

COUNCIL MEETING – 1 DECEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE

19 October 2015

Present: Councillors Carr (Chairman), Harrington (Vice-Chairman), Anslow, Ekins, Emerson, Griffiths, G Lawman, Patel, Scanlon, Skittrall and Stevenson.

Also present: Miss J Thomas, Head of Planning and Local Development Mrs V Phillipson, Principal Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager, Mrs S Bateman, Senior Planning Officer, Mrs N MacKenzie, Funding and Regeneration Officer, Mr J Nyakatawa, Senior Planning Policy Officer, Miss S Mason, Planning Officer and Mrs C A Mundy, Democratic Services Officer.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beirne, Gough, Maguire and Watts.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made.

3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2015.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Services Committee held on 14 September 2015, be confirmed and signed, subject to it being noted that Councillor Gough was also present as an observer.

4. LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to update members on progress on the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (PBW) and to approve the approach set out in various background papers.

The chairman informed members that Appendix three to the report – Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper had been withdrawn from this meeting and would be presented in December.

It was suggested by the chairman, and agreed by the committee, that each appendix be taken separately so that members could comment and obtain responses from the officers.

Appendix One- Glossary of Terms

This document had been found to be very useful and it was suggested that an explanation of CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy – be included therein.

Officers confirmed they would add this, and that this was a working document which could be added to at any time.

Appendix Two – Issues and Options

Below are questions raised along with the response from officers:

- **Issue One – Duty to cooperate**

Q - Would this include green infrastructure and landscaping?

A - This would be included in the duty to cooperate.

- **Issue 21 – Strategic Gaps**

Q – What are the benefits of strategic gaps? Why is it recommended for Wellingborough and Rushden but not Wellingborough and Irthlingborough?

A - Officers clarified that the criteria based policies in the JCS together with the identification of village boundaries and development boundaries are considered to provide sufficient protection of the countryside. All areas would be considered using this approach. If strategic gaps were identified there was a chance that some areas were protected and not others. It was agreed that there was a need for a separation between Wellingborough and Rushden. Consideration had been given to Wellingborough and Irthlingborough with the development at Stanton Cross coming forward, but it was believed that there was very little risk of coalescence between the two.

Q – There appeared to be conflicting comments from Irchester Parish Council and the Irchester, Little Irchester and Knuston Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and it was suggested that these be clarified as it was considered that both comments should be the same.

A – Officers would clarify the submissions.

- **Issue 31 – Employment Sectoral Targets**

Q – Would similar industries be located together where possible - for example noisy businesses or those with unpleasant emissions?

A – This was something that could be considered.

- **Issue 12 – Development in Gardens**
- **Issue 13 – Hatton Park**
- **Issue 14 – White Delves and Kilborn Close**

Q – What has happened with the ‘saved plans’ and will there be a paper on the town policies?

A - Officers confirmed that the Joint Core Strategy and the plan for the borough of Wellingborough would replace these policies and they could circulate the list of saved policies. The Hatton Park Residents Association had contacted the council and whilst they didn't feel the need to produce a Neighbourhood Plan they did feel that policies needed to be produced which were pertinent to their area. . Members confirmed that they would support this, as general policies were not specific enough, and residents in certain areas, such as Hatton Park, needed more protection.

Members asked if the Hatton Park area could be designated as a conservation area.

Officers confirmed that this had been considered but the Conservation Officer had found that the area did not merit conservation status. Officers could consider if a specific policy would be useful for the Hatton Park area.

Appendix Four – Wellingborough Rural Housing Allocation Methodology and site selection

The appendix explained the requirement for housing in the villages of Earls Barton, Finedon, Irchester, Wollaston and other rural villages with a total requirement of 1250 dwellings.

Q - Members asked if this paper primarily dealt with Finedon?

A - Officers confirmed that as the other three main villages were preparing Neighbourhood Plans the housing requirements would be dealt with in each of these. Finedon had decided not to prepare a plan and this document established the need to identify sufficient sites to deliver approximately 51 dwellings in Finedon. It also referred to other smaller villages where infill and windfall development would take place to meet local needs.

Suitable sites had been identified in Finedon to provide sufficient housing to meet the joint core strategy requirement. These were in Milner Road and at land south of Kenmuir Road. The sites were linked and it was necessary for the Milner Road site to be brought forward to enable access to the Kenmuir Road site.

Officers reported that Councillor Bailey, ward councillor for Finedon had requested officers consult further with him. Councillors commented that the Milner Road site had already been approved by Resources Committee. The document would be the subject of consultation including with the parish council and general public and comments could be made in the normal way. It was considered that this was sufficient.

Appendix Five – Village Boundaries

This appendix provided an overview of village boundaries and reviewed the existing criteria and boundaries in the borough, following consultation with parish councils.

The report detailed the boundaries that had been identified for Bozeat, Ecton, Finedon, Great Doddington, Great Harrowden, Grendon, Isham, Little Harrowden, Mears Ashby, Orlingbury, Sywell and Wilby. These would be consulted on.

Members congratulated the officer on the information contained in the appendix and supported this moving forward for consultation.

