

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 17 January 2017**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00am and ended at 11.50am.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, Cllr Bowden, chaired the meeting. The Committee agreed to Cllr Howe acting as Vice Chairman for the meeting.

#### **\*23 Public speaking**

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting. There were no members of the public that wished to speak.

#### **\*24 Minutes**

The minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 21 November 2016 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

#### **\*25 Declarations of interest**

Cllr Mike Howe; Minute 26

Interest - Personal

Reason: Property and business owner in Clyst St Mary

#### **26 Greater Exeter Strategic Plan – Local Development Scheme and other matters**

The report before the committee set out the next stages for agreement, in order to progress the production of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP). These included:

- Agreement of a revised timetable, starting with consultation in February 2017 on an Issues Report, Greater Exeter Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), and Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) “call for sites”;
- Governance arrangement of each authority approving the GESP at each relevant stage; with a recommended member steering group consisting of the relevant portfolio holder from each of the five authorities; plus a joint informal advisory reference forum to comment on plan drafts. Member briefings would also be included to permit all councillors to review and comment on draft plan proposals;
- Agreeing the Issues Report for publication and consultation. This would fulfil a requirement to consult at an early stage, but also help introduce and explain the reasoning behind the agreed strategy;
- Supporting a joint SCI that covers GESP specific consultation only, as existing SCI policies for each authority do not currently match and would be time consuming to review and consolidate;
- Resourcing appropriately to deal with workload.

The committee were supportive of the recommendations, and comments included:

- Any work must also include co-operation with Somerset and Dorset – this would be included in the process of producing a GESP; Links should also be made with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP);
- The GESP needs to take into account the growth plan and economic aspirations of the district – the GESP was understood to be more than a “planner’s plan” with a strategic view covering other factors such as economic growth;
- Seeking assurances that the GESP would not subsume the Local Plan recently agreed – councillors were assured that the decisions still rested with them to agree as a Council, with the GESP following the same process as the Local Plan in

- requiring it to be evidence based. The GESP was explained as a strategic level of plan, not containing specific detail as found in some sections of the Local Plan;
- Working together with the other authorities at this early stage allowed greater scope for influence, including in aspects such as equitable distribution of housing allocation;
  - The GESP and the Local Plan were not in competition with each other – there would be a level of synergy between them; this meant moving away from the traditional tiered approach of plans to apply to applications, to material weight of factors from both plans;
  - Development Management Committee would refer to the Local Plan as taking preference on application decisions until the GESP emerges; then the GESP will start to carry greater weight, but only in the strategic elements of decision making;
  - Housing allocation numbers may well increase over the years purely because of the growing demand over time, but again any suggestion of number had to be evidence based;
  - Software previously identified for detailing land within the five-year land supply would be investigated to see if it could be used across the areas for efficiencies in linking up land identified for development;
  - Governance arrangements set out in the report were welcomed to ensure Councillor involvement, but concern was raised that there were too many forums and groups of a similar nature that could lead to duplication, differing influences and added pressure on busy councillors. Some form of rationalisation of the groups would be helpful;
  - Infrastructure in the greater Exeter area needed careful consideration and not just a review of the existing measures, and some of the problems with road junctions were used as examples; the strategic plan of the County Council would need to be taken into account with creating the GESP, and vice versa;
  - Keen to take opportunity to influence the plan for the wider area at this early stage to ensure that Councillors can comment on and influence the GESP.

### **RECOMMENDATION that Council**

1. The process of production of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan is agreed, noting that it may be subject to review as the plan is prepared;
2. The draft budget for 2017/18 includes £78,000 per annum for up to 3 years (with a review of resources after 2 years) be made available for the appointment of two additional temporary members of staff to provide sufficient capacity in the Planning Policy Team to be able to work on the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan, and to avoid delays in production of the planned Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other planning policy work to deliver the development proposed in the Local Plan.
3. In the event that recommendations 1 and 2 are agreed that the following actions to progress work on the Strategic Plan also be agreed:
  - a) The timetable for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan;
  - b) The Local Development Scheme be updated to include the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan with immediate effect;
  - c) The Greater Exeter Strategic Plan be prepared under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, without the need for a statutory joint planning committee;

- d) a Member Steering Group be set up with a representative from each of the five councils, to which East Devon's Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Partnerships be appointed, with Portfolio Holder for Economy as his deputy;
- e) a joint informal advisory reference forum is set up consisting of 5 councillors each from Devon, East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge to consider and make comments on draft plan proposals before they are formally considered by each council;
- f) that the Strategic Planning Committee be authorised to deal with all aspects of the preparation of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan on behalf of the Council, save for the final adoption of the Strategic Plan which shall remain with the Council;
- g) that resolving any inconsistencies arising from the decisions of individual councils is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Partnerships.

**RESOLVED:** that the Strategic Planning Committee:

1. Approve the "Issues" document and the draft Greater Exeter Statement of Community Involvement for consultation purposes;
2. Delegates authority to the Service Lead - Planning Strategy and Development Management to agree minor changes to wording, corrections and minor format changes which may be required and to agree to the consultation being carried out provided Council agrees recommendations 1 and 2 above.

#### **\*27 Proposed changes to New Homes Bonus**

The report updated the Committee on the implications of the government's provisional announcement of the Local Governance Finance Settlement on the bonus scheme.

The proposed changes to the scheme are:

- Reduction in the number of years payments are made from 6 years to 5 years in 2017 – 18, and then 4 years from 2018 – 19 for existing and future years allocation;
- No payment will be made on housing growth below 0.4% of the council tax base in each year.

