

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Boston Borough Council, Council Offices, West Street, Boston, on Friday, 25 January 2013 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

P Bedford (Chairman)
H R Johnson (Vice-Chairman)

B Alcock
R Gambba-Jones

C Brotherton
E Poll

M Brookes

Planning Manager – Breckland and South Holland District Councils, Joint Policy Unit Manager, Joint Policy Unit Deputy Manager, Senior Planning Policy Officer, Planning Policy Officer, Strategic Planning Manager – Lincolnshire County Council, Forward Planning Officer, Forward Planning Officer, Representative of Legal Services Lincolnshire, Environment Agency Officer and Environment Agency Officer.

In Attendance: Councillors F Biggadike, F Pickett, O Snell and M Wright.

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors R Leggott and R Rudkin.

9. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2012 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

10. **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL PLAN: STRATEGY AND POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT: PREFERRED OPTIONS VERSION**

Consideration was given to the report of the Joint Policy Unit Manager which sought approval of the first part of the Preferred Options version for the purpose of public consultation. The Combined Preferred Options and Sustainability Appraisal Report was attached as Appendix A within the report. Comments received from the Head of Built Environment and Development at Boston Borough Council and the Planning Manager for Breckland and South Holland District Councils were included at section 4 of the report.

The Joint Policy Unit Manager noted that the Head of Built Environment and Development had raised the issue as to whether the Joint Committee should reserve full consideration and final approval of the document for consultation purposes to the next meeting of the Committee, when a complete document would be available. Following discussion on this matter, it was agreed that none of the outstanding issues fundamentally challenged the proposals presented for consideration at the meeting and, therefore, Councillors agreed to consider the document for approval at this point in time.

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There was some discussion on the proposed public consultation exercise relating to the document, and the following points were discussed:

- If the public were to be encouraged to engage, a more straightforward document would be required. The full document should be summarised and put into plain English. Officers responded by stating that they were in the early stages of preparing a document for public consultation, and were aware that a succinct summary was required. The summary document could be based on the shaded preferred policy approaches within the full document.
- Consideration of a summary document needed to take place once the full document was agreed. Before the summary document was issued for consultation, it had to be signed-off by members.
- In response to a question on whether the consultation exercise was to inform or to genuinely consult, officers advised that this point had been made by many people and that they appreciated their concern. Officers would be making clear that they would be seeking comments not only on the Preferred Options but also on the options that have been rejected and suggestions for other options to be considered.
- With regard to the offer by officers to attend parish council meetings as part of the consultation process, Members noted the need for summary documents to be made available at these meetings.

The Committee considered each of the proposed preferred policy approaches, and the following issues were raised:

Vision and Strategic Priorities (Page 9 of the document)

This section was considered to be a little vague; however, it was felt that this was preferable when outlining the initial vision and priorities. At this stage, the document should not be too specific or contain undeliverable projects.

Housing Growth and Flood Risk (from Page 12 of the document)

- Chris Holliday reported that he and Mark Robinson from the Environment Agency (EA) had met after the last Local Plan Steering Group meeting. The EA letter to Boston Borough Council had been positive and they were comfortable around the Boston Borough Council's emphasis on the concept of 'probability of flooding'. He considered that the contents of the letter did not affect the contents of Chapter 4 but would impact on the 'Broad Locations' work.
- Within the section 'Approach to Identifying the Quantity of Additional Housing to be Provided in South East Lincolnshire up to 2031' (from Page 28 of the document), both Reasonable and Unreasonable Policy Options were included. Members questioned why the unreasonable options had been included and why Migration-led scenarios A and B were included. Officers advised that the migration-led scenarios had been included because they represented up-to-date estimates of the impact of net inward migration on population growth and,

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consequently, potential housing needs. Including unreasonable options was an essential part of the 'preferred options approach, as this provided evidence of a variety of options having been considered and the reasoning for their rejection. The zero population growth figures had been based upon an approach included within the Lincolnshire Coastal Study Principles. Phil Hughes recommended the inclusion of a housing growth figure based on these figure as it would serve to provide a better spread of unreasonable options within which to set the two proposed reasonable options. Members agreed that another unreasonable option should be included within the document.

Provision for Housing (Page 38 of the document)

This section was agreed.

The Presumption of Favour of Sustainable Development (Page 58 of the document)

This section was agreed.

Spatial Strategy (Page 60 of the document)

Concerns were raised in respect of smaller settlements that were proposed for designation as Service Villages. In particular, there was a perceived fear that designation as a Service Village could undermine attempts to reject housing applications in smaller villages that had insufficient infrastructure to support them. Deeping St Nicholas was mentioned in this respect. Officers advised that if Deeping St Nicholas were to be removed from the list of Service Villages, the reasons why it had been included in the first place would need to be reviewed, which could raise questions with regard to the selection of other settlements. Following some discussion, it was agreed to keep Deeping St Nicholas in the list of Service Villages.

Employment Land and Premises (Page 84 of the document)

This section was agreed.

Town and Other Centres (Page 85 of the document)

This section was agreed.

Broad Location for a Spalding Rail Freight Interchange (Page 87 of the document)

This section was agreed.

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Environment (Pages 88 to 108 of the document)

This section was agreed

Environment – Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (Page 109)

Within the paragraph following the first set of bullet points, the following changes were agreed:

- that the word 'sustainable' be added prior to 'renewable' to read – 'Proposals for the development of sustainable renewable and low carbon sources of energy....'; and
- reference to 'large-scale freestanding installations' be removed as this could refer to other installations and not just wind turbines.

Design of New Development (Page 111 of the document)

It was felt that the policy should include reference to quality housing and that a standard about current building regulations should be sought.

That the following be added to the sixth bullet point – 'efficiencies for the lifetime of the development'.

Community Health and Well-Being (Page 125 of the document)

This section was agreed.

Infrastructure and Viability (Page 133 of the document)

This section was agreed.

DECISION:

- a) That the report be noted;
- b) That the contents of Appendix A be approved in principle, subject to the agreed revisions, for the purpose of public consultation; and
- c) That delegated authority be given to officers to make any necessary changes to the content of Appendix A in respect of matters relating to presentation or factual correction or updating.

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11. PROPOSED FUTURE MEETING DATES

It was agreed that the Summary document would be finalised in March and taken to the Committee for approval.

The next meeting of the Committee was set for Friday 5 April 2012, to be held at South Holland District Council.

(The meeting ended at 12.00 pm)

(End of minutes)