

# ITEM 6

## PARISHES ASSEMBLY

2 DECEMBER 2004

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### **AN EXCITING NEW COMMUNITY - DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR THE WESTERN EXPANSION AREA**

As some of you will be aware, the Western Expansion Area (or WEA) has been discussed in depth at the recent Local Plan Inquiry. We have now received the first part of the local plan inquiry Inspector's report, which covers the strategic elements of the plan including the principle of the City Expansion Areas such as the WEA.

#### **Outcome from the Local Plan Inquiry**

The Inspector recommended deleting one part of the WEA (Area 10.4) and adding a new area (Area 11) with no overall change to the amount of housing proposed for the area as a whole. Cabinet considered the Inspector's recommendations on 19<sup>th</sup> October and agreed with his approach for the WEA. Once this issue has been finally ratified by Full Council and we have also had chance to consider the Inspector's detailed recommendation in the second part of his report (due to be published in November), Proposed Modifications to the plan will be placed on deposit for public comment. This will probably be in late Spring 2005.

#### **The Development Framework**

In the meantime, public consultation is underway on a draft development framework for the Western Expansion Area (WEA). As you are probably aware the WEA is one of three expansion areas in the Milton Keynes Local Plan. It provides an exciting opportunity to plan a major extension to our thriving and developing City from start to finish.

#### **The two scenarios**

Two 'scenarios' are presented in the Development Framework due to some remaining uncertainty as to the outcome of the Local Plan Inquiry and, in particular, strategic decisions on the extent of the WEA which have to be made in light of the Local Plan Inspector's report. The final version of the Development Framework will have only one scenario consistent with the Council's final decisions on the WEA.

The development framework provides more detail than the local plan about how the area should be developed. It takes forward the principles, policies and requirements of the local plan and shows how they can be achieved on the ground. We want to know what you think about the key design principles

behind the scheme and the way that the different land uses have been laid out.

The key design principles include:

- Integrating significant existing natural features with proposed open spaces and linear parks
- Minimising walking distances to public transport routes (the City Streets)
- Locating key public facilities along public transport routes
- Focussing higher density housing along the City Streets
- Protecting sensitive rural edges with lower density development

A series of staffed exhibitions is currently underway and copies of all the consultation documents are on display at all the libraries in the borough and at the Civic Offices.