

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON THURSDAY
16 JANUARY 2014, AT 7.00 PM

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, P Ballam, E Bedford,
R Beeching, E Buckmaster, S Bull,
Mrs R Cheswright, G Jones, J Jones,
G Lawrence, M McMullen, P Moore,
M Newman, M Pope, P Ruffles, N Symonds,
A Warman, K Warnell and J Wing.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Lorraine Kirk	- Senior Communications Officer
Kay Mead	- Senior Planning Officer
Martin Paine	- Senior Planning Officer
Laura Pattison	- Assistant Planning Officer
Jenny Pierce	- Senior Planning Officer
Claire Sime	- Planning Policy Team Leader
Katie Simpson	- Planning Policy Officer

Brendan Starkey	- Assistant Planning Officer
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Bryan Thomsett	- Planning Policy Manager

34 **DUTY TO CO-OPERATE – UPDATE REPORT**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report presenting the notes of the latest round of Member-level meetings with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities.

Officers advised of an error in respect of the notes of the meeting with Epping Forest District Council in which the attendees had been wrongly attributed to Uttlesford District Council.

The Panel noted the report.

RECOMMENDED – that the notes of recent Member-level meetings with Broxbourne, Epping Forest and Welwyn Hatfield Councils, be agreed.

35 **INTERIM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REPORT (JANUARY 2014)**

The Panel considered a report on the Interim Development Strategy Report, which set out the justification of Part 1 of the District Plan. The report was considered alongside the Strategy Worksheet, Key Diagram and the Frequently Asked Questions document, all of which were presented as Essential Reference Papers to the report now submitted. These would all be available as part of the public consultation on the draft plan.

The Panel also received a presentation by Officers which

gave an overview of the main influences.

Councillor G Jones made a number of comments in respect of the methodology of the population forecasts, the role of Neighbourhood Planning and the level of additional secondary schools provision in Bishop's Stortford identified. He also questioned the fairness of the number of additional dwellings identified in Bishop's Stortford, especially given the impact of potential development across the border in Uttlesford.

In response, Officers referred to the practical requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework in projecting population figures and the encouragement given to parish/town councils wishing to develop Neighbourhood Plans. In respect of the continuing uncertainty of schools provision in Bishop's Stortford, the draft Plan needed to retain flexibility. Officers acknowledged that the housing numbers for Bishop's Stortford were projected for the early period of the Plan, but a threshold would be reached when there would be no more capacity.

In response to a question from Councillor M Newman in respect of the "Broad Locations", Officers referred to the phasing schedule which, given build rates and infrastructure lead-in times, indicated such development would not occur before 2022 as much work would still be needed.

In response to a question from Councillor J Jones, Officers clarified that the housing numbers shown for Buntingford included existing and completed units since 2011. The outcome of an existing appeal was awaited and when known, might have an impact.

Officers also clarified what constituted a "windfall" allowance.

The Panel supported the proposals now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the Interim Development Strategy Report, January 2014, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan; and

(B) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, be authorised to make non-material, and typographical corrections to the Interim Development Strategy Report and Essential Reference Papers, prior to publication for consultation purposes.

36 **INFRASTRUCTURE TOPIC PAPER (JANUARY 2014)**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report on the Infrastructure Topic Paper, which set out the main infrastructure issues arising from Part 1 of the draft District Plan. The Panel noted that the report outlined the main areas for further work during 2014, including the preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to support the District Plan, which would be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in public in 2015.

Councillor S Rutland-Barsby commented on the Health section and suggested updating the references to Hertford County Hospital. On the general issue of consulting with health providers, Officers outlined the continuing dialogue with NHS Hertfordshire. The Panel Chairman confirmed that the Local Strategic Partnership, involving a range of partners, were also fully engaged.

Councillor J Wing commented on the role of public houses as significant community centres and whether they had been overlooked in terms of infrastructure provision. The Panel Chairman stated that this would be looked at.

