

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 22 November 2017

Public Engagement launched on Final Draft of West of England Joint Spatial Plan

A public engagement process has been launched today, with the publication of the final draft of the Joint Spatial Plan for the West of England region.

Residents, businesses and other stakeholders from across the Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire council areas are able to submit comments on the Plan before it is submitted for further scrutiny by the Government.

The process runs from today (November 22) until January 10, with full details available online at www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk.

Submissions made in the coming weeks will be considered alongside the JSP, when they are passed to the Government's Planning Inspectorate in early 2018.

The Plan will then be examined in public by an Independent Planning Inspector, who will then make a report back to the local authorities, which may include proposed amendments. Once satisfied that the Plan meets all planning rules and laws, the four councils must adopt the Plan, giving it statutory authority. At that point the approved JSP would sit above and guide the review of the councils' own Local Plans.

The JSP sets out the policies and principles that have been applied in determining the most appropriate and sustainable locations for future development. The document is the product of more than two years joint working and two previous consultations, where individuals, communities and other stakeholders have made contributions to help shape the future growth of the region.

The JSP is the first such joint planning approach in the UK, which sees Councils working together to agree the number of new homes and jobs that are needed, the most appropriate locations where that growth should be located and the infrastructure needed to support that growth.

Alongside the JSP, the four councils are continuing to develop a Joint Transport Study (JTS), which is designed to help the region meet the growing infrastructure demands that new growth will bring, as well as identifying the projects that are needed to upgrade existing links where there is already pressure on road and public transport networks. This includes providing the key transport infrastructure needed to reduce reliance on cars with better road and extended cycle links, improved junctions and better access to public transport.