

At a meeting of the **LUTON & SOUTH BEDS JOINT COMMITTEE** held in Committee Room 1, The Council Offices, High Street North, Dunstable, LU6 1LF on Friday, 23 July 2010

PRESENT:	Councillor RJ Davis (Vice-Chairman) Councillor Franks Councillor Mrs Hegley Councillor M Hussain Councillor Matthews Councillor McVicar Councillor Nicols (Chairman) Councillor Shadbolt Councillor Taylor Councillor Worlding Councillor Young	Luton Borough Council Luton Borough Council Central Bedfordshire Council Luton Borough Council Central Bedfordshire Council Central Bedfordshire Council Central Bedfordshire Council Central Bedfordshire Council Luton Borough Council Luton Borough Council Central Bedfordshire Council
SUBSTITUTES:	Cllr Rutstein for Cllr Dolling	Luton Borough Council
CO-OPTEEES:	Mr J Gelder Councillor D Jones	Local Strategic Partnership Town & Parish Councils
OBSERVERS:	Cllr Barnard for Cllr Brindley	North Hertfordshire District Council
IN ATTENDANCE:	Councillor Bowater Mr M Hargreaves Mr N McKillen Councillor Snelling	Central Bedfordshire Council GO-East GO-East Central Bedfordshire Council
OFFICERS:	Mr Alderson (CBC), Mr Chick (LBC), Mr Emerton (CBC), Mr Fox (CBC), Mrs Hobbs (CBC), Mr Owen (LBC), Mr Pagdin (LBC), Mr Robertson (JTU), Mr Robinson (CBC) and Mr Saunders (CBC)	

LSBJC/10/01 **Election of Chairman (Ref 1)**

RESOLVED

that Councillor Nicols (CBC) be elected Chairman of the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

Members agreed that Councillor RJ Davis take the Chair for this meeting, as the outgoing Chairman.

LSBJC/10/02 **Election of Vice-Chairman (Ref 2)**

RESOLVED

that Councillor RJ Davis (LBC) be elected Vice-Chairman of the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

LSBJC/10/03 Apologies for Absence (Ref 3)

Apologies were received from Councillor Dolling and Councillor Paternoster. Councillor Rutstein was substituting for Councillor Dolling.

LSBJC/10/04 Minutes (Ref 4)

An amendment was proposed to the minutes of the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee held on 23 October that minute 25 'Community Infrastructure Levy' should refer to the MSG minutes of 6 October 2009 and not 2008.

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee held on 23 October 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the above amendment.

LSBJC/10/05 Members' Interests (Ref 5)

(a) Personal Interests:-

Councillor Franks declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 'Report on a Revised Joint Core Strategy' as he lived in an area that was detailed in the Core Strategy as significant importance for planning.

(b) Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-

None.

LSBJC/10/06 Urgent Business (Ref 6)

The Chairman advised Members that there was no urgent business.

LSBJC/10/07 Core Strategy Public Consultation (Ref 7)

Members considered the report of the Joint Officer Team which provided an addendum to the responses received to the Core Strategy and Key Diagram: Preferred Options document that was considered by the Joint Committee on 23 October 2009. In April 2010 a number of representations were missing from the detailed schedule of comments received. It was established that 14 responses had been sent to the Joint Technical Unit (JTU) via email and had wrongly been identified as duplicates of originals received by other means. These responses had now been analysed and had been dealt with in the identical way to those originally reported in October 2009.

Members were advised that since the publication of the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee agenda further comments had been received. An up to date schedule of comments received since the publication of the agenda is attached at Appendix A. Members stated that all comments received were analysed, recorded and taken on board. Members also highlighted an error on the schedule to reference 4342 and 4324.

The reason for decision was to enable the Luton and South Bedfordshire 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 amendment to the Core Strategy Public Consultation report submitted to the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee on 23 October 2009 on the type and origin of the consultation responses received together with an indication of the level of support and objection.

