

## **COUNCIL MEETING – 9 JULY 2019**

### **REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

24 June 2019

Present: Councillors Carr (Chairman), Skittrall (Vice-Chairman), Anslow, Hallam, G Lawman, Maguire, Walia, V Waters and Watts.

Also present: Mr A Piper (Assistant Director/Committee Manager), Mr T Shaw (Principal Planning Policy Officer), Mr M Swann (Principal Planning Manager) and Mrs C A Mundy, (Democratic Services Officer).

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**RESOLVED** to note that apologies were received from Councillors Bell, Ekins, Emerson, L Lawman, Partridge-Underwood and Patel.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED** to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, no declarations were made.

#### **3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 MARCH 2019**

The minutes of the development committee held on 18 March 2019 were received.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the development committee of 18 March 2019 be approved.

#### **4. OPEN SPACE: DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS SPD**

The annexed circulated report of the director of place and strategic growth was received to seek approval for public consultation to take place on the proposed open space supplementary planning documents and associated strategic environmental assessment screening, both of which were appended to the report.

Members commented on the document with issues being raised around the following:

- lack of provision for on-street parking and lack of access to amenities in rural areas and how developer contributions could be applied where there are developments of less than 10 houses;
- the general maintenance of open spaces, which was deemed to be poor along with the lack of marking out of football/cricket pitches;

Members also referred to the consultation period of six weeks and asked officers if they could extend the response time as a number of parish councils did not meet during August.

Officers responded to the issues raised and also agreed that the consultation could be extended to close on 30 August 2019 but that they would not reject late comments after that date.

The chairman reminded members that they should reply to the consultation with their concerns.

**RESOLVED** that approval be given to consult on the supplementary planning document and associated screening report as set out in the appendices to the report.

## **5. SPORTS PROVISION: DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS SPD**

The annexed circulated report of the director of place and strategic growth was received to seek approval to consult on the proposed sports provision supplementary planning document and associated strategic environmental assessment screening as appended to the report. Also appended thereto was the playing pitch strategy developer contributions toolkit.

Members raised issues regarding the funding for projects, such as a 3G pitch, within villages. There was often insufficient amenity space which meant local people had to travel to larger villages or the town. There was discussion about how section 106 and CIL funding could be better spent across the borough. There was also some concern that the documentation did not make enough reference to indoor sport provision, which had previously been very successful, or athletics. It was also considered that based on the proposed growth in the borough that provision for new leisure facilities should be made. Encouraging the use of sports facilities for older people was also important for social inclusion and general wellbeing and retirement homes were increasingly catering for this.

The chairman again reminded members that they could feedback into the consultation process if they wished.

**RESOLVED** that approval be given to consult on the sports provision supplementary planning document and associated screening report as set out in the appendices to the report.

## **6. STRATEGIC POLICIES**

The annexed circulated report of the director of place and strategic development was received in relation to the determination of which development plan policies should be considered strategic policies for the purposes of preparing neighbourhood plans.

Appended to the report was an assessment report of whether policies from the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough were strategic.

The report detailed that all neighbourhood plans needed to meet the basic conditions, listed below, before they can proceed to referendum:

- General conformity with the strategic policies in the local plan;
- Regard to national policies;
- Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Compatibility with EU obligations and human rights legislation.

The national planning policy framework (NPPF) stipulates that ‘plans should make explicit which policies are strategic policies. These should be limited to those necessary to address the strategic priorities of the area (and any relevant cross-boundary issues), to provide a clear starting point for any non-strategic policies that are needed. Strategic policies should not extend to detailed matters that are more appropriately dealt with through neighbourhood plans or other non-strategic policies.’

The report also described the strategic policies in the development plan for the borough and gave advice on how a strategic policy is determined. The development plan documents had been prepared before the revised NPPF, which required plans to make explicit which policies were strategic. Currently the documents were silent on this matter.

As Ecton Parish Council was in the process of preparing a neighbourhood plan, agreed in December 2014, for the parish, strategic policies were required to enable them to demonstrate compliance.

Other parishes that have prepared a neighbourhood plan have been advised that all the policies in the Joint Core Strategy are strategic.

The following policies within the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough were also considered to be strategic:

- Policy SS 1 (Villages)
- Policy GI 1 (Local Green Infrastructure Corridors)
- Policy GI 4 (Enhancement and Provision of Open Space)
- Policy GI 5 (Enhancement and Provision of Sport and Recreation Facilities)
- Policy E 3 (Employment Outside Established Employment Estates)
- Policy H 1 (Urban Housing Allocations)
- Policy H 3 (Housing Needs of Older People)
- Policy H 4 (Retirement Housing, Supported Housing and Care Homes)
- Policy H 5 (Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding)
- Policy H 6 (Single Plot Exception Sites for Self-Build)
- Policy R 1 (Retail Hierarchy)
- Policy R 2 (Neighbourhood Shops)
- Policy R 3 (Local Impact Threshold)

- Policy TC 1 (Town Centre Boundary)
- Policy TC 2 (Primary Shopping Area)
- Policy Site 1 (Wellingborough East)
- Policy Site 2 (Wellingborough North)
- Policy Site 5 (Park Farm Way/Shelley Road)
- Policy Site 9 (Sywell Aerodrome)

The report recommended that all the policies contained within the North Northamptonshire Joint Core strategy and those policies in the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough as detailed above be determined as strategic.

Members asked questions on the appendix particularly around town centre parking, which was deemed not to be strategic, in the document. This was considered to be essential for the town centre.

**RESOLVED** that approval be given to all the policies contained within the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the policies in the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough being determined as ‘strategic policies’.

(Councillor G Lawman voted against this item.)

## **7. OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE ARC UPDATE**

The annexed circulated report of the director of place and strategic growth was received in relation to the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and the potential implications for Northamptonshire.

The report informed members that the government had now confirmed that the whole of North Northamptonshire would fall within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. Progress on the growth deal had been slow but good relations had been established with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Homes England. The Joint Planning and Delivery Unit and partner authorities continued to press for a tailored package of support to give North Northamptonshire the ability to accelerate the delivery of committed growth, and the confidence to plan for increased levels of development in the longer term. It was unclear whether a spatial vision for the Arc would be prepared and if so what the process and timescale would be. The delay would have an impact on the timescale for updating the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and in the preparation of other statutory plans across the Arc. It may be necessary to progress the joint core strategy update ahead of any spatial vision being finalised for the Arc. The preparatory technical work will continue to be undertaken building on that already completed or commissioned in relation to the Arc. It is proposed that this should include a ‘call for sites’ in Summer 2019.

Appended to the report were the following:

- Joint declaration of ambition between Government and the Arc;
- Extract from the government statement ‘Series of milestones to be completed by Government within the next 12 months.’

Whilst members appreciated that this was only an update report they considered that they needed more detail and assurance that infrastructure would be put in place for any future developments and that funding for this would be available.

Officers noted members concerns and would keep them apprised of developments.

**RESOLVED** to note the update on the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and the implications for North Northamptonshire.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 8.10pm.

