

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

PRESENT: Councillor M Carver (Chairman)
Councillor L Haysey.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors W Ashley, E Buckmaster,
Mrs R Cheswright, G Jones, G Lawrence,
M McMullen, M Newman, T Page, M Pope,
P Ruffles, S Rutland-Barsby, N Symonds,
G Williamson and B Wrangles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Lorraine Kirk	- Senior Communications Officer
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
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Bryan Thomsett	- Planning Policy Manager

20 DISTRICT PLAN PART 1 – UPDATE REPORT

The Panel considered a report which confirmed that the East of England Plan had been revoked on 3 January 2013. The Panel was advised of recent interpretation of objectively assessed need by the Planning Inspectorate, which suggested that East Herts Council might need to plan for the upper end of the previously agreed range of 10,000 to 17,000 dwellings. Finally, Officers advised that because of continued uncertainty in relation to transport and schools planning, combined with the requirement for the Plan to be effective throughout its period, the consultation draft District Plan, was of necessity, subject to further delay.

Members asked questions and commented on the recent interpretation of objectively assessed need by the Planning Inspectorate and its potential impact on the range of dwellings, given the previous population models reported to the Panel. Officers explained that further studies, such as Phase 4 of the Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts and the Sub-District Population and Household Forecasts, had since been published. Whilst noting that the interpretation suggested a higher number, there remained a great deal of work to undertake on the deliverability, given outstanding infrastructure and sustainability issues.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) recent interpretation of ‘objectively assessed housing need’ by the Planning Inspectorate be noted, which suggests that East Herts Council may need to plan for the upper end of the range 10,000-17,000 dwellings over 20 years; and

(B) a further delay to the finalisation of the District Plan Part 1: Strategy be supported, until such time as a resolution to the outstanding

strategic issues can be found.

21 **DISTRICT PLAN PART 1 – STRATEGY SUPPORTING DOCUMENT: MEMBER COMMENTS AND ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS TO TEXT**

The Panel gave consideration to a report detailing the issues that had been raised in the responses made by Members following the previous Panel meeting held on 28 November 2012, in respect of the feedback period agreed regarding the District Plan Part 1 – Strategy Supporting Document: Update Report (Agenda Item 11), which concerned the first three sections of Chapter 5 - Options Refinement. The Panel was also advised of updated information received which necessitated revision to the Supporting Document at paragraphs 5.3.116 and 5.3.123, as now submitted.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses made by Members in respect of agenda item 11 of the District Planning Executive Panel on 28 November 2012 be noted;

(B) the Officer responses to the comments made and any consequent amendments to the District Plan: Part 1 - Strategy Supporting Document be supported; and

(C) the proposed amendments to the District Plan: Part 1 - Strategy Supporting Document at paragraphs 5.3.116 and 5.3.123 to be made as a result of the receipt of updated information, be supported.

22 **HABITATS REGULATION ASSESSMENT STAGE 1 –
SCREENING REPORT (DECEMBER 2012)**

The Panel considered the findings of the Stage 1 Screening Report Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Draft District Plan Part 1 – Strategy. This presented the HRA Screening Report and explained that a stepped approach to planning in relation to the potential impacts on European Sites was necessary.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED - that the Habitat Regulations Assessment Stage 1 – Screening Report (December 2012) be supported as part of the evidence base to inform the District Plan Part 1: Strategy.

23 **TRANSPORT MODELLING UPDATE AND DIAMOND
RESULTS**

The Panel considered a report presenting the results of the DIAMOND transport modelling of a range of development scenarios. The Panel noted that DIAMOND provided key messages in relation to options for large urban extensions, as set out in a Non-Technical Summary attached to the report now submitted. Officers advised that further work on transport modelling still needed to be completed, including the Harlow-Stansted-Gateway-Transport model, and that this delay had implications for the District Plan work programme as explained earlier in the meeting.

In response to Members' questions on the development scenarios, Officers advised that Hertfordshire County Council's transport specialists had been involved and were satisfied with the modelling. However, Officers were prepared to take up any specific queries with the County Council. Members were reminded that this was not a full transport model and that other modelling requirements

would be necessary.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the DIAMOND transport modelling work be supported as part of the technical evidence base to inform the District Plan Part 1 - Strategy; and

(B) East Herts Council implores the relevant transport authorities, including Essex County Council, Hertfordshire County Council, and the Highways Agency, to urgently work to identify a pragmatic solution to the evidence base for long-term transport planning issues, to enable East Herts Council to finalise a consultation draft of its District Plan and enable it to comply with its responsibilities as Local Planning Authority.

24 **FINANCIAL VIABILITY UPDATE AND STAGE 1 RESULTS**

The Panel gave consideration to a report explaining that assessing financial viability and costs was an important part of plan-making. This report presented the Executive Summaries of two important studies on the subject of financial viability. Officers advised that a stepped approach to financial viability and infrastructure planning would be necessary.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the Stage 1 Financial Viability technical work, be supported as part of the evidence base for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and for the District Plan Part 1 - Strategy; and

(B) the stepped approach to infrastructure planning outlined in this report, including a separate consultation on matters relating to financial viability, be supported.

25 **GREATER ESSEX DEMOGRAPHIC FORECASTS -
PHASES 1 TO 4 (MARCH 2012 - DECEMBER 2012)**

The Panel considered the findings of the Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts Phases 1 to 4 (March 2012 - January 2013) technical work, that was intended to form part of the evidence base for generating an appropriate District-wide housing target for East Herts to 2031, and to inform the preparation of the District Plan.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED - that the Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts Phases 1 to 4 (March 2012 - January 2013) technical study, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan.

26 **ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2011/12**

The Panel considered a report which sought approval for the publication of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2011/12. This aimed to monitor how the Council was performing against the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), and to report on the extent to which policies in local development documents were being successfully implemented. Officers advised of a number of tabled amendments to the AMR.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED - that the Annual Monitoring Report 2011/2012 contained as Essential Reference Paper 'B' and Essential Reference Paper 'C' to the report now submitted, be supported for publication.

27 **EAST HERTS LOCAL PLAN SECOND REVIEW (APRIL 2007) – NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) COMPATIBILITY SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

The Panel considered a report which assessed how well the current East Herts Local Plan Second Review (April 2007) reflected the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accompanying 'Planning policy for traveller sites'. The assessment had demonstrated that the overall aims and policies of the current Local Plan fitted well with the NPPF. However, some areas of the Local Plan did not fully conform with the NPPF, in particular, the Council could not demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites.

The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the NPPF Compatibility Self Assessment Checklist at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, be noted; and

(B) the policies in the East Herts Local Plan Second Review (April 2007) continue to be given due weight in accordance with paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

28 **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI): DRAFT DOCUMENT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Panel was advised of the need for the Council to update its Statement of Community Involvement and considered a report seeking approval to enter into a period of six weeks' public consultation on a draft revised document. Officers advised that a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) set out how a local authority intended to involve the community in the preparation, alteration or review of local planning policies, in determining planning applications and in certain neighbourhood planning consultations.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the Draft Statement of Community Involvement, as now submitted, be supported for public consultation.

29 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The Chairman advised Members to look out for an email invitation from him to participate in an informal discussion group on policy formulation issues that would inform the work of this Panel in advance of the public consultation on the Draft District Plan. He envisaged up to seven daytime meetings in the coming months and hoped that a good cross section of Members across the District would take an interest. He commented that all policies developed would be submitted to Council for approval, via this Panel and the Executive, in the usual way.

30 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 28 November 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 8.22 pm

Chairman
Date