

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Strategic Planning Committee held online via the zoom app on 22 February 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9.30 am and ended at 3.12 pm. The meeting was adjourned briefly at 11.03am and reconvened at 11.10am and adjourned at 1.08pm and reconvened at 1.40pm.

76 Public speaking

Councillor Alasdair Bruce read out the following statement on behalf of Feniton Parish Council in relation to Minute 87 Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040:

You will today be considering a strategy for the distribution of new development in the draft local plan. Most importantly for local communities, you will be identifying the specific sites where it is proposed development should be located. I am aware that the initial draft of the local plan does not meet the government's housing target for East Devon by some 900 houses and that the committee faces a potentially difficult task in bridging the gap.

I have noted that among the potential options to achieve this, the village of Feniton is identified in at least two. This seems to be partly because the "call for sites" produced a number of superficially suitable sites and partly because of its identification as a larger "Service Village".

I would like to remind the Committee that four of the sites at Feniton have already been tested at the consolidated Planning Inquiry of 2014 when all but the smallest site were rejected. The Planning Inspector concluded unequivocally that Feniton is not a sustainable location for new large scale housing.

The developers of these sites and the new sites now proposed at Feniton cannot claim with any authority or credibility that Feniton has become a more sustainable place for large scale housing. Indeed, I and the Parish Council would contend that if anything the situation is now worse.

Relative to the population the number of jobs easily accessible to the village is tiny. As a consequence the working population has to drive to its employment and car ownership in the village is way above the national average. While it is tempting to conclude that the presence of a railway station in the village makes it suitable as a commuter village for Exeter or Honiton, the reality is that trains only stop every two hours. The prospect of providing a service in the peak period that is sufficiently frequent to attract commuters from their cars is zero. The single track line will not allow it. Bus services are equally uninviting or inconvenient.

The Primary School is at capacity and on a constrained site. Consequently, the parents of new families coming to the village are already often required to transport their children to other villages by car. None of these parents is then going to return, park up and seek public transport to get to their jobs.

The village shop provides a good service but very few could rely on it for their total weekly shop. Most travel by car to supermarkets in nearby towns. While the draft plan

identifies Feniton as a “Service Village”, leisure facilities and other services in the village are limited, there is no doctor, so again more car journeys are needed to meet the needs of the village population.

So, typical of many East Devon villages, the pattern in Feniton is one of already very high car usage on completely unsuitable village lanes. The “main roads” into the village all have places where two cars cannot pass, are dangerously narrow and none have a footpath. This is already completely unsustainable. More housing at the scale proposed by developers is simply not acceptable in this location.

In addition, Feniton is already well known for its propensity to flood. Housing on open fields around the village will only add to this problem. I have reason to believe that the one small development approved at the Inquiry in 2014 - Acland Park - failed to implement flood mitigation measures. Moreover the site is incomplete, abandoned and a health hazard. The experience in Feniton is that more hard surfaces always add to the existing flooding problems for the rest of the village.

Developers have put forward land around Feniton that in theory could provide 650 new homes. While the Committee might be tempted to include some of this in the draft local plan to meet the 900 home shortfall, I would urge you to consider this very, very carefully.

The HELAA assessment has not been published for these sites. No sustainability assessment has been made of the sites individually or more importantly, collectively. I believe that the categorisation of the majority of the sites as 4 or 5 (i.e. potentially suitable for development) is not supported by the facts and is in direct conflict with the 2014 Decision of the Planning Inspector.

The village’s Neighbourhood Plan of 2018 is clear about the implications of mass development and the problems facing Feniton. In supporting the plan, East Devon District Council noted that it was made with “considerable community engagement” and congratulated the Parish working group on “all its hard work”.

Members will be aware that a Planning Inquiry is a quasi-judicial process. The Planning Inspector was very clear in her judgement in 2014. Feniton is not a sustainable location for new mass housing. Nothing has changed.

Councillor Roger Giles spoke on behalf of Ottery St Mary Town Council and residents in relation to Minute 87 Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. He referred to the current Local Plan and how Ottery St Mary had seen a 25% growth which was more than any other town in the district other than Cranbrook. He raised concerns that in the draft Local Plan there was a possibility that Ottery St Mary could see an astonishing further 1,300 houses which would be in excess of a further 50% growth. This proposal would make Ottery St Mary unsustainable as the town had no railway station, a poor bus service, the secondary school and primary school already at capacity and an overstretched medical centre.

