

## LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ADVISORY GROUP

### Minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2012 commencing at 5.30 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Davison (Chairman)  
Cllrs. Davison, Fittock and Walshe  
Cllr. Parry (KALC Representative)  
Cllrs. Clark, Edwards-Winsor, Mrs. Parkin and Raikes were also present.  
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Bosley, Mrs. Cook, Mrs. Dawson, Mr. Coupland and Mr. Czarnowski  
Mr. Alan Dyer (Group Manager – Planning), Mr. Steve Craddock (Senior Planning Officer) and Mr. David Lagzdins (Democratic Services Officer)

#### 1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### 2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Local Development Framework Advisory Group held on 12 March 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### 3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Fittock declared a personal interest in minute item 5 as a member of Swanley Town Council and in minute item 7 as it related to the Swanley Town Centre Regeneration area as a trustee of Swanley Town Centre Recreation Ground.

Cllr. Parry declared a personal interest in minute item 5 as a member of both Sevenoaks Town Council and Kent County Council.

Cllrs. Mrs. Davison and Davison declared personal interests in minute item 5 as members of Edenbridge Town Council.

#### 4. Matters Arising including actions from last meeting

The completed actions were noted.

#### 5. Community Infrastructure Levy Public Consultation Document and Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the item and explained that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was to be a standard charge based on floorspace for new development in the district. Sums collected would be used for the provision of

infrastructure necessary to support that development. This CIL would replace some monies previously received through section 106 agreements.

To introduce a CIL the Council must produce a charging schedule. Officers had created a draft charging schedule as part of the consultation.

The charging schedule was based on a viability assessment and an assessment of infrastructure required to support development. The viability assessment showed that a proposed CIL of £125/m<sup>2</sup> was unsustainable in northern areas of the district and in Edenbridge and therefore a second tier of £75/m<sup>2</sup> was considered for some wards. At this level it was expected that the CIL would raise £5-6million across the district in the period 2014-2026.

An Infrastructure Delivery Plan was prepared to support the CIL as an indicative list of infrastructure required to support the implementation of the Council's Core Strategy plan. The list was drawn up in consultation with infrastructure providers, including Town and Parish Councils. This list would become more developed over time and following the consultation period. There was still time for further schemes to be added during and after the consultation.

A Member of the Group enquired why residential care homes would not be charged the CIL. The Senior Planning Officer clarified that it depended on the use class of residential care home and that those in class C3 would be charged.

*Action: Officers to clarify in the document when residential care homes would be charged.*

The Member also suggested the population projection and infrastructure costs provided by Kent County Council (KCC) were underestimates. He also proposed that the figures be rounded to indicate that they were only estimates.

*Action: Officers to remove the specific population projection and to round the estimated costs of infrastructure projects.*

It was suggested that the difference between the CIL tiers was significant and could lead to unforeseen results. Officers responded that if the CIL were reduced to £75/m<sup>2</sup> across the district then the sum received would reduce by approximately £1million. Further, the figure of £125/m<sup>2</sup> had been considered as unsustainable in some parts of the district by the viability assessment. Government guidance on the introduction of CILs recommended that they be kept as simple as possible but if intermediate tiers were proposed then the Council would need a further viability assessment to consider the impact.

Another Member suggested that having a lower level in some areas indicated that they were second-class wards. The lower CIL could also incentivise greater development in areas which were already overcrowded. The Officer reminded the Group that the CIL receipts would be put into a central fund for use across the district. It was not believed the 2 tier CIL would particularly incentivise development as it was more usual for Councils to set the CIL at nil when they sought greater development.

A Councillor not on the Group asked whether the CIL would affect the income from Affordable Housing contributions. This had been considered and the viability assessment was on the assumption that the Affordable Housing contribution was made in full.

The Chairman added that she had recently questioned the Environment Agency regarding the cost for Edenbridge flood defences, following a suggestion that one type of defence could cost as little as £600,000 rather than the £11 million proposed. She would advise the Group of the response once received.

Resolved: That Cabinet be recommended that

- (a) the CIL Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule Consultation Document be agreed and published for consultation;
- (b) the Portfolio Holder be authorised to agree minor presentational changes and detailed amendments, including any minor changes to the proposed charging levels as a result of the completion of the CIL Viability Study, prior to publication to assist the clarity of the document; and
- (c) copies be made available for sale at a price to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder.

#### 6. Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment

The Senior Planning Officer advised that the Council had decided a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment was required since the Government had terminated its Partial Review of the South East Plan and since the publication of the new draft national policy.

Officers believed the study carried out by the University of Salford was robust as it had received a good response rate. Financial savings were made by jointly commissioning the study with Maidstone Borough Council.

The study had shown a need for 40 pitches over the period 2012-2016. It was possible, but not a recommendation of the report, that some of the existing temporary and unauthorised pitches (approximately 31) could be used to provide permanent accommodation for households. It was noted that this would need to be considered in preparing the Gypsy and Traveller DPD. A requirement of a further 32 pitches was estimated between 2016 and 2026. No need for Travelling Showpeople had been identified. Nor was a need for a dedicated transit site identified, however it was recommended that such needs be considered on a regional or county-wide basis.

Officers understood it would still be difficult to identify sites for the pitches but they believed the report was a good foundation for the Development Plan Document (DPD).

One Member commented that the survey should have gone wider than merely the existing residents in the district as the survey dealt with travelling populations. The survey would not therefore cover those who would move into or through the district.

Another Member, who was not on the Advisory Group, noted that there was an existing imbalance through the district of where Gypsy and Traveller accommodation was based. He asked that there be no presumption in the DPD that existing sites expand. Officers advised that the Accommodation Assessment would not be binding as to how any provision would be made and where.

