

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PANEL

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 November 2017
at 2.30 pm**

Present:

Councillor K H Turner (Chairman)
Councillor B Maitland-Walker
Councillor D Westcott

Councillor B Heywood
Councillor P Pilkington
Councillor T Venner

Members in Attendance:

Councillor I Aldridge

Councillor A Hadley

Officers in Attendance:

Martin Wilsher, Principal Planning Officer (Policy)
Ann Rhodes, Planning Policy Officer
Krystyna Kowalewska - Meeting Administrator

LD9 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Goss and J Parbrook.

LD10 Minutes

(Minutes of the Local Development Panel held on 1 August 2017 – circulated with the Agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Panel held on 1 August 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

LD11 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 K H Turner	All Items	Brompton Ralph	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr B Maitland-Walker	All Items	Carhampton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Pilkington	All	Timberscombe	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr D Westcott	All	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr T Venner	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted

Cllr I Aldridge	All Items	Williton	Personal	Spoke
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LD12 Public Participation

No members of the public spoke at the meeting on any items on the agenda.

LD13 Stogumber Neighbourhood Development Plan formal adoption (“made”) as a Development Plan Document for WSC

(Report No. WSC 110/17, circulated with the Agenda.)

Stogumber Neighbourhood Development Plan (SNDP) is a community led planning document which has been produced by Stogumber Parish Council. The document and its evidence base passed an Independent Examination and was supported by 59.58% of those who voted in the referendum. The Stogumber Neighbourhood Development Plan should be formally adopted (made) to enable it to be used to help it decide planning applications in the Stogumber Neighbourhood Plan area.

Councillor K Turner, Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing introduced the item. The Planning Policy Officer presented the report and outlined the details contained within. She reiterated that if the Council was minded to adopt the SNDP, the Plan would become a statutory document used to assist planning application decisions for Neighbourhood Plan Area for Stogumber. She advised that Officers knew of no legal reasons why the SNDP should not be adopted; it had passed independent examination and was compliant with legislation, and more than 50% of people supported the Plan in the referendum. It was for these reasons the Council was obliged to adopt the SNDP, however if the legal process was not followed and the Plan was not made WSC could be open to Judicial Review.

Councillor B Maitland-Walker proposed the recommendation of the report which was duly seconded by Councillor T Venner.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Full Council to formally adopt the Stogumber Neighbourhood Development Plan as a West Somerset Council (WSC) Development Plan Document, to be used in the planning application decision making process for the Stogumber Neighbourhood Plan area.

LD14 Local Plan: Progress Report on Evidence-Base

(Report No. WSC 118/17, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to update Members of the Panel of progress on various parts of the evidence-base that underpins the adopted and emerging Local Plans.

The Planning Policy Officer presented the report in detail. In summary, he advised that the final version of the adopted West Somerset Local Plan had been published on the Council's website and would be used by officers for development management decision making; the Employment Land, Retail and Leisure Study had been commissioned and work had commenced; Members would be presented with the finalised document relating to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment at the next Panel meeting; the West Somerset Design Guide tender had been commissioned, and it was anticipated that consultation would be carried out during the first half of next year with the document being recommended for adoption as a supplementary planning document in Autumn 2018; and work would start early in 2018 on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – this would be a high level strategic Level 1 study, updating the 2009 study, to be undertaken jointly with Taunton Deane Borough Council and South Somerset District Council.

Various questions and issues were raised by Members. The main points of discussion focussed on:

- The future capacity required in respect of employment sites in West Somerset and whether what had already been identified was sufficient to meet the requirements up to the end of the Local Plan period.
- Concern about the delay in progressing work on the Flood Risk Assessment.
- The introduction of a principal residency clause within a Neighbourhood Development Plan and the issue of enforcement and managing the process, and the need to demonstrate evidence showing there was a significant shortage of houses at affordable prices.
- It was confirmed that the up-to-date Local Plan to 2032 was available on the Council's website.
- Clarification on the objectively identified housing need and the strategic sites allocated was provided.
- Particular concerns were expressed relating to the provision of affordable housing, the lack of infrastructure and essential improvements required, and the need for more employment land.
- The Local Plan would be adaptive to change and would continue to be revised and updated. The Plan and its policies were there to create opportunities, but ultimately developments in the area were reliant on investors and it was for them to come up with new ideas, e.g. to build in a different way or to use different methods.
- The identification and location of the key strategic sites was explained.
- The Productivity Strategy would emphasise the importance of road connectivity in rural areas and identify areas in need of highway improvements, and the Principal Planning Officer (Policy) agreed to speak with the Assistant Director Business Development in this regard.
- The rate of delivering housing developments in West Somerset had been consistent over a 40 year period, averaging 120 dwellings a year.
- It was anticipated that the Design Guide would provide a useful lever to acquire better quality developments and more innovative thinking.

- Members requested the opportunity to have an input into the content of the West Somerset Design Guide and a suggestion was made that as part of the process the consultants could hold workshops in order to get a better understanding of the local issues; also it was confirmed the Panel would have further opportunities to comment on the Design Guide at a future panel meeting.
- The Design Guide would be extended to also incorporate masterplanning as part of the procurement process, and would be progressed as quickly as possible.
- It was confirmed that the Planning Policy Team would be submitting representations regarding the reserve matters planning application for the masterplan for the Hopcott site in Minehead, as well as the two Watchet applications.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 3.55 pm.