He also raised concerns about the proposed additional 470 houses proposed for West Hill highlighting that residents in West Hill also use the secondary school and medical centre in Ottery St Mary. He advised that Ottery St Mary Town Council and West Hill Parish Council were working together to address these issues and sought clarification whether the email sent to the Council on 9 February 2022 addressing the Local Plan proposals had been brought to Strategic Planning Committee Members’ attention. In response the Chair acknowledged receipt of the email but could not confirm if it had been

shared with Committee Members and would follow this up after the meeting. He addressed Councillor Giles concerns about the proposed additional housing for Ottery St Mary and advised that all the sites put forward in the district were to be reassessed in light of the policies discussed since December 2021. He advised the Council would be taking a policy led approach to the sites proposed and that some sites would no longer be eligible.

77 Minutes of the previous meeting

Members were happy to accept the minutes of the consultative Strategic Planning Committee meetings held on 25 and 26 January and 8 February 2022.

78 Declarations of interest

Minute 81. Housing monitoring update to year ending 31 March 2021.
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 81. Housing monitoring update to year ending 31 March 2021.
Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Employed as Clerk to All Saints and Chardstock Parish Councils and locum Deputy Clerk to Axminster Town Council.

Minute 82. Further engagement with developers and site promoters to inform Local Plan production.
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 83. Local Plan revised plan making timetable.
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Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Employed as Clerk to All Saints and Chardstock Parish Councils and locum Deputy Clerk to Axminster Town Council.

Minute 84. First Homes - interim guidance note.
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 85. Torbay Local Plan Housing update Growth Options Consultation.
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 86. Self-build monitoring report.
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Dan Ledger, Personal, Chair of Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Board.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Kevin Blakey, Personal, Cranbrook Town Councillor.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Mike Howe, Personal, Bishops Clyst Parish Councillor and owner of a convenience store in Clyst St Mary which is in my ward as a district councillor.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Director of Exeter Science Park and employed as Clerk to All Saints and Chardstock Parish Councils and locum Deputy Clerk to Axminster Town Council.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Philip Skinner, Personal, Known to FWS Carter & Sons and the Stewart family; Owns land in Talaton that is in the HELAA process which is not detailed in any documentation being discussed and a previous Member of the Science Park Board.

Minute 86. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Town Councillor and Broadclyst Ward Member.

79 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

80 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential / exempt items.

81 **Housing monitoring update to year ending 31 March 2021**

The Committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management’s report outlining the latest robust monitoring figures on housing supply and monitoring to year ending 31 March 2021.

Members noted that houses delivered was down on preceding years due to the pandemic, seeing 872 completed. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that although this figure was below the 918 Government standard method the overall shortfall was just two houses after taking into account over-supply in some of the previous year’s which demonstrated a five year housing land supply position. However, the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management raised concerns that this was in a declining position and drew Members attention to paragraph 5 about future risks highlighting there was a need for immediate action and that Members needed to accept that the Local Plan was unlikely to be adopted before 2024.

Points raised during discussion included:

- Reference was made to the table in paragraph 3.2 which should read (Number = A x 5) and (Number A x 8) as this was the annual requirement;
- Concerns raised that the wording in paragraph 5.2 could imply that developers could come forward with pre-emptive sites. In response the Chair advised that any sites that came forward would go through the Planning Committee and it was the Committee’s responsibility to determine applications that were not in line with current policy. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged the concerns raised about pre-empting but

emphasised the need to maintain the five year land supply. In response to a question he advised that he hoped to bring a report on the HELAA to the meeting in April;

- Reference was made to the removal of the Axminster Urban Extension detailed in paragraph 5 – future risks and questioned the suggestion that it had been removed because it was undeliverable. The Chair advised that the urban extension was removed as officers felt it was not able to deliver housing within the next five years and also addressed the phosphates issues in the River Axe. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy confirmed that evidence suggested this was the case but the urban extension could be revisited at a later date. He acknowledged there could be phosphate issues in many rivers in the district but highlighted that the River Axe was a priority as it was a European Designated Habitat.