LSBJC/10/08 Summary of Legislative Changes since October 2009 (Ref 8)

Members considered the report of the Joint Officer Team outlining the key changes in legislation, Government guidance and political context since the last Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee meeting on 23 October 2009, in order that decisions would be based on the most up to date information. The report set out details on the:

- new coalition Government manifestos;
- Community Infrastructure Levy;
- Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth 2009;
- and other guidance updates.

Members received an update from Neil McKillen, GO-East. Members were advised that since the change in Government there would be radical changes within the forthcoming Bills of Parliament to the Local Development Framework system with the emphasis on "localism". The Government were strongly supporting local authorities working together. He explained that there was no longer a role for GO-East to be advising the Committee. Members thanked Neil McKillen and stated that they had appreciated the support that GO-East Officers had provided.

The reason for decision was to enable the Joint Technical Unit to make informed decisions and respond to national and regional issues at local level based on the latest available political and planning legislation context.

NOTED

the implications of the new legislation on the progression of the Luton and South Bedfordshire local Development Framework.

RESOLVED

that decisions on the type and timing of Local Development Framework documents and evidence base be informed by the updates within the report.

LSBJC/10/09 Summary Report on the Evidence Studies Updated or Completed since October 2009 (Ref 9)

Members considered the report of the Team Leader, Joint Technical Unit outlining the outcome of recent technical studies, any implications for future Local Development Framework (LDF) work and any resulting changes made to the Core Strategy. The report set out details on the following studies:

- Employment Land and Market Assessment Study;
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA);
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment;
- Affordable Housing Thresholds Viability Study;
- Water Cycle Strategy Phase 2;
- Sustainable Development and Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change Study;
- Rural Settlement Sustainability Technical Paper;
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Funding Study; and
- Transport Modelling.

The Infrastructure Study was still ongoing and a substantial amount of work was being undertaken over the coming months. A full report on the study would be presented to the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee at their next meeting.

The Local Strategic Partnership representative highlighted that some of the rural settlements in southern Bedfordshire could encompass a small amount of growth to make them more sustainable.

Members noted that the number of additional homes needed between 2007 and 2021 for the Luton area was 5,700 and not 4,700 as stated in the report.

Members thanked the Officers for their hard work in preparing these studies.

The reason for decision was to ensure the Core Strategy was based on the most up to date and relevant evidence available.

NOTED

the findings of the technical studies outlined in the report.

LSBJC/10/10 Report on a Revised Joint Core Strategy (Ref 10)

Members considered the report of the Interim Head of the Joint Technical Unit (JTU) that informed the Joint Committee of the content of a Joint Core Strategy that took account of:

- (a) the results of the Core Strategy Public Consultation presented to the Joint Committee on 23 October 2009;
- (b) further consultation responses since 23 October 2009;
- (c) updated and additional baseline evidence produced since 23 October 2009;
- (d) the coalition government statements on the future of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the "Localism" agenda;
- (e) the identification of locally generated housing need in the absence of Regional Spatial Strategy "targets"; and
- (f) public funding of infrastructure and the general approach to national debt reduction.

Members were advised that the first proposed Core Strategy covered a 20 year period from 2011-2031 and the need for an additional 33,800 homes in southern Bedfordshire and Luton. The revised Joint Core Strategy now covered a more realistic 15 year period and the need for an additional 23,150 homes. The final Core Strategy would be presented to the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee in the autumn with further consultation being carried out during the winter. The Strategy would need to be kept under review to ensure that all evidence was kept up to date.

Members were made aware that Luton Borough Council was seeking clarification that the idea of developing land West of Luton had been considered as part of the JTU's technical work on the Core Strategy and whilst recognising the preferred Sustainable Urban extensions within the Core Strategy that the possibility of some development on the west side of Luton remains open.

Members welcomed the revised user friendly Core Strategy. It was noted that to be a sound document the Core Strategy should be justified, effective and consistent with national policy. The Chairman stated that working in partnership between the two local authorities was necessary in achieving future housing and employment in the sub-region.

An investigation looking at different travel models was being carried out by the Luton Gateway Board.

