

MINUTES of a meeting of the LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 20 JUNE 2017

Present: Councillor J Bridges (Chairman)

Councillors R Adams (Substitute for Councillor J Legrys), R D Bayliss, J Cotterill, R Johnson, V Richichi and M Specht

In Attendance: Councillors D Everitt and T J Pendleton

Officers: Mrs M Meredith, Mr I Nelson and Mr J Newton

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor R Adams moved that Councillor J Legrys be elected as Chairman for the forthcoming municipal year.

The motion was seconded by Councillor V Richichi and this was subsequently withdrawn.

The motion was then seconded by Councillor R Johnson. The motion was then put to the vote and declared LOST.

It was moved by Councillor V Richichi, seconded by Councillor J Cotterill and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor J Bridges be elected as Chairman for the forthcoming municipal year.

Councillor J Bridges then took the chair.

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor V Richichi, seconded by Councillor R Adams and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor J Legrys be elected as Deputy Chairman for the forthcoming municipal year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Legrys.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2017.

Councillor R D Bayliss requested that the minutes be amended to reflect the fact that Councillor J Hault was present as substitute for Councillor R D Bayliss.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor R Adams and

RESOLVED THAT:

Chairman's initials

Subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Noted.

7. LOCAL PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE: MODIFICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The Planning Policy Team Manager presented the report to members, outlining the progress on the Local Plan to date. He reported that the modifications which had been requested by the inspector during the examination process had now been published for a 6 week consultation period which would end on 24 July. He advised that the main modifications were those which in the view of the inspector were required in order to make the Local Plan sound or legally compliant; the additional modifications were of a much more minor nature, and many of these were factual or due to a change in position. He added that the inspector could only recommend main modifications to the Council, however the consultation on both the main and additional modifications was being undertaken concurrently.

The Planning Policy Team Manager referred members to section 4 of the report which detailed the most important main modifications. He highlighted in particular main modification 9 at paragraph 4.5 of the report relating to Policy S1 in respect of future housing and economic development needs. He referred to the discussions which had taken place around the need to review the Local Plan in light of the HEDNA, and consequently main modification 9 gave a commitment to commence a review of the Local Plan in January 2018 or within 3 months of adoption of the Local Plan, whichever was later. He added that this date had been chosen as it was felt there was a possibility that the Local Plan might not be adopted by January 2018, when work was due to be finalised on the strategic growth plan for Leicestershire. He highlighted that the key issue was that Leicester City Council had declared that they were unable to meet their housing need. He stated that the inspector was keen that the Council had a formal policy position to review the plan once this work was completed.

The Planning Policy Team Manager referred members to paragraph 4.18 of the report and advised that shortly after the Local Plan was submitted, the revised route for HS2 was published. The route passed through two sites to the west of Kegworth which had planning permission. The impact of the revised route was that officers did not believe these sites were deliverable and consequently main modification 27 identified a reserve site to help mitigate the shortfall.

Councillor J Bridges asked at what point it would be determined that these sites were not deliverable as they were affected now. He felt that the sites were not sustainable and not economically viable to deliver based on the fact that no funding would be available to develop these sites. He felt that delaying this decision could leave the Council open to challenge.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that when the government made its final decision on the route, a judgement would be made in respect of the viability of the sites as the route was subject to change. The Planning Policy Team Manager stated that should HS2 run through the two sites, the Council would encourage planning applications to bring forward a reserve site.

Councillor R Johnson commented on the length of time that could elapse before HS2 came through the district.

Chairman's initials

Councillor R D Bayliss referred to main modification 30 in respect of affordable housing. He sought clarification upon the change in requirement from 15 or more to 11 or more dwellings and the differences in requirement for brownfield sites. He expressed concerns in respect of financial viability and felt that a requirement of 30% on sites with 11 or more dwellings was stringent.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that the threshold of 11 or more dwellings was a national threshold and the original threshold of 15 or more dwellings in Ashby de la Zouch, Castle Donington and Coalville had been reduced in order to be consistent across the district. He added that increasing the threshold would reduce the opportunities for affordable housing. In respect of previously developed land, the inspector had identified during the examination that developments on such sites needed to be encouraged and he was concerned that a requirement of 30% affordable housing could have an impact upon viability. He added that whilst part 2 of the policy did allow us to take account of viability issues and adjust the requirement on a site by site basis, it was clear that the inspector was looking for a different approach in respect of previously developed land and as such, the Council was attempting to address the issues raised by the inspector.

In response to a question from Councillor R D Bayliss, the Planning Policy Team Manager advised that nothing had changed in terms of the financial viability assessment for previously developed land or brownfield land and that financial viability would always be a consideration.

Further to questions from Councillor J Bridges, the Planning Policy Team Manager advised that in line with the national approach, whichever threshold was first reached, either 11 dwellings or 1,000 square metres, would trigger the affordable housing requirement.

Councillor J Bridges commented that under today's building standards, having 1,000 square metres floorspace as a threshold would increase the amount of affordable housing required on any given site and would cause the requirement to be triggered more frequently. He felt that this could cause increased concerns in respect of viability which could consequently leave the Council open to challenge as the affordable housing requirement would be triggered at a lot less than 11 dwellings for many sites.

The Head of Planning and Regeneration advised that the viability thresholds detailed ensured that the Local Plan complied with national policy throughout the life of the plan.

Councillor J Bridges felt that that the increase to 30% would create more and more disputes.

Councillor V Richichi asked how long it would take to implement the main modifications and therefore adopt the Local Plan. He asked if the Local Plan was currently unsound.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that the current consultation would continue until 24 July following which officers would refer the responses on to the inspector. He advised that the timescales would depend upon how the inspector decided to proceed, but if the inspector was satisfied that all the issues had been addressed, the best date his report could be expected was in September 2017, in which case Council would be asked to adopt the Local Plan at its meeting in November 2017.

Councillor M Specht referred to main modification 10 and sought clarification on whether the limits to development in Coleorton had increased in size.

The Planning Policy Team Manager agreed to provide this information after the meeting.

Councillor R Johnson sought clarification on the range of services referred to in respect of Donington le Heath and Hugglescote.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that the range of services referred to were in the context of the greater Coalville urban area rather than individual villages.

Councillor R Johnson sought clarification on where infrastructure such as schools was referred to in the Local Plan.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that the Local Plan was supported by an infrastructure delivery plan and that the vast majority of development was already in place through Section 106 agreements. He explained that specific requirements from stakeholders such as the education authority were included in the Section 106 agreements. He added that Policy IF4 in the Local Plan dealt with infrastructure generally.

It was moved by Councillor J Bridges, seconded by Councillor M Specht and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) the main modifications published following the Local Plan examination hearing sessions be noted.
- b) the additional modifications published following the local plan examination hearing sessions be noted.
- c) the next steps be noted.

8. LOCAL PLAN - RISK MANAGEMENT

The Planning Policy Team Manager presented the report to members, providing an update on the key risks to the Local Plan. He advised that the risk register was reviewed at each monthly meeting of the Local Plan board.

Councillor J Bridges commented that his biggest concern was regarding loss of staff and he was pleased to see this as a key risk in the risk register.

It was moved by Councillor V Richichi, seconded by Councillor R Adams and

RESOLVED THAT:

The current risk assessment be noted.

The Planning Policy Team Manager advised that the date of the next meeting would be postponed to October in the hope that the inspector's report would be issued and could be brought to the committee before the report to Council. A date would be confirmed in due course. The Planning Policy Team Manager stated that upon receipt of the inspector's report it would be published straight away given that it is a public document.

Councillor M Specht sought clarity on the weight given to the Local Plan in the appeal decision in respect of the Coalville bypass.

The Head of Planning and Regeneration advised that the inspector had said that as the emerging Local Plan had not concluded the examination, it could only be given limited weight, however the figures in the HEDNA had been utilised to calculate the housing land supply and it was found that the Council could demonstrate a five year supply.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.17 pm

Chairman's signature