

Development Plan Steering Group – Wednesday 20th May 2009 @ 9:30am

Councillors Present: Reid (Chair), Baker, Blencowe, Ward (Vice Chair) and Blair

Also present: Tim Wetherfield (Urban Growth Project Manager)
Sara Cass (Planning Policy Manager)
Sharon Brown (Major Developments Manager)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Herbert.

2. Declaration of Interest

None declared

3. Public Questions

None.

4. Cambridgeshire Integrated Development Programme: Summary of Progress and Commentary on Draft Contents

Tim Wetherfield introduced the report. He highlighted the comments that had already been made about the draft Integrated Development Programme (IDP) and how the IDP was being developed. Following closer inspection of the draft IDP, it was proposed that additional comments be sent to Cambridgeshire Horizons. These would highlight the need to: engage relevant councillors in prioritising infrastructure projects; ensure that the commentary within the IDP reflected agreed policies, refer to a wider range of relevant policy documents, including the Quality Charter for Growth; make sure that the estimated costs quoted in the IDP are robust and up-to-date; and acknowledge the extent of housing growth planned across the city.

Members welcomed the concept of the IDP, recognising the usefulness of a factual and up-to-date overview of infrastructure needs and related investment requirements.

At the same time, Members made the following comments about the draft IDP (dated March 2009):

- the purpose of the IDP (including how it will be used and who it is for) was not clear;
- estimated costs for infrastructure projects, quoted in the draft IDP needed to be checked for accuracy, and corrected where necessary;
- the allocation of funding between the spatial packages should be more proportionate to the number of households planned on each growth site;
- within the strategic transport theme, the funding for sustainable transport (as opposed to road-building) should be made clearer;
- much more detail should be provided in the IDP about the strategy for tackling climate change (including specific projects);
- earlier consultation on draft documents would be helpful;
- the IDP had been developed principally by Cambridgeshire Horizons and the Greater Cambridge Partnership, and should be finalised and agreed by their Boards.

Tim Wetherfield was asked to raise these issues - along with the proposed additional comments about the IDP - to Cambridgeshire Horizons so that these points could be taken into account in the revised version of the IDP that will be considered by the Boards of Cambridgeshire Horizons and the Greater Cambridge Partnership in June 2009.

5. Cambridgeshire Sub-Regional Variable Tariff Proposal – Summary of Progress/Key Principles/Issues for the City Council

Sara Cass and Sharon Brown introduced the report. Cllrs raised a number of questions relating to the principle of taking a tariff forward and the benefits for the City Council. There was also concern expressed relating to the figure in the consultants report and where the figures had come from. A clear audit trail would also need to be developed in order track allocation of money.

Action – Tim Wetherfield to develop a list of questions, reflecting issues discussed at the meeting and in the report, in order to highlight issues that will need to be addressed in the further development of the Variable Rate Tariff proposals. These questions will be sent to the Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Horizons and copied to members of the Development Plan Steering Group.

6. Infrastructure Planning and Delivery – Infrastructure Study for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

Sara Cass introduced the report. The need for consultants to undertake such

a study was questioned at the March DPSPG meeting given all the existing information available and Sara Cass explained that its not the intention of this study to duplicate existing work but to draw together all the information in one place, identify any gaps and where appropriate provide more detail. This study will then form the basis for the delivery strategy to be incorporated into the Core Strategy.

Cllr Reid stated that the proposal relied upon input from the County Council and requested that they be formally involved in the process. Cllr Blencowe questioned why the work could not be completed in-house. Sara Cass stated that we did not have the resources in house at the present time to undertake such work. Cllr Ward asked if we would be inviting the Consultants who undertook the Infrastructure Study for Huntingdon to tender. Sara Cass explained that we would be and that Huntingdon's infrastructure study was considered to be a good study amongst officers and that officers did not expect the cost of our own study to total that of Huntingdon's study. They would ensure the consultants attended Member briefings, as it would prove to be very beneficial for both parties.

Cllr Baker suggested for the consultancy to focus on work that could not be carried out in-house, such as those stated at items 5, 6 and 7 and to pull 1 – 4 together. Cllr Reid also stated that they should amplify paragraph 4.2 (7).

Action – Cllr Reid requested a formal letter be sent to the County and copied to David Bard to question whether they would be adequately resourced to deliver the proposal.