

Minutes of a meeting of the CABINET LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK SUB-COMMITTEE held on Friday, 25th September, 2015 in the Civic Community Hall, Vicarage Lane, HAILSHAM (10.00 a.m. to 11.12 a.m.)

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs A Newton (Chairman), N Collinson, Mrs J Howell, R Standley, Mrs S Stedman and S Shing.

Also present in accordance with Access to Information Procedure Rule 22: Councillor A Long.

In attendance were the Strategic Planning Manager (M Brigginsshaw), Director of Planning Policy & Economic Development (N Hannam) and Democratic Services Officer (S Lawrence).

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Galley.

**15/10 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**15/11 WEALDEN LOCAL PLAN - ISSUES, OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

The Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, Councillor Newton, outlined the purpose of the meeting and the report asking for the Sub-Committee to endorse going out to consultation on the Wealden local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations Consultation Document and the associated Conservation Areas - Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations Consultation Document. Further to the agenda, it was proposed to add a further recommendation in relation to the development of a Hailsham Area Action Plan. Councillor Newton highlighted the plan for further briefings for District and Parish Councillors.

Councillor Long asked if the Sub-Committee had the power under the Council's Constitution to carry out the business of the meeting. The Chairman confirmed that she was satisfied the Sub-Committee had the powers required and proceeded to the business in hand.

The Strategic Policy Manager (Marina Brigginsshaw) gave a presentation, which set out the background to the consultation, and the process to be followed for the Council to adopt the Local Plan. She explained that the starting point for the plan was the 'Objectively Assessed Housing Need' for the area. On this basis the draft plan proposal was for 19,950 dwellings provided from 2013 to 2037, including 2,300 on behalf of neighbouring authorities under Duty to Co-operate requirements. The preferred option for testing in the document was for developments to be concentrated in sustainable areas away from the Ashdown

Forest. The development of this many properties would depend on an assessment on the impact on the Ashdown Forest, sufficient land being available, and the provision of necessary infrastructure. The presentation also touched upon policies relating to economic development and historic environments, including conservation areas. The consultation was proposed to take place between 19<sup>th</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> November, with documents available online and in public spaces, and with a range of publicity arrangements.

The Strategic Policy Manager and Portfolio Holder then answered questions from the Sub-Committee in relation to the following matters:

- *Inclusion of Windfall Sites* – It was confirmed that the start date for the calculation of Assessed Housing Need was 2013, when Government data was available. The numbers of dwellings granted for sites between 2013 and 2015 had been included in the plan calculations and any further dwellings granted before the Plan was adopted would be taken into account.
- *Phasing of the Plan* – It was confirmed that the phasing of site development was only allowed by Planning Inspectors where this was based on evidence of infrastructure requirements. A good example of such infrastructure would be waste water treatment capacity.
- *Consultation Timescales* – The consultation period was for 6 weeks, but the information was in the public domain for 8 weeks from the release of this agenda, and this was considered appropriate.
- *Reliability of Neighbouring Authority Housing Need Assessments* – The Council would be checking that other Authority calculations of housing need were robust, and they had made every effort to accommodate their own housing numbers, before looking for provision in the Wealden area.
- *Conservation Areas Lines* – The conservation areas had been identified separately to housing numbers, in accordance with English Heritage criteria. It was hoped that Parish and Town Councils and local communities would submit comments in relation to the proposed conservation areas.
- *Southern Water Responsibilities* – It was confirmed that South Water as a statutory provider was required to provide infrastructure for growth. There was a particular issue in relation to the Pevensy Levels, and it had carried out a study and identified technology to address the issue. It had to make suitable provision by December 2021/22 regardless of cost, and the Council Officers were satisfied with the assurances and plans in place to deliver on these commitments.
- *Eastbourne Flood Storage Area* – It was confirmed that Wealden area was in the catchment of this storage area, and Eastbourne Council was looking to develop the capacity and use sustainable urban design, to enable development without increasing flood risk.
- *Timescales for Hailsham Area Action Plan and Implications for other Parishes* – It was confirmed that this Action Plan would follow the same timetable as the Local Plan development. The Local Plan provided the strategic view, and area action plans including local policies should correspond but not cross over the strategic plan. In areas that did not have or develop Area Action Plans, Officers would work directly with the Parish and Town Councils.
- *Job Capacity Calculation* – It was confirmed that the figure of 12,000 jobs being created was calculated in relation to the housing numbers, but could increase. This was a significant number of jobs compared to other areas.

- *Publicity and Exhibitions*– It was advised that each household in Wealden would receive a leaflet on the Local Plan consultation. Exhibitions had been placed strategically across the District so that all were in reach of local communities, but would not be provided in every area.
- *Why further development?* – The Portfolio Holder advised that the additional development proposed was based on Wealden’s Assessed Housing Need. The Government policy was for growth, and if the Council did not plan for this development, it could not resist unplanned developer-led growth with no infrastructure funding or control of housing mix.
- *Infrastructure Delivery* – The Strategic Planning Manager confirmed that the Council was working with East Sussex County Council and other Authorities and infrastructure providers on an Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- *Brown Field Sites* – It was advised that the definition for such sites was included in the document, and this was based on what was on the ground, not the length of time it had been in place.
- *Length of Plan up to 2037* – It was confirmed that it was standard practice to have a plan of at least 15 years, but given the length of time for plan adoption and the specific issues of the District, it was considered that a longer plan length up to 2037 was appropriate.
- *Infrastructure Funding* – It was confirmed that under Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) it was clearer that infrastructure funding was paid at commencement and in line with the Charging Schedule, and failure of developers to pay within a fixed period would invoke a penalty. The Leader advised that he would be looking at the development of a revolving infrastructure fund to help forward fund required infrastructure, and this would be easier to administer as the payments would be set, based on that CIL Charging regime due to go to Full Council for approval in November 2015.
- *Infrastructure Dependent Development* – The Strategic Planning Manager confirmed that where infrastructure was designated as critical it was not possible for development to go ahead without it; education provision was one of the items designated as critical infrastructure.
- *Existing Infrastructure needs* - The Portfolio Holder recognised that there were existing infrastructure needs in relation to provision of roads and schools in areas, such as Hailsham, and she agreed that these would be kept under review.

The Chairman read out the proposed Hailsham Area Action Plan proposal for inclusion in the Local Plan document and the proposed recommendation for its development. The Sub-Committee supported the need for such an initiative given the level of development being proposed in the South of the District and in and around Hailsham.

**RESOLVED –**

- A. That, taking into account the comments of the Cabinet Local Development Framework Sub-Committee, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development approves the Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations Consultation Document (Appendix A) and the associated Conservation Areas - Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Consultation Document (Appendix B) for publication and consultation;
- B. That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development agrees any minor

amendments necessary to the consultation documents prior to publication; and

- C. That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development approves an amendment to the Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations Consultation Document (Appendix A) to include the preparation of the Hailsham Area Action Plan in line with the timetable for the Wealden Local Plan, and recommends to Full Council that the Local Development Scheme is amended accordingly.

Councillor A Newton  
Chairman