

Committee: Environment Committee

Agenda Item

Date: 19 January 2010

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Title: **Lead Officer's Report**

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Summary

- 1 This report updates Members on matters that are not included elsewhere on the agenda.

LDF Core Strategy

- 2 The provisional programme is that the consultation will run from Monday 15 February to Friday 9 April. The leaflet has been finalised following discussion with the Management Task Group. A further meeting of the task group will be held on 12 January following which copies will be circulated to all Members for information. Two additional Community Forum meetings are being arranged on 4 and 6 March. Dates are subject to confirmation. It is anticipated that the County Highways and Transportation team will have finalised the explanatory text to the comparative transport assessment to inform the consultation.

- 3 The housing viability joint study has commenced following appointment of consultants. The findings will feed into the next pre-submission consultation stage of the core strategy and inform the site allocations development plan documents. A retail study is being commissioned to update our understanding of the need and opportunities for shopping. The employment land review is also being revisited.

Rural Masterplanning fund

- 4 Officers are preparing a bid for funding towards technical support for masterplanning. The initiative is a government competition aimed particularly at rural authorities wanting to provide for growth over an extended period in rural locations. It would be similar to the Rural Excellence support gained by the Council in recent years in delivering affordable housing. Those aspects of the prospectus that are of particular interest are:
- 1) Consultancy support for urban design and masterplanning commissions for individual sites;
 - 2) Where to locate housing and other development in the rural areas – either considering allocations across a number of settlements or a single settlement;
 - 3) Workshops on the role of good urban design and how to deliver it through the planning system to support aspirations of accommodating growth in small settlements.
 - 4) The outcome of bids would be announced early February and the projects undertaken by successful authorities between February and October.

Outsourcing carbon management of the Council's estate

- 5 Expressions of interest from contractors have been sought through the Procurement Hub and a pre-qualification questionnaire is being prepared.