

Executive – 30 November 2009

Present: Councillor Henley (Chairman)
Councillors Coles, R Lees, Paul, Prior-Sankey, Slattery, Mrs Smith,
and A Wedderkopp

Officers: Joy Wishlade (Strategic Director), Tonya Meers (Legal and
Democratic Services Manager), Ralph Willoughby-Foster (Planning
Policy Advisor), Maggie Hammond (Strategic Finance Officer) and
Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager)

Also present: Councillors Bishop, Brooks, Cavill, Mrs Court-Stenning, Edwards,
Hall, Horsley, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Meikle, Morrell, Mrs Stock-Williams,
Mrs Waymouth and Williams.

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

100. Apology

Councillor Mrs Wilson.

101. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Henley, Paul and Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Coles declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillor Mrs Smith declared a personal interest as an employee of Somerset County Council. Councillor Slattery declared personal interests both as a Member of the Somerset Waste Board and as an employee of Sedgemoor District Council. Councillor Williams declared a personal interest as the owner of a property in Monkton Heathfield. Councillor Farbahi declared an interest as the owner of land in the area. He stated that he would leave the meeting if sites near to his land were discussed. Councillor Cavill declared a personal interest as someone with an interest in agricultural matters.

102. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following item because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clauses 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

103. Local Development Framework – Core Strategy and Small Site Consultation

Submitted for consideration and comment a draft copy of the Core Strategy and Small Site Consultation document which set out suggested directions for the spatial planning policies of Taunton Deane up to 2026.

The document was not a draft plan. It requested the public to respond to planning issues and options and preferred policy directions. This would be the main opportunity for everyone to comment and the response to consultation would help to shape the Core Strategy which would be the subject of pre-submission consultation in September and October 2010.

The Local Development Framework Steering Group had met frequently to consider component parts of this document and its next meeting would consider the Sustainability Appraisal, which would also be subject to consultation.

The Core Strategy document was still being edited and the delegated authority of the Executive Councillor would be sought to approve any further amendments prior to it being formally launched for public consultation.

Reported that there was a significant amount to be done before the launch, including:-

- Final editing;
- document publishing and printing;
- preparation of leaflets, posters and exhibition material;
- printing and distribution of leaflets and consultation material;
- placing documents on the consultation website;
- preparation of statutory notices; and
- preparing for the consultation events, meetings and exhibitions.

With regard to the latter bullet point, Members expressed concern that the consultation period, between 11 January and 19 February 2010, appeared far too short to enable Parish Councils and other Community Groups to become fully engaged in the process. Mr Willoughby-Foster undertook to ensure Parish Councils were contacted about proposed consultation events/evenings at the earliest opportunity.

Mr Willoughby-Foster went on to say that whilst the Core Strategy document could not technically be considered to be confidential post approval, if the contents were to be proactively publicised now the Council would not be in a position to properly respond to public demands for information. Potentially this could jeopardise the public consultation in January 2010. A holding response to any enquiries that might be forthcoming between now and the second week in January was therefore being prepared.

During the discussion of the document, a number of points were made in terms of amendments which were required and inaccuracies that needed to be addressed. Further comments would also be provided to Mr Willoughby-Foster outside of the meeting.

Resolved that:-

- (1) The Core Strategy and Small Sites document be agreed for public consultation;
- (2) Executive Councillor Simon Coles be authorised to agree any further amendments to the Core Strategy and the Sustainability Appraisal for consultation; and
- (3) A holding response be prepared for any enquiries that were received prior to the second week in January 2010.

104. **Executive Forward Plan**

Submitted for information the Forward Plan of the Executive over the next few months.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.14 p.m.)