
LOCAL PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE**MINUTES**

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Thursday 7 March 2019 between 7pm and 8.25pm.

Councillors present:

Martin Trevett (Chairman)	Chris Lloyd
Sara Bedford	Angela Killick
Stephen Cox	Alison Wall
Keith Martin (for Cllr Giles-Medhurst)	Paula Hiscocks
Matthew Bedford (for Cllr Michaels)	

Also in attendance: Councillors Marilyn Butler, Joanna Clemens, Reena Ranger and David Sansom.

Officers Present: Geof Muggerridge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
Claire May, Head of Planning Policy and Projects
Marko Kalik, Senior Planning Officer
Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

LPSC09/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stephen Giles-Medhurst and Alex Michaels with Councillors Keith Martin and Matthew Bedford being appointed substitute Members.

LPSC10/18 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Local Plan sub-committee meeting held on 7 February 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

LPSC11/18 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman ruled that the following item of business had not been available 5 clear working days before the meeting but was of sufficient urgency for the following reasons:

Local Plan Update

To enable the Council to progress the work required for the Local Plan.

LPSC12/18 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received.

LPSC13/18 LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

The Committee received a report providing:

- A summary of the responses to the Potential sites consultation
- An update on the standard method of calculating Housing Need
- Details on the Housing Delivery Test and Action Plan
- An update on the 5 year housing supply and details of the Annual Position Statement

Potential sites consultation responses

Members noted that the responses provided in Appendix 1 of the report were from statutory consultees (e.g. Herts County Council, Environment Agency, Parish Councils, local Water Company and neighbouring Borough Council). The statutory consultees were set out in legislation and the information they had provided would feed into the SHELAA process.

Concern was raised that the library site in Rickmansworth had been included as a potential site. It was advised that no decision had been made on the site and any development would come forward as a planning application in the public domain and at a Planning Committee meeting. The Council had to consider better uses of its assets following the huge spending cuts made by the Government.

Clarity was requested with regard to the Green Belt review and how this tied into the Local Plan process. Officers clarified that the Stage 1 Review objective was to consider the extent to which land met the 5 purposes of Green Belt set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018). These were to:

- check unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The study found that all the Green Belt across the District made at least some contribution, and in most cases a significant contribution to the 5 purposes.

A further review to look at smaller parcels of land would be undertaken in a Green Belt Stage 2 Review. This study would provide a more detailed analysis of smaller scale parcels and their performance against the 5 purposes of Green Belt as set out in the NPPF (2018). Members noted that if parcels of land were found to be making a positive contribution to the Green Belt, it did not mean that it could not be developed. There may be exceptional circumstances that warrant Green Belt removal, such as sustainability of a site. This further review would be published with the draft Local Plan.

The draft Local Plan would be available in September for the Policy and Resources Committee to consider.

It was noted that there was a reliance on consultants to provide the study information for the reviews. The longer the Council spent without a local plan in place the risk this could have on the Council.

It was noted that many Councils were not undertaking their meetings in the public domain but this Council was. In addition we had undertaken an additional non-statutory consultation to that required by regulation.

With regard to the site at Junction 17 of the M25 only statutory consultee responses had been provided. All individual comments received had been lodged including those from Residents Associations.

On the infrastructure which would be required all comments would be considered during the local plan process.

Members thanked Claire and her team on the work they had done and their explanations on the process for the Local Plan.

On a question raised with regard to the coalescence of Green Belt land it was advised that the Green Belt boundaries could not be changed unless in exceptional circumstances.

The use of brownfield land/urban land would be the priority and conversations would have to be had with neighbouring authorities as to whether they could provide land for our housing target but it was unlikely that they would be able to do so.

Concern was raised regarding the infrastructure delivery plan and ensuring that the required infrastructure was put in place. The current infrastructure fell short of what was needed in the area. Officers advised that the evidence based studies would inform the infrastructure requirements for the future. Officers agreed to circulate the current infrastructure delivery document to the sub-committee.

The Herts County Council (HCC) Growth Board was responsible for infrastructure delivery in Hertfordshire and would require six billion pounds to deliver the infrastructure required for the County.

Update to the Standard Method for Calculating Housing Need

Councillor Martin Trevett moved, seconded by Councillor Chris Lloyd that it be recommended that the Council write to the three MPs in the Three Rivers area with regard to method for calculating housing needs and the proposed increase in our housing need figures.

The motion on being put to the sub-committee was declared CARRIED by the Chairman the voting being 8 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention.

Housing Delivery test and action plan

It was asked if the infrastructure delivery plan showed it was not possible to deliver the infrastructure required could the number of homes be reduced to meet the plan. Officers advised that there was not one piece of infrastructure to prevent development going ahead. The Council would work closely with the infrastructure providers on what would be needed but there was no guarantee that the required infrastructure would be provided.

The number of homes needed to be built came from the Government and if the Council did not meet this the Government could take over the Local Plan process. Under the NPPF it was our duty to work with other authorities. This Council only had a duty to work with infrastructure providers not to provide it.

The 5 year housing land supply and annual position statement

With regard to the Local Plan being out of date, it was not due to the lack of housing supply. As Members were aware, the Local plan is reviewed every 5

years and the Council had allocated sufficient land for housing. It was the Government who had changed our housing target.

The Annual Monitoring Report published in December had identified that the Council were unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing against the housing target set by the standard method.

It was noted that some items of business would need to be taken in Part II due to the commercial confidentiality of the work or the identification of an individual. The agendas for the meeting will be published on the Council's website. The Part II reports would remain confidential until such time as the information can be published for the press and public although all recommendations from the sub-committee will go to the Policy and Resources Committee in Part I and will be public documents in September 2019.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That it be recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee that the Council write to the three MPs in the Three Rivers area with regard to method for calculating housing needs and the proposed increase in our housing need figures; and
3. To circulate the current infrastructure delivery document to the sub-committee.

LPSC14/18 FURTHER MEETING DATES

The sub-committee received a verbal update on further meetings to the end of September 2019. It was agreed that the Committee team would circulate dates to the members of the sub-committee to agree.

POST MEETING NOTE:

Thursday 20 June
Thursday 4 July
Monday 15 July
Thursday 8 August
Thursday 22 August
Wednesday 11 September
Wednesday 25 September

LPSC15/18 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman moved the following motion, duly seconded, and it was agreed:

that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraphs (2 and 3) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

LPSC16/18 LOCAL PLAN SITES

This report provided details of sites that had been identified to date as being unsuitable for allocation for development through the Local Plan.

With regard to the flood risk levels it was agreed that Members would be provided details on the various levels of flood risk for the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Local Plan Sub Committee:

- Note the contents of this report; and
- That public access to the report and minutes be denied until the publication of the Draft Local Plan.

CHAIRMAN