

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 21 November 2016

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00am and ended at 11.45am.

***15 Public speaking**

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

There were no members of the public that wished to speak.

***16 Minutes**

The minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 13 September 2016 were confirmed and signed as a true record, subject to a comment raised on minute *12 (A30 Honiton to Devonshire Inn – Highway Improvement Scheme) being corrected to read:

- Queried whether there would be service station provision. In response, it was advised that there were currently no proposals for provision and that any service station would need to be provided by a private company.

***17 Declarations of interest**

Cllr Jill Elson; minute – *8 – Draft Exmouth Sports Pitch Strategy and *21 – Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance

Interest - Personal

Reason: Chair of Governors, Exmouth Community College

Cllr Geoff Pook; minute – *21 - Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance

Interest - Personal

Reason: Involved in the construction industry

***18 Housing Monitoring and Five Year Land Supply Calculations**

The Committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management's report outlining the latest monitoring figures on housing completions and projections and setting out the five year housing supply calculation to 31 March 2016. The Council was legally required to monitor housing completions within the District on an annual basis and calculate whether it could demonstrate a five year housing land supply.

Members noted that in summary, over the six-month period from 1 October 2015 – 31 March 2016 there were 515 net new dwellings completed in the District and there had been 1027 net completions over the full monitoring period (1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016). The figures showed that there had been a drop off in completions at the West End and a rise in completions in the rest of the District. The drop in the West End was considered to be a temporary situation which was primarily caused by the reduced flow of available plots with reserved matters at Cranbrook and partially due to uncertainty as a result of the Cranbrook DPD process. Actions were being taken to encourage developers to progress applications and to remove obstacles to delivery.

The five year land supply based on the 31 March 2016 monitor, showed that the Council could demonstrate 5.80 years supply of land for housing with a 5% buffer and 5.07 housing land years supply with a 20% buffer. Members were advised that it was left to the local authority to consider what constituted 'persistent under delivery' and which buffer should be used. The Council had applied a 20% buffer in recent years due to under delivery prior to the current Local Plan, however it was now considered that the Council was clearly delivering at around or above the requirements and therefore the 5% buffer should now be applied.

The Council being able to demonstrate a healthy five year supply meant that full weight could be given to Local Plan policies when assessing planning applications. However, it was stressed to Members that the Council should not become complacent as the buffer could easily be reduced if appropriate windfall sites or allocated sites were not developed. It was therefore important that there was a continued focus placed on increasing housing delivery to strengthen the supply position and provide greater security that could be maintained in the long term. The Planning Advisory Service advice stated that Councils should be aiming for a 7 – 8 year supply as a 5 year supply would render the local authority vulnerable within a very short period.

The Service Lead advised the Committee of a correction to the Housing Monitoring Update appended to the Committee report relating to the calculations – the correction did not affect the overall figures or the five year land supply calculation.

Comments raised during discussion included:

- Slowed delivery in the West End had implications on the delivery of infrastructure and services. In response, it was reiterated that the drop in delivery was envisaged as being a temporary short-term issue.
- There was concern that reduced completions led to higher house prices and while this may be in the interests of the housebuilders it is not in the Council's interests.
- Current policies restrict development in those villages that wished to have limited growth to help sustain services. In response, it was advised that there were over forty Neighbourhood Plans in production – the plans would enable those settlements to bring forward development that met the communities' need. When a Neighbourhood Plan had been through examination and referendum it became part of the development plan for the local planning authority and is given weight accordingly.
- The correlation needed to be made between housing and employment supply. In response, it was advised that it was recognised there was a need to consider how the Council reported on the delivery of employment land and this was being actioned.
- There was a need to consider alternative home models, such as cheaper construction methods and the Council being proactive in bringing forward housing on its own land.
- Affordable homes were still too expensive for the average wage earner in the District – the definition of affordable needed to be revisited. Members were advised that a 'white paper' was anticipated from Government on housing and planning.
- There was a lack of suitable housing to enable older people to downsize.
- The Development Management Committee needed to be mindful that a 5 year land supply was a minimum and that the Council should be aiming for 7 – 8 year supply.

