

**CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE****6 June 2011****Attendance:****Committee Members:**

Councillors:

Beckett (Chairman) (P)

Coates (P)

Weston (P)

Humby (P)

**Other invited Councillors:**

Jeffs (P)

Learney (P)

Evans (P)

**Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:**

Councillor Godfrey and Pearson

**Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:**

Councillors Clear, Hiscock, Mitchell and Ruffell

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**1. MINUTES**

Councillor Evans referred to the item relating to Feedback on Remainder Blueprint Responses (Report CAB2148(LDF) refers). She stated that Mr M Carter had spoken in a personal capacity and not as a representative of Wickham Parish Council and that this correction should be made to the Minutes. The Committee agreed to this correction.

Also in connection with this Minute, Councillor Evans additionally requested (and it was agreed by the Chairman) that in the interests of balance, her amendments made and approved at Council on 22 April 2009, which outlined the Council's latest formal position, should be replicated in these Minutes, as follows:

"That the text of Policy SH5 be amended by the words struck out and the new insertion in italics, as set out below:-

**'Policy SH5**

'The City Council will work with Fareham Borough Council to help develop a Strategic Development Area of up to 10,000 dwellings together with supporting uses, centred immediately to the north of Fareham. Land within

Winchester District (*as shown in the Plan below*) will form part of the open areas required by the South East Plan to ensure separation between the SDA and the existing settlements of Knowle and Wickham by defining the long-term open gaps. ~~This land (shown on the plan below) may be suitable for some open rural uses associated with the SDA, provided these retain its open nature and secure its effective use and management as a long-term open gap between the settlements.~~’ “

RESOLVED:

That subject to:-

- a) it being clarified in the item relating to Feedback on Remainder Blueprint Responses (Report CAB2148(LDF) refers) that Mr M Carter spoke in a personal capacity and not as a representative of Wickham Parish Council; and
- b) that the text of the amendments made and approved at Council on 22 April 2009, which outlined the Council's latest formal position, as set out above, be added, the minutes of the meeting held 1 April 2011 be approved and adopted.

## 2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr M Emmett, Mr P Davies, Mr J Beveridge, Mr R Baker, Mr V Hatch and Councillors Godfrey and Pearson spoke regarding Report CAB2177(LDF) and their comments are summarised below. Councillor Pearson also spoke in respect of Report CAB2178(LDF) and his comments are also summarised below.

## 3. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE- CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Humby be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the 2011/12 Municipal Year.

## 4. **PUBLICATION OF PLANS FOR PLACES – AFTER BLUEPRINT** (Report CAB2177 (LDF) refers)

The Chairman thanked the officers for the Blueprint consultation exercise. He emphasised that Plans for Places was a statement of direction rather than a policy document.

Mrs Nell, Principal Planning Officer, informed the meeting that Blueprint looked to establish the needs of people in the District over the next 20 years. Later this year the pre-submission version of the LDF Core Strategy would be published and Plans for Places was a less formal document which would translate the Blueprint work into the spatial distribution of development across the District. In parallel would be the update of the evidence base, such as the employment and retail studies. The Housing Technical paper at Appendix B

studied population projections and needed to be considered alongside the Blueprint findings. Attention was drawn to the projected population increase of 16550 and how this equated to 11000 new dwellings, of which it was recommended that 5500 would be in the South Hants Urban Areas (reflecting that PUSH is an area for growth), 4000 in Winchester Town and 1500 elsewhere in the District, in the Market Towns and Rural Area. The documentation would be considered by the South Downs National Park Authority shortly, and the National Park could add a new constraint due to its conservation policies.

At the request of the Chairman, Mr Bone, Head of Legal Services, gave an update on legal proceedings by Cala Homes against the Secretary of State. He also referred to a letter dated 2 June 2011 from RPS written on behalf of Cala Homes. Mr Bone provided background to the two sets of legal proceedings that had taken place following a change in Government, which had led to the current situation. In conclusion, he stated that the Court of Appeal Court judgement suggested that local planning authorities and the Secretary of State were entitled to treat the clear intention of the Coalition Government to abolish regional strategies as a material consideration, in the minority of cases where the regional strategy was relevant to a particular case. However, the Court did indicate that any decision-maker giving weight to this would be well-advised to have clear and cogent reasons for doing so, given the legal obstacles (Parliamentary approval and a Strategic Environmental Assessment) which had to be dealt with before the intention could be put into effect.

During the public participation period, Mr Michael Emett, Cala Homes, made reference to the letter from their planning consultants, RPS, referred to by Mr Bone above. He stated that in his view, the statement that “if the Barton Farm appeal is dismissed it would be necessary to plan for alternative provision” at the top of page 20 of the Report at Appendix A was misleading, as the situation was that if Barton Farm was dismissed by the Secretary of State, it should revert to being a site for consideration along with others.

The Corporate Director (Operations) acknowledged that Barton Farm would not necessarily be excluded from future consideration if the current planning application were to be dismissed by the Secretary of State, depending on the reasoning for the Secretary of State’s decision.

