

**CABINET (LOCAL PLAN) COMMITTEE**

**27 February 2017**

Attendance:

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Weston (Chairman) (P)

Horrill (P)

Warwick

Humby (P)

Other invited Councillors:

Bell (P)

Evans (P)

Read (P)

Ruffell (P)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Tait

1. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Humby declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items due to his role as a County Councillor. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, he remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Standards Committee to participate and vote in all matters which might have a County Council involvement.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 October 2016 be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

John Beveridge (City of Winchester Trust) addressed the Committee regarding the implications of the recently published Housing White Paper, particularly Government statements on encouraging high density development. He reiterated the Trust's view (as reported to Cabinet in January 2015) that the Council should seek to encourage higher density development at Barton Farm (the current density was under 40 dwellings per hectare, whereas the Trust considered this could be doubled providing a highly sustainable development). The Trust believed that encouraging higher

density development on areas which were already allocated for development would assist in protecting Winchester's compact nature overall.

The Chairman thanked Mr Beveridge for his comments which would be considered further as appropriate.

Patrick Davies (City of Winchester Trust) spoke regarding Report CAB2903(LP) and his comments are summarised under the relevant minute below.

4. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN PART 2: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND SITE ALLOCATIONS – PROPOSED ADOPTION**  
(Report CAB2903(LP) refers)

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked the Head of Strategic Planning and Team for their work in preparing the Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2) to this stage. She also thanked all other Councillors, Parish Councils and local organisations for their input into the Plan's preparation.

The Head of Strategic Planning reciprocated thanks to Members, Parish Councils and other local representatives for their assistance and support. He emphasised that the Council must accept the Inspector's Main Modifications in order to progress the Local Plan to statutory adoption. The Inspector's Report was received on 31 January 2017 and recommended the inclusion of the Main Modifications that were published for consultation, with only small changes as summarised in Paragraph 10.6 of the Report. The Report also recommended a number of minor changes to the proposed Additional Modifications be approved, as set out in Appendix 2.

If the Plan was approved at Council on 5 April 2017, a six week period would follow when it could be challenged in the High Court, but only on "procedural" matters. It was not expected that there were valid grounds for the Plan to be challenged and even if this did occur, the Plan would remain in force unless and until any challenge was upheld.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that it was intended that a complete copy of the proposed revised Plan would be circulated to Members prior to Council on 5 April 2017.

Patrick Davies (City of Winchester Trust) spoke during public participation and in summary also wished to thank the Head of Strategic Planning and Team for their cooperation with the Trust. He stated that he had recently attended a meeting regarding the Housing White Paper at the House of Commons and had sought clarification on the implications on potential changes to housing number requirements for Local Plans that were already approved. However, this remained unclear and whilst welcoming that the Council's Plan should be approved shortly, he urged that careful consideration be given to the potential impact of the White Paper, particularly regarding monitoring. On a more specific matter, he expressed concern that Paragraph 19 of the Inspector's Report could be open to misinterpretation regarding the future of Bushfield Camp as he believed it appeared to suggest there was a commitment for future use for housing, which there was not.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Tait addressed the Committee and in summary expressed concern about whether the Local Plan would in effect deliver what it was supposed to, in particular regarding levels of affordable housing. In addition, he was concerned about the difficulties in delivering higher density developments because of local opposition. He gave the example of the development at the old Winchester Fire Station site where the final built scheme was of a lower density than originally proposed. He suggested that the Council should take a lead in emphasising that higher density developments should not necessarily cause concerns. Councillor Tait also expressed concern that the Plan did not address the requirement for a wider mix of tenures of housing.

The Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that the review of LPP2 would commence in 2018 with the aim for a new Local Plan to be adopted in 2021. However he emphasised that this meant there was a period of relative stability and certainty for the Council for the next four/five years. In response to Members' questions, he confirmed that the Council would adopt a robust approach to recommending refusal of planning applications for housing development sites outside of the Plan's allocated areas as the Inspector had found that the Plan demonstrated a five year housing land supply.

