

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 26 June 2018

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9am and ended at 10.10am.

***1 Public speaking**

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting. There were no members of the public present who wished to address the Committee.

***2 Minutes**

The minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 24 April 2018 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

In response to a question from Cllr Jung regarding minute 42, the Service Lead for Planning Strategy and Development Management advised the committee that a series of meetings for the Advisory Reference Forum would begin in September 2018 and run to the summer of 2019.

In response to a question from Cllr Bond regarding minute 42, the Chief Executive advised the committee that members of the Principal Officers Group and the Growth and Development Board met last week. There are no substantial updates at present, only that there is a need to work with Exeter City Council to promote the desirability of development in the city. Exeter City Council will be undertaking a branding campaign to promote this and it is key to the progression of the GESP outside of the city.

***3 Declarations of interest**

None

4 East Devon Villages Plan – Inspector’s Report and Proposed Plan Adoption

The report presented to the committee outlined the Inspector’s final report into the East Devon Villages Plan (EDVP). This concludes that, with the ‘main modifications’ (MM) set out in an Appendix to the report, the plan meets the legal requirements and is ‘sound’.

The Villages Plan has been prepared in line with the East Devon Local Plan, which set out that it would define development boundaries around certain villages, include any policies that may be applicable for villages and prepare inset maps for Greendale and Hill Barton Business Parks.

Since the adoption of the Local Plan, several rounds of consultation have been undertaken to guide the development of the Villages Plan and it was formally submitted for consideration by the Secretary of State on 28 June 2017. The Inspector held formal hearing sessions in November 2017 and a consultation on proposed modifications ended on 2 February 2018. The Inspector considered all comments that were submitted during this consultation period. However, paragraph 36 of the Inspector’s report highlights that amendments to the two main modifications relating to the policies for Greendale Business Park and Hill Barton Business Park, as suggested by this committee, were not adopted.

RESOLVED: that the receipt of the final report from the Planning Inspector be noted.

RECOMMENDED that Council:

1. approve the incorporation of the proposed main modifications into the Villages Plan,
2. approve the minor changes to detailed wording of the Sidbury Chapter and the Greendale inset map be incorporated into the Villages Plan,
3. adopt the Villages Plan on 26th July 2018.

***5 New Local Development Scheme for East Devon**

The report presented to the committee introduced the new Local Development Scheme (LDS), which sets out a programme and timetable for production of future planning policy documents. The previous LDS dates from July 2017 and requires an update.

The LDS advises of production of four Development Plan Documents (DPDs) which comprise the Villages Plan, Cranbrook Plan, Gypsy and Traveller Plan and the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan.

There are a number of Supplementary Planning Policy Documents set out in the report. However, the Council is restricted in progressing a select few ahead of the GESP. A project plan for the GESP is being created which includes engaging with the Strategic Planning Committee.

Discussion covered:

- The need to include the development of supported housing due to current pressure on sheltered housing. In response, the committee were advised that there is a draft scoping document that has been sent to key housing officers for review. As part of the review of the draft scope, officer's will consider how to address issues of delivering affordable sheltered housing.
- The need to work with other partners involved in the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) on self-build. In response, the committee were advised that communications have taken place with the Right to Build Task Force which is a body currently working with Teignbridge District Council on Self Build. The Service Lead for Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that this Council is already working in partnership with the Right to Build Task Force in the Cranbrook area. As part of the commission the task force are to make a presentation to Members on self and custom build and how the council could help to bring forward sites.
- Concerns around viability issues and the lack of affordable housing development. In response, the committee were advised that the Government are finally acknowledging these issues and the fundamental problem of high land value. The Service Lead for Planning Strategy and Development Management also advised that changes in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) could mean that viability assessments would be undertaken much earlier in the application process.
- Concerns that high value single property developments (self build houses) are exempt from the Community Infrastructure Levy; this needs to be addressed.
- Concerns over the imminent changes to the NPPF and whether this allows enough time for possible changes to be made to the East Devon Local Plan. In

response, the committee were advised that transitional arrangements would be made if the East Devon Local Plan needed be altered although it is unlikely that the changes would lead to the plan being out of conformity with the NPPF.

