

## PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S MEETING

MONDAY, 14 MARCH 2016

### DECISIONS

Set out below is a summary of the decisions taken at the Planning Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on Monday, 14 March 2016. Decisions made by the Portfolio Holder will be subject to call-in. Recommendations made to the Cabinet or to the Council are not subject to call-in. The wording used does not necessarily reflect the actual wording that will appear in the minutes.

If you have any queries about any matters referred to in this decision sheet please contact Victoria Wallace.

#### 1. LOCAL PLAN

The Leader of the Council acting on behalf of the Portfolio Holder, **AGREED** the following recommendations to Full Council:

- a) That the Report on Consultation (Appendix A), the Proposed Modifications (Appendix C) and the supplement to the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum (Appendix E) be submitted for consideration by Full Council on 23 March 2016 and approved for submission to the Inspectors examining the Local Plan;
- b) To agree that the documents attached to the report as Appendices F to J are noted and submitted as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan;
- c) To agree that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and New Communities to make any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder.

#### Other Options Considered:

- a) Agree the Report on Consultation, the proposed Modifications and the supplement to the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum for consideration by Full Council; or
- b) Agree the Report on Consultation, with amendments to the Proposed Modifications and the supplement to the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum for consideration by Full Council; or
- c) Not to agree the Report on Consultation, the Proposed Modifications and the supplement to the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum for consideration by Full Council.

**Reason For Decision:** The report follows on from the consultation on proposed modifications to the Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan held between 2 December 2015 and 25 January 2016.

#### 2. AMENDMENTS TO SCHEME OF DELEGATED POWERS AND FUNCTIONS FOR PLANNING DECISIONS

The Leader of the Council acting on behalf of the Portfolio Holder, **ENDORSED** and **RECOMMENDED** to the Planning Committee that the current scheme of delegation be amended in the following manner:

- a) To allow all decisions to be delegated other than those listed in Appendix A of the report.
- b) That the time given for District Councillors to request an application be considered by Planning Committee is extended from 21 to 28 days.
- c) That the automatic referral to Planning Committee is removed when an officer recommendation of approval conflicts with representations by the Parish Council

and these cannot be substantially addressed by planning condition. Instead this is replaced by the right of the Parish Council to request an application is considered by Planning Committee. The request must be supported by material planning reasons and the final decision on whether the application is considered by Planning Committee will be taken by the Chairman of Planning Committee as advised by the Designated Officer (Head of Development Management or Head of New Communities).

The Leader of the Council **AGREED** that the Revised Scheme of Delegation should be given at least one year to bed in, and a formal review process involving Parish Councils should take place within 24 months.

**Other Options Considered:**

1. The earlier scheme which was discussed and consulted In September/October included replacing the automatic referral for Parish Councils with one by District Councillors only, with the aim of encouraging Parish Councils and District Councillors to work more closely together to represent local community views. A large number of Parish Councils were concerned by this approach which left District Councillors as gate keepers.
2. Following discussions with both District- and Parish Councillors at the Parish Planning Forum on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015, the current proposals emerged and gained considerable support. These were the subject of further consultation in January/February 2016.
3. Extending the current referral arrangement of Parish Councils to one of full delegation for decision upon certain types of applications was outlined in an earlier Portfolio Holder report but not taken forward. This has been explored in the past by a few Councils, notably Cornwall and Chelmsford but has been rejected in order for the District Council to retain its integrity and responsibility as the Local Planning Authority. The desire to make planning decisions at a more local level has resulted in area planning committees in various authorities. These are however expensive to run and can be complex in operation.
4. Leaving the Scheme of Delegation unchanged is not an option given the current high number of planning applications and the need to ensure that Planning Committee is able to focus on the more significant and controversial applications as well as having time to prepare by way of briefings and training.

**Reason For Decision:** This proposal forms part of a programme of changes to improve processes within the Planning Service to ensure it is providing an efficient and effective service to all its customers. In this new format, the Scheme can readily accommodate any future changes in national regulation and policy e.g. new types of application or prior notifications.

It will allow Planning Committee to focus on the most significant and/or contentious planning applications and support closer working between Parish Councils and their District Councillors.

### 3. **RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON STRATEGIC POLICIES IN THE ADOPTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

The Leader of the Council acting on behalf of the Portfolio Holder:

- a) **NOTED** the comments made during the consultation about strategic policies with parish councils in South Cambridgeshire contained in Appendix B of the report
- b) **AGREED** the policies in the currently adopted development plan for South Cambridgeshire that are to be considered as strategic for the purposes of neighbourhood planning.

**Other Options Considered:** The Portfolio Holder could:

- (a) Decide to formally agree the list of strategic policies as subject to consultation with PCs.
- (b) Decide to delay identifying the strategic policies in the adopted development plan, making the assumption that PCs will not progress their NP until after the Submission Local Plan is adopted. However this would lead to uncertainty for PCs preparing plans as they would not know which policies in the development plan they should conform with and could introduce unnecessary delay for these local communities who wish to progress their NP towards adoption in advance of the adoption of the Local Plan.

**Reason For Decision:** It was agreed at the Planning Portfolio Holder meeting on 4 December 2015 that a consultation should take place with interested parties such as parish councils on the list of policies in the adopted development plan proposed to be identified as strategic policies for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. The consultation was intended to give the opportunity for Parish Councils to comment on the draft list before it is formally adopted by the Council in view of the significance of the list to Parish Councils in the context of the preparation of neighbourhood plans.