

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

21 October 2008

Attendance:

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Wood (Chairman) (P)

Beckett (P)

Pearson (P)

Coates (P)

Other invited Councillors:

Busher (P)

Jeffs (P)

Pines

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Allgood and Barratt

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors Bell, Humby, Learney, Stallard and Worrall

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Pearson declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest as the Council's appointed representative on the Winchester District Board of the Council for the Protection of Rural England. He remained in the room throughout the meeting and spoke and voted on agenda items.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held 15 July 2008 be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mrs A Gossling (Save Barton Farm Group) and Mrs C Slattery (Council for the Protection of Rural England) spoke regarding Report CAB1729(LDF). Mr M Pendlebury (Planning Director, Atisreal) spoke regarding Report CAB1729(LDF). Mrs J Porter (Hampshire County Councillor) spoke regarding

Report CAB1730(LDF). Their comments are summarised under the relevant agenda items below.

Mr Goodman (Alresford Society) spoke under the general public participation procedure and his comments are summarised below. He emphasised that the Alresford Society had encouraged its members to be involved in the Local Development Framework (LDF) process. However, it had particular concerns that the economic future of New Alresford should be addressed as a matter of urgency, otherwise he believed there was a risk that the town would lose a significant proportion of its industrial employers. In addition, he did not believe it was appropriate to place reliance primarily on developers' contributions to provide infrastructure.

In response, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that reports considering the proposed settlement hierarchy and development strategy for the main settlements within the District, would be submitted to the future Committee meetings on 12 November or 16 December 2008. He also confirmed that New Alresford Town Council had commissioned a market town health check.

Councillor Jeffs supported Mr Goodman's comments regarding the urgency of the situation, as some of the industrial employers in the town were keen to expand their businesses. If this was not facilitated, there was a risk that the firms would relocate further away. Councillor Beckett also noted the comments and suggested that action should be taken as soon as possible.

4. **SOUTH EAST PLAN: SECRETARY OF STATE 'PROPOSED CHANGES'**
(Report [CAB1729\(LDF\)](#) refers)

Under the Council's Constitution, Access to Information Procedure Rules (Rule 15.1 General Exception), this was a Key Decision, which had not been included in the Forward Plan. Under this procedure, the Chairman of Principal Scrutiny Committee had been informed.

Councillor Beckett advised that he had received a response from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, regarding his letter setting out inconsistencies in the Government's reasons for increasing the housing numbers required in the part of Winchester District outside South Hampshire. The response stated that the Minister was unable to respond to the comments made at this stage. Instead, the Council was invited to resubmit these comments as part of their response to the consultation on the South East Plan 'proposed changes'. He confirmed that the comments outlined in the appendix to the report did include these points.

Councillor Beckett also reported that the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) would be writing to the Secretary of State, requesting that the requirement that infrastructure was in place before any major development be reinstated. In addition, SEERA was objecting to the proposed treatment of "windfall" developments and the reference to overall housing requirements being treated as a minimum.

Councillor Beckett stated that following various representations received and attendance at various parish council meetings over the previous year, he was proposing an additional recommendation regarding the Hedge End Strategic Development Area. His proposed amendment was supported by the Committee, as outlined under Resolution 2 below.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Allgood and Barratt address the Committee and their comments are summarised below.

Councillor Allgood generally welcomed the Council's proposed response, but suggested the following changes (paragraph numbers relate to Appendix 1 of the report):

- Paragraph 5: wording should be strengthened to emphasise that without proper infrastructure being in place, plans could be severely affected;
- Paragraph 6: wording should include some reference to the importance of conserving water supplies;
- Paragraph 5.10: wording should be amended to indicate that it was important that local authorities work together, including for example highways and education departments, and not just planning authorities. Some reference to involving local communities should also be included;
- A comment should be included recognising the importance of protecting Portsdown Hill and Hedge End railway station in relation to proposed SDAs.

Councillor Barratt (speaking on behalf of Councillor Evans who was unable to attend the meeting) requested clarification of the wording of paragraph 3.4 of the report which stated that "... housing requirements for the SDAs are listed separately and remain at 10,000 dwellings for the Fareham SDA" The Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that the South East Plan referred to "up to 10,000 dwellings".

In response to another query from Councillor Evans, the Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that it was possible that, because suitable land was limited within the Fareham Borough Council area, some of the green infrastructure requirements of the Fareham SDA would be located within the Winchester District. However, he considered that this was compatible with the need to maintain a gap between Wickham and Knowle, and also could offer additional protection to any land allocated (for example, if it was designated as recreation land or a nature reserve).

On behalf of Save Barton Farm Group (SBFG), Mrs Gossling welcomed the Council's comments objecting to the proposed increase in housing numbers for the Central Hampshire part of the District. However, she requested that this objection be strengthened and include reference to objecting to any development on land 'North of Winchester'. She stated that studies had indicated Barton Farm had a history of flooding. She believed that the Council should utilise brownfield sites in order to protect the landscape and historic setting of Winchester.

On behalf of the Winchester Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), Mrs Slattery supported the Council's stated objections to the increase in housing requirement for Central Hampshire. However, CPRE also requested that the wording of the objection be strengthened, as it believed that the region was already approaching its environmental limits in terms of sustaining new developments.

In response, Councillor Beckett thanked the public speakers for their support to the Council's objections to increased housing numbers. However, he did not consider it appropriate to specifically revisit the proposals for land 'North of Winchester' at this stage.

One Member commented that regard should be had to the fact that there was a need for additional homes within the District, as demonstrated by the number of housing applicants to the Council.

Following further discussion, the Committee agreed that the proposed submission to the Secretary of State (as contained as Appendix 1 to the report) be amended as detailed below. The exact wording to be agreed by the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access.