Unless there was a change in government policy, there would be no grant by 2020. A white paper was pending from the government, but there was no indication at this stage of a replacement scheme. Councillors expressed the success of the scheme and concern on the implications if no replacement scheme was brought in.

**RESOLVED:** that the Strategic Planning Committee notes the District Council's Network briefing note on proposed changes to the New Homes Bonus, and writes to each local Member of Parliament to outline the implications of the scheme reduction.

#### **28 Adoption of Gypsy and Traveller Site Design and Layout Supplementary Planning Document**

The Gypsy and Traveller Site Design and Layout Supplementary Planning Document, previously considered by the committee, had been subject to consultation. Feedback from that consultation had been considered and some amendment made to produce the final plan before the committee.

A further report would come forward on the implications of implementation and cost of delivery of such sites; this report covered setting a standard for sites.

**RESOLVED:** that the amendments to the Gypsy and Traveller Site Design and Layout Supplementary Planning Document be agreed.

**RECOMMENDED:** that Cabinet adopts the Gypsy and Traveller Site Design and Layout Supplementary Planning Document, as agreed by the committee.

**\*29 Heat Network Strategies for the West End**

The report by the Projects Director for the Exeter and East Devon Growth Point set out in technical detail the development of heat networks and energy networks, including the analysis by the Centre for Energy and Environment. Working towards bringing forward technologies and energy sources locally were stressed, linked to the original zero carbon objective. This necessitated a need for a heat network strategy to make provision that enables the scaling up of renewable energy technologies to deliver increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction. The strategy would be used as part of the evidence base for the Cranbrook Development Plan Document (DPD).

The technologies were an exciting opportunity for ground-breaking work at Cranbrook on energy delivery.

Comments by councillors included:

- Ensure clear cost analysis on the technologies proposed, so that technologies adopted for energy delivery were not expensive. In response, explanation was given on the robust examination of the Cranbrook DPD of which this strategy would form part of the evidence base and so be fully tested;
- Need for more education of councillors on the technologies available;
- Look for co-operation, competitiveness and sustainability from energy providers.

**RESOLVED:**

1. that the 'Heat Network Strategies for the West End' report be adopted as part of the evidence base for the Cranbrook Development Plan Document (DPD);
2. that the recommendations in the 'Heat Network Strategies for the West End' report form the basis for framing policies and proposals within the Cranbrook DPD for achieving zero carbon development at Cranbrook, and inform subsequent decision making on development proposals at Cranbrook and the wider West End.

**\*30 South Marine Plan Draft for consultation – November 16**

The draft plan by the Marine Management Organisation is currently under consultation until late January 2017. The draft plan, when adopted, contains policies that, as well as guiding development that affects the marine environment, could also be relevant to the consideration of planning applications with close links to the coast, with a direct overlap between terrestrial planning and the "intertidal" zone. The report set out what elements of the proposed plan were most relevant to the Council.

Legal observations were amended to those shown on the printed agenda as being "contained within the report".

In response to a question about the involvement of the Ministry of Defence, the response was that they were sometimes required as a consultee, but this was rare. However the adoption of the plan gave clear policy to consider if such a planning application arose –

examples given included for an offshore wind farm.

**RESOLVED:**

1. that the Strategic Planning Committee recognises the importance of the draft Marine Plan to the activities of the Council, including planning decisions, policy development and advice on neighbourhood planning;
2. that the Council submits comments of support in response to the consultation on the draft Marine Plan.

**31 Status of Planning Guidance**

The report set out the consolidation process of planning guidance, to seek out elements that were now outdated or superseded. This included relating to sites that have been developed, and the adoption of a new Local Plan.

The specific elements were set out in the report for the committee to consider for withdraw, including the reasons for removing it. This consolidation would give clarity to the Development Management Committee on planning guidance for their use in determination of planning applications.

The work of the service was commended in ensuring that relevant guidance was retained and updated.

**RECOMMENDED:** that Cabinet confirms withdrawal of the Planning Guidance shown in the table at 2.5 listed as 'Withdraw' in the committee report "Status of Planning Guidance" as reported to the Strategic Planning Committee on 17 January 2017.

**RESOLVED:** that the Strategic Planning Committee;

1. Confirms that the former Supplementary Planning Guidance documents listed in the table at 2.5 as "Change status to endorsed" in the committee report be used as guidance to inform decision making.
2. Notes the further work required to update the Conservation Area Appraisals and agrees that the existing documents continue to be used as guidance to inform decision making in the meantime.

**Attendance list**

**Committee Members:**

Councillors

Peter Bowden – Vice Chairman in the Chair

Mike Howe – Acting Vice Chairman

Mike Allen

Susie Bond

Peter Burrows

Jill Elson

Graham Godbeer

Geoff Jung

David Key

Rob Longhurst

Philip Skinner

Brenda Taylor

Mark Williamson

**Also present (present for all or part of the meeting):**

Councillors:  
Geoff Pook  
Colin Brown  
Brian Bailey  
Tom Wright  
Peter Faithfull

**Officers present (present for all or part of the meeting):**

Mark Williams, Chief Executive  
Matt Dickins, Planning Policy Manager  
Ed Freeman, Service Lead – Strategic Planning and Development Management  
Chris Rose, Development Manager  
Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead – Governance and Licensing  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

**Apologies**

**Committee Members:**  
Andrew Moulding

Chairman ..... Date.....