

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Policy Advisory Group held on  
Thursday, 18 January 2007 at 10.00am

Councillors:	RE Barrett	RF Bryant
	Mrs PS Corney	Mrs A Elsby
	R Hall	SGM Kindersley
	RB Martlew	MJ Mason
	Mrs CAED Murfitt	CR Nightingale
	JH Stewart	

and Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder).

Officers:	Paul Cook	Head of Service Transport Policy and Strategy, Cambridgeshire County Council
	Jonathan Dixon	Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
	Caroline Hunt	Principal Planning Policy Officer
	Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer

Councillors Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs CA Hunt, RMA Manning, AG Orgee, Mrs HM Smith and RJ Turner were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors NIC Wright.

### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt in the Chair in her capacity of Chairman of the Council.

Upon the proposal of Councillor RE Barrett, seconded by Councillor CR Nightingale, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Mrs DSK Spink be elected Chairman of the Planning Policy Advisory Group for the year 2006-2007.

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

Upon the proposal of Councillor SGM Kindersley, seconded generally, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Mrs PS Corney be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Planning Policy Advisory Group for the year 2006-2007.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors SGM Kindersley, A Orgee and RJ Turner declared personal interests as Cambridgeshire County Councillors.

### **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Planning Policy Advisory Group agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2005 were an accurate record.

### **5. CAMBRIDGE EAST SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT STUDY**

The Planning Policy Advisory Group considered a report outlining the contents of a study commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council to examine the potential transport issues arising from the proposed development of Cambridge East.

Martin Higgett of Steer Davies Gleeve made a PowerPoint presentation to Members, focusing on:

- The Cambridge Growth Area
- Cambridge East Development Proposals
- Area Action Plan – planning and transport policies
- Purpose and objectives of the transport study
- The process
- Main destinations and options – Cambridge Northern Fringe, City centre, Cambridge Southern Fringe and the wider area
- Phasing
- Implications
- Impact on the surrounding road network

The following points were discussed:

- The intended routing of public transport from Cambridge East to the Cambridge Southern Fringe
  - Promotion of the local accessibility within Cambridge East while allowing easy access to the wider City
  - employment opportunities
  - the future of Cambridge Airport and the implications of its relocation, including sustainability
  - The mechanics of the County Council's modelling process
  - the viability of Cambridge East as a self-standing community
- the proposed 60/ 40 (public / private) transport split

## 6. REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

The Planning Policy Advisory Group considered a report outlining the outcomes from the Government's consultation on the proposed changes to the draft revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy.

The following points were made during debate:

**Implications.** The District had already accepted significant growth, and the RSS appeared to be suggesting yet more. Proposed removal of the descriptive term 'compact' from Cambridge City also had implications for South Cambridgeshire in that it could result in unsustainable urban sprawl. Housing aspirations could mean that every developable piece of land within the City boundaries would be built on, resulting in any further expansion inevitably taking place within South Cambridgeshire. The 'minimum' figure for housing (rather than a 'ceiling') means that it will be a problem to control development in South Cambridgeshire in the future.

**Affordable Housing.** South Cambridgeshire District Council should press for the reinstatement of the goal that 40% of new housing should be affordable, at least in South Cambridgeshire if not the Cambridge Sub-Region. Depending on the extent of growth, this 40% figure might eventually have to be revised upwards. Ultimately, if people could not find affordable housing within the Cambridge Sub-Region then they will have no alternative but to commute from further away, thus leading to greater unsustainability.

**Climate Change and Sustainability.** The Government had stated that the implications of climate change should be considered, but this seemed not to link with its proposed

development of the Cambridge Sub-Region. Renewable energy should amount to more than 10% of provision – it should be 80-90% if climate change was to be taken seriously. There was an urgent need for new Building Regulations. The RSS should not set targets that were not achievable in a sustainable way. For sustainable development any new growth should be centred on the market towns.

**Public Transport and cycling.** New infrastructure was behind schedule (as with the Guided Busway) or else being eroded while, at the same time, increased growth was expected. The RSS had removed much-needed infrastructure enhancements, including to the M11 and A428.

**Employment.** The continued link between employment allocation and employment growth needed to be reviewed. Employment should be required to contribute to the provision of affordable housing.

**Utilities.** Further development would bring pressure to bear on dwindling water resources and have serious drainage impacts. The apparent contradiction in paragraph 52 of the report was a great concern, namely

*“Also in Policy WAT2 it is proposed that LDDs should plan to site new development so as to maximise the potential of existing water/ waste water treatment infrastructure, thereby minimising the need for new / improved infrastructure. This could re-emphasise the idea of clustering more growth around Cambridge since the waste water treatment works in the north of Cambridge is capable of taking more waste without the need for re-location.”*

**Area of Restraint.** The draft RSS had referred to an area of restraint in the northern part of Uttlesford district – this should be expanded to include South Cambridgeshire. New houses to the south of Cambridge will be for commuters.

**Prosperity.** This should be distributed throughout the Cambridge Sub-Region, including Fenland, to Huntingdonshire and the Haverhill area. The option of working with Forest Heath District Council should be explored. In the longer term, development should be spread across the entire country, rather than concentrated simply in London and the South East.

The Planning Policy Advisory Group agreed that South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council should endeavour to agree a joint response on the changes to the Regional Spatial Strategy.

---

**The Meeting ended at 12.25 p.m.**

---