

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON THURSDAY
21 SEPTEMBER 2017, AT 7.00 PM

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors A Alder, P Ballam, R Brunton,
S Bull, M Casey, M Freeman, J Jones,
T Page, M Pope, S Rutland-Barsby,
N Symonds and K Warnell.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Butcher	-	Principal Planning Officer
Martin Ibrahim	-	Democratic Services Team Leader
Kay Mead	-	Principal Planning Officer
George Pavey	-	Planning Officer
Jenny Pierce	-	Principal Planning Officer
Claire Sime	-	Service Manager (Planning Policy)
Kevin Steptoe	-	Head of Planning and Building Control Services

1 **OPEN SPACES AND SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT
TECHNICAL STUDY (SEPTEMBER 2017)**

The Leader of the Council submitted a report summarising the findings of the Open Spaces and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study (September 2017), which sought agreement to use the Assessment to inform the preparation of the East Herts District Plan and to inform Development Management decisions. The Panel noted the importance of open space, sports, play and recreation facilities in enhancing people's quality of life

through improving wider health and wellbeing functions, helping to build inclusive communities and promoting healthy lifestyles.

In response to Members' questions and comments, Officers explained the rationale for different types of facilities being assessed according to walking or car travel distances. They also clarified the need for the conversion of adult football pitches to mini soccer use at appropriate times.

Ward Members referred to the level of participation in football in Buntingford and the need for more pitches.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) Parts 1 to 3 of the Open Spaces and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study (September 2017), be approved as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan;

(B) Parts 1 to 3 of the Open Spaces and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study (September 2017), be approved to inform Development Management decisions;

(C) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to agree Part 4 of the Open Spaces and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study (September 2017), as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan; and

(D) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to agree Part 4 of the Open Spaces and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study (September 2017), to inform Development Management decisions.

2 **DRAFT AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)**

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report seeking authority to produce a new draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which would sit alongside the East Herts District Plan once adopted. The new SPD would provide further guidance on the delivery of affordable housing in East Herts and would support Policy HOU3: Affordable Housing as set out in the emerging District Plan. Once adopted, the new SPD would replace the Council's current Affordable Housing SPD (January 2008).

The Executive Member referred to the need to address excluded groups and to look at developing a model section 106 agreement. In response to Members' comments and questions, Officers acknowledged that shared ownership would be looked at by the team.

The Panel supported the recommendation now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that a new draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be produced, with the content to be agreed in due course prior to public consultation.

3 **AGREEMENT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF USING THE COUNCIL'S COMPULSORY PURCHASE POWERS IN RESPECT OF LAND REQUIRED TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF THE GILSTON AREA**

The Panel considered a report seeking agreement for the principle of using the Council's Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers under Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in respect of land required to support development of the Gilston Area.

Officers clarified that the land promoted to the Council for

residential development was hatched in blue and not red as stated in paragraph 2.4 of the report submitted.

Councillor R Brunton referred to local residents' concerns about the uncertainties of the CPO process and sought assurance that all avenues would be exhausted before CPO powers were implemented. The Leader gave this assurance and spoke of the Council's commitment to negotiate as far as possible.

The Panel supported the recommendation now detailed.

RESOMMENDED – that it is agreed in principle that the use of the Council's Compulsory Purchase Order powers under Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in respect of the land identified in the report submitted be authorised, subject to a further report seeking authorisation to commence the process dealing with the detailed procedural and legal requirements and relevant considerations.

4 **HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN UPDATE**

The Leader submitted an update on the ongoing work on the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town proposal. She outlined the progress of various workstreams and the two consultancies that had been engaged.

The Panel noted the update.

RECOMMENDED – that the ongoing work in relation to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town be noted.

5 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS) SEPTEMBER 2017**

The Panel considered an updated version of the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS), the schedule and work programme that set out the timeline for preparation of the

District Plan. This would replace the LDS May 2016 (Version 6).

The schedule and work programme set out the timeline for the preparation of the District Plan.

In response to Members' comments on the potential for a delay in the adoption of the District Plan caused by a legal challenge, Officers expressed confidence that the submitted Plan was sound. The Leader warned of the dangers of a delay and the impact this would have on the Council's ability to resist inappropriate development.

The Panel supported the recommendation, as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the Local Development Scheme (LDS) September 2017, attached at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, be agreed to take effect from September 2017.

6 EAST HERTS APPROACH TO MASTER PLANNING

The Panel considered a report setting out the Council's approach to master planning, which sought agreement for its use to support the delivery of significant development sites in the District.

The Panel noted that throughout the development of the District Plan, the Council had emphasised the need to ensure that development of the highest quality came forward, fully supported by infrastructure which delivered a range of aspirations that the Council and the community in general had about the benefits to be delivered as part of development. These aspirations could be best identified and achieved through a collaborative master planning approach to the bringing forward of sites for development.

In response to Members' comments and questions,

Officers confirmed that no threshold on the size of development was proposed and that each development site would be considered on its merits. The Council would seek a collaborative approach that would involve discussions with all parties and this could apply to employment sites as well.

In respect of the Gilston area, Officers explained that it was too early to confirm the approach that would be taken at this stage and the various questions asked would be best answered by the steering group set up.

Regarding the Goods Yard site in Bishop's Stortford, Officers advised that, as this application was subject to appeal, some caution needed to be applied in any discussion. However, it was noted that a collaborative approach was being taken. Officers emphasised that the master planning approach would raise the bar and help the process of seeking the highest possible quality in design and development.

The Panel supported the recommendation now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the approach to master planning set out in the report submitted, be endorsed as the approach to be followed in relation to the development of significant development sites in East Herts.

7 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Panel Chairman welcomed Members, Officers and the public and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

She updated the meeting in terms of the District Plan's Examination in Public which was due to commence on 3 October 2017. She also advised that the Examination would be webcast.

8 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 8.08 pm

Chairman
Date