RESOLVED:

- 1. that latest housing monitoring update up to 31 March 2016 be noted;**
- 2. that the approach to the calculation of the five year land supply be noted;**
- 3. that the implications of the latest monitoring report be noted and that the Development Management Committee be asked to note the latest monitoring figures and use them to inform their decision making.**

***19 Draft Exmouth Sports Pitch Strategy**

The Committee considered the Planning Policy Officer's report updating on progress made with the Exmouth Sports Pitch Strategy. The Strategy was being developed as a means to deliver the pitch requirements set out in the District-wide Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) adopted in June 2015 and sought to address the action plans identified in the PPS in response to issues facing pitch supply in Exmouth currently and up to 2024.

Consultation on the draft Strategy had taken place from 27 May to 8 July 2016. Members noted that 112 representations had been received during the consultation from a wide range of respondents; a summary of the comments received were included in the Consultation Statement appended to the Committee report.

The Committee report outlined the additional work required as a result of key issues raised and the staff and resource implications for future delivery.

Comments during discussion included:

- The expansion of schools onto school playing pitches resulted in an increasing number of schools having to share pitches with clubs.
- Lympstone required a cricket and football pitch – queried whether this could be included in the Strategy.
- Acknowledgment that there was significant work to be undertaken before any final recommendations could be made.
- As well as identifying sites, consideration also needed to be given to the management of them. In response, it was advised that the Strategy needed to be deliverable, however this did not mean that the Council needed to necessarily manage the sites.
- The Council's role should be that of a facilitator.
- Terms of leases needed to be adequate to enable clubs to apply for funding and grants - often the leases were not long enough.

RESOLVED:

- 1. that the work to date on developing the Exmouth Sports Pitch Strategy, including the summary of comments received as detailed in the Consultation Statement, be noted;**
- 2. that the requirement for significant further work on options before a revised draft strategy could be presented to Members for endorsement and published for consultation be noted;**
- 3. that the Strategic Planning Committee recognises the staff and resource implications for the Council in the future delivery of the strategy as a whole and specific project;**
- 4. that the supplementary budget of £25,000 to further assess options and enable drafting of a revised draft strategy in due course be agreed.**

***20 Revised draft Honiton Sports Pitch Strategy**

The Committee considered the Planning Policy Officer's report updating on progress made with the Honiton Sports Pitch Strategy. The Strategy was being developed as a means to deliver the pitch requirements set out in the District-wide Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) adopted in June 2015 and sought to address the action plans identified in the PPS in response to issues facing pitch supply in Honiton currently and up to 2024.

Consultation on the draft Strategy had taken place from 27 May to 8 July 2016. A summary of the 34 representations received from a wide range of respondents were included in the Consultation Statement appended to the Committee report.

The committee report sought endorsement for a second consultation on a revised draft strategy and outlined staff and resource implications for future delivery. Members noted that there were a number of minor changes and two major changes from the initial draft Strategy – the two major changes concerning St Rita's extension and Mountbatten Park and the former showground.

The Service Lead – Strategic Planning and Development Management drew Members' attention to comments received from Honiton Town Council since the agenda had been published.

Points raised during discussion included:

- Delivery of sports pitches was an issue throughout the District.
- The cricket club should be moved to the St Rita's extension site, the football pitch should remain on the existing site and the rugby pitch should be leased to the rugby club to allow them to progress.
- The former showground was a sustainable location for sports pitches, easily accessible by all modes of transport.
- Reiterated that the Council should be a facilitator.
- Terms of leases needed to be adequate.

