Officer

Budgetary Considerations	Not applicable in this case
Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	Not applicable in this case
Input of Legal Services Required	
Legal Opinion Obtained	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) Steering Group Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the 2023/24 reporting period.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Council's Development Plan team is currently preparing an LDP for the Borough. The Council must provide a 15-year plan framework to support the environmental, economic and social needs of the Borough in line with regional strategies and policies, and with the objective of furthering sustainable development¹.

2.2 The LDP is prepared in three stages, as follows:

- Preferred Options Paper (POP);
- Plan Strategy (PS); and
- Local Policies Plan (LPP).

2.3 We are currently preparing a draft Plan Strategy (dPS).

2.4 The LDP is subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to assess any potential environmental, economic or social impacts of the Plan against a range of sustainability objectives. This iterative process is carried out at all three stages of LDP preparation.

2.5 In line with the Council's published 'Statement of Community Involvement in Planning' (SCI), the LDP Steering Group was established, comprising the Planning Committee and the Head of Planning (see TOR at Appendix 1), to:

- Ensure overview and strategic input in the Plan process, on behalf of the whole community, as well as from planning officials and the wider council.
- Deliver the LDP in accordance with the published Timetable whilst meeting statutory requirements and various tests of 'soundness'.
- Ensure the engagement of Elected Members in the LDP process.
- Agree policy options to be taken forward for assessment under the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment.

2.6 At Preferred Options (POP) stage the LDP Steering Group was consulted on key planning issues arising within the Borough and agreement on the POP publication document.

2.7 At draft Plan Strategy stage the group will agree draft policies to be appraised through the SA process, and the dPS publication document prior to formal presentation for ratification at Full Council.

¹ "Sustainable development" was defined in the World Commission on Environment and Development's 1987 Brundtland report 'Our Common Future' as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

- 2.8 The AMR is set out at Appendix 2 (attached).
- 2.9 It is important to note that Northern Ireland has a new LDP process, and although it was anticipated that the new regime would take some time to settle down it has been a much steeper learning curve than was originally anticipated, for all of the 11 councils (both officers and elected members) as well as the key consultees and stakeholders, and the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) in its oversight role.
- 2.10 Dfi has, during the LDP process to date, issued a number of guidance documents which the Council has taken account of during its LDP preparation. However, the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 is also now a consideration, as will any regional policy and guidance updates (including the Marine Plan for NI and the Programme for Government) which must be taken into account as we continue through this process.
- 3.0 Recommendation**
- 3.1 **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that the Planning Committee note the attached LDP Steering Group Annual Monitoring Report.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: LDP Steering Group Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: LDP Steering Group: Annual Monitoring Report (01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024)

Appendix1: LDP Steering Group Terms of Reference



Local Development Plan Steering Group

Terms of Reference

NAME

The name of Steering Group will be the 'Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP) Steering Group'.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Steering Group is to oversee and co-ordinate the delivery of the Local Development Plan (LDP).

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure overview and strategic input in the Plan process, on behalf of the whole community, as well as from planning officials and the wider council.
- To deliver the LDP in accordance with the published Timetable whilst meeting statutory requirements and various tests of 'soundness'.
- To ensure the engagement of Elected Members in the LDP process.
- To agree policy options to be taken forward for assessment under the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE STEERING GROUP

In line with Council's published "Statement of Community Involvement in Planning" (SCI) the LDP Steering Group will comprise of:-

- The Planning Committee; and
- Head of Planning.

Heads of Service within the relevant sections of Council will be invited to participate in the Steering Group meetings.

The Head of Planning will chair the Group.

The Plan Manager will act as Secretary to the Group.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members of the Steering Group should declare **any** personal interest that may exist or may be perceived to exist, in relation to any decisions or recommendations made by the group.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

In the conduct of their duties, members of this group will be privy to material that is confidential, or which should reasonably be regarded as being of a confidential nature. This material must not be distributed outside of the group.

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The Steering Group will normally meet on a quarterly basis. However, there may be occasions when an ad hoc meeting is required to ensure that we meet our published LDP Timetable. In this instance at least one week's notice will be given (via e-mail).

The Steering Group shall take minutes of all meetings. These may be open to public scrutiny, subject to the Environmental Information (EIR) Regulations 2004.

Minutes of the meeting will be circulated to all attendees within one week of the meeting being held.

REPORTING STRUCTURES

The Group will supply an annual monitoring report to inform Council on progress in meeting the Plan Timetable and identifying the causes of any significant delay.

The Group will be required to complete its objectives within the timescale for the adoption of the Plan, as per the agreed LDP Timetable.