Appendix Six – Employment Land Review

This appendix dealt with the future demand for employment land to 2031. Reference was made to the current provision of employment land in the borough against the forecasted employment need to ensure there is sufficient supply to meet current and future business requirements.

Members made reference to the following sites:

- Page 189 EM26 – Eastfield Road
A suggestion was made that this be split in two as this was down as mixed use employment and residential and only had a relatively small area for retail.

Officers would look at this.

- Page 171 EM19 - Sanders Business Park
A query was raised that this was the route for Stanton Cross and that it should be reflected that the land is safeguarded for an access road.

Officers would check the exact layout.

- Page 222 – Appendix 10 - This did not include reference to Oxford House or Arthur Street.

Officers explained that this was a rolling document and would be updated as and when required.

- Page 213 – EM36 – Vauxhall dealership and Railway Club

It was suggested that this be split into several sites.

Officers confirmed that they would look at this but considered there was no need to allocate any employment land as there was sufficient available.

- Page 207 – EM32 – South of Rixon Road, North of Finedon Road Allotments.

There was some concern over the allotment site as this site was well established and would not want to be lost.

Officers noted the comment.

- Page 122 – a query was raised over why the OG's Business Park had been left out?

Officers would look into this.

- Page 120 - Denington Road Industrial Estate
This was one of the oldest industrial estates built in the 1960's and now in need of updating. Members considered that its location was good and it was a prime site with the retail development on Victoria Park, and that this could be brought up to date and used as a hi-Tec business park.

Officers explained that the council owned very little property on this site with the majority being owned privately. It would require a lot of intervention by the council to bring any changes forward.

- Page 174 – EM20 – Land at Doddington Road Wollaston.

A query was asked about whether this included the recycling centre?

This was confirmed.

There were no other questions raised and the chairman proposed the following motion:

- (i) The progress being made towards preparing the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough be noted;
- (ii) That the responses to the representations included in appendix two be an appropriate basis for preparing a draft Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough;
- (iii) That approval be given to the background papers included in appendices four to six as the basis for preparing a draft Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Harrington and on being put to the vote declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the progress made towards preparing the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough be noted;
- (ii) the responses to the representations included in appendix two be agreed as an appropriate basis for preparing a draft Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough;
- (iii) approval be given to the background papers included in appendices four to six being used as the basis for preparing a draft Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough.

5. REVIEWING THE ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR WELLINGBOROUGH

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received to seek approval for the economic development strategy to proceed to consultation amongst key stakeholders and economic partners.

The following documents were appended to the report:

- Economic evidence base;
- Business survey results 2014;
- Consultation questions;
- An economic strategy for Wellingborough 2015;
- Economic Strategy Implementation Plan.

Members commented as follows:

- Some concern was raised over outbound commuting from south of the borough.

This was considered inevitable with the cost of housing being lower here than in other places further south. All endeavours would be made to create the right opportunities for people to live and work in the borough where possible.

- Review period - it was suggested that this be every three years and not every five years

This could be considered if resources allowed.

- Clarification was sought as to whether Lotus was still located in the borough.

Officers would check this.

- How do we attract businesses to relocate to the borough?

Officers clarified that a new website was being developed along with a prospectus for the borough. Work was ongoing with the

Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (NEP) to promote Wellingborough.

Work was also ongoing with the Joint Delivery Unit on housing and employment sites. It had recently been stated that Wellingborough was the most affordable place to buy a property with excellent rail and road links.

- Engagement

Members asked about engagement particularly with new businesses, with particular reference being made to the new Marina at Earls Barton.

Officers confirmed that they had contacted the Marina by email and would follow this up as it is recognised as an attractive asset to promote as part of the 'Destination Nene Valley' project. New businesses would continue to be offered assistance wherever possible.

- Members asked about leisure, country parks and heritage.

Officers confirmed that this was referred to under the tourism activities proposed in the appended implementation plan.

- Education - Members were concerned over educational standards.

Officers explained that there was a desire to improve educational standards and that there were a number of initiatives ongoing in partnership with NEP to bring together employers and schools, review the further education offer and identify the skills employers wanted for the future.

- Environment – page 138

It was suggested that the SWOT analysis for 'Environment' be amended to reflect opportunities to increase cycling and also the potential dangers of building in floodplains.

There being no other points to raise the chairman put the proposition to the meeting. This was declared carried.

RESOLVED approval be given to the consultation on the appended Economic Evidence Base, Strategy, Implementation Plan and Questions.

6. URGENT MATTER

The chairman decided that the following matter was urgent within the meaning of Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the reason set out:

Minute No	Report Title	Reason for urgency
7	Parking Strategy Advisory Group	There was an urgent need for an advisory group to be established to feed into the Plan.

7. PARKING STRATEGY ADVISORY GROUP

The report had been circulated to establish a Parking Strategy Advisory Group of five members of the Services Committee to advise on the production of a parking strategy to feed into the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough.

It was proposed that Councillors Anslow, Ekins, G Lawman, Scanlon and Skittrall be appointed to the Parking Strategy Advisory Group.

- R1 RECOMMENDED** that Councillors Anslow, Ekins, G Lawman, Scanlon and Skittrall be appointed to the Parking Strategy Advisory Group for a period of 12 to 18 months.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 8.20pm.