

Development Plan Steering Group – Tuesday 1st December 2009 @ 9:30am

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

Also present:

Myles Greensmith (Research and Information Manager)

Dave Roberts (Head of Policy and Projects)

Sara Cass (Planning Policy Manager)

Tim Wetherfield (Urban Growth Project Manager)

Matthew Bowles (Transport Planner)

Stuart Clarke, Ian Trafford and Rob Lewis (Cambridgeshire County Council)

Anna Keyes (Cambridgeshire Horizons)

1. Minutes

The minutes from 13th October 2009 will be signed at the next meeting.

2. Apologies

None.

3. Declaration of Interest

None

4. Public Questions

None.

5. Local Development Framework - Annual Monitoring Report 2009

Myles Greensmith introduced the report. The appendix is a draft and the finalised version will be submitted to Go East on 31st December. He updated members on a late change to the housing trajectory figures as we have received a late response regarding a potential site at the Nuffield Hospital for 54 dwellings which is no longer available. A minor tidy up of the graphics and text is also needed. Members questioned some figures in the report in the contextual indicators which are based on the last Census and won't be updateable until the results of the 2011 are available.

Members agreed that the report was useful and interesting and asked for bound copies of the final version to be sent to members of the DPSG

Planning Committee and the Environment Scrutiny Committee.

6. Cambridgeshire Integrated Development Programme

Tim Wetherfield introduced the report and provided an update on progress. The draft Integrated Development Programme (IDP) has been developed by Cambridgeshire Horizons, following discussions with the Executive Councillor and Officers, to reflect local issues. Horizons has worked hard to take those comments into account. The document refers to the A14 proposals but does not endorse them. The final draft version of the IDP will be considered for approval by the Cambridgeshire Horizons Board on 9 December 2009.

The latest draft IDP was discussed by Members. The need for a number of amendments was highlighted and Cambridgeshire Horizons will be asked to take them on board:

- Throughout the draft IDP, the spatial package currently referred to as "Chesterton Strategic Interchange and Gateway" should be renamed "Cambridge Northern Fringe East", to keep it consistent with other official policies and documents;
- The text on page 23 (paragraph 3.14) referring to the County Council's response to the consultation on the Regional Spatial Strategy review to 2031 will need to be updated in the light of the CReSSP meeting (Joint Cambridgeshire Regional Spatial Strategy Review Panel) on 4 December;
- The map on page 38 needs to be updated to show proper allocations for North West Cambridge. There is currently no mention of NIAB Extra or development in South Cambridgeshire on the University site. It would be helpful for these details to be included in the map for the final version of the IDP that will be produced following approval by the Horizons Board.
- The national infrastructure projects listed on page 56 in the table under 'Strategic Transport' need to be presented separately so that they are not confused with projects that are included within the IDP package.
- The source for the map on page 96 needs to be changed to "Cambridge City Council, April 2009".

The Steering Group agreed the recommendation that the Executive Councillor consider whether to endorse the final version of the Integrated Development Programme that will be reported to the Cambridgeshire Horizons Board

7. Planning Obligations Strategy Supplementary Planning Document

– Education Section.

Sara Cass introduced the report and outlined the background to the current position. Staff changes have caused some delays and a consultant has been employed to complete the work. It is proposed that there will be a five-week consultation period on the education section (extended due to the Christmas period). The final document will be considered for adoption by the March Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr Reid questioned the assumptions the report makes about renewable energy targets for new schools. Ian Trafford from the County Council stated that it is only possible to cost on current standards and improvements to technology are likely to result in this being an underestimation.

Members questioned the current County policy on standards. According to the County Council, the current standard is BREEAM 'very good' as a base line with 'excellent' being an aspiration. Ian Trafford felt it would be difficult to justify linking S106 buildings to future standards. Members also suggested that there might be some confusion about standards where a building is part education and part community use as building standards could be different.

In response to member questions Ian Trafford explained the difference between the 2004 standards and the new approach. Members expressed surprise at the increased level of education contribution suggested (a four fold increase) for a 3 bedroom property.

Members were unhappy about being into a locked policy with an easily achieved build standards when technology is changing and renewable standards could soon be vastly improved. It was suggested that design and energy standards could be tracked to enable annual reviews with an evidence base. Cllr Reid stated that she needs more time to investigate what other authorities are doing. The approach needs to be forward thinking and aspiration.

Cllr Ward questioned the projected child figures and how this are arrived at. Appendix 3 was felt to be unclear and confusing. Ian Trafford explained that it is no longer assumed that 17% of children will not enter the state education system. The wording in the appendix will be amended in order to avoid any confusion. The information on early years provision was also felt to be confusing as it is no longer County policy to directly provide this. The split between private and social rented housing and the difference in the demands this places on education were discussed. A formula is applied and these factors are taken into account.

Cllr Ward asked where the 53% of 0-3 year old is applied.

Cllr Reid calculated that the contribution from a market rate 3 bed property would be £16,000 and a social rented nearer £34,000 and questioned the ability of the market to bear this sort of cost. She also stated that the document is not ready to go to consultation and further work is needed. Members asked for someone from the County to be at the Environment Committee in January to justify the increased education costs.

Members discussed how future education needs would be met as schools are already at capacity and there is no provision for the purchase of land for future school building.

No decision was made as Cllr Reid needs more time to bottom out the political policy on BREEAM standards and further work is needed on the document.

8. A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Scheme: Publication of Environmental Statement and Draft Orders

Matthew Bowles introduced the item outlined the consultation process as per the report. Cllr Reid stated that the scheme presents a number of difficulties not least being its focus on the North of the City. However, the City was keen to avoid the project being a source of conflict with other authorities. Cllr Blencowe argued that calling this a National rather than a Sub Regional issue lacks credibility.

Cllr Reid was pleased with the improved safety on the A14 since the introduction of average speed limit controls. She further stated that while she was not suggesting all freight should use rail networks, reduced road use was Lib Dem policy. Cllr Ward was concerned that a multi lane junction at Girton would leave cars with no-where to go. Cllr Blair stated that the city were not the only authority to have concerns about the plan.

The policy was agreed subject to minor corrections to the text.

Meeting ended at 11.40am.