

Planning & Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel

MINUTES

Commencing: 6.00pm
9 December 2003
Bourne Hill
Salisbury

Present

Councillor P D Edge (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs E Chettleburgh (Vice Chairman)
Councillor R Britton
Councillor M A Hewitt
Councillor Mrs C A Spencer
Councillor I R Tomes
Councillor S A Willan

In Attendance

H Collar (SDC)
R Hayman (SDC)
J Meeker (SDC)
E Milton (SDC)
J Sage (SDC)
Eric Teagle (SDC)
Councillor J C Noeken
Councillor J A Cole Morgan
Councillor D W Brown
Councillor K C Wren

Apologies

Councillor A J A Brown Hovelt
Councillor G E Jeans
Councillor Ms S C Mallory
Councillor T Woodbridge
D Crook (SDC)

Public/Observers

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18. Public Questions/Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

19. Councillor Questions/Statements

There were no Councillor questions or statements.

20. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11 November 2003 were **agreed** as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

22. Wiltshire Structure Plan – Salisbury District Housing Allocation; Cabinet explanation for SDC response to County consultation.

Following the receipt of an invitation by the Panel for the Cabinet (or a representative from the Cabinet) to attend the meeting, Councillor Noeken, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Economic Development explained the reasoning behind the Cabinet's response to the County Council's Consultation Exercise relating to various allocations (including housing and employment land allocations) within the proposed Wiltshire Structure Plan.

The primary reasons for recommending an increase in the district housing allocation above that proposed by WCC were as follows :-

1. in order to accommodate the extra workers who would require housing as a result of the County Council's proposed increase in the allocation of employment land (from 10 hectares to 20 hectares) in the district; and
2. in order to, as part of a range of measures, help ensure the provision of a reasonable level of affordable housing in the district which, according to the Council's own projections amounts to a requirement of at least 895 dwellings per year to 2006.

The concern being that without an adequate supply of housing the District would continue to lose (and fail to attract) well-qualified and economically active people; a situation currently exacerbated by the relatively high house prices and low wage levels obtaining in the area.

Councillor Noeken informed the Panel that, since receiving notifications of the Panel's concerns at the Cabinet's recommendation to Wiltshire County Council to allocate at least 1,500 and preferably 2,000 new houses in the District, he had advised the Cabinet at its meeting of 26 November 2004 of the following :-

'this issue was not new having originally been considered by Cabinet on 25 June, however on reflection I am willing to see the limit on new homes kept at 1500, - any figure below that would not be tenable in view of the serious housing issues facing the District.'

and the Cabinet had **agreed** that :-

'the Cabinet's original decision at its meeting on 29 October 2003 (minute 136) be rescinded and replaced with the following decision:-

that the Officers submit representations to Wiltshire County Council as follows :-

- a. *the District Council endorses the revised proposal of 20 hectares of strategic employment land in Salisbury District to provide for demands between 2011 and 2016*

- b. the original proposal for 1500 new homes be maintained as the minimum level of provision for Salisbury District for the period 2011-2016.'*

Following a presentation by Councillor Noeken (see Annexes A & E, attached) the following points were made :-

1. Government policy is such that Housing and Employment Land allocations (and other structure plan issues) are now considered at a pan-regional level (by the Government Office of the South West) with local needs being placed second to the needs of the Region as a whole.
2. In addition to the above, Government policy, administered via Regional Planning Guidance, seeks to focus development in urban areas (eg Swindon and Bath) for 'sustainability purposes, a policy which works against the economic interests of predominantly rural districts such as Salisbury.
3. With reference to the above points, the Council should seek to actively lobby and/or negotiate with the Government Office of the South West to ensure that the needs of the district are not overlooked and are met during the formulation of the Regional Planning Frameworks.
4. The type of houses to be built is key; currently the need is less for 3-4 bedroom dwellings than it is for more easily affordable 2 bedroom (perhaps terraced in style) dwellings
5. Achieving an increase in the amount of affordable housing available in the district requires the introduction/application of a raft of measures. The use of new development to achieve affordable housing is but one measure that can be adopted.
6. In approving any affordable housing to be built in the district, the Council should seek to ensure that a specified level of quality of design and build is adhered to.
7. Consideration needs to be given when determining the future housing needs of the district to the increases in housing that could, potentially, be required as a result of plans by DSTL to increase their workforce by at least 800 in the very near future and the impact of the MOD's 'Project Allenby' (which will result in an increase in the numbers of MOD personnel retiring whilst in this area and requiring housing following their departure from MOD-provided housing). [NB. These facts should be used to support the Council's case in any representations made to the Government Office of the South West.]
8. The drive to increase the amount of housing (including affordable housing) available in the district should be balanced against the character of the area (i.e. its rural and historic nature) and great care should be taken not to erode, through development, those features that make the area an attractive and sought after place to live and work. Priority should be given to determining the 'type of place' Salisbury seeks to be by 2020 and beyond.

