

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

11 September 2007

Attendance:

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Wood (Chairman) (P)

Beckett (P)
Hollingbery (P)

Pearson (P)

Other invited Councillors:

Beveridge (P)
Busher (P)
Cook (P)

Jeffs (P)
Sutton (P)

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held 25 July 2007 be approved and adopted.

2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked or statements made.

3. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CORE STRATEGY – PROGRESS REPORT**

(Report CAB1521(LDF) refers)

The Committee noted the link between progress on the Core Strategy and the recent Government guidance that a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment should now be undertaken (Report CAB1522(LDF) below refers). The implications of this were that it would not be possible to publish the "Issues and Options" paper in November 2007, as originally planned. It was proposed to publish this paper in late December, but not to commence the formal six-week consultation period until January 2008, to make allowance for the Christmas holiday period.

In response to questions about the potential impacts of this slippage in the Local Development Framework (LDF) timetable, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Preferred Option Stage should be completed by August 2008, to ensure that delays in this key stage would not affect the Council's Planning

Delivery Grant. The Committee suggested the Council could contact the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) to request some flexibility in the deadline as the delays were caused by the issue of new Government guidance. The Head of Strategic Planning noted this suggestion, but highlighted that it was likely to be of limited success as all local authorities were in a similar position.

Councillor Beveridge requested that dates for the Strategic Outcome Groups be published in the weekly Members' Bulletin. This was agreed. The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the next Groups would be on 12 September 2007 (Inclusive Society) and 16 October 2007 (Economic Prosperity).

RESOLVED:

That the progress being made with the evidence studies and the delay in the programme for the preparation and publication of the Issues and Options Paper for the Core Strategy be noted.

4. **SOUTH EAST PLAN UPDATE**
(Oral Report)

The Head of Strategic Planning provided an update on the South East Plan Panel Report which had recently been published. In summary, his presentation outlined the following information.

Process and Procedures

The South East Plan Regional Spatial Strategy would replace Regional Planning Guidance Note 9. It had been through a public examination where it was tested for soundness. The report of the Panel that held the Examination in Public had just been published. Currently the City Council were not being consulted on the Panel Report's contents. Consultation would be carried out at the stage when the Secretary of State responded to the Report, in late 2007/early 2008. It was estimated that the Plan would be adopted in Autumn 2008.

Key Areas

The Panel concluded that an additional 10 per cent more housing was required in the South East as a whole. Recommended locations for this additional housing were along the M4/Thames Valley corridor, Oxford and Milton Keynes. The Panel had supported the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) Strategy and its housing growth figures.

For the non-PUSH section of the District, it was recommending an additional 90 houses be provided per year (a total of 1,800 over the Plan period). The Panel had not specified precisely where development should be located, but had dismissed the proposals by Eagle Star for a new settlement at Micheldever Station.

With regard to affordable housing, the Panel supported the requirement for 25 per cent of new homes to be affordable social housing, with a further 10 per cent to be other types of 'intermediate' affordable housing. It was emphasised that

this recommendation of 35 per cent affordable housing was of all housing built (not just on qualifying sites).

The Panel was sympathetic to the need for substantial investment in infrastructure but did not entirely accept that principle that no development should commence before the provision of infrastructure.

The Head of Strategic Planning responded to questions on the Panel's Report.

He confirmed that the Council would receive two distinct housing requirements for the District: one for the PUSH area and one for the rest of the District. The Council would therefore have to undertake separate housing 'trajectories' for each of the two areas. In theory, the Council had complete discretion as to where new houses could be built to make up the numbers (within each sub-area of the District). However, in practice the planning history and existing developers' interests in sites may limit this discretion. The settlement hierarchy and development strategy would be one of the key issues in the Issues and Options paper.

One Member queried whether any shortfall in housing in, for example, the PUSH area of the District, could be made up by an increase in the "Rest of District" area. The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the two sections should be regarded as completely distinct, although it might exceptionally be possible to argue for some flexibility for example if there was found to be a large surplus in one sub-area and a corresponding shortfall in the other.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Panel had considered the infrastructure issues relating to water in South Hampshire, where this is a particular issue. For example, the whole of Portsmouth was in an area considered to be at risk of flooding.

