

**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
30 APRIL 2001**

**REPORT ON: PROPOSED SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF DUNDEE AND
ANGUS STRUCTURE PLAN**

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

REPORT NO: 215-2001

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's authorisation to appoint consultants to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan.
- 1.2 The scope of Sustainability Appraisal is wide ranging, embracing socio-economic, as well as environmental sustainability.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
 - a agree that the Director of Planning and Transportation, in conjunction with the Director of Planning and Transport, Angus Council, appoint Consultants to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of the Draft Dundee and Angus Structure Plan as part of the process of finalising the Structure Plan for submission to the Scottish Ministers later this year;
 - b authorise the Director of Planning and Transportation to contribute 50% towards the cost of commissioning the Sustainability Appraisal up to a maximum of £5,000;
 - c note the completion of the various elements of the consultation programme for the Draft Dundee and Angus Structure Plan undertaken during February and March 2001.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 It is estimated that a total of up to £10,000 will be required to undertake the Sustainability Appraisal. Given that half the cost of the study would be met by Angus Council, the contribution from Dundee City Council would not exceed £5,000. This cost would be contained within the Planning and Transportation Department's 2001/02 Revenue Budget.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Given the wide socio-economic and environmental scope of the Sustainability Appraisal it would cover the key themes.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Sustainability Appraisal would address themes including quality of life, social equity and access to opportunities. As such it would highlight the degree to which the Structure Plan provides for equality of opportunity. This could in turn point to these aspects of the Plan requiring further consideration in this regard.

6 BACKGROUND

Structure Plan Progress

- 6.1 Prior to considering the potential contribution of a Sustainability Appraisal to the Dundee and Angus Structure it may be helpful to briefly outline the progress so far on plan preparation and the key steps yet to be undertaken. Having commenced preparation in December 1999 the Draft Dundee and Angus Structure Plan was published for consultation purposes on 2 February this year. Local press and radio provided details of the opportunities available over this period to participate in the debate on the Structure Plan and to provide feedback to help shape its revision prior to submission to the Scottish Ministers later this year. A programme of 11 public meetings was undertaken throughout Dundee and Angus during the consultation period together with a Business Forum an Environmental Forum and two Youth Fora.
- 6.2 Since the latter part of the consultation period (which ended on 30 March), officers of Dundee and Angus Councils have been engaged in summarising and analysing the various representations received on the Draft Structure Plan and in formulating responses on behalf of the Joint Dundee and Angus Structure Plan Authority. These, together with the recommended revisions to the Plan will be reported in the first instance to the Structure Plan Panel and thereafter to Dundee and Angus Councils. In the later part of this year, the Finalised Structure Plan together with the Report of Survey and the Report on Publicity and Consultations will similarly be brought forward for endorsement by Members prior to submission to the Scottish Ministers for final approval.
- 6.3 As part of the process of finalising the Structure Plan, it would be appropriate to conduct a Sustainability Appraisal of the Structure Plan by assessing the Development Strategy, policies and proposals against a range of sustainability criteria and indicators in order to anticipate and evaluate their environmental, social and economic consequences.
- 6.4 The proposed study is expected to be conducted in four key stages:
- identification of sustainability criteria or indicators appropriate to Dundee and Angus;
 - assessment of the Draft Structure Plan Strategy, policies and proposals against the identified sustainability criteria;
 - identification of key performance indicators to allow ongoing assessment, monitoring and appropriate review of the Structure Plan throughout its life-span; and

- reassessment of the Finalised Structure Plan Strategy, Policies and Proposals against the identified sustainability criteria, prior to its submission to the Scottish Ministers.

The results of the first three stages of the Sustainability Appraisal will help inform the process of finalising the Structure Plan. The final stage will reappraise the emerging Finalised Structure Plan prior to its submission to the Scottish Ministers. A draft Consultant's brief is attached as Appendix 1.

The Context for Sustainability Appraisal

- 6.5 Over a number of years national planning guidance has urged local authorities to place sustainability and environmental objectives at the heart of land use planning. The Scottish Executive has repeatedly highlighted the role of the planning system in securing a land use framework geared to achieving sustainable economic development. It has also stressed planning's role in maintaining and enhancing the quality of the natural heritage and the built environment. A range of European Union Directives are also of significance in this context with specific examples including those in respect of Waste Management, Water and Air Quality, Landfill, Habitats and Wild Birds. In addition, a number of public and private partnerships and other initiatives have been developed in order to ensure a co-ordinated, effective and shared approach to achieving sustainability and environmental goals. Examples include local transport strategies, local biodiversity action plans, community plans and area waste strategies. In the circumstances most Structure Plan Authorities are now carrying out Sustainability Appraisals of their plans at this stage of preparation.

The Role of Development Plans

- 6.6 Development plans have an important role in making the relevant links with such initiatives, both interacting with them and reflecting their provisions as appropriate in the land use planning framework. As such they have a key role in the delivery of sustainability and environmental objectives. Structure Plans, in particular, with their long term vision and broad strategic perspective, have the ability to shape the land use framework in a way which addresses these objectives while meeting development needs, contributing to community regeneration and addressing issues of social inclusion. It is therefore important that Structure Plans are assessed to ensure that there is consistency and logic in their approach to sustainability and environmental objectives and that the relevant matters are addressed.

