

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Planning Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on  
Thursday, 9 July 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

Portfolio Holder: Robert Turner

### **Councillors in attendance:**

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors: Kevin Cuffley

Opposition spokesmen: Aidan Van de Weyer

Also in attendance: David Bard, Anna Bradnam, Peter Johnson,  
Janet Lockwood, Des O'Brien, Ben Shelton and  
John Williams

Councillor Henry Batchelor (an Opposition spokesman) was unable to attend the meeting.

### **Officers:**

Jonathan Dixon	Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Caroline Hunt	Planning Policy Manager
Jo Mills	Planning and New Communities Director
Jennifer Nuttycombe	Senior Planning Policy Officer
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Planning Portfolio Holder signed, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2015.

### **3. SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL PLAN - RESPONSE TO INSPECTORS' LETTER**

The Planning Portfolio Holder considered a report summarising the response to the Inspectors' letter asking for further work to be carried out on the Local Plan. That response had been submitted on 30 June 2015 following the resolution of the Extraordinary Council meeting on 4 June 2015, and other related matters.

While disappointed by the Inspectors' letter, the Planning Policy Manager welcomed the opportunity to address their concerns at an interim stage of the Local Plan Examination. She referred the Portfolio Holder, and others present, to the three key areas identified as needing further attention, namely

- Evidence of housing numbers
- Development strategy
- Conformity with revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

and, specifically, to Appendices 1 and 2 attached to the report from the Planning and New Communities Director. The proposed timetable was to seek the Planning Portfolio Holder's endorsement of the additional work, and any proposed modifications to the Local Plan, in October 2015, with public consultation during November and December, and for the

additional work to be submitted to the Examination in February 2016. The Planning Policy Manager recognised the importance of striking a balance between moving forward efficiently and effectively, and ensuring that the work was robust.

In response to a question about the adequacy of Council resources given the amount of additional work required, the Portfolio Holder referred to paragraph 28 of the report, indicating that South Cambridgeshire District Council's share of the joint work with Cambridge City Council had been estimated at about £150,000. The Planning Policy Manager outlined some of the actions that were already taking place. These included joint meetings with the City Council and some external work with regard to the Cambridge Green Belt. The Planning and New Communities Director added that the District and City Councils were also working with other bodies, such as the Joint Strategic Planning Unit and Cambridgeshire County Council.

In response to a question about the 'Planning Obligation Justification' template mentioned in paragraph 18, the Planning and New Communities Director confirmed that this template is intended to assist the presentation of reports but does not affect the way the judgements are made. She reported that reports to Planning Committee will start to include the new template. She said that cases would continue to be brought to Committee in a timely manner as delay could result in the Council being challenged. As stated in the report, the Council is seeking an independent assessment of the way it is dealing with applications made under the lack of a five-year supply, and the findings would be reported to the Planning Portfolio Holder meeting on 10 August 2015.

In response to a question as to when the two Councils could expect to hear whether the Inspectors were minded to endorse the joint trajectory approach to housing delivery, the Planning Policy Manager referred to the letter attached at Appendix 3 to the report from the Planning and New Communities Director, and advised that they were in the Inspectors' hands in terms of when a response might be received. This letter suggested that, should the Inspectors be satisfied in principle with the joint trajectory approach, they could prepare a single issue report addressing that point, thus providing clarity and enabling the two Councils to resolve the situation with regard to the five-year land supply as soon as possible. The Portfolio Holder said that, until that situation had been resolved, South Cambridgeshire District Council could continue to rely on the NPPF, as well as those local policies which remain relevant, in determining planning applications within its area.

In response to a question, the Planning Policy Manager outlined the relationship between the joint trajectory and five-year housing supply,

In response to a question about whether officers would seek to justify the Local Plan as it stands, subject only to the reassessed elements, or revisit it in full, the Planning Policy Manager reiterated the approach, and said a number of factors would be taken into account in judging whether the additional work supported the Plan as submitted or whether there was a need to consider adjusting the balance between proposals for new settlements and the Cambridge City Fringe. In addition, further transport modelling was being carried out in order to consider again the question of infrastructure delivery for new settlements.

In response to a question about the make-up of the team undertaking the work requested by the Inspectors, the Planning Policy Manager said that South Cambridgeshire District Council's in-house Planning Policy officers were working closely with officers at the City Council and would be supported by the Planning Officers Society, acting as a "critical friend". The Planning and New Communities Director also highlighted the need for the District Council to work closely with Cambridgeshire County Council (as Local Highways Authority) in order to be consistent on transport issues.

In response to a question about the Local Plan evidence, the Planning Policy Manager commented that the Inspectors had highlighted where they considered evidence needed refreshing and that the Councils had asked the Inspectors' view on the intention to carry out a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment with adjoining Councils, taking account of current guidance, which could be prepared in parallel with the work identified in the Inspectors' letter.

In response to a question about the Greater Cambridge City Deal, the Planning Policy Manager suggested that the City Deal was about helping to deliver the development strategy determined by the Local Plans and in particular the key infrastructure to deliver growth.

The Portfolio Holder expressed confidence in the comprehensive approach being adopted by officers.

A supportive statement from the Planning Committee Chairman was read out to those present.

The Planning Portfolio Holder:

1. **noted** the letter responding to the Inspectors' preliminary conclusions, and endorsed the plan for the additional work;
2. **received and noted** the independent advice on managing planning applications while the Council was unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply;
3. **noted** and **endorsed** the advice provided on bringing forward the Community Infrastructure Levy; and
4. **noted** and **endorsed** the proposed review of the Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment.

#### 4. **CONSULTATION ON CAMBRIDGESHIRE FLOOD AND WATER SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

The Planning Portfolio Holder considered a report seeking his agreement for the draft Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to be published for consultation.

In response to a question, the Principal Planning Policy Officer said that Cambridgeshire County Council's consultation on the Cambridgeshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was related to its role as Lead Local Flood Authority, whereas the Cambridgeshire Flood & Water SPD had been prepared by the County Council in conjunction with all the local planning authorities in Cambridgeshire to support the implementation of flooding and water related policies in each authority's Local Plans. Once adopted by all of the district councils in Cambridgeshire, or a substantial number of them, the SPD would assist the County Council in its role as a statutory consultee.

The Planning Portfolio Holder:

- (a) **agreed** that the draft Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (Appendix 1 to the report) be issued for consultation;

- (b) **agreed** the draft Adoption and Maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems in South Cambridgeshire document be issued for consultation (Appendix 2 to the report);
- (c) **agreed** an addendum to the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Scheme setting out the timetable for the preparation of this SPD (Appendix 3 to the report); and
- (d) **delegated** any further minor editing of the SPD and approval of the supporting and technical documents to the Director of Planning and New Communities.

## 5. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Planning Portfolio Holder received and noted the Work Programme attached to the agenda.

One Member expressed some reservation about moving towards a paperless planning service.

## 6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Planning Portfolio Holder meeting would take place on Monday 10 August 2015, starting at 2.00pm.

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**The Meeting ended at 11.05 a.m.**

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