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) representative confirmed the LSP's strong support for the Core Strategy but commented that its vision might be made reflective of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Members were advised that the definition of 'critical' under the Infrastructure Delivery Strategy might be described as 'showstoppers'. The A5-M1 Link (including the proposed Junction 11a) was defined as being critical. Members were advised that a new Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document would be considered in due course as guidance to developers.

The Core Strategy aimed to address the challenges of delivering new local infrastructure and recognised that partnership working with a variety of bodies would be necessary to achieve its successful implementation.

In a response to a question regarding East of Leighton Buzzard and the link road proposed to run from Heath Road, Members were advised that discussions were taking place with developers and transport engineers. Officers noted the request that the link road proposal be extended to run directly from Heath Road to the Leighton-Linslade bypass.

Members stated that they appreciated the work of the Joint Technical Unit and Officers and extended their thanks for their hard work during the past 9 months, in a period of change and uncertainty.

The reason for decision was to enable the Joint Technical Unit to publish the draft Core Strategy and associated technical material and thereby progress preparation of the Core Strategy to the next stage.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the draft Core Strategy as presented in the report, be agreed to be an appropriate basis for a final Core Strategy (Submission) Development Plan Document for consultation purposes;**
- 2. that the Joint Committee's requirements for any further investigative work and/or further public consultations, as may be identified and agreed, be undertaken; and**
- 3. that a final Core Strategy (Submission) Development Plan Document together with the associated Sustainability Appraisal be presented to the next Joint Committee meeting for approval.**

LSBJC/10/11 Report on a Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire (Ref 11)

Members considered a report of the Team Leader Local Development Framework for north Central Bedfordshire seeking adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document for the south area (former South Bedfordshire) of Central Bedfordshire subject to securing compliance with the recommendations. Members were advised that if the Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire was adopted, it would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for development in Central Bedfordshire.

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

RESOLVED

- 1. to welcome the widespread and broadly positive response and support to the Draft Design Guide following formal public consultation; and**
- 2. to adopt the proposed Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document constituting part of its Local Development Framework.**

LSBJC/10/12 Strategic Applications Update (Ref 12)

Members received a copy of a letter from the Department for Communities and Local Government setting out the details of the public local inquiry on land at Stoke Road, Leighton Linlade. The letter stated that the Inspector recommended that the appeal be dismissed and that planning permission be refused.

NOTED

the letter and report on the Secretary of State's decision regarding land at Stoke Road, Leighton Linlade.

LSBJC/10/13 2008/09 External Audit Report (Ref 13)

Members considered the report of the Assistant Director of Planning & Development Strategy and the Senior Financial Advisor setting out the 2008/09 External Audit Report.

The External Audit Report highlighted that a publication scheme for Freedom of Information Act 2000 should be adopted by the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee. Further clarification was being sought from the Information Commissioner on the requirement in relation to this. Members were advised that a publication scheme would be drawn up and presented to the Joint Committee at their next meeting.

The reason for decision was to give effect to the required governance arrangements for the efficient and effective operation of the Joint Committee.

NOTED

the report.

LSBJC/10/14 2009/10 Annual Statement of Accounts and Current Budget Position Update (Ref 14)

Members considered the report of the Assistant Director of Planning & Development Strategy and the Senior Financial Advisor setting out the 2009/10 Annual Statement of Accounts and current budget position update.

Members noted that an amendment to the Annual Governance Statement on the third paragraph under 'Scope of responsibility' to read as follows:

"The Council, considers it has complied with a national code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' (CIPFA 2007)."

The reason for decision was that the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 required that the 2009/10 Statement of Accounts be approved by the Joint Committee. The budget position would enable the Committee to plan its future work programme and resources.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement for 2009/10, be approved subject to the above amendment and audit; and**
- 2. that the Joint Committee budget position for 2010/11 and future years be noted together with the dependency on the existing revenue budgets of the two core authorities to meet the supporting employee and additional costs incurred in the preparation of the Joint Local Development Framework.**

LSBJC/10/15 Minutes of the Members Steering Group (Ref 15)

Members received the minutes from the Member Steering Group held on 13 July 2010.

NOTED

the minutes from the Member Steering Group held on 13 July 2010.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 10.45 a.m.)

Chairman

Dated