

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MINUTES

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 8 November 2021

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 7.19 pm

Members Present: C Whitbread (Chairman), N Avey, L Burrows, A Patel, J Philip, S Kane, D Sunger and H Whitbread

Other Councillors: S Heap, M Sartin, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

Apologies: N Bedford

Officers Present: G Blakemore (Chief Executive), N Dawe (Chief Operating Officer), N Cole (Corporate Communications Officer), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer), N Richardson (Service Director (Planning Services)) and A Small (Strategic Director Corporate and 151 Officer)

59. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Leader of Council made a short address to remind everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet, and would be capable of repeated viewing, which could infringe their human and data protection rights.

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

61. MINUTES

Decision:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 11th October 2021 be taken as read and would be signed by the Leader as a correct record.

62. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

The Housing Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor H Whitbread reminded the Cabinet that they had a tour of the district on the coming Friday, to look at the estates across the district and at the coming plans for the regeneration of these estates.

63. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE CABINET

The Cabinet noted that no public questions or requests to address the Cabinet had been received for consideration at the meeting.

64. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that the last meeting of the committee had been held on 12 October and a report of this meeting had gone to the October Council meeting.

There had been an informal meeting held to consider the recent call-in on Jessel Green and the tree plantings proposed there. Two signatories of that call-in met with her along with appropriate officers and the relevant Portfolio Holders. As a result, further to the meeting, further work would be undertaken on the original proposal and a second follow up meeting would be arranged for December.

The Cabinet's agenda was reviewed but there were no specific issues identified on any of the items being considered.

65. COUNCIL HOUSEBUILDING CABINET COMMITTEE - 28 SEPTEMBER 2021

Decision:

That the minutes of the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee held on 28th September 2021 be noted.

66. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LOCAL PLAN: UPDATE ON PROGRESS

In the absence of the Planning and Sustainability Portfolio Holder, Councillor J Philip introduced the report.

This report was prepared by the Policy & Implementation Team to provide members with an update on the progress of Strategic Masterplans, Concept Frameworks and Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) within the District, including major projects and planning applications dealt with by the team. Scheduled meetings and workshops continued to take place with site promoters and developers in accordance with project plans agreed within PPAs. The majority of workshops/meetings were taking place virtually, but consideration was being given to in-person meetings, in particular for future Quality Review Panels (subject to COVID restrictions).

The District's emerging Local Plan was progressing well and at an advanced stage. As such, the Local Plan was being given substantial weight in the assessment of planning applications. The Main Modifications to the LPSV were published for consultation as a statutory part of the Local Plan Examination Process on the 15th July 2021 until 23rd September 2021. Following the consideration of the representations, the Inspector will prepare a Final Report which will include the Main Modifications necessary in order to make the Local Plan 'sound'. Full Council will consider the Inspector's report, its recommendations and if accepted, the Local Plan was likely to be adopted by the District Council in later 2021.

Councillor Avey asked about the South Epping Master Plan and for a bit more information on the technical evidence produced by their consultants and what was said in response to the inspector's concerns. Mr Richardson, Director of Planning Services said that he did not have the full details with him, he noted that the inspector had agreed to reduce the allocation on the site that was put forward. So, what has now been put forward was a smaller number of residential units on a smaller site. He would come back to the Councillor with any further details.

Councillor S Kane said that in regard to the main modifications, did we have a best guess as to when we would hear back from the inspector on this so that we could

schedule a council meeting. Mr Richardson replied that it would be at least a couple of weeks before we hear from the inspector.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse wanted to raise the infrastructure funding statements. When would it be spent or dispersed, and could this be included in future statements? Mr Richardson agreed that they could do this.

Councillor Wixley asked if they could have some ideas on what this money would be spent on? Mr Richardson noted that the S106 agreements specified where the money was to be spent along with the infrastructure delivery plan in future years. This money although secured through a S106 agreement, had not been triggered as yet for that money to be paid to the council.