In response to a comment by Councillor M Pope concerning railways, Officers outlined the dialogue with

Network Rail and the train operating companies.

Councillor R Beeching suggested that infrastructure would be key to the District Plan and questioned who would pay for it.

The Panel supported the proposals as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the Infrastructure Topic Paper, January 2014, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan.

37 **INTERIM SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT
(DECEMBER 2013)**

The Panel considered the Interim Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the draft East Herts District Plan. It summarised the Interim SA Report as required by the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. It also described the various stages of the Interim SA Report and how the process of sustainability appraisal had been integrated into the process of preparing the development strategy and the Draft District Plan.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the Interim Sustainability Appraisal of the East Herts District Plan, January 2014, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support the Draft East Herts District Plan (Preferred Options) (January 2014);

(B) the Council's response as detailed in Section 11.3 Tables 11.3 and 11.4 to the Interim SA, be incorporated into the Consultation version of the Interim Development Strategy Report (January 2014); and

(C) the Head of Planning and Building Control,

in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, be authorised to make non-material, and typographical corrections to the Interim Sustainability Appraisal.

38 DRAFT EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN (PREFERRED OPTIONS) (JANUARY 2014)

The Panel considered a report seeking approval for the Draft East Herts District Plan (January 2014) for the purposes of public consultation for a period of twelve weeks. The Panel was also asked to support the consultation strategy.

The Panel noted that work on the emerging District Plan had been ongoing since the issues and options consultation in 2010. The emerging Plan had been prepared in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance and informed by extensive background research and information. This had included research on a range of topics, including housing delivery and supply, transport needs, infrastructure requirements, and economic development. Work on the evidence base was ongoing throughout the Plan process and beyond, as it would be essential for the Council to maintain an up to date evidence base that informed the production, implementation and future review of the District Plan.

The Panel supported the following amendments:

- page 27, paragraph 3.3.3 – delete “conform” and insert “have regard”.**
- page 27, paragraph 3.3.4 – delete “Firstly, the NPPF requires that objectively assessed housing needs should be met” and insert “The NPPF requires that every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth.”**
- page 30, policy DPS3, various alterations not affecting total numbers.**

- page 64, Figure 5.8, revised site location to be inserted.
- page 107, paragraph 8.4.2, references to “High Street” should be replaced with “Bell Street”.
- page 160, paragraph 13.9.3, The Stables, Bayfordbury – delete “6 pitches” and insert “5 pitches (with planning permission for an additional 3 pitches).”

In response to Members’ questions and comments, Officers undertook to review paragraph 5.1.8 in its description of the green corridor of the Stort. In respect of the Ware chapter, Officers undertook to correct the photographs. In relation to Chapter 12, Officers explained the rationale for arriving at the 5,000 – 10,000 new homes figure.

Officers advised that in respect of Chapter 22, a reference to Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (DCLG, July 2013), had been added under section 22.4 to help clarify the Council’s position with regard to renewable and low carbon energy.

The Panel supported the proposals as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the Draft East Herts District Plan (January 2014), as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ of the report now submitted, be agreed and made available for public consultation for a period of twelve weeks, in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;

(B) the Consultation Strategy, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘F’ of the report now submitted, be agreed; and

(C) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, be authorised to make non-material, and typographical corrections

to the Draft District Plan, prior to publication for consultation purposes.

39 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The Panel Chairman stated that the Authority was in the final stages of preparing its Draft District Plan for public consultation, which would culminate with the Executive and Council meetings on 21 and 29 January 2014 respectively. Although the public consultation would run for the full twelve weeks, the exact dates had yet to be finalised.

He also reminded everyone that a meeting with parish and town council representatives would be held on 22 January 2014.

Finally, the Panel Chairman expressed his gratitude to the Planning Policy team for their hard work and efforts and also thanked the public for their continuing interest and engagement.

40 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 3 December 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

41 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Panel Chairman asked Members to note that he was the Chairman of Hertford Regional College.

Councillor J Wing asked Members to note that his wife was the Vice Chairman of Hertford Regional College.

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm