

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **LUTON & SOUTH BEDS JOINT COMMITTEE** held in Committee Room 1, Central Bedfordshire Council, Council Offices, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds LU6 1LF on Friday, 23 October 2009

PRESENT:

Councillor RJ Davis (Chairman)	Luton Borough Council
Councillor Dolling	Luton Borough Council
Councillor Franks	Luton Borough Council
Councillor Matthews	Central Bedfordshire Council
Councillor McVicar	Central Bedfordshire Council
Councillor Nicols (Vice-Chairman)	Central Bedfordshire Council
Councillor Shadbolt	Central Bedfordshire Council
Councillor Taylor	Luton Borough Council
Councillor Worlding	Luton Borough Council

SUBSTITUTES:

Cllr Ashraf for Cllr Hussain	Luton Borough Council
Cllr D Bowater for Cllr Mrs Hegley	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr MR Jones for Cllr Young	Central Bedfordshire Council

OBSERVERS:

Cllr Barnard for Cllr Brindley	North Hertfordshire District Council
Cllr Paternoster	Aylesbury Vale District Council

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr McKillen	Go-East
Cllr P Rawcliffe	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Rutstein	Luton Borough Council

OFFICERS: Mr Atkinson (JTU), Mr Butcher (JTU), Mr Dove (LBC), Mr Fox (CBC), Mrs Hobbs (CBC), Mr Owen (LBC), Mr Pagdin (LBC), Mr Robertson (JTU), Mr Saccoccio (CBC) and Mr Saunders (CBC)

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Brindley, Mrs Hegley, Hussain, D Jones and Young and John Gelder.

17. MINUTES (REF: 2)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee held on the 24 July 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

18. MEMBERS' INTERESTS (REF: 3)

(a) Personal Interests:-

None.

(b) Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-

None.

19. URGENT BUSINESS (REF: 4)

The Chairman advised Members that there was no urgent business.

20. EMERGING CORE STRATEGY PUBLIC CONSULTATION: OVERVIEW OF THE TYPE OF RESPONSES RECEIVED AND THE OVERALL LEVELS OF SUPPORT AND OBJECTIONS TO ITS EMERGING CONTENTS (REF: 5)

Members received a report that set the scene of the type of response received and the overall level of support and objection to the 'Preferred Options' version of the Core Strategy. A total of 1,452 separate individual respondents submitted a total of 1,501 responses ranging across all elements of the Preferred Options. These were made up of responses from individuals, statutory consultees, key stakeholders and other organisations/companies.

Detailed analysis of all the representations had not identified any new substantive issues. Five responses derive from campaigns and take the form of, for example, petitions and multiple postcards and express views on a topic from a group.

Officers confirmed that every response had been considered, recorded and taken on board.

The reason for noting the report was to enable the Joint Committee to have an overarching understanding of the type and origin of the representations received and the overall levels of support and objection expressed.

NOTED the report as an overarching commentary on the type and origin of the consultation responses received together with an indication of the level of support and objection.

21. EMERGING CORE STRATEGY: SCHEDULE OF RESPONSES RECEIVED ON THE RECENT 'PREFERRED OPTIONS' PUBLIC CONSULTATION (REF: 6)

The Joint Committee received a report that set out the responses received, suggested responses and actions relating to them. Members had received a schedule containing 3,962 individual comments. There were twelve elements to the schedules, one relating to each of the substantive chapters of the 'Preferred Options' document and the nineteen online questions posed to guide respondents. Members and Officers were pleased with the number of responses received from the Community. The evidence base was being refined and improved to strengthen the emerging Core Strategy.

A motion was moved and seconded as follows:

'That the Joint Committee resolves that, in line with the overwhelming public response to the consultation exercise, the area to the east of Luton be removed from the list of proposed urban extensions.

Instructs Officers to re-examine all of the areas originally identified and to report to a future meeting on the development capacity of the remaining approved areas and of the areas previously rejected including those to the North of the proposed Northern by-pass.