Decision:

(1) The Cabinet noted the progress of Masterplans and Concept Frameworks, including the use of Planning Performance Agreements and the progress of other proposals at pre-application and application stage;

(2) The Cabinet noted the positive progress being made on the Epping Forest Local Plan Submitted Version (LPSV) following the consultation of the Main Modifications;

(3) That the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2020/2021 (Appendix F of the report) was agreed for online publication by 31 December 2021.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To ensure that members were kept fully up to date on the progress of Masterplans and Concept Frameworks and other major proposals being promoted within the District.

To comply with the Council's general obligations as a local planning authority and the requirements set out in national planning guidance.

Every Local Authority was required to publish an Infrastructure Funding Statement ('IFS') by 31 December each year that sets out the amount of planning obligation expenditure where funds have been allocated.

Community Infrastructure Levy Guidance 2014 sets out that:

"Reporting on developer contributions helps local communities and developers see how contributions have been spent and understand what future funds will be spent on, ensuring a transparent and accountable system."

Paragraph: 172, Reference ID: 25-172-20190901

The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan has identified the infrastructure projects that were required to deliver development in the District to 2033.

Other Options for Action:

Not to update members on the progress on the above issues would be contrary to the commitment made by the Implementation Team as noted in the 18 October 2018 Cabinet Report.

Not to publish the Infrastructure Funding Statement within the deadline would result in a failure to comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy regulations.

67. LEASEHOLD BUILDING INSURANCE TENDER - JULY 2022

The Corporate Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor Sunger and the Strategic Director, A Small, introduced the report.

As Freeholder the Council was obliged to arrange building insurance on behalf of its residential leaseholders in accordance with the terms of the lease.

The Council tendered the leaseholder building insurance in July 2015 on a five-year long-term agreement (LTA) with the option to extend for a further two years. The current arrangement expires on 30 June 2022.

Owing to the value of this contract which currently stands at approximately £90,000 p.a there was a requirement to undertake a full Tender exercise on the open market to ensure we obtained the most comparatively advantageous terms. It was recommended that we Tender for a three-year long-term agreement (LTA) with the option of extending for a further two years, making the overall total value of this contract to be in the region of £450,000.

The current insurance provider is Zurich Municipal Insurance.

There were a limited number of providers in the insurance market who specialise in Leaseholder residential buildings insurance for Public Sector risks and EFDC were engaging a specialist broker to market the risk on a full OJEU open tender basis to ensure we maximise the attractiveness of the proposition and thus providing competitive challenge to Zurich Municipal Insurance rates currently being charged.

Consultation under S20 of the Leaseholder Reform Act 2002 will be undertaken by the Home Ownership Team and Insurance Specialist.

Decision:

(1) The Cabinet approved the procurement and re-tender of the Leaseholder residential building insurance contract on a three-year long-term agreement (LTA) with the option of extending for a further two years to be effective from 1st July 2022; and

(2) Approved the delegation of the contract decision and final award of contract to the Strategic Director/S151 in consultation with the Director of Housing and Property.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The current insurance arrangement expires on the 30 June 2022 creating a need to re-tender the Leaseholder residential building insurance, to ensure we were achieving value for money and to comply with the Procurement rules owing to the significant expenditure involved. Failure to ensure that insurable risks were insured with external providers would expose the Council to significant financial risk and put us in breach of our contractual obligations under the lease agreement.

Cabinet approval was required as this was a key decision.

Other Options for Action:

The Leaseholder current building insurance policy ceases 30 June 2022 and there were no other options but to undertake a full open Tender exercise.

68. NORTH WEALD EMPLOYMENT LAND MASTER PLAN

In the absence of the Planning and Sustainability Portfolio Holder, Councillor J Philip introduced the report.