The Chair proposed an additional recommendation that a short briefing session with Strategic Planning Committee and Planning Committee from planners about how to boost the housing supply outside of the emerging Local Plan. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management confirmed he was happy to arrange if Members agreed

The Strategic Planning Committee noted:

- 1. The residential dwellings completion data and future projections for the district including the comments on future supply risks detailed in section 5 of the report;**
- 2. The confirmation of a Five Year Land Supply;**
- 3. That the Housing Monitoring update will be published on the Council's website;**
- 4. Request a short briefing for Strategic Planning Committee and Planning Committee from planners as to how supply can be boosted outside the Local Plan.**

82 Further engagement with developers and site promoters to inform Local Plan production

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management sought Members' views about whether they would like wider engagement with developers and site promoters following the 33 site presentations held on 25 and 26 January 2022. Interest to present to Members had been received on a further 27 sites that had either scored low or high in Officer's initial assessment while there was also a small number of other parties that had missed the registration deadline.

Comments received from Committee Members included:

- Support for options 1 & 2 and welcomed more time to hear from other developers;
- Support for option 3 as none of the information provided by developers would be binding.
- It would be helpful to hear about the proposed new community but the suggestion of more long days listening to presentations would not be welcomed;
- If we are to understand the opportunities for the district we must listen to more presentations;
- It is important to be democratic and transparent;
- Support for option 2 to set aside time at a later stage of plan production which would give more time to understand the policies

The Chair proposed option 2 together with the recommendations as written in the report. He further proposed to not accept sites that are not major applications of less than 10 houses.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. For Senior Officers to promote option 2 in response to the remaining requests for presentations to Strategic Planning Committee and specifically whether more time to set aside to have presentations from developers and site promoters and, if so, when and how the meetings should be arranged;**
- 2. To Senior Officers that Officers to able to meet with developers and site promoters where this is necessary to gain further information and evidence on a site to inform assessment work provided such meetings are minuted.**

83 Local Plan revised plan making timetable

The Committee considered the report which updated Members on the timetable for production of the new Local Plan noting that progress had been slower than initially envisaged due to resourcing issues and Members consideration of the working draft Local Plan taking longer than envisaged in the original work programme. The expectation was for consultation on a draft Local Plan to be in September/October 2022.

Discussions on the report included:

- Clarification was sought about the further call for sites which Members supported at the last meeting as a search for sites underpins the whole Local Plan. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to paragraph 2.4 and welcomed Members view about whether they were happy to wait to run the call for sites alongside the consultation on the draft Local Plan. He advised a further report for a call for sites outlining the options and practicalities would hopefully be brought to Committee in March;
- Clarification sought on surface water and river flooding implications as the Environment Agency were not updating their information until autumn which could impact on planning processes. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that the flooding maps and infrastructure assessments were ongoing and Officers were gathering evidence to form assessments of the sites which would be brought to Members when it became available
- Concerns raised about the resource implications and whether there would be capacity to undertake a further call for sites.
- It is essential that all town and parish councils be included in the call for sites to find out whether they were aware of any plots of land that could be developed or to find out their aspirations for their town or village. The Chair was hesitant about this and suggested that councils could put forward sites without the landowner's knowledge when we need a willing land owner to allocate the site.

That Strategic Planning Committee note the proposed amendment to the local plan making timetable (consultation proposed to now be in autumn 2022)

RECOMMENDATION:

Of agreement that a new Local Development Scheme, with a detailed plan timetable, will be brought to Committee in spring 2022 and that a further report on practicalities for a further call for sites be presented.

84 First Homes - interim guidance note

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management presented the report that sought Members approval of the draft Interim Guidance Note: East Devon – First Homes introduced by Government for first time buyers with a household income of less than £80,000 per year.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management drew Members attention to the various options within the report and advised if Members were minded not to pursue the preferred options that delegated powers to amend the guidance notes would be needed to be sought to ensure its accuracy.