RESOLVED:

- 1. that the work on developing the Strategy, including the summary of comments received and subsequent changes made in response as detailed in the Consultation Statement be noted;**
- 2. that the revised draft Honiton Sports Pitch Strategy and supporting documents (SEA/HRA Screening Report, EqIA Screening Report and Consultation Statement) be endorsed;**
- 3. that a further 4 week public consultation on the revised draft Honiton Sports Pitch Strategy and supporting documents (SEA/HRA Screening Report, EqIA Screening Report and Consultation Statement) be agreed;**
- 4. that the Strategic Planning Committee recognises the staff and resource implications for the Council in the future delivery of the strategy as a whole and specific projects.**

***21 Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document**

The Committee considered the Senior Planning Officer's report seeking endorsement for consultation on the draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPD). The SPD sought to provide guidance and clarify the position with regard to planning obligations for developers, decision makers, stakeholders and local communities following the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy in September 2016.

Members noted that following the consultation, and depending on the responses received, the document would need to be amended and a further consultation undertaken. A final SPD would then be published and adopted.

Comments raised during discussion included:

- The consultation documents should be sent to parish and town councils for their comments.
- Extend the consultation period due to the Christmas period.
- Planning obligations were tied to the land ownership until the obligation was fully complied with, however there some exceptions.
- Queried whether there were sufficient enforcement officers to ensure obligations were adhered to. In response, it was advised that enforcement action was taken on information provided and was therefore reactive.
- Concern was raised that without confirmation that there would be funding for education from CIL, Academy Schools did not qualify for funding from the Education Funding Agency. In response, it was advised that a report regarding CIL governance arrangements would be presented at the next Committee meeting.
- CIL was non-negotiable and therefore made obligations delivered through Section 106 agreements, such as affordable housing and open space provision, more vulnerable.

RESOLVED: that a six week consultation (extended to take account of the Christmas period if required) on the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance, subject to any minor typographical amendments, be agreed.

***22 Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment**

The Committee considered the Planning Policy Officer's report seeking endorsement for a new Housing and Economic Land Assessment (HELAA) methodology for the Exeter housing market area (Teignbridge, Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter). The HELAA was an assessment of land that was likely to be available and capable of development for new housing and employment within a certain timeframe and essentially replaced the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

The HELAA would form part of the evidence to inform plan making and would support early plan preparation for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESp). Members noted that it would also ensure the Council was aware of deliverable options for development if through the Local Plan review it was identified that additional supply was required. For all the GESp authorities it was intended that a joint 'call for sites' would begin in February 2017.

In response to questions raised during discussion, the Service Lead – Strategic Planning and Development Management advised that:

- The Council would be able to proactively look for suitable housing and employment sites to supplement those submitted through the call for sites and/or combine adjoining smaller sites to form larger strategic sites.
- Whether or not to create a new community or focus on expanding existing settlements would be a policy decision for the GESP authorities.

RESOLVED: that the new Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) methodology be endorsed.

Attendance list

Committee Members:

Councillors

Andrew Moulding – Chairman

Peter Burrows

Jill Elson

Graham Godbeer

Mike Howe

Geoff Jung

David Key

Rob Longhurst

Philip Skinner

Also present (present for all or part of the meeting):

Councillors:

Brian Bailey

David Barratt

Colin Brown

Jenny Brown

Paul Diviani

John Dyson

Peter Faithfull

Geoff Jung

Geoff Pook

Phil Twiss

Tom Wright

Officers present (present for all or part of the meeting):

Mark Williams, Chief Executive

Ed Freeman, Service Lead – Strategic Planning and Development Management

Keith Lane, Planning Policy Officer

Rob Murray, Economic Manager

Claire Rodway, Senior Planning Officer

Chris Rose, Development Manager

Shirley Shaw, Planning Barrister

Graeme Thompson, Planning Policy Officer

Hannah Whitfield, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Mike Allen

Susie Bond

Peter Bowden

Brenda Taylor

Mark Williamson

Non-committee Members

Councillors:

Alan Dent

Ian Thomas

Officers:

Richard Cohen, Deputy Chief Executive

Chairman Date.....