

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

5 February 2008

Attendance:

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Wood (Chairman) (P)

Beckett (P)

Pearson (P)

Coates (P)

Other invited Councillors:

Beveridge (P)

Jeffs (P)

Busher (P)

Sutton (P)

Cook (P)

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Stallard

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Hollingbery.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held 6 December 2007 be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr A Weeks (Winchester City Residents' Association) was concerned that the Government Consultation Paper on PPS12 was not available for the public to refer to at the Council Offices, although it had been made available to him at the Discovery Centre. He believed this represented a significant shortfall in the Council's consultation on the Local Development Framework (LDF). He also requested that the LDF papers state where such consultation papers could be accessed.

In response, the Chairman highlighted that the recent public workshops on the LDF "Issues and Options" had been very well attended and that the Council were adhering to the requirements as prescribed by Government. In addition, the Head of Strategic Planning emphasised that the Council did not receive hard copies of Government consultations itself, but were referred to the Internet for reference. Because of this and because it was Government carrying out the consultations, he did not consider it appropriate for the Council to supply hard copies for the public or to refer to Government consultations in the LDF documentation.

Mr Weeks also spoke with reference to the LDF process in general and his comments are summarised under the appropriate agenda item below.

Mr J Hayter spoke regarding Report CAB1603(LDF) and his comments are summarised below.

4. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**
(Report [CAB1603\(LDF\)](#) refers)

The Chairman welcomed the increased focus of providing housing for families. In addition, he mentioned that the current limit of 14 units (the size of development before affordable housing must be supplied) was causing difficulties in practice and this would be considered as part of the development of the Core Strategy.

Mr Hayter raised a number of points regarding this Report, as summarised below. He suggested that the key issue was a question of balancing the priority of providing more affordable housing, and thus reducing the Council's housing waiting list, against the requirement to ensure affordable housing was "indistinguishable" from surrounding market housing. He was concerned that this additional requirement to make "indistinguishable" could limit the number of units provided. He emphasised that the best developments had a variety of scales and styles within them, although he acknowledged it was important not to create "ghettos" of affordable units.

In response, the Head of Strategic Housing emphasised that there would not be a requirement for all units to be the same, rather that the affordable housing units picked up on themes from the rest of the development to enable them to blend in. The idea was to improve quality and also avoid stigmatising such units.

Councillor Beckett also highlighted that the intention was to make housing indistinguishable by virtue of tenure, without placing too many requirements on developers, so as to reduce the amount of affordable housing provided. He suggested that the wording could be rephrased if the Committee desired to ensure that this point was emphasised.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning explained that this Supplementary Planning Document related to the existing District Local Plan. However, affordable housing would form an element of the Core Strategy which should be adopted at the end of 2009. Therefore, current public consultations on the LDF process, including affordable housing issues, would be fed into the development of the Core Strategy.

The Committee welcomed the Supplementary Planning Document and agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the Supplementary Planning Document be adopted as planning policy, subject to adjustment of the commuted sums table as set out in paragraph 1.8 of the Report.

5. **STREAMLINING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS – CONSULTATION PAPER FROM DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**
(Report [CAB1613\(LDF\)](#) refers)

Mr A Weeks (Winchester Residents' Association) criticised the Council's consultation process to date, and in particular its assumption that development north of Winchester would be required. The Association believed that the option of no development should also have been presented in the consultation documents. The Association wished to protect the environmental assets for the future and believed that Winchester should concentrate on tourism as its main focus for development.

In response, the Chairman highlighted that at various stages of the consultation process, the Council had emphasised that the public could put forward other options to those included in the document. With regard to other points made by Mr Weeks, he requested that these be included in the Association's official response to the consultation which should be submitted by 15 February 2008.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Government's consultation paper was unclear as to whether a Council would have to repeat work under the new guidelines which it had already undertaken. At the request of the Committee, Councillor Beckett, as Leader, agreed to make representations to the Local Government Association, emphasising the Council's concerns on this point.

With regard to the Council's proposed submission at paragraph B2 of Annex A to the Report, Councillor Beckett requested that the wording be amended to emphasise that the Council should be required to make actual site allocations as late as possible, as he considered this would facilitate better decisions on this issue. In addition, the public should be notified and be able to make representations on possible site allocations.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Government had not defined what was meant by "strategic" development so it would be for the Council to decide.

In response to questions regarding the proposed response at Paragraph C7, the Head of Strategic Planning stated that the Council were incurring difficulties in obtaining responses from infrastructure providers in advance of site specific allocations being made. On this point, it was noted that the second sentence of the paragraph be corrected by substituting the word "overestimate" for "underestimate". This was agreed.

The Committee agreed that the Head of Strategic Planning be granted delegated authority to make the changes to the submission as discussed above, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

1. That subject to Recommendation 2 below, the recommended comments at Annex A be endorsed as a response to the Department for Communities and Local Government consultation on 'Streamlining Local Development Frameworks', to be submitted by Tuesday 19 February 2008.

2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, to make changes to the response as outlined above, and any further minor editing changes that may be necessary prior to submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

6. **ORAL UPDATE – RECENT PUBLIC WORKSHOPS ON THE NEW LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND THE ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR THE WINCHESTER DISTRICT**

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked the Head of Strategic Planning and other officers involved for all their work with regards to the recent consultations on the Issues and Options paper.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that approximately 1,000 people had attending the public workshops. In addition, 152 on-line questionnaires had been completed and 39 paper copies. Wickham Parish Council had created their own questionnaire and 300 copies of this had been received.

Although it had not yet been possible to analyse comments in detail, the following general points had arisen:

- A concern about the ability of existing infrastructure to cope with the anticipated growth;
- Concern about the requirement to protect the environmental assets of the District;
- Understanding of the necessity for more affordable housing, but some confusion about what was meant by the term;
- In the South of the District, concern about the impact of major growth at the strategic development areas at Hedge End and Fareham;
- Mixed views across the District about the options presented.

Councillor Beckett commented on the “Save our South” group meeting which he had recently attended, but emphasised that their concerns appeared to be directed more at Government policy regarding housing growth.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the “Issues and Options” public workshops be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.05am

Chairman