

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Monday, 8 January 2018.

PRESENT

Cllr D McVicar (Chairman)
Cllr B Saunders (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs D Bowater
Ms A M W Graham
J Kane

Cllrs Cllr M Liddiard
K C Matthews
R Morris

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs

Substitutes: Cllrs C C Gomm (sub for Cllr Downing)

Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	A D Brown	Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration
		J Chatterley	Vice-Chairman Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
		Mrs S Clark	Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration
		N B Costin	
		I Dalgarno	Executive Member for Community Services
		P Downing	Vice Chairman Social Care, Health & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
		F Firth	
		E Ghent	Executive Member for Assets and Housing Delivery
		Mrs S A Goodchild	
		Mrs C Hegley	Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations (HRA)
		J G Jamieson	Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Executive
		Mrs J G Lawrence	Chairman of General Purposes Committee
		D J Lawrence	Vice-Chairman of Audit

Ms C Maudlin	Deputy Executive Member for Adults, Social Care, Housing Operations (HRA) and Volunteering
T Nicols	Chairman of Licensing Committee
Cllr B J Spurr	Executive Member for Health and Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board
Mrs T Stock	Deputy Executive Member for Health
B Wells	Deputy Executive Member for Community Services
J N Young	Executive Member for Regeneration

Officers in Attendance:	Mr A Davie	– Development Infrastructure Group Manager
	Ms C Frost-Bryant	– Head of Strategic Growth
	Mr J Longhurst	– Director of Regeneration and Business
	Mr J Partridge	– Head of Governance
	Mrs R Preen	– Scrutiny Policy Adviser

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SCOSC/17/54 **Members' Interests**

Whilst not a Member of the Committee, Cllr Maudlin declared an interest as a member of her family owned a parcel of land detailed within the Local Plan document as a possible development site.

SCOSC/17/55 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman reminded Members that the meeting would be webcast and that due consideration would need to be taken with regards to comments made on the Local Plan document, ensuring a strategic focus. All Members would have the opportunity to comment in detail on individual elements of the Plan as part of the public consultation process which was due to commence on 11 January 2018.

SCOSC/17/56 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 November 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SCOSC/17/57 Petitions

None.

SCOSC/17/58 Questions, Statements or Deputations

None.

SCOSC/17/59 Call-In

None.

SCOSC/17/60 Requested Items

None.

SCOSC/17/61 Executive Members Updates

The Executive Member for Community Services advised the Committee that a previous Call-In in relation to a decision made regarding Stuart Street Dunstable and parking permits issued to a non resident had been reconsidered by the Traffic Management Committee in December as recommended by the SC OSC. The original decision had been upheld and two permits had been issued to a resident of Clifton Road Dunstable. The Committee were also advised of a recent fire at Woburn Safari Park in which a number of animals had perished. The incident would be investigated by the Council as it was the responsible licensing authority. Members were also advised that the library at Leighton Buzzard was due to reopen on 9 January 2018 following a recent flood.

SCOSC/17/62 Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

The Executive Member for Regeneration advised the Committee that the latest iteration of the Local Plan set out the Council's strategic direction for homes and business development, the detail of which had been informed by a recent public consultation. Members were advised of the decision-making timeline and that comments made by the Committee would be considered by the Executive. Following Executive the document would be assessed by full Council before going out to public consultation, after which the planning inspector would make their judgement on the Plan. Members were reminded of the consequences of not having an up to date Plan or five-year land supply. Concerns had also been raised regarding the new government housing calculation, which would substantially increase the number of homes the authority would be required to deliver.

The Head of Strategic Growth delivered a presentation, which set out the implications of the Oxford to Cambridge arc and the appropriate steps taken to mitigate these. The presentation also outlined the duty to provide for Luton's unmet need, the approach to the spatial strategy and the release of some green belt land where it was deemed sustainable to do so. Members were advised that during the recent public consultation residents had expressed the

importance of limiting the expansion of existing settlements, which had been reflected in the updated Plan.

In light of the presentation Members discussed the following in summary: -

- Concerns regarding the decision making timeline and the date on which the technical evidence base, that would include small and medium growth areas and the size of countryside gaps, would be released. In response it was confirmed that the approach was standard practice and deemed appropriate.
- The site assessment matrix, which it was confirmed would be included in the documentation when published.
- Whether it was possible to fund strategic roads from developer contributions.
- The need for clarity within the document regarding settlement boundaries.
- Whether supporting the document at full Council would prejudice a Member's ability to comment in detail at a later stage. In response it was confirmed that Members would not be prejudiced from making further comments if they supported the Plan at Full Council. At Full Council Members would be asked to support the document to be released for public consultation, a further opportunity would be provided to comment on individual aspects of the Plan in the usual manner.
- That there were no plans to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) at this stage as the authority was still awaiting a government response to a CIL review conducted in 2017.
- That details of all partner and statutory consultees would be provided to Members on request.
- That each site within the Plan identified strategic health needs with officers liaising extensively with the CCG and NHS partners in order to identify provision for health care, thus informing the infrastructure delivery plan.
- That formal and informal public open space would be provided in addition to countryside gaps.
- That new developments would be required to detail the infrastructure requirements for each site regardless of any deficit.
- Red delineations, as outlined within the Plan, would not necessarily be filled with development, they indicated areas in which pockets of development could occur.
- Members were encouraged to attend future developer consultations and provide feedback.
- The need to strengthen policy regarding public transport, elderly accommodation and climate change (specifically the retention of water). In response it was confirmed that the wording around each of these elements would be reconsidered.
- The need to hold developers to account when projects were not completed within a timely fashion, notwithstanding the difficulties this presented due to current planning legislation.
- Members were reassured that all steps had been taken in order to meet compliance at the examination stage.
- Concerns regarding a lack of clarity and consistency within the document in relation to the number of villages proposed with the Marston Vale.

- That a contingency in the number of homes proposed would allow for the fact that some would be delivered outside of the Plan timetable, also protecting against the non-delivery of some sites.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. That the Executive supports the draft Pre-Submission Local Plan attached at Appendix A and that the Council agrees the document for the purposes of Publication.
2. That officers strengthen the wording within the document to protect against the coalescence of existing and future settlements wherever practicable.

SCOSC/17/63 Work Programme 2017/18 and Executive Forward Plan

AGREED the Committee Work Programme subject to the following amendments: -

- That the number of items scheduled for March 2018 be revisited due to the length of the agenda.
- The Waste Collection Contract – TBC
- Car Parking Policy – TBC

(Note: The meeting commenced at 1.03 p.m. and concluded at 2.47 p.m.)