

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON THURSDAY
25 FEBRUARY 2016, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor L Haysey (Chairman)
Councillors E Buckmaster and G Jones.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors A Alder, R Brunton, M Freeman,
J Goodeve, T Page, M Pope, P Ruffles,
S Rutland-Barsby, M Stevenson and
N Symonds.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Butcher	- Principal Planning Officer
Isabelle Hadow	- Senior Planning Officer
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Lorraine Kirk	- Senior Communications Officer
Kay Mead	- Principal Planning Officer
Jenny Pierce	- Principal Planning Officer
Claire Sime	- Planning Policy Manager
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Liz Watts	- Chief Executive

21 **HERTFORD TOWN CENTRE URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY
FEBRUARY 2016**

The Panel considered a report detailing the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy.

This had been developed by Tibbalds, a leading planning and urban design consultancy, working together with Hertfordshire County Council, East Herts Council and Hertford Town Council to develop a Vision and Urban Design Strategy for Hertford town centre. Key elements of the study brief were to consider the future of major sites, the design and management of the street scene and transport issues for the town centre.

To inform the developing Strategy, Tibbalds' expertise had been supplemented by property, retail, transport and landscape architectural specialists over the course of the project. Following two rounds of public consultation, a finalised Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy (HTCUDS) had been produced and this was detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted.

Various Members thanked the consultants, officers, the three councils and the public for their efforts and contributions. Members spoke of the need for concrete actions to follow on from the Strategy. To this end, an additional recommendation setting up a steering group to agree an action plan was supported.

In response to Members' comments and questions, Officers advised on the distinction between an urban strategy and a neighbourhood plan within the context of considering a planning application. The Panel noted that an adopted neighbourhood plan formed part of the development plan, whilst this Strategy did not, although it was a material consideration that could inform a planning application.

Officers also clarified the position on car parking spaces and advised that the Strategy provided a framework as a

starting point for improving parts of the town centre. Specific schemes brought forward would be subject to individual consultation, where any potential loss of on-street parking spaces would be considered at that stage.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy, February 2016, be approved as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan;

(B) the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy, February 2016, be approved to inform Development Management decisions; and

(C) a Steering Group be set up, including representatives from East Herts Council, Hertfordshire County Council and Hertford Town Council, to agree an action plan to bring forward appropriate projects in the short, medium and long term for the improvement and enhancement of the County Town, with a report on an action plan and identified projects being submitted to the Executive.

22 **BISHOP'S STORTFORD NORTH S106 SPORTS INVESTMENT STRATEGY, DECEMBER 2015**

The Panel considered a report presenting the Bishop's Stortford North Section 106 Sports Investment Strategy, to support the Council in its management of up to £3.65M Section 106 contribution for the improvement of local sports facilities. The report sought agreement to use the Strategy as part of the evidence base to inform and support preparation of the District Plan and to inform Development Management decisions. It also sought approval to empower the Steering Group to consider and make recommendations for future investments in consultation with relevant parties.

In response to Members' comments on the progress of the housing development and the potential benefits of the sports provision for residents of neighbouring authorities, Officers advised that these issues would be taken up by the proposed Steering Group.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the project prioritisation criteria be approved;

(B) the Steering Group, in conjunction with the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing, be empowered to consider and make recommendations on future investments to Council following consultation with the Sounding Board; and

(C) the Bishop's Stortford North S106 Sports Investment Strategy, December 2015, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support preparation of the East Herts District Plan and for Development Management purposes.

23 **STRATEGIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report updating the Panel on the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA). The Panel was advised that a number of sites still needed to be assessed. In the main, these were sites on the edge of the main settlements. However in addition, the sites that had formed Rounds 1 and 2 also needed to be re-assessed in order to ensure that the information previously presented was still up to date and that the assessments reflected the requirements of updated national planning guidance.

Officers advised that this further work would take place in Round 4. It was currently envisaged that a stakeholder

consultation would be undertaken on draft assessments in spring 2016. Following that, a final comprehensive version of the SLAA containing all sites would be completed prior to undertaking a Pre-Submission consultation on the District Plan.

The Panel supported the recommendation now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the SLAA Round 3 site assessments, and the ongoing process for completing the SLAA, be noted.

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DUTY TO CO-OPERATE UPDATE REPORT

The Panel received the notes of the latest round of Member-level meetings with adjoining Local Planning Authorities. Members were reminded of the Duty to Co-Operate and the need to engage constructively with a range of bodies throughout the plan-making process.

Officers advised that, as work on the District Plan progressed, it was expected that a series of Memoranda of Understanding would be agreed with neighbouring local authorities, and other bodies where considered appropriate. These would identify how strategic cross boundary issues had been addressed and would therefore form a key piece of evidence in support of the District Plan moving forward to Examination.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the notes of the Member-level meetings held with neighbouring local authorities be received; and

(B) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the District Planning Executive Panel Members, be authorised to prepare, agree and sign Memoranda of Understanding with neighbouring local authorities, and other bodies,

as appropriate.

25 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Panel Chairman welcomed Members and the public to the meeting and reminded them that the meeting was being webcast.

She advised on a recent visit by an experienced Inspector, who had suggested that, in respect of the progress of the District Plan, the Council appeared to be on the right lines. However, a couple of areas needed to be revisited, which would impact on the overall timetable for producing the Plan.

She advised that the provisional date for the next meeting on 7 April 2016 had now been cancelled. The next meetings were scheduled for 28 April and 24 May 2016. She also advised on dates for future consultative meetings with parish and town councils on 1 March and 5 May 2016.

26 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

27 EAST HERTS GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE ACCOMMODATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE FEBRUARY 2016

The Panel agreed to defer this item to the next meeting. Officers advised that as late information relating to site occupancy had only just become available, it was considered appropriate to defer deliberation in order to allow this new information to be fully considered. This would ensure a robust evidence base and avoid potential challenge at the Inspection stage.

RESOLVED – that this matter be deferred to the next Panel meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm

Chairman

Date