Members commended the report and agreed that it was considerably better than the study in 2006.

Resolved: That the Council's Gypsy and Traveller DPD be prepared on the basis of the findings of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.

## 7. Allocations and Development Management Plan

The Group Manager – Planning reminded Members that the Allocations and Development Management Plan reported to the Advisory Group on 12 March 2012 had been a working draft. The working draft was subject to changes in allocations and changes in the finalised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The report set out those changes to the Development Management Policies which would be needed since the NPPF had been finalised. The Group Manager – Planning emphasised that Policy NPPF 1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) was regularly being inserted by Inspectors into DPDs during examination. If the amendments proposed to bring the plan into conformity with the NPPF were not made then the document would be found unsound.

A Member noted that the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development stated that any development should be considered sustainable where it was in line with up-to-date local plans where they existed.

*Action: Officers to add such wording to the document.*

Another Member, not on the Committee, felt it was difficult to follow references to the NPPF and asked that paragraph references to the NPPF be added. Officers agreed but suggested some references to the NPPF would be only general in nature.

*Action: Officers to add references to the appropriate paragraphs of the NPPF throughout the document.*

The report also set out the responses to the consultation for site allocations. The Group Manager – Planning acknowledged that some further changes could be needed and so the recommendation at this time was not for immediate approval of the DPD but only for further discussion with stakeholders. He added that since the last report there had been interest in the Land West of Bligh's Meadow, Sevenoaks to be retail led. Additionally the owners had requested that the boundary of Swanley Town Centre be extended to the recreation ground and this matter was still unresolved, but the Town Council, who own the recreation ground, had clarified that it would like the land to be retained as such.

The Group considered each of the additions or variations to the 2010 draft allocations in turn and comments were made on the following addresses:

### School House, Oak Lane and Hopgarden Land

Concern was raised that the proposed allocations for this site would make it dense and out of keeping with the Character Area Assessment. This was particularly true of the lower site.

### Johnsons, Oak Lane and Hopgarden Land

It was suggested that the concerns regarding School House would also apply to this site.

United House, Godsel Road, Swanley

It was noted that the site was subject to ongoing stakeholder discussions. Concern was raised about the impact development could have on density and that there would be no barrier to the paper mill. Development would also have an impact on air quality and highways, which had got worse in the area since the matter was considered in 2010.

The Manor House, New Ash Green

It was noted that the site was subject to ongoing stakeholder discussions. A Local Member, not on the Group explained that there had been a large response to the consultation and, except for those with an interest in development, respondents were almost exclusively against the proposals. They did not want to lose the largest employment site in the parish.

Station Approach, Edenbridge

Members were not certain that the owners of the site, Network Rail, also owned the entrance to the site.

New Ash Green Village Centre, New Ash Green

A Local Member, not on the Group, considered that parking could be a concern with the site. The site would not merely require the re-provision of parking to replace that which would be lost by the development. It would also need added provision for the increased demand that redevelopment, especially the residential development, would create.

Warren Court, Halstead

The representative of the Kent Association of Local Councils informed the Group that the local Parish Council had declared a preference for this site to be allocated for social housing.

Land west of Bligh's Meadow, Sevenoaks

A Member suggested that the loss of 100 public parking spaces should be a consideration in any future use of the site. The loss of parking could neutralise any economic gain from the development of the site. Officers confirmed parking was noted as a factor to be considered in its future use.

Post Office/BT Exchange, South Park, Sevenoaks

Officers confirmed that the BT site could be available towards the end of the plan period. Members proposed that the two sites be considered separately as it was so uncertain when the BT site could become available.

In response to a question the Group Manager – Planning clarified that the proposal was for mixed use. The site would not just replace employment use with residential use.

Powder Mills (Former GSK Site), Leigh

It was noted that this site was still subject to ongoing stakeholder discussions.

Broom Hill, Swanley

A local resident noted that in a previous Inspector's report there had been a recommendation for a park to be created to the rear of the existing residential properties to act as a buffer to the M25 Motorway and the proposed employment development. Part of the land was now fenced off but the land would still not be suitable for the proposed allocation because of the impact it would have on the environment and on traffic. Any increased use of the site was opposed. However, the further down the hill any employment development was then the less impact it would have.

A Member, who was also on Swanley Town Council, reiterated the comments about air quality and that the highways would be overused, especially as Beechenlea Lane was so narrow. The public footpath also needed to be incorporated into any future plans. A Member proposed that the existing proposals be reconsidered.

The Chairman informed the meeting that the land to be allocated for development had not been part of the Green Belt for 16 years and that the Sevenoaks District Core Strategy prioritised the development of land which was not in the Green Belt. Responding to a question the Group Manager – Planning commented that the land to be maintained as open space could be considered as a buffer, but noted the comments of the local residents that they wanted the residential and, in some cases, the employment areas also maintained as a buffer.

The Chairman said that the Broom Hill proposals would be subject to a further 6 week consultation, in their current form, to give local residents a further opportunity to submit comments or supplement their previously submitted comments.

*Action: Officers to remove reference to Leigh's Builders Yard, Edenbridge since outline planning permission had now been granted for the site.*

Resolved: That the revised Allocations and Development Management Plan is noted and, subject to consultation, supported and that discussions continue with local stakeholders/site promoters on site allocations in order to progress the plan to pre-submission publication.

8. Any other business

There was no other business.

9. Date of next meeting - 3 October 2012.

The proposed date of the next meeting of the Advisory Group was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.50 PM

CHAIRMAN