

Minutes of the Meeting of the **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Committee Room, Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at 10 am.

**PRESENT**

R Gambba-Jones	C Brotherton	M Brookes
B Alcock	C Rylott	E Poll
F Biggadike (substitute)	S Ransome	

Joint Policy Unit Manager (South Holland District Council), Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager (Boston Borough Council), Senior Planning Policy Officer (South Holland District Council), Planning Policy Officer (South Holland District Council), Forward Planning Officers (Boston Borough Council), Corporate Director (Boston Borough Council) Strategic Planning Manager (South Holland District and Breckland Councils), Legal Services Lincolnshire Representative and Senior Member Services Officer (Boston Borough Council)

In attendance: Councillors M Cooper and M D Seymour

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor R Gambba-Jones be elected Chairman of the Joint Committee for 2017/18.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Claire Rylott be elected Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee for 2017/18.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Austin, D Brown and P E Coupland; and from A Hewitson (Environment Agency)

**4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations were made.

**5. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2017 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**6. DRAFT REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Joint Policy Unit Manager, which sought approval for a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) for South East Lincolnshire to take effect from 15 June 2017.

In the case of the Joint Committee, the purpose of the LDS was to provide a public statement of its programme for the production of the local development documents that related to South East Lincolnshire and for the production of its 'Statement of Community involvement' (SCI).

The LDS was essentially a project plan, a living document that could be updated and amended as and when appropriate. The current LDS was approved by the Joint Committee and came into effect on 14 March 2014, setting out a clear timetable for the preparation of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (the Local Plan). However, plan preparation had become increasingly complex and the current situation was no longer consistent with the LDS timetable; therefore, the LDS needed to be updated to reflect progress to date.

The 'Publication Version' of the Local Plan had recently been subject to a statutory six-week period of public consultation and officers were presently considering the comments received. This work would form the last stage in plan preparation before all relevant Local Plan documentation was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination, scheduled to take place in late June. In view of the imminent commencement of the examination process, it was important to demonstrate that the current progress in plan preparation was supported by an up-to-date LDS; therefore, the revised document attached to the report, at Appendix A, had been prepared.

The revised draft covered planned work commencing in January 2017 through to mid-2018, setting out details of the documents whose preparation would be given priority during this period. It was to be noted that such documents now included a 'Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document'. It proposed the submission of the Publication Version of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 23 June 2017. It was hoped that the Local Plan could be adopted in the spring of 2018. *[This was stated as 2017 in the report at paragraph 2.3 in error.]*

The Joint Policy Unit Manager added that, once the Local Plan was adopted, the Joint Committee would consider whether it should continue as a single local planning authority for the preparation of local development documents (LDDs) or for the two authorities of Boston Borough Council and South Holland District Council to proceed separately in this respect. The Chairman expressed the hope that, even if the authorities did decide to proceed separately, the working relationship established between the two teams would continue.

*[Councillor Mike Brookes arrived at 10.15 am]*

Following submission of the Publication Version of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State, the Joint Policy Unit Manager explained that the appointment of the Inspector would be the next stage and, it was hoped, an examination would commence in October 2017 with most of the proceedings to be held in the Boston Borough Council's offices. A 'Programme Officer' had been engaged to oversee the arrangements.

During discussion, a Member raised the issue of the weight to be attached to the emerging Local Plan when considering planning applications once submission to the Secretary of State had occurred.

The Chairman commented that it was extremely difficult to answer this question, which had been subject to extensive discussions. Planning applications had to be considered on their own merits and, for example, in respect of matters regarding a housing developer's affordable housing contribution, the existing policy should be followed, as it was not possible to say definitely that the revised provision proposed in the emerging Local Plan would be accepted by the Inspector. The planning process itself was the ultimate test of the Local Plan.

Reference was then made to cases where it had not been possible to resist applications for housing due to the lack of a 'five-year housing land supply'. It was remarked that nothing could be assumed until the Local Plan had been formally adopted.

The Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer advised Members that, for both the Boston Borough and South Holland District areas, they would probably not have a five-year housing land supply until the Local Plan had been adopted.

It was noted that comments from the recent public consultation on the Publication Version of the Local Plan were available to view on the website.

**DECISION:**

1. That the contents of the report and the attached Draft Local Development Scheme (Draft LDS) be noted;
2. That the Draft LDS be approved as set out in Appendix A to the report without revisions; and
3. That the Draft LDS takes effect from 15 June 2017.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was reported.

(The meeting ended at 10.33 am.)

(End of minutes.)