

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PANEL

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 October 2016
at 2.30 pm**

Present:

Councillor K H Turner (Chairman)
Councillor S Y Goss

Councillor J Parbrook
Councillor B Maitland-Walker

Members in Attendance:

Councillor M Chilcott

Councillor R Woods

Officers in Attendance:

Tim Burton, Assistant Director - Planning and Environment
Martin Wilsher, Principal Planning Officer (Policy)
Toby Clempson, Principal Planning Officer (Policy)
Nick Bryant, Planning Policy Manager
Gill Littlewood, Planning Policy Officer
Marcus Prouse - Meeting Administrator

LD1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Cllrs I Aldridge, D Archer, B Heywood and T Venner.

LD2 Minutes

(Minutes of the Local Development Panel held on 25 November 2015 – circulated with the Agenda).

RESOLVED that, subject to correcting the initial of Cllr Maitland-Walker's forename in the Declarations of Interest, also adding clarifying detail around Faye Barringer-Capp's contribution at Public Participation, namely that land adjacent to Garlands, Withycombe Lane, Carhampton was unsuitable for housing as it was subject to flooding itself and would exacerbate flooding issues elsewhere in Carhampton. Further clarifying detail was requested to be added to the Public Participation section of the minutes, namely that Phil Gannon's remarks were corrected to reflect that the setting around Cleeve Abbey was threatened, and not the actual Abbey. The changes were accepted and thus the Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Panel held on 25 November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

LD3 Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

Name	Minute No	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial	Action Taken
Cllr S Goss	All Items	Stogursey	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr K H Turner	All Items	Brompton Ralph	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr B Maitland-Walker	All Items	Carhampton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted

In addition, Councillor R Woods declared a personal interest in item number 6, as the owner of a property near one of the sites included in the Local Plan. She stated that she wished to express her concerns after she had looked at the Inspectors Report and his comments on the development of land at Liddymore, and this is concerning on the effect on the rest of Watchet. There are other developments near Watchet too and potentially this could mean 613 dwellings being started within the next five years if the land is brought forward, and she does not believe this is sustainable in one ward in such a short period. This is by her calculation one ward (Watchet) absorbing the responsibility of one fifth of the Local Plan's quota. She asked the Committee to bear this in mind when making their decisions.

The Chair thanked Cllr Woods for her contribution, and stated that historically West Somerset has never had anything built in those proportions ever before, and it was unlikely to happen.

LD4 Public Participation

No members of the public spoke on any of the items on the Agenda.

LD5 Housing Land Availability Report

(Report No. WSC 107/16, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to inform the Panel of the Housing Land Availability Report, which contained information on the development and availability of land for housing within the West Somerset Planning Area. The report also contained information and statistics relating to the housing completions during the reporting period April 2015 to March 2016.

The Planning Policy Officer presented the report, which she stated is newly introduced for this year to tie in with the Local Plan, and to ensure that the Local Plan is delivering the housing levels that is expected. She stated that whilst we are currently down on what we needed to achieve, in the 'under construction' column the figures there are quite healthy and the developments are quite big so there is no real concern at the moment.

During the debate the following main points were raised:

- Cllr made Members aware that the figures are operating from different timescale to the New Homes Bonus figures which operate from October to September.
- A Cllr raised concerns with developments at Carhampton, with work progressing very slowly, and even coming to an impasse at this moment in time, and as to how long this could last, as people locally had been allocated houses but had not been given an end date.
- Another Cllr raised issues with run-off and pipe work in Minehead, could she be told what we do as an authority when planning is granted but there is not infrastructure there to support it?
- A Principal Planning Officer responded that this issue is currently being covered by our Infrastructure Delivery Plan. As part of the Development Management Process, any planning application submitted is referred to Wessex Water as the responsible drainage authority, and the Development Management Officers have to reflect what they say. They cannot recommend refusal if the statutory undertaker indicates it is not an issue. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is in its final stages, and the Officer hoped there would be a response from the infrastructure providers.
- Cllr requested further detail and wanted to know whether within our Plan there would be a guarantee from them that if the infrastructure needed is not in place it will be put in place.
- The Officer responded that this depended on the statutory undertaker's response to the Plan.
- The Planning Policy Manager added more detail around the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which the purpose of it is to identify strategic infrastructure that's required to support the planned development. The IDP is virtually finished, it has taken much longer than they would have liked due to information delays from Somerset County Council. In terms of discharging of planning duties in future, the relevant stakeholders are consulted, but it is reasonable the statutory undertaker identify shortcomings and problems as the whole purpose of a plan-led system.
- Cllr responded that the statutory provider has already identified a problem in regards to the specific example given in the Hopcott Road Site.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED that Members noted the WSC Housing Land Availability Report 2016 and endorsed it as an integral part of the Council's on-going evidence base for identifying land supply and monitoring housing development and completions.

LD6 West Somerset Local Plan to 2032: Additional Modifications consultation

(Report No. WSC 109/16, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report is to present to Members the results of the consultation on the Proposed Modifications. With the Examination process of the Local Plan to 2032, from the submission at the end of July 2015 to the resolution of Full Council to consult on the Proposed Modifications in May of this year, there have been a number of amendments suggested to elements of the content of the local plan document. A number of representations were made as a result of the 19 Additional Modifications.

