

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON THURSDAY
25 JULY 2013, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Carver (Chairman)
Councillors L Haysey and S Rutland-Barsby.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors W Ashley, R Beeching,
A Jackson, J Jones, M McMullen, T Page,
M Pope, J Ranger, J Thornton and
G Williamson.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Kay Mead	- Senior Planning Officer
Martin Paine	- Senior Planning Officer
Jenny Pierce	- Senior Planning Officer
Claire Sime	- Planning Policy Team Leader
Katie Simpson	- Assistant Planning Officer
Brendan Starkey	- Assistant Planning Officer
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Bryan Thomsett	- Planning Policy Manager

1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Panel Chairman welcomed the press, public and Members and reminded them that the meeting was being webcast. He also welcomed Councillor S Rutland-Barsby to her first meeting as a Panel Member and Brendan Starkey, a new addition to the Planning Policy team.

The Chairman reminded Members of the training day that had been arranged in conjunction with the Planning Advisory Service, for 24 October 2013. This would be a very important session and all Members were urged to attend. He also referred to a meeting with the East Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils on 20 September 2013.

Finally, the Chairman commented that the informal group continued to look at emerging policies and reminded Members of the process, namely that, all proposals would be submitted to Council for decision, via the Executive and this Panel.

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 21 February 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

In respect of Minute 8 – Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) – Round 3 – Update, the Panel Chairman declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in that he was Chairman of Hertford Regional College and would leave the room in the event of there being any substantial discussion of specific sites.

4 **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI): PROPOSED ADOPTION OF DOCUMENT FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report detailing the results of the

Council's public consultation on its Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sought agreement to adopt a revised document.

The Panel noted that 23 responses had been received from 20 respondents in relation to the consultation. The matters raised in these submissions were detailed in the schedule attached to the report submitted at Essential Reference Paper 'B'. This included summaries of the main issues raised, the Officer responses to those issues, and proposed amendments to the SCI, where appropriate. Several representations had suggested amendments that would add value to the SCI either in terms of factual content or for clarification of the proposed text. For these cases, proposed amendments to the document had been suggested in the schedule. Additional to the issues raised during the consultation, one further suggested amendment was also made to the SCI document for consistency reasons.

The Panel recommended the proposed changes and the adoption of the SCI as now submitted.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Draft East Herts Statement of Community Involvement be supported; and

(B) the East Herts Statement of Community Involvement, 2013 be supported for adoption.

5 DISTRICT PLAN - UPDATE REPORT

The Panel considered a report setting out the progress made towards finalisation of a development strategy for the District. Approval was sought towards consolidation of the two-part plan into a single District Plan, which provided for an early review of the plan to address long-term planning requirements. An updated stepped approach was set out at Essential Reference 'B' of the

report submitted.

The Panel also noted that there was an important gap in the Council's knowledge relating to infrastructure delivery considerations, notably in respect of the scope of evidence that might be required as part of the plan-making process, and the robustness of information that had to date been made available to the Council.

Therefore, Officers had requested support from the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS), an independent advisory service available to support local authorities in dealing with complex and large scale development projects.

The Panel noted that, subject to unforeseen circumstances, it would be possible to present a draft District Plan to Members later this year, with consultation later this year/early next year.

Officers referred to paragraph 2.31 of the report submitted and asked the Panel to note an error, in that Uttlesford District Council were currently considering an application for 850 dwellings at Elsenham, and the matter was not subject to an appeal.

In response to various Members' comments and questions, Officers advised that further guidance from the Government on the interpretation of the Duty to Co-operate was expected imminently. In respect of infrastructure issues, the Panel was referred to ongoing correspondence with strategic partners as detailed in the report submitted. Overall, the Authority was well placed to deliver a robust and evidence-based Plan.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) a change to the structure of the District Plan, to combine Strategic Policies, Development Management Policies, and Site Allocations, into a single District Plan, be supported;

(B) an early review of the District Plan, based on a 'plan-monitor-and-manage' approach particularly in respect of long-term planning, be supported; and

(C) the approach to obtaining critical delivery information, including ATLAS project support, be supported.

6 DUTY TO CO-OPERATE – UPDATE REPORT

The Panel received a report summarising relevant information related to the Duty to Co-Operate involving each of the seven adjoining Local Planning Authorities. The report also sought endorsement of the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership's Memorandum of Understanding, as detailed in the report submitted.

The Panel noted an error at paragraph 2.23 of the report submitted, in that Uttlesford District Council was currently considering an application for 850 dwellings at Elsenham and the matter was not subject of an appeal. Also the application had been submitted by Fairfield Partnership and not Fairview Homes.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the current main issues relating to the Duty to Co-Operate involving adjoining authorities, be noted; and

(B) the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership Memorandum of Understanding, be supported for use in planning policy and development management work.

7 POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS – UPDATE REPORT

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and

Transport submitted a report updating Members on aspects of population and household projections. Recently published and emerging information, together with the ongoing interpretation by the Planning Inspectorate of 'objectively assessed housing need' in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), continued to indicate that East Herts Council might need to plan for the upper end of the range 10,000 to 17,000 dwellings over the 20 year period 2011 to 2031.

The Panel supported the recommendation now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that it be noted that recently published and emerging information, together with the ongoing interpretation by the Planning Inspectorate of 'objectively assessed housing need' in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), continues to indicate that East Herts Council may need to plan for the upper end of the range 10,000 to 17,000 dwellings over the 20 year period 2011 to 2031.

8 **STRATEGIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SLAA) – ROUND 3 – UPDATE REPORT**

The Panel considered a report which updated Members on the status of Round 3 of the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) and to provide an interim list of sites identified to date that will be considered for assessment in Round 3.

Officers advised that, for clarification purposes, site 20/010 in both Essential Reference Papers 'B' and 'C' had been renamed to 'Land to the north of the Turkey Farm Recreation Area'.

In response to Members' questions and comments, Officers reminded the Panel of the Call for Sites process and suggested that updates to the list could be reported as a regular item to the meetings with the East Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the list of identified sites, contained as Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ to the report submitted, which includes responses received to the Call for Sites, be noted and taken into account as part of the preparation of Round 3 of the East Herts Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA); and

(B) any future Call for Sites suggestions be included and assessed as part of the preparation of Round 3 of the SLAA, and subsequently as part of the annual monitoring and review of the SLAA.

9 **TOWN WIDE EMPLOYMENT STUDY FOR BISHOP’S STORTFORD (JUNE 2013)**

The Panel received a report summarising the findings of the Employment Study undertaken for Bishop’s Stortford by Wessex Economics, which sought endorsement to use the Study to inform the preparation of the East Herts District Plan.

The Panel supported the recommendation now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the Town Wide Employment Study of Bishop’s Stortford, June 2013, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan and for Development Management purposes in the determination of planning applications.

The meeting closed at 7.53 pm

Chairman
Date