

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Local Development Framework **Date:** 28 March 2011
Cabinet Committee

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, **Time:** 7.00 - 7.50 pm
High Street, Epping

Members Present: Mrs D Collins (Chairman), R Bassett, Mrs M Sartin and Ms S Stavrou

Other Councillors: D Stallan

Apologies: B Rolfe and Mrs L Wagland

Officers Present: K Polyzoides (Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation)), M Houseago (Olympics Regeneration Officer), K Hallé (Senior Planning & Consultation Officer) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors Mrs M Sartin and Ms S-A Stavrou declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Lee Valley White Water Centre Update & Olympics Regeneration Officer, by virtue of being appointed members of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority by the Council. The Councillors had determined that their interest was not prejudicial and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor R Bassett declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Lee Valley White Water Centre Update & Olympics Regeneration Officer, by virtue of being appointed as a deputy member of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority by the Council. The Councillor had determined that his interest was not prejudicial and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

63. MINUTES

The Democratic Services Officer reported that the minutes from the last meeting were not quite ready yet, but would be ready in time for the Cabinet meeting on 18 April and for the Cabinet Committee to agree at its next meeting scheduled for 13 June 2011.

64. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Cabinet Committee noted its Terms of Reference, as agreed by the Council on 17 February 2009 (minute 113(a) refers).

65. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The Senior Planning & Consultation Officer presented a report about the Issues and Options Consultation Strategy for the Local Development Framework.

The Strategy outlined the approach for engaging with key stakeholders, interested parties and the community during the Issues and Options stage of the Core Planning Strategy. The Strategy aimed to be: focused using both tested and innovative methods; an adopted format for Officers and the community to work with, and cost effective. The Council was committed to providing local communities with opportunities to shape the places in which they lived and had developed an approach to engagement designed to make this achievable. The Government had made it one of its priorities to give local people more influence in the decisions that affected their locality. The Government had abolished regional housing targets and it was now the responsibility of the Council to work with local communities to determine options for future development.

The Strategy had included lessons from the successful 'Community Visioning' exercise carried out from November 2010 to January 2011. The next stage built upon this with a 'Community Choices' exercise that sought the views of the local community on the planning issues facing the District and the most appropriate policy options for addressing them. The Issues and Options Consultation was scheduled to start in September 2011 for a period of 12 weeks and the results would be used to produce the Core Planning Strategy Preferred Options document in Spring 2012. The consultation and methods would be expanded upon to form the Council's LDF Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The Cabinet Committee was informed that the increased requirements to engage with local people would have a detrimental impact on the available Officer resources within Forward Planning.

In response to questions from the Members present, the Senior Planning & Consultation Officer stated that all Councillors would be included on the email distribution list for the Local Development Framework Newsletter. Neighbourhood Plans would have to link in with the Core Planning Strategy and Village Action Groups could contribute to the different consultations during the Core Planning Strategy process. The Ongar and North Weald Gazette was also being considered alongside the Epping Forest Guardian for advertising in, as well as the Everything Epping Forest website and any Parish Magazines.

The Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation) added that invitations would be issued to all Councillors for the Stakeholder Options Workshops, as well those Councils adjacent to the District. The Council was awaiting further guidance from the Government on the process to be followed in producing Neighbourhood Plans, such as consultation methods and evidence gathering procedures. Any work undertaken by town or Parish Councils to date on Neighbourhood Plans could still be fed into the District's Core Planning Strategy.

The Cabinet Committee welcomed the Strategy and suggested that Roydon should be moved from the Rural Communities area to be included with Waltham Abbey and Nazeing, whilst North Weald could also be added as a location. The workshop schedules should incorporate a variety of times and days to permit the widest possible participation from local residents.

Recommended:

- (1) That the principles and methods set out in the Local Development Framework

Core Planning Strategy Issues and Options Consultation Strategy be approved as an approach for consulting the community in the forthcoming preparation of spatial development plans;

(2) That Roydon be moved from the Rural Communities workshop area to the Waltham Abbey and Nazeing workshop area; and

(3) That North Weald be added as a workshop location.