SIGNATURES

1. Chairperson in group: DENISE DICKSON 5/10/17

Signed: 

2. Name and Position in group: ALD KING - VICE CHAIR.

Signed:  5/10/17

APPENDIX 2:

Local Development Plan (LDP) Steering Group: Annual Monitoring Report (01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024)

1.0 Annual Monitoring Report

1.1 Party Group Meetings and Member Workshops continued throughout this reporting period. These are set out in Table 1, below:

Table 1: Party Group Meetings & Member Workshops

Group Party Mtg - PUP	29/08/23
Group Party Mtg – DUP	31/08/23
Group Party Mtg - SF	05/09/23
Group Party Mtg - Alliance	12/09/23
Member Workshop	07/12/23
LDP Working Group	19/03/24

1.2 In preparation for and following the above series of meetings and workshops, officers carried out further research, evidence gathering, and consultation with relevant stakeholders, to inform the Plan preparation.

2.0 Impact on LDP Timetable

2.1 It is a statutory requirement for a council to prepare, and keep under review, a timetable for the preparation and adoption of its LDP. The timetable must include indicative dates for each stage of LDP preparation and the publication of the POP and development plan documents (Draft Plan Strategy and Draft Local Policies Plan) as well as accompanying documents such as the SA. The LDP must be prepared on the basis of robust and sound evidence.

2.2 The initial timetable was published on 29th November 2016. It has been revised on several occasions since, as follows:

- Revision 1 - December 2017
- Revision 2 - November 2019; and
- Revision 3 - May 2021.

2.3 Each revision was approved by Council prior to notifying the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) and seeking agreement with DfI, prior to formal publication, as required.

2.4 The current published LDP Timetable (Revision 3) sets out an indicative date for publication of the dPS in spring/summer 2022. Members will be aware of the work being undertaken by planning officials in its preparation. A chronology of important events relating to this is set out at Table 2, below:

Table 2: Chronology of events relating to dPS Preparation

Date	Event
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24th August 2022	dPS publication document presented at Planning Committee. Members resolved to proceed to Full Council for dPS ratification prior to publication and public consultation.
1st November 2022	dPS publication presented at Full Council Meeting. Council resolved to defer for further consideration and discussion with Party Groups.
November - December 2022	Series of Party Group Meetings held. This resulted in further evidence gathering and consequential updates to the Council's evidence base were also carried out.
August - September 2023	Further series of Party Group Meetings held following Local Government Elections. This resulted in further evidence gathering and consequential updates to the Council's evidence base were also carried out.
7th December 2023	All-Member Workshop held. Agreed to set up a LDP Working Group. Requested a paper on this to be brought before the Planning Committee for agreement.
24th January 2024	Paper presented to Planning Committee seeking agreement to set up the LDP Working Group. Members resolved to proceed.
19th March 2024	LDP Working Group Meeting held. Members agreed to officers preparing a paper for CP&R Committee to procure independent research to inform the LDP preparation.
24th March 2024	Paper presented to Planning Committee seeking agreement on revised LDP Timetable. Members resolved to agree.
4th April 2024	Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) consulted on revised LDP timetable.
10th April 2024	Response received from PAC on revised LDP Timetable.
11th April 2024	Member comment sought on the procurement Terms of Reference (see Appendix 1) prior to presentation of the proposal at the 23 rd April 2024 Corporate Policy and Resources (CP&R) Committee.
23rd April 2024	Paper presented at CP&R Committee seeking agreement on the procurement of consultant/s. Members resolved to agree.
24th May 2024	Tender advert issued.
2nd July 2024	Revised LDP Timetable sent to the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) for agreement.

10th July 2024	Tender process closed. The Council received no submissions in response to the advert.
28th August 2024	Paper outlining the outcome of the procurement exercise presented to Planning Committee. Members resolved that planning officials make contact with Ulster University to discuss housing research to inform the Plan preparation.

2.5 As requested by Members at the 28th August 2024 Planning Committee, planning officials are in discussion with Ulster University regarding independent housing research to inform the Plan preparation.

Revised LDP Timetable

2.6 Given the additional series meetings and workshops (at Members' request), that have taken place since officials presented, for agreement, the dPS at the November 2022 Council meeting, and the ongoing research, evidence gathering and key consultee consultations, a timetable review was necessary.

2.7 Revision 4, agreed at the 27th March 2024 Planning Committee, sets out a revised date of autumn/winter 2026 for dPS publication. It is currently with Dfl for agreement.

2.8 The Council's Development Plan team continues to update the evidence base to inform a draft LDP policy approach to be presented for discussion at the ongoing LDP Workshops, prior to agreement with the LDP Steering Group.

2.9 The LDP timetable will be kept under review and the Planning Committee provided with regular progress updates.