Instructs Officers to make appropriate amendments to the suggested responses in the appendix to the agenda item 6 report.'

A Member raised concern that the responses received from groups of respondents had not been appropriately dealt with, in particular the postcards submitted under the name 'Keep East of Luton Green', as these were only being recorded as one response. Officers explained that the postcards had comprised the views of 4,942 respondents expressing the respondents' opposition to development to the area East of Luton, destroying an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the development in this area would fail to assist the regeneration of the Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis conurbation and the increase in the traffic to the edge of Luton, had been treated as one record as it was a single point of view. A request was made that the original sites be re-examined, especially as the East of Luton had originally been a reserve site.

Councillor Nicols asked whether anything raised in the consultation responses or submissions to the Joint Technical Unit since the Consultation Core Strategy had been published suggested that the preferred options or direction of travel of the emerging Core Strategy needed to be altered. Officers' explained that detailed analysis of all the representations had not identified any new substantive issues that would undermine the evidence base or lead to a conclusion that the emerging Core Strategy would be found unsound. Noting that South Central Bedfordshire would likely be taking the bulk of the proposed housing to assist Luton's growth, especially with the demographics showing an increase in birth rates in Luton, Members noted that continued cross boundary work was required to continue to plan properly for the conurbation. Officers confirmed that they were continuing to consider all responses and evidence

received through consultation in the preparation of the emerging Core Strategy. Officers also advised that they continued to look at the capacity of areas leading up to the proposed northern bypass though it was unlikely to deliver substantial new capacity above that already suggested by the Core Strategy.

Members took a vote and this motion was lost.

Members then voted on the recommendation contained within the agenda. Councillors Franks and Dolling requested that their vote against this recommendation be recorded.

The reason for resolving the following was to enable Members to approve the suggested responses and related action as part of its role in the ongoing formulation of the emerging Core Strategy.

RESOLVED that the suggested responses and the actions proposed relating to representations received, be approved.

22. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT ON PLANNING OBLIGATIONS (SECTION 106 LEGAL AGREEMENTS) FOR SOUTHERN BEDFORDSHIRE (REF: 7)

The Joint Committee received a report on the Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations for southern Bedfordshire. Luton had adopted its own Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in September 2007, southern Bedfordshire needed to put in place a consistent policy approach to planning obligations. Mid Bedfordshire Planning Obligations Strategy was adopted in February 2008 and it remained the intention of Central Bedfordshire to create a single Planning Obligations Strategy as soon as practicable.

Members were advised that once this SPD had been adopted it would apply to new development proposals within southern Bedfordshire from 5 January 2010.

A query was raised about Leighton Buzzard library not having identifiable library need. Officers advised Members that this information had been sought from the Community and Cultural Services team and it had been felt that this only related to Dunstable and Caddington.

The reason for decision was to meet the requirements of the town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee

- 1) welcomes the widespread and broadly positive response and support to the Draft Planning Obligations Strategy following formal public consultation**
- 2) formally adopts the proposed Planning Obligations Strategy as a Supplementary Planning Document constituting part of its Local Development Framework**

- 3) that the Director of Sustainable Communities at Central Bedfordshire Council agree with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development any minor typographical calculative and explanatory amendments to the text of the SPD prior to its operation
- 4) note that the SPD would be applied to new development proposals within southern Bedfordshire from 5 January 2010.

23. LUTON AND SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (REF: 8)

The Joint Committee received a report which considered a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The reason for the decision was to bring the revised LDS into effect.

NOTED that the Government Office for the East of England had approved the revised LDS.

RESOLVED that the revised LDS be brought into effect as of 23 October 2009.

24. EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN REVIEW 2031 (REF: 9)

The Joint Committee received a report on the Regional Assembly's consultation on four growth scenarios to inform the review of the East of England Plan (EoEP) that ran from 2 September to 24 November 2009. The Regional Assembly was rolling forward the end date of the recently adopted EoEP by ten years from 2021 to 2031. The four growth scenarios were as follows:

- Scenario 1: Roll forward 26,000 dwellings per annum (dpa) for the region; the same distribution strategy focused on key towns and cities
- Scenario 2: National housing advice with additional regional growth allocations delivering 30,000 dpa across the region (or an extra 80,000 homes above Scenario 1); as new settlements/urban extensions (3 proposed in Central Bedfordshire, Marston Vale Eco Town; Midland Mainline - A5120 corridor; A1 (M) - East Coast Mainline corridor) – this also impacts on Luton with an increase in target above scenario 1 & 3
- Scenario 3: National housing advice and regional economic forecasts requiring 30,000 dpa across the region
- Scenario 4: National household projections (natural increase, net in migration, single households and living longer) requiring 33,700 dpa.

Luton and Central Bedfordshire had reiterated their earlier advice to the Regional Assembly that while there were significant challenges, progress was being made and the Local Delivery Vehicle was now in place to continue planned delivery of the Luton and southern Bedfordshire Growth Area.

Members agreed that the available jobs needed to match the increase in houses to have a balanced economy.

NOTED the report and the progress on the regional planning review which set the framework for the Local Development Framework.

25. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (REF:10)

The Joint Committee received a report that informed Members about the current consultation on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) draft regulations and suggested a response to the key issues. The CIL was expected to raise hundreds of millions of pounds of extra funding per year towards the infrastructure that local communities needed. A response had been drafted by Officers from Luton Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council and would be considered at both these Council Executive meetings.

The main areas of concerns were:

- the degree of sophistication of infrastructure calculations
- the desirability of an exceptions policy
- the affordable housing investment
- the role of CIL relative to mainstream funding.

A response from the Members Steering Group (MSG) was attached at appendix A to the MSG minutes of 6 October 2008 and once ratified by the Joint Committee would be sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

RESOLVED to respond to the Government expressing support for the CIL in principle, but requests that consideration be given to matters set out within the report.

26. MAJOR TRANSPORT SCHEMES UPDATE (REF: 11)

Members received a report that updated them on the latest position on the major transport schemes, affecting the delivery of growth in the area, including those funded by Central Government either through the Highways Agency, the Regional Funding Allocation, the second round of the Communities Infrastructure Fund (CIF2) or the third round of the Growth Area Fund (GAF3).

At the Joint Committee meeting on 24 July 2009 Members discussed the proposals for the improvements at junctions 11 – 12 of the M1 as part of the public consultation process being carried out by the Highways Agency. A letter was sent to the Highways Agency advising them of the Joint Committee's views. The Highways Agency was working closely with the two local

authorities and key developers on the design of a connection of junction 11a with the local highway network. Members noted that the local roads in the vicinity of the new junction were to be re-aligned as part of the design of the A5-M1 Link. The Orders for the A5-M1 Link scheme were due to be published in November 2009 by the Highways Agency.

Members also received an update on the improvements to junction 10a of the M1. The Consultants, Scott Wilson, had been requested to draw up some further designs, where London Road would pass under the existing roundabout. Officers had only just received these further designs and they needed to be put out on consultation. This would have an impact of the expected programme to progress the scheme design.

RESOLVED to endorse the response to the Highways Agency's public consultation on the proposed junction designs for M1 junctions 11 and 12.

27. MINUTES OF THE MEMBERS STEERING GROUP (REF: 12)

Members received the minutes from the Member Steering Group held on 7 September 2009 and 6 October 2009.

Members noted that the reserve meeting scheduled for 6 November 2009 had been cancelled as there was no new business to be reported at this point.

NOTED

- 1) the minutes from the Member Steering Group held on 7 September 2009 and 6 October 2009**
- 2) the cancellation of the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee reserved meeting scheduled for 6 November 2009.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 10.37 a.m.)