Reasons for Decision:

To provide a formalised strategy for engaging with key local stakeholders and the general public in the production of the Local Development Framework Core Planning Strategy.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not approve the Issues and Options Consultation Strategy. However, stakeholder and public engagement was a statutory requirement in the production of the Local Development Framework, and the Core Planning Strategy might be found unsound if there was no robust evidence of this.

66. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Senior Planning & Consultation Officer presented a report upon the Council's Local Development Scheme.

The Council was under a statutory obligation to produce a Local Development Scheme outlining the schedule for producing the documents which would form the Local Development Framework. Since the General Election last year, the new Government had made several key changes that would impact upon the production of the Local Development Framework, such as revoking Regional Spatial Strategies, cancelling the need to produce a separate Development Plan Document for Gypsies and Travellers, and requiring the Council to work more closely with the local community when preparing plans for the area.

The three key Local Development documents were: PD1 Core Planning Strategy; PD2 Site Allocations Development Plan Document; and PD3 Development Management Development Plan Document. The proposed timescale envisaged the Issues and Options stage for the Core Strategy beginning in the autumn of 2011, with adoption in the spring of 2014, whilst the Issues and Options stage for the other two documents would begin in the autumn of 2013, with adoption of both documents in the summer of 2016. Splitting the production of the three documents in this manner provided greater flexibility for dealing with revisions in the future, more productive and less confusing community engagement exercises, and better utilise the resources available within the Forward Planning team.

The Cabinet Committee was requested to approve the revised Local Development Scheme and the proposed timetable for the production of the three key documents.

The Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation) updated the Cabinet Committee on the progress with the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy. The approach of other councils had been examined and some preliminary analysis was being undertaken, with the result that the Council was not as far behind as initially thought. There was the possibility that a separate Community Infrastructure Levy would be required for those areas adjoining Harlow and scheduled for development. The

Council did have a Section 106 agreement policy for large planning applications, even if its application by the Council was inconsistent. A Supplementary Planning Policy would be required if Section 106 Agreements were phased out in 2014 before the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy had been agreed and adopted.

Recommended:

- (1) That the methodology to update the Local Development Scheme be approved; and
- (2) That the Local Development Framework be produced in accordance with the proposed timescale within the Scheme.

Reasons for Decision:

The Local Development Scheme was a statutory requirement and would guide the production of all documents for the Local Development Framework.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not approve the revised Local Development Scheme and timescale as proposed for the Local Development Framework.

67. LEE VALLEY WHITE WATER CENTRE UPDATE & OLYMPICS REGENERATION OFFICER

The Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation) presented an update upon the Lee Valley White Water Centre Economic Development Study and introduced the Cabinet Committee to the jointly funded Olympics Regeneration Officer.

The Assistant Director reported that Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners had been appointed as the external consultants to assist in the development of the Economic Development Study for the Lee Valley White Water Canoe Centre White Water Centre in December 2010. since their appointment, Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners had been investigating how the Centre could become part of a popular visitor destination and the opportunities for attracting further leisure attractions into the area. They would also be examining how to maximise visitor numbers to the area and the related benefits for local people through job and training opportunities. Local businesses and organisations, including local Council Members, had an opportunity to contribute to the study at a seminar held in March in Waltham Abbey. Their draft report was due on 25 April, with the final report scheduled for publication on 30 May 2011.

The Olympics Regeneration Officer outlined the current and future projects that the Officer had been involved in. Aside from working with Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners on the Economic Development Study, the Officer had been assisting the British Canoe Union with their bid to host the 2015 Canoe Slalom World Championships; an announcement was due in April 2011. The Olympic Officer was also examining the Travel Plan for the Olympic period and the benefits for the Council. Regeneration projects for the area post-Olympics was being investigated, including a Waltham Abbey Town Centre Strategy similar to that being developed for Waltham Cross, and obtaining Heritage Lottery Funding to assist with them. A walk-about in Waltham Abbey was planned with representatives from both the Town and District Councils to identify key issues and further potential projects. The Officer believed that the Olympics would bring benefits to the local area in the long-term.

Resolved:

- (1) That the appointment of the Olympics Regeneration Officer and emerging workstreams be noted; and
- (2) That the update on the Lee Valley White Water Centre Economic Development Study be noted.

68. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other urgent business for the Cabinet Committee to consider.

CHAIRMAN