Discussions covered:

- As a lot of developers challenge rural exception sites so there is a need to make policies robust and unchallengeable; The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management confirmed the policy on rural exception sites was robust and there were no issues to date
- Reference was made to paragraph 1.3 and whether there were sufficient applicants to take up the offer of at least 25% affordable units as first homes. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development advised 25% was a Government requirement and advised he was happy to look into this but there was an assumption that this would be an attractive offer for those struggling to get onto the property ladder
- There is a need to provide first homes in areas where there is growing economy;
- It was questioned how to make developers make deliverable houses. In response the Planning Barrister advised that Homes England had set up templates and guidance notes in relation to this. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management reassured Members that the Council was working on the processes for supporting this when the NPPF brings out the guidance and the framework for first homes. He also advised about other local councils were participating in drafting legal agreements and monitoring;
- It was questioned whether there were any comparisons to determine how this would fit within East Devon. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised all councils were in similar positions as this was a new type of affordable housing ownership product for first-time buyers and time will tell on how it would work.
- Issues about cost recovery and whether councils would be able to enter into a fee agreement;
- Reference was made to paragraph 3.7 and the balance between affordable housing delivery and its impact on Strategy 24 of the Local Plan. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that guidance would be developed over time and would be incorporated into the new Local Plan

ROMMENDATION:

- 1. Of approval of the draft Interim Guidance Note: East Devon – First Homes;**
- 2. Of agreement to delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management in consultant with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning to make any minor changes to finalise the Interim Guidance Note and to publish that document on the Council's website.**
- 3. Of agreement to delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to authorise the use of the Interim Guidance Note: East Devon – First Homes for development management purposes from the date of publication of the Note.**

85 **Torbay Local Plan Housing update Growth Options Consultation**

The report presented to Committee summarised the current Torbay Local Housing Update Growth Options Consultation for meeting Torbay's housing requirements up to 2030.

The Service Lead - Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that Torbay Council was struggling to meet their housing need and referred Members to paragraph 1.2 which detailed Torbay's consultation documents and the following list of proposed options to help meet the Government's housing figure of 596 houses per year:

- Option 1 – No further greenfield allocations beyond already allocated or approved sites.
- Option 2 – Limited further greenfield development
- Option 3 – One or two further urban extensions.
- Option 4 - All sites that have not been ruled out in principle
- Option 5 – Meeting full needs (as required by Government)

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that as it was unlikely Torbay Council would meet their housing need he sought Members views on the council's response on page 139 highlighting that East Devon District Council had the same landscape and environmental constraints. The response also highlights the impact on peoples' home lives and climate change if new homes to meet Torbay's needs are delivered in East Devon when residents lives are fundamentally based in Torbay.

Comments received from Members included:

- This is an excellent and diplomatic response;
- It does not make sense for Torbay Council to outsource housing to more than 20 miles away;
- There is a need to follow our own advice and not take the easy option to develop on greenfield sites.

RECOMMENDATION:

Of endorsement of the proposed response in this report and delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to submit comments accordingly

86 **Self-build monitoring report**

The Committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management's report on demand for plots from the period 30 October 2020 to 31 October 2021. The period saw a continued demand with an overall 44 individuals added to the register with 26 plots consented between 31 October 2021 and 30 October 2024 highlighting there was a need to permission service plots to meet that demand.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to the appendix to the report outlining information about budgets which suggested the majority of builders were looking to build larger properties rather than affordable housing projects and suggested this may change in the future when plots come forward through policy requirements in the Cranbrook DPD as well as the self-build policies in the Local Plan.

The Committee were supportive of the self-build monitoring report and questions raised during discussion were:

- Clarification sought from the Council's policy perspective about how would self-builds fit within development schemes;
- Clarification sought about what was the floor area space on the self-build policy;
- It was suggested that people who want to build £1m houses must contribute to the local budget to help deliver extra services; The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged the frustration felt and advised that all self-builds were exempt from contributing to Community Infrastructure Levy
- Need to avoid self-build homes being sold on by someone who builds houses for a living. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised there was a requirement to live in self-builds for a minimum of three years (to be exempt from CIL) which the council enforce rigidly
- There is a need to make it work for all levels of income;
- There is a need to encourage and provide opportunities to people wanting to build their own homes;
- Would like to see serviced plots throughout the district and not just Cranbrook focussed;
- We urgently need serviced plots to introduce diversity in house designs;
- Would like to see a requirement on developers all over the district to provide serviced plots for the younger people who otherwise do not have the opportunity to get themselves on the property ladder;
- Suggestion to revisit the budget requirement for the council to look into acquiring self-build plots.