To conclude, the Chairman thanked Councillor Noeken and other Cabinet Members for attending the meeting and informing Panel Members of the Cabinet's reasoning and amended resolution on this issue.

23. Planning Enforcement: Policy & Practice

The Panel received a presentation from Richard Hayman, Enforcement Officer, together with a brief 'update' paper (see Annex B, attached), circulated at the meeting.

The Panel **agreed** that :-

1. the contents of the report be noted; and
2. the Cabinet be requested to, as a matter of urgency, authorise the Head of Development Services to recruit a compliance officer (subject to his being satisfied that sufficient income can be generated from the enforcement function such that the additional post is filled at no overall cost to the Council).
3. in addition, the Head of Development Services/Forward Planning & Transportation be authorised to levy an additional charge on Section 106 Planning Obligations, for the purposes of ensuring that benefits secured through such obligations are provided, as follows :-
 - £500 per each individual obligation/requirement within Section 106; and
 - an additional fee equating to 5 per cent of the R2 contribution paid.

Such charges are to be reviewed after 12 months if it is considered that the revenue generated is insufficient to fully fund the post.

24. Conservation of Historic Farm Buildings – Information Leaflet

Following consideration of the report (circulated with the meeting Agenda), the Panel received a presentation from Jocelyn Sage, Conservation Officer, together with a copy of the draft Information Leaflet (see Annex C, attached), circulated at the meeting.

The Panel **agreed** that :-

1. the proposed introduction and use of such an informative, relatively cheap to produce and easily updateable publication is to welcomed; and
2. the Cabinet be recommended to adopt the publication as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

25. Buildings at Risk Strategy

Following consideration of the report (circulated with the meeting Agenda), the Panel received a presentation from Jocelyn Sage, Conservation Officer.

The Panel **agreed** that :-

1. the proposed introduction of such a Strategy in the District is to be welcomed;
4. that the Cabinet be recommended to endorse the Strategy with the addition of the following points :-
 - a. that the distribution of such grant monies as are currently provided by the Council for the conservation/repair of historic buildings and structures be apportioned by assessing the cost of the conservation/repair work against the value of the house (on the basis that, the higher the value of the house the smaller the grant awarded); and
 - b. that consideration be given to prioritising 'non-economic' structures (for example, cob walls and dovecots) when distributing limited Council grant funding.
3. that a report detailing how Officers plan to monitor those buildings/structures already identified as being 'at risk' and those that come to be at risk be submitted to the Panel at an appropriate date in the future.

26. Procedure for the Adoption of Supplementary Planning Guidance

Following consideration of the report (circulated with the Agenda), the Panel received a presentation (see Annex D, attached) from John Meeker, Principal Planning Officer.

The Panel **agreed** that the Cabinet be recommended to adopt the Procedure Note (as circulated as an Annex to the report circulated with the meeting Agenda) as the standardised process for the preparation and adoption of future Supplementary Planning Guidance.

27. Affordable Housing: Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

Following consideration of the report (circulated on 3 December in follow-up to the meeting Agenda) of John Meeker, Principal Planning Officer, the Panel received a presentation (see Annex E, attached) from the Principal Planning Officer.

The Panel **noted** the content of the proposed SPG and the fact that the Guidance would, in due course, be released for public consultation.

28. Dates of Next Meetings

The forward meeting dates of the Panel were **agreed** as follows :-

- Tuesday 13 January 2004, commencing 1800hrs (provisional)
- Tuesday 10 February 2004, commencing 1800hrs (provisional)
- Tuesday 9 March 2004, commencing at 1800hrs (provisional)

The meeting closed at 2100hrs.