- Clarification on whether Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents automatically become Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD), whether there are any undergoing this process and the weighting that they hold. In response, the committee were advised that an SPG will not automatically become a SPD. The lack of current resources will not allow for older SPGs to be translated into SPDs however, they are still endorsed and hold a weight in decision making.
- Concerns that the GESP is not going to incorporate small scale industrial sites. In response, the committee were advised that the GESP only looks at larger strategic sites and that the smaller scale industrial sites will be reviewed through the East Devon Local Plan Review which will follow the GESP.

RESOLVED: that the new Local Development Scheme be approved with effect from 2 July 2018.

***6 Updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

The report presented to the committee outlined the updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI is a document that Local Planning Authorities are required to produce, setting out how the Council will consult the local community and other interested parties on Planning Policy documents (including Local Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents and other guidance), Neighbourhood Plans and Planning Applications.

From 6 April 2018, local planning authorities must review Statements of Community Involvement at least once every five years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community. The last East Devon SCI was produced in 2013, at a time when major changes to the planning system were being introduced. Since then, further changes have occurred and it is timely to update it again.

From 31st July 2018, authorities are expected to set out in their Statement of Community Involvement how they will engage communities on the preliminary stages of plan making, specifically the survey stage and local development scheme.

The report also reflects the need for, and actively encourages, Developers to undertake consultation with Town and Parish Councils and the community prior to submission.

The Statement of Community Involvement will need to undergo a six-week consultation period before it is presented to this committee in September 2018.

Discussion covered:

- The need to ensure planning officers receive the updated ward boundaries to guarantee that ward members are consulted on relevant planning applications. In response, the committee were assured that the system will be updated.
- Whether businesses will be consulted directly regarding development. In response, the committee were advised that businesses are not specifically targeted but consultations would be advertised widely locally.

- It was noted that the section on Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders was very clear.
- Request for clarification on Neighbourhood Planning Orders. In response, the committee were advised that it is an involved process and requires an agreement with the relevant landowner. This will bypass the normal planning process.

RESOLVED: that Members agree that the Statement of Community Involvement be updated and that consultation be undertaken to commence the process.

***7 Planning Appeals Status Report**

The Service Lead – Strategic Planning and Development Management presented the report and provided an update on the current situation regarding planning appeal decisions and an overview of the results of planning appeals from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. It was highlighted that the Council had achieved an appeal success rate close to the national average; the figures for the last twelve months represented a drop in the number of appeals dismissed when compared to the Council's performance over the past three years, where the success rate had been consistently above the national average.

The Service Lead – Strategic Planning and Development Management highlighted that although planning decisions taken on larger developments have been in tune with the Inspector's view, it has been identified that the Inspector is taking an increasingly flexible view on smaller infill developments and extensions. The Inspectorate is less concerned with these types of developments when historically they would have taken a more critical view. In response to this, a shift in approach is needed to ensure the right decisions are made whilst being mindful of public resources.

Discussion covered:

- The need to ensure Town and Parish Councils are kept informed of the trend in planning appeals and the Inspector's view. In response, the committee were advised that a possible Planning Newsletter could be put together and disseminated to Town and Parish Councils.
- Concern over the appeal relating to equestrian development. In response, the committee were advised that there was a miss communication between the Council and the Inspector regarding specifics of the application. Furthermore, the Council does not have a specific Equestrian Planning Policy, only a guidance document from the AONB team.

(Councillor Mike Howe left the chamber for this item)

RESOLVED: that the Planning Appeals Status report be noted.

Attendance list

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Paul Diviani - Chairman

Mike Allen – Vice Chairman

Susie Bond

Colin Brown

Jill Elson
Graham Godbeer
Ian Hall
Mike Howe
Geoff Jung
Rob Longhurst
Philip Skinner
Mark Williamson

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

Councillors:
David Barratt
Alan Dent
Bruce de Saram
Tom Wright

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

Mark Williams, Chief Executive
Ed Freeman, Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management
Chris Rose, Development Manager
Shirley Shaw, Planning Barrister
Tabitha Whitcombe, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies:

Councillors
Stuart Hughes
Geoff Pook
Ian Thomas

Chairman Date.....