

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Joint Local Planning Advisory Group held on
Monday, 24 October 2022 at 5.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins – Chair
Councillor Katie Thornburrow – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Tim Bick Neil Shailer
Simon Smith Peter Sandford

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Laurence Damary-Homan (Democratic Services Officer), Ciaran Davis (Policy Planner), Jonathan Dixon (Planning Policy Manager), Caroline Hunt (Strategy and Economy Manager) and Jenny Nuttycombe (Principal Planning Policy Officer)

Councillors Jenny Gawthrop Wood, Geoff Harvey, Pippa Heylings and Martin Smart were in attendance.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Dr Aidan Van de Weyer sent apologies for absence and was substituted by Councillor Peter Sandford.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

With respect to Minute 4 of the meeting held on 08 September 2021, an amendment was made on page 3 where a bullet point for “Biodiversity and green spaces” was added to the list of new areas of policy highlighted in the presentation. With this amendment, the Group, by affirmation, authorised the Chair to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 08 September 2021 as a correct record.

By affirmation, the Group authorised the Chair to sign the Minutes of the meetings held on 30 November 2021 and 08 October 2022 as a correct record.

4. STRATEGY AND SITES

The Strategy and Economy Manager introduced the report and the Principal Planning Policy Officer presented the Strategy section of the report. Members discussed a number of topics.

Water resources and environmental impacts were discussed. Members raised queries about the levels and types of protection afforded to areas of environmental significance, such as chalk streams, and how acceptable levels of environmental harm was defined. Further discussion was held on water resources and the infrastructure requirements, as well as the necessity for comprehensive contingency plans, particularly around reservoirs, to be put into place. Concerns over the impact of climate change and existing levels of water extraction were raised. Officers offered insight into the necessity to evaluate water issues once Water Management Plans had been published by the relevant water companies and feedback had been given by other bodies, such as the Environment

Agency. Members were assured that they would be consulted on water strategies once the relevant information was available and assessments had been made.

Housing delivery was also discussed. To mitigate concerns over overdependence on strategic sites, it was requested that an overview of existing allocations and consents for new housing be brought forward alongside an analysis of projected trajectory of housing delivery- officers stated that this could be brought to a future meeting. The lag between the completion of housing developments and the linked supporting infrastructure was raised as a serious point of concern and the Group felt that it was imperative to coordinate the completion of infrastructure projects alongside housing development for the sake of good place building. The concerns of residents in existing communities being left behind by growth was raised and Members felt it was important that messaging around the Local Plan detail the benefits of growth as well as addressing concerns. Officers offered response to points raised and the Group noted that, with the session covering a broad overview, many issues would be addressed under more specific headings in future meetings.

The Strategy and Economy Manager presented an overview of the Sites section of the report and the Cambridge urban area sub section. The edge of Cambridge sub section was presented by the Policy Planner, new settlements was presented by the Planning Policy Manager and the Principal Planning Policy Officer presented the rural southern cluster sub section. Members raised a number of points.

The importance of good place making was stressed by the Group and it was suggested that urban design guidance and frameworks needed to be robust to provide a blueprint for developers, allowing for a reduction in the amount of required responses to developers regarding their urban design. Members noted the desires of residents to see improvements to protected open spaces implemented as part of the development process.

Affordable homes, infrastructure and links to the University in Eddington were discussed; Members stated that affordable homes for all would be desirable and noted that changes to the policy for the area from that in the Area Action Plan were likely to be forthcoming- officers informed the Group that they were awaiting updates from the University on their housing need.

Comments on village boundaries, as defined by Village Development Frameworks, and the desire for greater flexibility from some were noted by the Group. Members acknowledged the challenge of striking the balance between allowing development and also protecting existing communities. Officers highlighted the ongoing work on the housing delivery study and informed the Group that the comments from the consultations were being utilised in this process.

Members raised the need for effective transport links in rural areas and discussion over the impact and challenges of the East-West Rail development was held- the Group was informed that the East-West Rail project was still in the early stages.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Group was informed that the next meeting was to be held on Monday 21 November 2022.

The Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.