- Wording of paragraph 5 to be strengthened to highlight the importance of adequate infrastructure being in place prior to development;
- Wording of paragraph 5.10 to be amended to recognise the need for local authorities to work together, and also involvement of local communities;
- Wording of paragraph 1 to be strengthened to emphasise the Council's strong objections to the increase in housing requirements and also the flawed information relied upon by the Secretary of State;
- Paragraph 5.11 be expanded upon to include mention of the importance of Portsdown Hill;

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Head of Strategic Planning be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access, to submit comments (reflecting the summary at Appendix 1 of the Report as amended above) to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as representing the City Council's response to the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes (July 2008).

2. That the Council maintains its objection to Policy SH2 in relation to the proposed Hedge End Strategic Development Area (SDA), until such time as it is demonstrated that potential problems, particularly in relation to infrastructure provision, especially transport, as outlined in the Council's comments of June 2006, can be satisfactorily addressed.

5. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS – FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND SUGGESTED PREFERRED APPROACH – VISION, OBJECTIVES, SPATIAL STRATEGY, HOUSING MIX AND REDUNDANT RURAL BUILDINGS**

(Report [CAB1728\(LDF\)](#) refers)

With regard to the revised timetable for Core Strategy preparation, the Committee noted that the public should be made aware that their last meaningful chance of contributing to the process was when the 'Preferred Options' document was published.

Mr Pendlebury (Planning Director at Atisreal) spoke regarding the Strategy for Spatial Distribution (Appendix C of the report), on behalf of his clients who were the executors of an estate in Denmead. He requested that, in addition to the M27, the Council should also recognise the importance of the A3M corridor within its District, especially to land to the east of Denmead. He requested that the Strategy be flexible with regard to strategic and specific housing land allocations. It should seek to achieve a range of different sizes of strategic allocations, not simply rely on one large development.

The Committee considered Appendices A to E of the report in detail, including the recommended action contained within the documents.

With regard to Appendix A, the Head of Strategic Planning noted that it was important to be clear when referring to "Winchester" throughout the documents that it referred to the whole District, unless the Winchester Town area was specifically mentioned.

With regard to Appendix B, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the response figure on page 3 be amended to "over 700 people". The proportions on page 4 had changed as a result but the overall levels of agreement/disagreement remained very similar.

In discussing Appendix C, the Head of Strategic Planning highlighted the proposed change to amend the Strategy for Spatial Distribution to: Winchester Town; the Market Towns and the rural area; and the M27 corridor urban areas, with 'policy overlays' for the PUSH area and South Downs National Park. With regard to the comments made by Mr Pendlebury, she emphasised that the Strategy would be flexible, particularly as this was one of the 'tests of soundness' set out by the Government.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that a report would be submitted to future Committee meetings regarding strategies for the development of the settlements, including Denmead and New Alresford.

The Head of Strategic Housing responded to questions regarding Appendices D and E. With regard to redundant rural buildings, he emphasised the importance of balancing the different elements of environmental and social sustainability, including maintaining the viability of rural settlements.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommended actions in relation to the Core Strategy's options on Vision, Objectives, Spatial Strategy, Housing Mix and Redundant Rural Buildings (Appendices A – E) be agreed and incorporated when developing the 'Preferred Options' version of the Core Strategy for consultation.

2. That the revised timetable for Core Strategy preparation and publication of the 'preferred options' stage be noted.

6. **MEETING GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLES' ACCOMMODATION NEEDS: CONSULTATION BY THE SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

(Report [CAB1730\(LDF\)](#) refers)

Under the Council's Constitution, Access to Information Procedure Rules (Rule 15.1 General Exception), this was a Key Decision, which had not been included in the Forward Plan. Under this procedure, the Chairman of Principal Scrutiny Committee had been informed.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Allgood expressed concern that the Leaders of both Portsmouth City Council and Fareham Borough Council had appeared to indicate that they could not provide any new pitches within their Districts. He queried whether there was a risk that Winchester City Council would have to increase the numbers they provided accordingly?

In response, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that each local authority was responsible for providing the specified pitch requirements which the South East Plan revision required within its District and that it was these requirements which were currently being consulted on. If a neighbouring authority did not meet its requirements, this would not increase the impact on the City Council.

Mrs Porter (Hampshire County Councillor) stated that it was important that the Dummer site was reopened to meet the needs of gypsies and travellers in the area (a site situated within the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council area). She recognised that the poor behaviour of some of its occupants had led to its closure, but suggested that registered social landlords could be employed to manage such sites. She requested that the City Council favour Option A (as set out in the Appendix to the report), but hold informal discussions regarding Option B.

Councillor Beckett noted Mrs Porter's suggestion and agreed to discuss further with the appropriate officers.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the pitch numbers and options for regional distribution contained in the South East Regional Assembly's public consultation document "Somewhere to Live: Planning for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People in the South East" be noted.

2. That the Committee comments on the consultation document to the South East England Regional Assembly, to inform its Partial Review of the South East Plan, as set out in paragraph 6.9 of the report.

7. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – RENEWABLE ENERGY STUDY (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

(Report [CAB1731\(LDF\)](#) refers)

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted in accordance with Contracts Procedure Rule 3.1 C.

8.

EXEMPT BUSINESS

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
##	Winchester District Development	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)
##	Framework – Renewable Energy Study – Exempt Appendix	
##		
##		

9. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – RENEWABLE ENERGY STUDY - EXEMPT APPENDIX**

(Report CAB1731(LDF) refers)

The Committee considered the exempt appendix which contained an assessment of consultants for the renewable energy study.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Exempt Appendix be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.25pm.

Chairman