



ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

Aberdeenshire 
COUNCIL

REPORT TO NORTH EAST STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE – 23 JUNE 2003

STRUCTURE PLAN MONITORING- PROPOSALS

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Joint Committee considered the issue of Structure Plan monitoring at their meeting on the 31st August 2002, when broad principles were set for the monitoring framework, and on 9th December 2002 when authority was sought to undertake consultation with stakeholders on a specific monitoring proposal.
- 1.2 This paper reports on that consultation process and submits a final monitoring scheme for approval of the committee.

2 Background

- 2.1 Consultation on the draft proposals took two forms. Firstly a focused consultation was undertaken with the North East Housing and Planning Alliance (NEHPA), NESTRANS and Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Local Economic Forum (AALEF) as representative groups. The monitoring proposals were then modified in the light of the comments made before circulation to the Structure Plan Focus Group members.
- 2.2 Specific comments were received from both AALEF and NESTRANS. NEHPA partners were asked to consider the “Housing” topic monitoring proposals and, while the issue was considered by the Planning Policy Information Sub-group of NEHPA, no revisions were proposed.
- 2.3 The Structure Plan Focus Group was asked whether a meeting should be held to discuss the proposals. Members expressed no enthusiasm for such a meeting and consultation was undertaken on the basis of written representations.
- 2.4 Significant comments were received from Aberdeenshire Environmental Forum. These are welcomed as this was the one area not given scrutiny by a Structure Plan wide grouping.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Structure Plan monitoring proposals have been modified to reflect the views of consultees. Where there was a difference of opinion the issue was discussed with the respondent and a compromise solution agreed. In response to specific queries the broad principle of monitoring by use of indicators was universally accepted, as was the proposal to report on topics rather than attempting to report on the whole plan at one time.
- 3.2 Principal issues raised centred on identification of alternative indicators to those proposed which partners felt better represented the issue being considered and the identification of targets for individual indicators.
- 3.3 On this latter point it is accepted that the targets set are highly aspirational and may need to be modified to reflect reasonable levels of performance. As is stated in the monitoring proposal, failure to meet a target may be indicative of a policy failure, a changing environment or an over ambitious target.
- 3.4 The finalised monitoring proposals as amended are presented in Appendix 1. As identified in those proposals monitoring will be undertaken on a thematic basis with the time between monitoring reports variable according to the speed of change within that topic. It is anticipated that a monitoring report on the “Housing” and the “Economy and Transport” topics will be produced later this year and these will provide a further opportunity to re-evaluate the monitoring scheme in the context of continuous plan making proposed within NEST.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 That the Joint Committee approve the proposals as contained in appendix 1 as the agreed joint monitoring scheme for the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan, North East Scotland Together.**

Eric Melrose
Head of Planning & Environment

Bob Reid
Head of Physical Development

Report by Piers Blaxter, Team Leader, Structure Plan Team, Aberdeenshire Council.