Mr V Hatch spoke of the Blueprint consultation process with regard to Whiteley, which was in his opinion not as extensive as it could have been. There was also a disproportionate emphasis on the requirements for Winchester Town, its surrounding areas, Market Towns and Rural Areas when compared to the South Hants Urban Area, which included Whiteley. He also asked what would be the likely effect on housing numbers for North Whiteley given the Council’s support for the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) and the latest positions of the Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) at North/North East of Hedge End and North of Fareham. Additionally, he sought an explanation on the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and when the Whiteley Forum might next meet.

The officers responded that the housing figures for the SDAs were not allocated to specific District Councils. If they could not be accommodated within the defined SDAs then PUSH would have to reconsider its housing provision and distribution. The workings of the CIL were outlined and it was indicated that a meeting of the North of Whiteley Forum would be held in June or July 2011.

Mr Patrick Davies, representing the City Of Winchester Trust, stated that the Trust would submit a formal response as part of the consultation. He asked for an update on the economic viability of Bushfield Camp as discussed at previous Committee meetings, and also whether the current definition of affordable housing would deliver affordable housing for those most in need. It was noted that in cases where affordable housing provision had not been possible to achieve, it had reverted to general market housing.

The officers responded that the economic viability study for Bushfield Camp had been commissioned and was still in draft form prior to its submission to Committee. However, the Plans for Places exercise was not site-specific and took a more general approach. In respect of the provision of affordable housing, the detailed implications of the Government's proposals for 'affordable rents' were currently unknown. The Housing Technical Paper acknowledged that this change could have a knock on effect for housing projections, but it was anticipated that the impact would be marginal in terms of the overall numbers of houses required.

Mr John Beveridge, representing the City of Winchester Trust, asked that if the Barton Farm application was unsuccessful and development was required beyond the Winchester Town settlement boundary (or even it was successful and employment sites and other land uses were required), had consideration been given to the relative impacts on the setting of Winchester of the different scenarios, for example the use of two large areas compared with a number of smaller areas. To undertake such an exercise would help in the selection of sites, particularly those outside of the areas considered for strategic housing allocations.

The officers stated that some of this work had already been undertaken as part of work in preparation of the Core Strategy Preferred Option and was published on the Local Development Framework evidence base. This related to assessing the options for large-scale 'strategic' allocations. If only smaller sites were considered, then these would not be allocated as part of the Core Strategy, but there was thought to be adequate time to undertake the necessary work after the Barton Farm decision was announced.

Mr. Richard Baker, representing the City of Winchester Trust, commented that on page 8 of Appendix A, the number of new dwellings between 2011-2031 for the District was identified as 11000 to accommodate a population of 16550. He suggested that this translated to 1.5 persons per dwelling whereas the national range was 2.1 to 2.5 persons per dwelling.

The officers explained that this figure was based only on population and housing increases and that calculations for household sizes need to be based on an extrapolation of all households and not just the new ones required. This situation was explained more fully in the Housing Technical Paper. This point would be clarified further by adding a note in the consultation paper for ease of understanding.

In response to further questions raised by Mr Hatch, the officers explained that the implementation and funding of the plan, including use of the CIL, would be discussed with parish councils.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Godfrey spoke as a Ward Member for Wonston and Micheldever. He asked whether the CIL could be used to bring benefits to the local area from large scale schemes such as the recently permitted Forestry Commission holiday home complex at Blackwood, Micheldever. This scheme would impact on the local area and carried with it no local benefits in terms of affordable housing or contributions to open space, which would have been associated with residential development.

The officers responded that a Community Infrastructure Charging Schedule would need to be introduced to implement CIL and this would set the scale of charges and the types of development they would apply to. The local authority had discretion over how and where contributions were spent and this could cover the situation raised by Councillor Godfrey.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Pearson spoke on the use of 2008 figures as a baseline for housing projections and sought clarification that in respect of paragraph 5.2 of the covering report, the land in the District between the Fareham boundaries and Wickham and Knowle would be retained as agricultural land. This was because the Report now made reference that it would retain its existing open countryside character in perpetuity, which could infer that it was brownfield land to be used for recreational purposes, such as golf courses or playing fields. He also asked whether Localism had been covered by the Report.

The officers explained that the latest 2011-2031 figures had been used to meet the requirement for the Core Strategy to plan ahead for at least 15 years from adoption. It would also be made clearer that the aim is to retain the open character of the land within the gap between the Strategic Development Area and Wickham/Knowle, although this did not necessarily mean retaining it all for agriculture. Some of the land was already in other uses such as woodland and the aim was that it would remain open and without formal recreation or built structures. Localism had been addressed by the Blueprint exercise and the fact that Plans for Places sought to address the aspirations raised, as well as reference to Neighbourhood Planning within the document.