The Sustainability Appraisal Process

- 6.7 Sustainability Appraisal is a process which has been developed for this purpose. Put simply, this is an examination of the Plan as a whole aimed at identifying to what extent it is moving towards or away from sustainable development. This involves a systematic and objective assessment of the plan's strategy, policies and proposals with the intention of establishing where modifications and fine-tuning would result in a more sustainable approach to socio-economic and environmental matters. Sustainability Appraisal extends beyond the scope of Environmental Appraisal in that in addition to environmental implications, it explores the plan's likely impact relative to wider issues such as social inclusion, improving access to jobs, homes, leisure and social provision, tackling unemployment and achieving sustainable economic growth. The outcome of the exercise is a summary of the Plan's effects relative to a

range of sustainability themes. This would point to where its impact would be positive, negative or neutral and would highlight those aspects of the plan meriting further consideration.

- 6.8 The Sustainability Appraisal is not a one-off exercise but one which can be repeated at key stages in the plan making process to ensure that, in the process of refinement and revision, the plan continues to progress towards sustainability objectives. Thereafter, the approach adopted throughout the appraisal process can be used to guide the monitoring of the plan's performance against key sustainability indicators. On this basis, the appraisal framework can continue to function as an ongoing sustainability check on the performance of the plan, highlighting the need for review and alteration as appropriate. Sustainability Appraisal is recognised as a valuable exercise and has now been undertaken by a number of Structure Plan authorities including Fife and Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

Relevance to the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan

- 6.9 The Strategic Vision guiding the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan highlights its focus on economic, social and environmental sustainability. The sustainability theme is reflected throughout the Plan in its strategy, policies and proposals and also in how the different elements of the Plan fit together and interact. It is also reflected in how the Plan relates to and takes account of other strategies and partnership initiatives.
- 6.10 Within this context there is a need for an objective, independent and systematic appraisal of how effectively the Plan as a whole addresses its sustainability aims. There is also a need to pinpoint those instances where the Plan's approach may need further consideration if these aims are to be realised. Finally, there is also a need to define sustainability indicators to assess the plan's future performance in delivering on its sustainability objectives.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Given the background outlined above and bearing in mind its current stage, there would be great merit in undertaking Sustainability Appraisal of the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan. This would dovetail with ongoing work on the Plan and would provide valuable evidence of its effectiveness in pursuing its sustainability aims and objectives. Given the tight timescale for Plan preparation, the complexity of the task and the advantages in securing objective independent advice this is an exercise which would be best tackled through the appointment of a specialist consultancy.

8 CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Support Services, Director of Corporate Planning, Director of Economic Development and Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 None

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3 April 2001

KW/AB/RJ SP5/1

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APPENDIX 1

DUNDEE AND ANGUS STRUCTURE PLAN

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

CONSULTANTS BRIEF

Background

Dundee City and Angus Councils have jointly prepared and published the Draft Dundee and Angus Structure Plan for consultation purposes and intend to finalise the Plan and submit it to the Scottish Ministers towards the end of 2001.

Sustainability is a key theme underpinning the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan approach over the period to 2016 and the Strategic Vision which guides it, focuses on economic, social and environmental sustainability. This theme is reflected throughout the Plan and its relationship with other strategies and partnership initiatives including Local Transport Strategies, National Waste Strategy, Local Biodiversity Action Plans and Angus Environmental and Rural strategies.

As part of the process of finalising the Structure Plan both Councils agree that it is appropriate to consider the Development Strategy, Policies and Proposals against a range of sustainability criteria and indicators in order to anticipate and evaluate their environmental, social and economic consequences.

Objectives

The principal objective of the study is to provide a detailed sustainability appraisal of the developing Dundee and Angus Structure Plan and is expected to be conducted in four key stages:

- Identification of sustainability criteria or indicators appropriate to Dundee and Angus
- Assessment of the Draft Structure Plan Strategy, Policies and Proposals against the identified sustainability criteria
- Identification of key performance indicators to allow ongoing assessment, monitoring and appropriate review of the Structure Plan throughout its life-span
- Reassessment of the Finalised Structure Plan Strategy, Policies and Proposals against the identified sustainability criteria, prior to its submission to the Scottish Ministers

The sustainability appraisal is expected to evaluate the environmental, social and economic consequences of the Draft Plan and through modification as part of the process of finalising the Structure Plan enable it to more fully ensure that changes in land use occur in suitable locations and are sustainable.

The results of the first three stages of the sustainability appraisal will be used to inform the process of finalising the Structure Plan by appropriate development and refinement of both the Development Strategy as a whole and the individual policies and proposals which

comprise the strategic guidance for Dundee and Angus over the period to 2016. The last stage will reappraise the emerging Finalised Structure Plan prior to its submission to the Scottish Ministers.

Methodology

When completed the appraisal will form a significant input to the finalising and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan.

The appraisal should clearly identify the methodology used, the detailed results of the assessment and suggest how the Structure Plan content and strategic guidance can be improved.

Timescale

The study will be conducted between and2001.

Budget

All aspects of the study and liaison with officers of Dundee City and Angus Councils will be at a cost not greater than £10,000 including expenses but excluding VAT. Submissions in excess of this figure are unlikely to be successful.

Data Provision

Consultants will be required to clearly identify any aspects of the study which will require input from the Commissioning Authorities and where possible indicate the range and scope of information and assistance required.

Data Availability

Public reports and documents held by Dundee City and Angus Council will be made available to consultants and may include:

- Dundee and Angus Structure Plan Draft Written Report
- Dundee and Angus Structure Plan Draft Report of Survey
- Angus Local Plan
- Dundee City Local Plan
- Angus Local Transport Strategy
- Dundee Local Transport Strategy
- Angus Rural Strategy
- Angus Environmental Strategy
- Draft Angus Local Agenda 21 Strategy
- Dundee Local Agenda 21 Strategy