The report was presented by the Principal Planning Officer (Policy) – Martin Wilsher who summarised to Members that there were only five direct representations on Additional Modifications, and three of those were connected to representations on Main Modifications. There were no comments with regard to the supporting text, only related to the policy wording. Other comments were made but were inadmissible for this part because they did not relate specifically to the remit of the consultation which was just on the changes that were being proposed.

During the debate the following main points were raised:

- Cllr wanted to know whether this document was the final stage in the process.
- Principal Planning Officer responded that this was in terms of relevant responses to the consultation that we as a Council can change as the local planning authority.
- Officer also expanded that throughout the Local Plan process, the response level from outside groups has been quite disappointing, despite good effort to publicise the work being done.

Councillor Goss proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor B Maitland-Walker.

RESOLVED (1) that as a consequence of the changes that were proposed as Additional Modifications and the responses received to them during the consultation process it is recommended that:

- (1.1)** The Additional Modifications be incorporated into the Publication Draft version of the Local Plan to 2032 as set out in Table 1 of Appendix A;
- (1.2)** The changes to correct typographical and grammatical errors to the supporting text be made to the Publication Draft version of the Local Plan to 2032 as set out in Table 1 of Appendix A, and;
- (1.3)** That the Local Plan to 2032, as amended by these changes, be recommended to Full Council as part of the adoption process alongside those recommendations relating to the Inspectors' Report.

LD7 Adoption of the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032 (WSLP)

(Report No. WSC 108/16, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to consider the adoption of the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032. The Council is in receipt of the Inspector's Report which confirmed that the Plan can be legally adopted by West Somerset Council subject to the main modifications outlined in his Report (which were consulted upon). At this stage the Council could not make substantive changes to the WSLP to 2032, it could either adopt the Plan with the main modifications or have chosen not to adopt.

The Planning Policy Manager presented the item and provided Members with a summary of the report. He stated that the main takeaway of this report is that the Inspector has stated that the Plan is sound and capable of adoption – subject to some modifications. Some of the modifications were ones suggested by WSC which were accepted in their entirety, others where the Inspector has tweaked slightly but the essence remains the same.

The West Somerset Local Plan will introduce a target that is well in excess of the objectively assessed housing need. The Inspector concluded the strategic allocations brought forward are deliverable, and that whilst the plan doesn't allocate all the land required to meet all of its housing requirements he could take a sufficient comfort that the numbers could be achieved. There are references for a need to have an early review of the Plan, which arises primarily due to the fact there was a differing landscape when this Plan was conceived and what the local planning authorities were expected to do, which has changed quite a bit. Officer stated that he was pleased to have got the plan through examination. The Chairman also commented that out of 324 local authorities West Somerset would be in the minority in having a fully compliant Local Plan which was pleasing to see.

During the debate the following main points were raised:

- A Cllr raised that the Inspector was not very happy with the fact that we do not have up to date Strategic Flood Risk Assessments.
- The Officer concurred that this would be one of the first documents that the Council would update, and the question for the Council in a commissioning sense is how to tie up all this work together with Taunton Deane to make efficiencies for the benefit of both.
- Another Cllr raised concerns over the language in the recommendation specifically that it "be proposed that a new joint LDS be progressed for both councils in advance of the proposed new council, this will set up a project plan outline in future policy activities most probably centred on the new singular local plan." The Councillor was concerned as she was under the impression there would be two plans and they would stay separate. Surely councillors will be asked about this as there is a lot of sensitivity around this and it should not just be put into documents?

- The Officer responded that if WSC did want to progress a singular local plan regardless of the setting up of a new council that would be fine in principle but difficult in practice due to the requirements of the national planning framework. The Officer stated that there would be a resourcing cost irrespective of a joint plan, as the Inspector has said it needs to be reviewed again soon, it is not budgeted for at the moment but this is work that needs to be done and it would be his recommendation for TDBC and WSC to work together on a new joint local development scheme, but of course both councils would need to agree on that beforehand. If they didn't there would need to be a way found to get through that.
- A Cllr felt that his understanding was in talking with the Officer team was that ever since the joining together of the One Team in shared services, it was anticipated that there would end up being a joint local plan.
- Another Cllr disagreed and stated this was incorrect and was not said at Scrutiny or at a PAG. She was concerned that given the sensitivities at the start of this journey people might think decisions had been made without their consultation and she was keen to avoid this.
- Another Cllr concurred that this a bit premature as the new council decision has only just been agreed in principle. Her feeling was that there is a lot of work already on the slate such as a Masterplan for the Hopcott Area, without going onto looking at joining it all up.
- The Cllr requested that the Officer give the Committee an update on the discussion at the Low Carbon Group Meeting on the Hopcott Masterplan.
- The Officer stated that the Local Plan recognises the need for master planning for the larger strategic sites. In Minehead it was recognised as more difficult due to the multitude of landowners on the Hopcott Road site, and the planning status of some of the parcels of land.
- The Officer stated that the Council would have to think very carefully about the best way of bringing forward proposals for that site, particularly in terms of securing the most appropriate form of urban design and also the mix of uses requiring, if the Council wished to take more of a lead role a source of funding would have to be identified as there is no provision in the budget.

Councillor Parbrook proposed the recommendation of the report which was seconded by Councillor Goss.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council to adopt the WSLP to 2032 incorporating the main modifications.

The meeting closed at 3.32 pm.