Councillor Learney commented that without completing the technical paper on economic based projections, the housing figures derived may be too high. The officers explained that rather than delay the consultation process, it could proceed whilst the technical update was undertaken.

Following debate, it was also agreed that the consultation documentation include examples of how various densities of housing development might look in order to give people an understanding of the implications for higher density development, particularly in the Winchester Town area, should the Barton Farm application be unsuccessful.

At the request of Councillor Learney, it was agreed that reference to "timely infrastructure provision" be added to the consultation document's section on Whiteley.

Also, at the suggestion of Councillor Evans, it was agreed that on page 23 the reference that the scale of the development in the Strategic Development Area "may have an impact" on the Winchester District settlements immediately adjacent to the administrative boundary be changed to "will have an impact..". It was also agreed that on the same page, the reference to "green infrastructure" be made clear that this does not include playing fields, swimming pools, allotments and other buildings or development.

In respect of the section of the report dealing with Market Towns and Rural Areas, Councillor Jeffs commented that the Core Strategy needed to be flexible to deal with changed circumstances, for example where delays in infrastructure provision made it difficult to provide the housing provision. The officers responded that this was recognised in the need for adequate and timely infrastructure and the recognition of other extraneous factors. For smaller amounts of development, Neighbourhood Planning could be of assistance in this respect.

Consultation was also continuing with the new South Downs National Park Authority over the policy approach within the National Park and in turn the National Park would eventually be undertaking its own Local Development Framework exercise, upon which Winchester City Council would be consulted.

During debate, members requested an explanation of the term 'significant development' in relation to development within the Market Towns and Rural Area (page 25 of the draft document). Officers advised that this paragraph reflected Government guidance in terms of development being proportionate and appropriate to a rural area.

Members also requested that in paragraph 3 page 28 the term 'sports facilities' be added to the list of key services referred to – this was agreed.

It was further agreed that in the Settlement Profile for Wickham (appended to the document), potential impact on Wickham of the proposed Fareham SDA be added as one of the challenges facing Wickham over the next 20 years.

The officers explained that the consultation period would take place over a six week period but that this would not start until late June as the South Downs National Park Authority would need to approve the document for publication and would be considering its response to the Plans for Places report on 22 June 2011.

Following debate, the recommendations were agreed, subject to the delegation as set out in recommendation 2 to Cabinet being extended to include the amendments to the document agreed above, and to the development of a set of consultation questions to aid responses.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the South Downs National Park Authority be asked to endorse the publications of *Plans for Places...after Blueprint* for consultation.

**RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:**

1. That "Plans for Places, *after Blueprint*", be agreed for publication and a period of public consultation for 6 weeks.
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement, to make any minor amendments and corrections as necessary, prior to publication, including the minor amendments set out above and the addition of consultation questions.
3. That authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement, and the Head of Legal Services to determine any changes necessary to the consultation document, process, or timetable, in light of any comments received from South Downs National Park Authority.

5. **REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2011**  
(Report CAB2178(LDF) refers)

The Committee noted that the Gantt chart within the recommended Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1) now included the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Pearson asked whether the Risk Assessment and Management Exercise set out on page 21 of the report should include the identification of the provision of sites for gypsies and travellers and also whether this topic should also be included as an emerging new policy on the page 27 of the Report, in view of the latest Government guidance.

The officers responded that the Government was presently consulting on its proposals for gypsies and travellers and that the Scheme would take account of new Government policy in due course. The City Council did not have a Local Plan policy on gypsies and travellers at present (as it had not been 'saved' by the Secretary of State) but instead relied on Government policy on such matters. The future provision of sites would be included in general terms within the Core Strategy but any site allocations needed would be made

through the Development Management and Allocations DPD when it is produced.

**RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:**

- 1 That the Winchester District Local Development Scheme 2011 be agreed and submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
- 2 That authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement, to make any minor amendments and corrections as necessary to the LDS prior to submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
- 3 That subject to no direction to the contrary being received from the Secretary of State, a further report be brought back to Cabinet for a resolution that the Scheme be brought into effect on a date to be specified in the resolution.

6. **REFRESH OF THE WINCHESTER ECONOMIC EVIDENCE BASE**  
(Report CAB2179(LDF) refers)

The officers reported that there was a need to refresh the economic evidence base for the District as it pre-dated the current recession. This would include looking at the land requirements that would inform the Core Strategy and taking account of the recent refresh of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) strategy. It was anticipated that this exercise could be undertaken by the end of July 2011.

Members commented that this work might include a study of commuting in and out of Winchester and also the effect of commuting trends, such as those resulting from a migration from public to private employment.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Committee agrees to the proposal to refresh the economic evidence base for Winchester Town, and authorises the Head of Strategic Planning to commission the necessary work, provided a suitable brief and fee can be agreed with the consultants currently appointed to monitor the Housing Market Assessment.
2. That a Direction be made under Contracts Procedure Rule 2.4 a) be made to authorise the arrangements in 1. above.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.35pm.

Chairman