In response to the questions raised the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged there was a need to review the council's approach to self-build and custom build homes to help identify suitable sites to bring forward and purchase but at present the land coming forward has been quite limited over the last couple of years. He referred to Policy 41 in the new Local Plan that requires 5% of dwellings on sites of 20 homes or more to be custom or self-build plots as well as different vehicles for delivering these. He suggested the need to investigate further to reduce some of the red tape during the planning process such as a plot passport to remove the need for formal planning permission.

The Strategic Planning Committee noted:

- 1. The draft monitoring report and that it will be used to inform planning permission decisions (both to inform local plan production and inform decision making on planning applications);**
- 2. That 44 individuals were added to the self-build register during the latest monitoring period (31/10/20 to 30/10/21);**
- 3. The need to permission 26 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/20 and 30/10/23 to meet level of demand show on Part 1 of the self-build register (between 31/10/20 and 30/10/22);**
- 4. That the demand for self-build plots indicated on the register should be taken into account in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.**

87 Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040

Chapter 5 – Future growth and development on the development on the western side of East Devon

10. Strategic Policy – Exeter Science Park

- Do not support option B as would like to see the Science Park expanded

- Well sought after area;
- Support for option A
- There is a need to read option C carefully and have it on the back burner;
- The Science Park not only delivers jobs but it delivers a very high tech of jobs and skills we do not see in the normal walk of life with connections between Exeter City Council and Exeter University.
- In response to discussions the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised the Science Park wanted to have land to expand into and were in discussions about what land is available. Preference would be to have land as near to the existing Science Park to benefit from infrastructure and existing facilities but if this was not possible an expansion on land to the south of the A30 would be an option;
- Caution raised for option C as this would be part of the Clyst Valley Regional Park and the need to consider wildlife;
- Would like expansion to take place north of the A30 that abuts the Science Park

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

The proposal is for land to be allocated for Science Park expansion. Policy will explain and expand on:

- **The types of uses that will be allowed;**
- **Any relevant phasing policies;**
- **Particular design standards and approaches that might be applicable.**

11. Strategic Policy – High quality employment north of Sowton Village

- Support for option B as this is a very sensitive area and right against the A30 and M5 with limited land for development without encroaching onto Sowton Village Conservation Area where there are a multitude of listed buildings. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that evidence was being gathered and referred to an updated economic development needs assessment for site assessment work for this particular area. Preserving the historic village of Sowton can be achieved provided there was adequate landscape separation
- Support for option A as it is adjacent to the M5 and A30 and in close proximity to the Science Park with an opportunity for housing growth;
- Concerns raised that this would be more Greenfield development. Not supportive of this because we need a hierarchy to develop on what has already been built on. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management agreed that brownfield land should be used first but there is none.
- Need to consider the flooding implications of the Culm Valley

Members advised that they support officers preferred option:

The proposal is for land to be allocated for a high quality business park to the north of Sowton village. Policy will explain and expand on matters to include:

- **The types of uses that will be allowed;**
- **Any relevant phasing policies;**
- **Particular design standards and approaches that might be applicable;**
- **Links to the Clyst Valley Regional Park including provision of a green bridge over the A30.**

12. Strategic Policy – Aviation and aeronautical activity employment provision east of Exeter Airport terminal

- Exeter Airport is vital to the district and support;

- Need the airport to remain sustainable
- Dunkeswell Airfield needs to be included in the new Local Plan.

Members advised that they support officers preferred option:

The proposal is for land to be allocated for aviation and aeronautical activity employment provision. Policy will explain and expand on matters to include:

- **The types of uses that will be allowed;**
- **Any relevant phasing policies;**
- **Particular design standards and approaches that might be applicable;**
- **Links and justification in respect of the operation of the airport and greening its activities and flying.**

13. Strategic Policy – Exeter Airport and its future operation and development

Members advised that they support officers preferred option:

Proposed policy will address the role of Exeter Airport as a key transport gateway and it will safeguard the airport and its land for aviation uses. Noise sensitive development within the 57db noise contour around the airport will be restricted (in order to ensure future airport operations are not adversely impacted) alongside ensuring that any development proposals do not have a material impact on navigational aids.

The transition to zero carbon operations at the airport will be supported through enhanced public transport surface access and the installation of renewable energy generating capacity.