In noting that the Secretary of State had yet to comment on the Panel's Report and might make changes to its recommendations, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that GOSE had indicated that Councils could not use uncertainty about the South East Plan as a justification for delay in making decisions on the LDF process. The Government considered that the LDF and Core Strategy should contain sufficient flexibility to deal with any such changes.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the South East Plan Panel Report be noted.

5. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – REVIEW OF URBAN CAPACITY STUDY AND PROPOSED STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT**
(Report CAB1522(LDF) refers)

With regard to the Review of the Urban Capacity Study, the Head of Strategic Planning emphasised one of the key findings was that more than half of housing completions were on "windfall" sites (54 per cent). This was of great significance as PPS3 advised that windfall sites should not be taken into account (i.e. prior to

being developed).

The requirements of the new Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) were more stringent and its key stages were summarised in Appendix A of the Report. One element involved writing to everyone within the District with outstanding planning permission granted, in addition to owners of other sites with potential for development (of more than five dwellings).

In response to questions about why a threshold of five dwellings had been selected, when historically smaller sites had provided a great deal of development, the Head of Strategic Planning advised this was based partly on best practice guidance and the practice of other local authorities and partly because there were greater resource implications for the Council in identifying smaller sites.

In response to a question regarding the hierarchy of settlements and sustainability tests, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the hierarchy would be a key issue to be set at the Preferred Option stage of the LDF process.

The Committee emphasised the importance of seeking to ensure that the Council could take account of "windfall" sites. The Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that it would seek to do so, but its success could be limited by the fact that Government advice did not allow such sites to be counted.

The Committee noted that it was intended for the work on the SHLAA to be undertaken in-house. The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Council would liaise with neighbouring local authorities to share resources and use common methodology where possible.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Review of the Urban Capacity Study be noted.
2. That the importance of undertaking a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in accordance with the Government's recently issued Practice Guidance, together with the implications for the LDF Programme, be noted.

6. **MEETING GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION NEEDS**
(Report CAB1523(LDF) refers)

Councillor Sutton declared a personal (but not prejudicial) as Chairman of the Gypsy and Travellers Joint Advisory Panel. She remained in the room and spoke thereon.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Consultant's Study had recently been published which recommended a total of 44 new permanent pitches within Hampshire. Of these, 18 should be located within the Southern Group area (of which the Council was part). The study suggested 11 of these 18 permanent pitches should be within the Winchester District. The Study also recommended an additional 41 transit pitches within Hampshire. A pitch was defined as

accommodation for one family, normally one mobile home and one touring caravan.

The Committee welcomed the emphasis on enforcing planning law and removing unauthorised camps.

Councillor Pearson expressed concern that one extended family could comprise of a large number of people and therefore require a great many more mobile homes, etc than the provision estimated. In addition, he considered that the suggested provision of 11 permanent pitches was inadequate to meet the existing demand within the District.

The Head of Strategic Planning acknowledged that if the Council considered the suggested provision was too modest it was open for the Council to make its own individual submission to SEERA if it wished. However, following discussion the Committee agreed that it was preferable for a joint submission to be made.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the LDF would have to set out the number of pitches to be provided, but would not have to be site specific.

RESOLVED:

1. That the interim conclusions of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment be noted, together with the likely requirement for making specific provision to meet the local accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers.

2. That work should continue on this issue, with a view to identifying issues and options for consultation at the relevant stage in the production of the LDF.

3. That Cabinet be recommended to approve the content of the draft submission, as set out in Paragraph 9.4 of the Report, as a joint statement to be submitted to SEERA, on behalf of Winchester and the South Hampshire group of authorities, in order to inform the Partial Review of the South East Plan.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was agreed that the next meetings of the Committee be held on Tuesday 6 November at 10.00am and Thursday 6 December at 10.00am.

The meeting commenced at 2.10pm and concluded at 3.50pm

Chairman