With regard to comments about encouraging higher density developments, the Head of Strategic Planning acknowledged it was a matter of balance between higher densities and recognising the character of the area. If appropriate, Officers did recommend an application for approval at a higher density. However, if there was local opposition from the public, developers sometimes opted to reduce the density of development in order to ease the approval process. The Committee noted that the Housing White Paper included consideration of encouraging higher density developments and this matter would be kept under review.

With regard to the query raised by Mr Davies in relation to Bushfield Camp, the Head of Strategic Planning stated that officers had not interpreted the Inspector's Report in the same way, and that it is not possible to change the Inspector's Report, but its meaning would be clarified if the issue were raised.

In response to questions regarding Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site allocations, the Head of Strategic Planning clarified that Policy DM4 had been inserted in LPP2 to address comments made by the Inspector. The site allocations would be made through a separate Development Plan Document and Report CAB2904(LP) below gave further details on this.

The Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that there was currently only one Neighbourhood Plan 'made' in the District (for Denmead) and this would be included within the 2018 review process.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Housing White Paper did not suggest a radical review of the planning system but did propose various detailed changes, including changes to the methodology of calculating housing numbers.

In response to a Member's query, the Head of Strategic Planning noted an error in the 'Non-Technical Summary' of the Inspector's Report which refers to Policy CP2, rather than DM2. It is not possible to correct this, but the main part of the Report refers to the correct policy and Main Modification numbers (paragraph 49 and MM29).

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

**RECOMMENDED (TO CABINET AND COUNCIL):**

**1. That the Winchester District Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management and Site Allocations, as submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2016 and modified in accordance with the Inspector's recommended Main Modifications (see Appendix 1 of the Report and the proposed Additional Modifications (as proposed to be amended, see Appendix 2 of Report), be adopted and that formal notices be published to complete the process of statutory adoption.**

**2. That all remaining 'saved' policies of the Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006, as listed in the new Appendix E of the Local Plan (see MM1 part 2 at Appendix 1 of the Report), be no longer 'saved' within that part of the District outside the South Downs National Park.**

**3. That authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment, to undertake minor updating and amendments in order to incorporate the various Modifications and consequential changes to the Plan, including to correct errors and format text, without altering the policy intentions of the Plan.**

**5. GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT - UPDATE  
(Report CAB2904(LP) refers)**

In introducing the report, the Chairman emphasised that at the current time the Council was not able to demonstrate a five year supply of land for sites and as a consequence, there was an assumption that planning applications for sites would be approved, at least on a temporary basis. Site allocations would therefore give the Council more control over which sites should be granted permission.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Development Plan Document (the DPD) only covered the areas of the District outside of the South Downs National Park (SDNP) area. Policy DM4 was included within LPP2 and set out a requirement for about 15 gypsy/traveller pitches and about 24 travelling showpeople's plots between 2016 and 2031. To date, one application for a

gypsy/traveller site and three plots for travelling showpeople had been approved, which contribute to the requirement.

The Head of Strategic Planning stated that the Report provided an update on progress and work to date on the DPD and it was anticipated that a Committee meeting be held in late May to consider the Draft DPD for recommendation to Cabinet to approve for consultation. The aim was for the consultation to be completed before the end of July 2017.

During discussion, Members queried whether it was appropriate for sites to be concentrated around one particular settlement. In addition, public concerns were noted about sites subsequently being granted planning permission following an initial unlawful use. The Head of Strategic Planning noted concerns, but highlighted that existing sites were being investigated to ascertain what services were available and whether they would be suitable to be authorised permanently or expanded.

The Head of Strategic Planning explained that the situation had been complicated by the definition of Gypsy and Travellers changing in 2015 and some of the existing sites in the District had been approved under the previous definition.

The Committee noted that there was a duty to cooperate with the SDNP authority, together with other neighbouring local authorities (and vice versa) and discussions were currently ongoing at Officer level regarding the number of sites required in the SDNP area of the District.

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

**RESOLVED:**

That the progress with preparation of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Development Plan Document be noted and that 'WCC Responses' in Appendix A of the Report, be agreed.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.25am

Chairman