The role of the Airport as a test bed for new technologies will be supported through the development of a sustainable aviation cluster. Land to the north of the runway is proposed to be allocated to support research and development activity alongside maintenance/ repair/overhaul and new freight/cargo operations. Land to the south is proposed to be allocated for further aviation related, employment and training/education uses.

The ongoing development and potential for expansion of Cranbrook.

- Perturbed about the thought that we might be giving the go-ahead to annexing parts of other communities. There is a need to consider neighbourhood plans. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised the Council's preferred approach would be to deliver just the growth envisaged in the Cranbrook DPD which was hoped to be adopted later this year. He drew Members attention to the plan at Annex 3B that showed land currently put forward beyond the Cranbrook Plan area.
- Not happy with this policy as one of the previous Local Plan items was to avoid the coalescence of settlements;
- Support paragraph 5.28 (option A) as it has been the view of Cranbrook Town Council;
- Clarification sought on the future delivery vehicles. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that the Council was very close to offering the contract to consultants with lots of experience in this area of work to determine the best delivery vehicle based on the Council's vision;
- At some point sensible discussions are needed about neighbourhood plans as the Local Plan comes first and there are neighbourhood plans that have been recently made and now there is talk about throwing these away because of the Local Plan;
- Suggestion to revise neighbourhood plans instead of ignoring them;

Members advised that they support officers preferred option:

It is not proposed that the new Local Plan will supersede the Cranbrook Plan. The policies of the Cranbrook Plan will remain applicable and will be formally saved. The Cranbrook Plan does, however, only run to 2031 and this means that the new Local plan will need to be revised and replaced before this date or ensure policy coverage for and at Cranbrook in future years. There are also some existing local plan policies that are applicable at Cranbrook and a view will need to be taken, in due course, on whether these are also saved or whether we supersede them with new local plan coverage that may for selected policies 'sweep-over' and include land in the Cranbrook Plan areas.

14. Strategic Policy – Green infrastructure and the Clyst Valley Regional Park

Members advised that they support officers preferred option:

Proposed policy will address green infrastructure in the western parts of East Devon in general and specifically the future of the Clyst Valley Regional Park.

Cross reference will be made to the consultancy work on landscape appraisal to inform possible park boundary amendments/extension.

Policy reference will be made to how development schemes should contribute to and complement green infrastructure initiatives more generally and how the park will form a setting and context for future developments. Policy to also note that the park offers scope to accommodate Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) as a means to provide mitigation in respect of adverse impacts on protected habitats and also potentially other green initiatives such as biodiversity off-setting.

With proposed additional development coming forward on the western side of East Devon there is a clear argument for the expansion of the park as a means to provide supporting and additional Green Infrastructure.

15. Strategic Policy – Development next to the M5 and north of Topsham

- Concerns raised as it is quite a distance from Topsham town and the access is poor so very cautiously support it and there is a need to bear in mind the facilities around and the need to sort out cycle trails. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management that a number of sites had been put forward and this area was also looked at through GESP in terms of a joint development that would extend south into Exeter that was already being built and together could potentially provide up to 1,500 homes which could deliver a level of services to support that community.
- Reservations made about Clge_20 and Clge_24;
- Concerns raised as Blue Ball Pumping Station was at capacity and could not take any further development;
- There is a need to look into mitigation measures to consider the health and wellbeing of people living close to traffic noise

Members advised that they support officers preferred option:

Proposed policy will provide for the comprehensive development of land allocated (indicative boundary shown at this stage) for mixed use development with an estimated capacity of around 580 new homes next to the M5 and north of Topsham. Policy will:

- **Require a comprehensive masterplan for the whole site to be produced and agreed before specific parcels of land come forward;**
- **Joint working across the City boundary to align development in East Devon with that in the City;**

- **A range of facilities to meet and address East Devon and cross boundary needs - needs to be determined in the context of East Devon and Exeter collective needs and provision and capacity in Exeter city (existing and planned) services and facilities.**
- **Links to the Clyst Valley Regional Park;**
- **Transport and especially pedestrian and cycle links including potential for a new rail crossing; and**
- **Require that any development respects the landscape quality of the lower Clyst and provides links with the Clyst Valley Regional Park.**

Provision of land, amount to be quantified, for employment uses, any infrastructure needs or other provisions.

The Chair thanked Members for their feedback on the policies and invited Members to provide feedback on any policies that they felt had been missed out of the Local Plan or whether they wanted further discussions on certain policies so that Officers could bring back at a later meeting.

