

Notes of a meeting of the Local Plan Working Group held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Ely on Wednesday, 16th December 2015 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Coralie Green (Chairman)
Cllr Derrick Beckett
Cllr David Brown
Cllr Steve Cheetham
Cllr Lorna Dupré
Cllr Julia Huffer

OFFICERS

Julie Barrow – Senior Planning Officer
Richard Kay – Strategic Planning Manager
Kate Eales – Strategic Planning Officer
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer

11. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Joshua Schumann.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

13. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman informed Members that Cllr Ian Bovingdon had stood down from the Working Group, and his place had been taken by Cllr Paul Cox.

14. NOTES

It was resolved:

That the Notes of the previous meeting held on 17th November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

15. EMERGING DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

The Strategic Planning Manager introduced the emerging draft Local Plan and reiterated that at present it is a working draft.

It will be much shorter and focused than the previous Plan, and there will be a foreword to explain the purpose of the document. The public version will be fully numbered.

The following points were noted:

- The document should make reference to the equine industry as well as farming;
- When the Plan goes out to public consultation in February 2016, there will be no reference to specific sites at this point;
- It is intended to hold a Parish Conference in February 2016;
- All settlement boundaries are to be reviewed;
- The final paragraph on page 12 will be made more explicit to include reference to public transport;
- Policy LP1 (A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) is largely a carry forward of Policy GROWTH5 in the current Local Plan, 2015. The NPPF requires that this Local Plan must define the overall level of growth in East Cambridgeshire between 2014 and 2036. Growth targets should be informed by need;
- The current intention is that the “Memorandum of Cooperation” will be maintained for the new Local Plan for East Cambridgeshire. The proposal is to plan for 12,800 new homes between 2014-20136;
- The new Plan should have far more flexibility regarding some long term growth areas.

With regard to the distribution of the growth, the following four options will be presented to Council:

- Option 1 – Proportionate settlement growth;
- Option 2 – Infrastructure and accessibility led growth;
- Option 3 – Prioritise larger settlements;
- Option 4 – Prioritise growth in and close to Ely (within 3 miles).

Page 23 of the draft Plan sets out the East Cambridgeshire settlement hierarchy which will give a steer regarding allocations. Sustainability is at the heart of the hierarchy.

There was some discussion regarding Policy LP5: Community-led development. Over the next 12 months the Council will consider, as an option, whether specific sites (or parts of sites) should be allocated on the Policies Map for exclusive development by a community-led approach.

The reference to Rural Exception Sites (Policy LP6: Meeting Local Housing Needs, page 28) is to be deleted, as this is covered in more detail on pages 58-59; the next version of the Plan will include figures.

Reference to sports provision will be included in the new Plan and the section regarding The Ministerial Statement will be paraphrased. Waterways will also be added in relation to transport, given the links between three cathedral cities. It is suggested that the Business Development Manager be asked speak to the major transport firms in the District regarding the provision of proper Truck Stops, with hard standing, toilets and showers for foreign/domestic lorry drivers.

16. CHAIRMAN'S CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked Officers for producing what she considered to be a very accessible draft Local Plan.

The meeting closed at 7.58pm