

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON THURSDAY
19 MARCH 2015, AT 7.00 PM

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, S Bull, G Jones,
J Jones, P Moore, M Newman, T Page,
M Pope and N Symonds.

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
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services

DELIVERY STUDY UPDATE REPORT

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report which provided an update on progress with the Delivery Study. He also set out delays with critical pieces of evidence, particularly relating to transport planning, and the implications of this for the overall timeline for the District Plan. He also

explained that the delays with the District Plan were part of a wider picture of plan-making across England.

In respect of transport planning delays, Officers explained the difficulties that Essex County Council were experiencing with validating the data used in the modelling. This would be critical also for the planned consultation on the M11 junction 7a proposal.

In response to Members' questions, Officers clarified the Duty to Co-operate and the impact on East Herts of neighbouring Local Authorities' plans being deemed unsound. Officers also reminded Members of the transparency of meetings held with site promoters, as minutes of these were available on the Council's website.

Officers also outlined the ongoing work with education and health providers and the need to maximise section 106 funding for infrastructure requirements. The Panel Chairman referred to the national picture and the impact of government funding reductions on the District Council's plan making.

Finally, the Panel discussed the level of congestion in town centres and on the M11 and the lack of definition of "severe disruption" within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Panel supported the recommendation now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the Update Report, including the slow progress with Local Plans across England, and the risks of proceeding without sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance, be noted.

The Panel considered a report presenting revised vehicle

parking standards which would form an appendix to the District Plan. It was noted that, at present, the vehicle parking standards for East Herts were contained both within the Adopted Local Plan 2007, at Appendix II, and within the 'Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2008' which supplemented the Adopted Local Plan and provided additional guidance on provision beyond the standards themselves. The existing maximum standards reflected a local interpretation of the content of Hertfordshire County Council's 'Best Practice Guide: Parking Provision at New Development' (2003), which in turn was based on Supplementary Planning Guidance to the now superseded Hertfordshire Structure Plan. The currently adopted standards were also based on the now deleted PPG 13, which only allowed for the provision of maximum standards based on average provision of 1.5 spaces per dwelling across the District.

As recent decisions taken by Inspectors through Local Plan Examinations had demonstrated a clear preference for including any policy requirements or standards within the Local Plan document itself, the Panel considered a draft Appendix to the East Herts District Plan to enable new standards to be included which better reflected current circumstances and which, while partly based on the currently adopted parking standards, also reflected provisions contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

In response to Members' questions and comments, Officers confirmed that the proposed revised parking standards would offer more flexibility in allowing the Authority to impose different standards in different zones of the District. As the document had not been subject to public consultation, it could not be adopted at this time. However, the standards could be considered a material consideration and be given weight in determining planning applications.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED - that (A) the draft District Plan Appendix concerning Vehicle Parking Standards be noted, with a decision on its final content being deferred and considered alongside the rest of the District Plan; and

(B) a replacement Supplementary Planning Document on Vehicle Parking be prepared alongside the District Plan which will include updated guidance on design issues.

32 **DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN CHAPTERS 15 AND 16:
RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING PREFERRED
OPTIONS CONSULTATION AND DRAFT REVISED
CHAPTERS**

The Panel considered a report highlighting the issues raised through the recent consultation in connection with Chapters 15 – 16 of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options, together with Officer responses to those issues. The report also presented draft revised chapters showing proposed amendments, for subsequent incorporation into a revised Draft District Plan.

The proposed amendments were presented as working Draft Revised Chapters only at this stage, as they might change before final agreement of a revised Draft District Plan. Therefore, these Revised Chapters would only be presented for approval until such time that the complete suite of amendments were collated and presented as one comprehensive Revised Draft District Plan.

In response to Members' questions, Officers advised that the policies maps would come forward in due course. In respect of the Retail and Town Centres chapter, Officers confirmed that the proposed revisions provided more flexibility that would enable the changing retail landscape to be accounted for.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the issues raised in respect of Chapters 15 and 16 of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options, as detailed at Essential Reference Papers B and C to the report submitted, be received and considered;

(B) the Officer response to the issues referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Essential Reference Papers B and C to the report submitted, be noted; and

(C) the draft revised chapters, as detailed in Essential Reference Papers B and C to the report submitted, be noted, with decision on their final content being deferred to allow consideration of further technical work and other issues.

33 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

He advised that a further meeting with parish and town council representatives had been arranged for 28 April 2015.

The Panel Chairman referred to the referendum being held today on the Neighbourhood Plan in Bishop's Stortford Silverleys and Meads wards and looked forward to further public engagement with the local planning process.

The Chairman acknowledged this being his last meeting as he was retiring from the Council in May 2015. He thanked Members for their support throughout his time as Panel Chairman and paid tribute to the hard work and endeavours of the Planning Policy team.

On behalf of Officers, the Head of Planning and Building Control thanked the Panel Chairman for his support over the

years and wished him well in his retirement.

On behalf of Members, Councillor L Haysey thanked the Panel Chairman for his hard work on planning policy matters over many years and expressed the wish that this would not be lost after his retirement.

34 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 8 December 2014, be approved as correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – that the date of the next meeting on 2 July 2015, be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm

Chairman

Date