

LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY GROUP

Monday, 11 January 2021

Attendance:

Councillors
Porter (Chairperson)

Brook
Evans
Ferguson

Horrill
Rutter
Thompson

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Bell and Hutchison

[Full audio recording and video recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Porter declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest due to her role as a County Councillor.

3. **TO NOTE ANY REQUEST FROM COUNCILLORS TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS ON AN AGENDA ITEM**

The requests from Councillors to make representations were considered under the respective agenda items.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2020**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 November 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Patrick Davies addressed the meeting as summarised briefly below.

Mr Davies commented on the draft strategic issues and priorities document. He stated that there should be clarity on the exercise involved, including on the carbon neutrality objective which may conflict with national policy, such as the

issues covered by building regulations referred to on page 21. He asked whether such a substantial part of the document should cover just this topic, as worthy as it was. The sustainable public transport objective should also refer to buses and trains in addition to walking and cycling as their use should be encouraged. On pages 28 to 31 green belt issues were raised and there should be more emphasis on the rarity of green belts in this part of England, their real purpose and the meaning of exceptional circumstances in order not to raise expectations. On page 35 onwards there should be clarity on the relationship between developers' aspirations and the SHEELA, the Government Planning White Paper and its fluctuating demand on housing numbers and that they be up to date so as not to cause public confusion. In appendix 1 there was a list of many pieces of work undertaken pre Covid and he asked whether they were now relevant and not out of date.

Robert Shields, Bishops Waltham Parish Council, addressed the meeting on the draft strategic issues and priorities document as summarised briefly below.

Although Bishops Waltham Parish Council did not know how many new dwellings were proposed, it would be unlikely to challenge the number, provided the local rural character was preserved and it was commensurate with the limited infrastructure available and close working between the City Council and residents was encouraged.

Two strategic proposals were put forward. Bishop's Waltham town was long and thin. To retain the character of a market town, with an easily accessible town centre, it needed to be rounded, which required high level planning. The current SHEELA was merely the summation of land offered for development by landowners. Instead, a proper "town plan" should be formulated, with landowners then being approached as needed.

Secondly, about half the current Settlement Boundary of Bishop's Waltham was bounded by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), which constrained all new developments to one direction only. There were some suitable sites for development to the north of the town but the South Downs Authority had no priority in their own plans for developments in this area, further unbalancing the geographical layout of the town. A Statement of Common Ground, or other similar agreement with the SDNPA, was requested to share the number of new developments for the sustainability of Bishop's Waltham.

Regarding the draft Consultation Document, in summary, the existing vision for the Market Towns was fine, as was the sustainable development objectives; achieving carbon neutrality was important, but parish councils would have limited ability to participate in the opportunity mapping or analysing carbon emissions at parish level; to protect the rural characteristics of the market towns, and villages, it was more important to define local green areas and settlement gaps than to focus on large-scale green belts, and where it was not possible to provide reasonable sized gardens, housing developments should include green spaces for leisure and allotments, as well as play areas.

The Chairperson thanked the public speakers for their contributions.

6. **LOCAL PLAN WEBSITE AND BRANDING (VERBAL UPDATE)**

The Principal Planning Officer gave a verbal update on the Local Plan Website and Branding and referred to the presentation that had been published as a supplemental paper to the meeting.

The Strategic Planning Manager and Corporate Head of Regulatory responded to Members' questions on the following:

- How the Local Plan website would be advertised.
- Would all consultation be online and would alternative channels be used.
- That engagement should take place with all groups from within the community, for example learning from work on engagement carried out by the Housing Department.
- Engagement with varying age groups, including young people by means of a virtual briefing, for example to University students.
- When looking at the level of the public's interaction with the website, what action would be taken if it was found that there was bias, for example a geographical bias from areas that are more able to interact and those that could not due to their limited internet access and connectivity. If this was found to be the case would alternative methods be considered, such as written material and posters?
- That the lessons learnt from consultation exercise undertaken for central Winchester should be built upon, that a telephone number should be available for the public to contact and the role of City Councillors was important in advertising the consultation.

7. **DRAFT STRATEGIC ISSUES AND PRIORITIES DOCUMENT**

The Strategic Planning Manager introduced the draft strategic issues and priorities document.

Councillor Bell addressed the meeting as summarised briefly below.

It was hoped that when the document came to consultation there would be certainty on housing numbers required to provide a more measured and sensible approach to strategic planning for housing. The approach proposed in the document was supported. The special characteristics of the land south of Winchester and the need to protect these characteristics should be highlighted. The carbon neutrality and sustainability targets were supported. Areas such as Hursley still fitted within a rural areas brief as articulated within MTRA3 and 4 and were under additional pressure and should have more specific attention within the Local Plan. The local parish councils were fundamentally opposed to the out of scale development proposed for 'Royal Down'. However, Hursley Parish council were actively looking for small scale development in their parish area. This were positive actions to provide local housing for local residents and the parish would work on this basis with the Strategic Planners.

Councillor Hutchison addressed the meeting as summarised briefly below.

The document was welcomed. The focus relating to climate emergency and other priorities and elements of the work on the Vision for Winchester and in particular the concept of the 15 minute City were supported. The Winchester Town Forum, through its work on the Vision, had identified the need for a map of the Town to be embedded in the Local Plan. The Vision also included the parishes that surrounded the Town area and looked at the built up areas. There was a need to promote mixed use development in relation to the concept of 15 minute City or neighbourhood; reference needed to be made to spatial plans in knowing where to locate development; to recognise the role of regeneration in providing homes and improving the built form; reference to land and sites owned by the City and County Councils and the Hospital and the Prison and the Barracks; reference to new council housing and council led housing developments, and to promote active travel, including walking and cycling and working with the County Council on this issue.

The Chairperson thanked Councillors Bell and Hutchison for their representations.

The Strategic Planning Manager and Corporate Head of Regulatory responded to the following questions and comments from Members:

- The effect of the proposals in the Government's White Paper on the affordable housing threshold and information on the setting of the level for the proposed levy on the contribution for affordable housing from developers as set out on page 68 of the document.
- There should be a vision for the entire District as well as the soon to be published Vision for Winchester to 2030, to avoid misunderstanding between the two documents.
- The document lists all available current sites and is up to date, including brownfield sites (using the NPPF definition).
- The potential risks associated with the Statement of Common Ground which the Council had committed to with the Partnership for South Hampshire and the proposed removal of the duty to cooperate. The view was expressed that there was a need to ensure that Winchester did not become a net provider of homes for the broader area and that it remained in control of this.
- Additional employment sites be included, including added reference to Whiteley. There should be emphasis on building houses close to employment sites so that they were sustainable.
- The logging of documents and how progress on them could be accessed, including the green/blue infrastructure framework and other pieces of evidence gathering.
- The committee asked how the revision of settlement gaps would be undertaken.
- The committee discussed the hierarchy of settlements and their significance and how information on this could be accessed.

- How information on sites in the current local plan that had not come to fruition during the last plan period, including for example Bushfield Camp, would be conveyed to Members.
- Mention of the Winchester Movement Strategy and how it related to the wider district.
- The inclusion of a glossary.
- A Member requested that the Administration should be flexible to listen and to respond to changes in direction that may result from consultation feedback.
- That when housing was allocated in the Local Plan there should be support and encouragement to developers so that it was completed to meet annual targets. It was noted that the City Council had replied on this point in its consultation response to the White Paper.
- The consideration of economic allocations and the use of pre pandemic data and to seek the public's input on this due to the changes in the economy over the last 12 months. It was noted that a new economic study was being commissioned.
- Park and ride and having places to cycle to in order to catch public transport.
- Encouraging people to come forward with sites for renewable energy as mentioned on page 67 of the document.
- Ways to prevent confusing questions on carbon neutrality in the public consultation were discussed.
- The Vision for Winchester to be explained in the context of the whole District
- That the layout of the document be revised to shorten columns that contain blank areas to make it easier to read.
- To check the accuracy on page 38 of the naming of the site as Newlands in the context of the West of Waterlooville.
- The consideration of planning development policies and particularly MTRA4 which raised questions on its interpretation, as set out on page 29.
- The committee asked if the questions at the end of the document to be placed on the new website during the consultation and what would be done with the answers, for example would they form part of the evidence base?
- That employment sites be located preferably where the council and local communities wished them to be located in easily accessible and sustainable locations rather than via landowners offering sites.
- That the need for digital connectivity and other infrastructure issues including water and sewerage provision be acknowledged.
- Reassurance was sought that engagement would continue with the respective neighbouring authorities on the development of employment land at West of Waterlooville and Whiteley.
- That the language and definitions in the document be reviewed to make to it easier to understand for the public.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.55 pm

Chairperson