Committee Members raised the following points:

- There is a need to discuss neighbourhood plans to give Officers a steer how we should work with them as many town and parish councils have only just completed their neighbourhood plans. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management reiterated that legislation states that the Local Plan takes precedent over neighbourhood plans because of the allocation of growth on a strategic level to meet housing needs. He advised it will not mean they will be ignored and will be taken into regard but equally housing needs need to be met in the district.
- Would like to consider delivery of sport and sports delivery on a regional scale; The Service Lead – Planning Strategy & Development Management advised this could be explored if Members were wanting to pursue the new community which presents an opportunity for a regional sports hub;
- There is a need to consider agricultural working, farming and rural businesses including Bicton College; In response to Bicton College the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management agreed there may be a need for policy provision to support its continued use for further educational purposes;
- The need for clear Housing Policies on disability and vulnerable elderly people with disabilities, in particular housing for everyday living. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy advised this had been addressed through Policy 39 as well as policies about nationally described space standards;
- Reference was made to giving planning permission to an outstanding house and the need to restrict this by not including green wedges to prevent coalescence;
- Aspirations for a centre of excellence;
- There is a need to consider land owned by EDDC for housing development. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to the Housing Taskforce which had been set up to look at EDDC land and advised this would be looked into to understand what assets the Council controls and what land might be suitable
- To not lose focus on sustainability we need specific sites to come forward on the further call for sites in accordance with the hierarchy of settlements. We cannot have sprawling sites all over the countryside;
- Would like to see a report about a more proactive approach to redeveloping brownfield sites. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised there was a need to look at the urban capacity study again to see what opportunities there could be.

- Would like all the Local Plan documents available to view in one place and easy to find on the Council's website;
- Still have concerns that there are sites in the Local Plan that have been turned down on appeal;
- Reference was made to the new community and a need to consider the deliverability of major infrastructure if CIL cannot cover all the costs. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that a lot of evidence work was still being gathered to understand what infrastructure would be needed to ensure sustainable developments
- More discussion is required about the Devon County Show and the need to protect the ground and parking related to it. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management confirmed he was happy to look at the showground but parking would be difficult as some of the parking was off site.

The Planning Barrister reminded Members about the three recommendations appended to the report and drew Members attention to a small typo mistake to Recommendation 3 which should read paragraph 8.1 to the report and not 6.9 as stated.

The Chair moved the recommendations and reiterated to Members that the sites would be brought back to Committee at a later date after Officers have done the further work on site allocations.

To remind Members of Recommendation 3 the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to the minutes of the previous meeting where Members took a straw poll and were in support of options C, G and I within the table in paragraph 8.1 and advised Members they would need to vote on the recommendation based on the following:

- C – Look to villages below tier 4 for growth.
- G – Search for extra sites.
- I – Be less restrictive to development in the AONBs.

Clarification was sought about why further votes on recommendations were required when straw polls had already taken place. The Chair clarified the recommendations were to agree the straw polls as one holistic vote. The Planning Barrister further clarified that the straw polls had been informal votes and the recommendations set out in the report on page 196 needed to be voted on.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. Of endorsement, in principle, of the proposed working draft Local Plan;**
- 2. Of agreement to delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to progress with refinement and final formulation of draft policies, including through engagement with internal staff and key public sector outside partner bodies and service providers.**
- 3. The Strategic Planning Committee considered paragraph 8.1 of the report to give a clear steer on a favoured approach to ensure allocation of sufficient and appropriate sites to meet housing and other development need and noted that as currently drafted there is a significant element of the housing need for which suitable sites have not been identified.**

Attendance List

Councillors present:

D Ledger (Chair)
M Allen
P Arnott
J Bailey
K Blakey
S Chamberlain
P Hayward
M Howe
B Ingham
A Moulding
G Pratt
E Rylance
P Skinner

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

M Armstrong
C Brown
A Bruce
P Faithfull
G Jung
R Lawrence
J Loudoun
D Manley
H Parr
M Rixson
J Rowland

Officers in attendance:

Ed Freeman, Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management
Shirley Shaw, Planning Barrister
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Jo Garfoot, Housing Task Force Service Lead

Councillor apologies:

O Davey

Chairman

Date: