

MINUTES of a meeting of the LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2021

Present: Councillor J Bridges (Chairman)

Councillors R L Morris, D Bigby, D Everitt, J Hoult, J G Simmons, N Smith and J Geary (Substitute for Councillor J Legrys)

In Attendance: Councillors R Johnson and K Merrie MBE

Officers: Mr I Nelson, Mr C Elston, Mrs C Hammond, Mr C Colvin and Ms S Grant

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman advised that Councillor N Smith was unable to attend the meeting in person and therefore would be joining the meeting remotely. In accordance with the Council's Constitutional rules, he was able to participate in the meeting but would not be permitted to vote.

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors J Legrys and T Saffell.

24 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Members declared the following interests:

Councillor J Hoult declared a non-pecuniary interest in anything relating to neighbourhood plans, as a member of the Ashby and Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan Committees.

25 PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

26 MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2021.

It was moved by Councillor J Geary, seconded by Councillor J Simmons and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

27 REVIEW OF SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager presented the report to members.

Councillor D Everitt expressed concerns that Thringstone had been included within the Coalville Urban Area and that he felt that it should be classed as a sustainable village, like Swannington. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager noted that Swannington was physically separated from the Coalville Urban area, whereas with Thringstone, it was felt that the separation with Whitwick and hence the wider Coalville Urban area, was not apparent.

Members discussed how the characteristics of the sustainable villages could change during the life of a plan which in turn would move them into the local housing needs category. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager advised that during the

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plan review any changes to a settlement could be reviewed and amended as required, however once the plan had been adopted a status could only be changed through a review of the plan. He stated that he would take the point away for consideration

It was moved by Councillor J Hault, seconded by Councillor J Geary and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The proposed Settlement Hierarchy as set out at paragraph 3.19 of the report be agreed; and
2. It be agreed that the proposed Settlement Hierarchy be consulted upon as part of the next round of consultation.

28 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager presented the report to members. He presented each section separately allowing members the opportunity to ask questions after each section.

In terms of Sections 3, 4 & 5 the following questions were asked:

Councillor D Bigby sought clarification as to why option 3, part of which had been selected as a preferable option for High 1, did not contain either the smaller villages or the new settlement. He felt that at least one option should contain those settlements to allow sensible provision to be made for development within those areas. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager advised that there was an infinite number of options and that new options following the consultation may need to be considered.

Councillor J Geary noted the large amount of industrial development that was taking place in the north of the district, which would employ staff on low wages, and the lack of affordable homes that were being built in those areas. He felt that when land was being earmarked for large employment development, land should also be earmarked for affordable housing for the employees. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager stated that the suggestion was one of the arguments in favour of a new settlement within the northern part of the district due to the continued economic growth in that area.

Councillor N Smith sought clarification, that if a new settlement was built, would the Authority have any control over how the dwellings were built, such as factory built houses? The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager stated that the plan could include policies that would require developments to be built to certain standards, but could not stipulate a certain requirement in terms of how they were built.

Councillor D Bigby asked if the Authority was talking to neighbouring authorities to the north of the district to take some of North West Leicestershire's housing requirements due to the large scale industrial development in that area. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager advised that they were talking, but that you could only request that another authority takes your growth if you could not accommodate it, which was the case with Leicester and surrounding authorities looking to take on the unmet need. However, no such unmet need had been identified in North West Leicestershire.

In terms of sections 6,7 & 8 the following questions and comments were made:

Councillor D Bigby raised concerns over the language in the recommendation that stated that scenario High 2 was the preferred option. He stated that he was not against including

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the scenario, but the wording did not sit right with him. He noted that the numbers were higher than all the figures other than the build out rate and with that number of proposed dwellings in the option, the market would become saturated. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager stated that if members wished to put forward alternative wording for the recommendation, he would be happy to consider it. He agreed that if too much housing was planned there was a chance that it wouldn't get built.

Councillor J Geary noted that as well as overspill from Leicester, the report stated that Oadby and Wigston required housing distribution, which was on the other side of Leicester to North West Leicestershire. He expressed concerns that due to their location, they should have been looking at authorities adjoining their borough to take the need. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager clarified that there was currently no unmet growth need in Oadby and Wigston, however at the time of the production of the Strategic Growth Plan, there was a possibility that there could be.

Councillor D Bigby put forward some amended wording for the recommendation that was agreed by officers.

Councillor D Bigby moved that the wording in the recommendation be amended to "That the Local Plan Committee agrees that at this stage scenarios High 1 and High 2 cover the most likely growth requirement and, for these scenarios, distribution options 3A and 7B respectively would be the most suitable and these should be taken forward for consultation". The amendment to the recommendation was seconded by Councillor J Geary and it was

RESOLVED THAT:

At this stage scenarios High 1 and High 2 cover the most likely growth requirement and, for these scenarios, distribution options 3A and 7B respectively would be the most suitable and these should be taken forward for consultation.

The meeting closed at 7.29pm

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.29 pm