North Weald Airfield Masterplan Area comprises the main airfield and parcels of land to the east (ref: NWB.E4) and west (ref: NWB.E3) comprising a cluster of industrial, commercial and retail uses in the south east with associated car parks and hardstanding. The Masterplan Area was proposed for allocation in the LPSV for business use, general industrial/storage and warehousing. The areas to the eastern side of the airfield were identified as locations that could be developed to provide employment opportunities that were sustainable, promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of transportation and provide viable alternatives to private car use. These would be delivered in concert with the nearby proposed housing developments, particularly in North Weald and Latton Priory whereby measures should provide for, and encourage, more sustainable travel patterns by contributing toward integrated walking and cycling, and public transport connectivity to the wider areas, including Epping and Harlow.

For information, the masterplan framework is attached to these minutes.

Decision:

1. The Cabinet approved the draft Strategic Masterplan Framework and commencement of the public consultation for the employment land at North Weald, identified as NWB.E4 in the Local Plan Submission Version 2017;
2. The Cabinet noted that the staged public consultation will take place in November, December, and January to allow the widest possible contribution and to take account of the Christmas / New Year period; and
3. The Cabinet noted that a further update would be provided to share the results of the public consultation and to adopt the masterplan, so that it could be given appropriate weight as a material planning consideration in the determination of future planning applications. This update will take place in the February to April 2022 period.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Strategic Masterplanning Briefing Note 2018 was agreed by the Council's Cabinet in October 2018. This report sets out the requirement for the endorsement of Strategic Masterplans and Concept Frameworks as allocated in the emerging Local Plan Submission Version 2017 (LPSV).

Other Options for Action:

None at this time.

69. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration by the Cabinet.

CHAIRMAN

Appendix A - Masterplan and Concept Frameworks

Masterplan Area / Concept Framework Area	Local Plan policy and site reference	Description of proposed allocation	PPA status	Delivery due to commence (Housing Implementation Strategy 2019)	QRP	Timescales / progress update	Proposal stage	Section 106	Case officer
Latton Priory	Policy SP 4 & SP 5: SP 5.1	New Garden Town Community consisting of approximately 1,050 homes, 2 hectares of employment land, up to 5 traveller pitches, a new primary and secondary school and a local centre.	Reviewed 2021	2022/23	11/10/2018 and 05/04/2019	The process for endorsement of Masterplans by the HGGT Board was agreed at the meeting on 12th October 2021. An updated PPA programme is being developed with CEG, Hallam Land and the Garden Town Partners in October/November 2021 with a view to developing an endorsed masterplan around March 2022.	Masterplan	Not commenced	Richard Schunemann
Water Lane	Policy SP 4 & SP 5: SP 5.2	New Garden Town Community consisting of approximately 2,100 homes, up to 5 traveller pitches, a new primary school and a local centre.	West Sumners signed -July 2018 West Katherines signed - May 2019	2022/23	28/03/2019 - Joint 06/09/2019 - West Sumners	Series of masterplanning meetings are ongoing between key stakeholders including EFDC, the main site promoters (a consortium of housebuilders including Persimmon, Taylor Wimpey and Martin Grant Homes - West Katherines, and Manor Oak Homes - West Sumners), ECC (Highway), and HDC. Discussions with representatives of the smaller sites and with representatives of Redwings have commenced. A Sustainable Transport Corridor workshop took place in July 2021.	Masterplan	Not commenced	Evie Learman
East of Harlow	Policy SP 4 & SP 5: SP 5.3	New Garden Town Community consisting of approximately 750 homes, up to 5 traveller pitches, a local centre, and a potential new secondary school and potential relocation of PAH.	PPA signed January 2021 with PAH, ECC, HC	2024/25	N/A	Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) and the Garden Town Partners agreed an updated Interim Planning Position Statement in October 2021. This sets out the latest policy context for the site and an update to work programme. PAH and the GT Partners attended QRP workshops over the summer period to discuss sustainable mobility, energy and character/design of the proposals. The wider East of Harlow Masterplan is at an early stage of discussion.	Masterplan	Not commenced	Richard Schunemann
North Weald Bassett	Policy P 6: NWB.R1, NWB.T1, NWB.R2, NWB.R3, NWB.R4 and NWB.R5	Provision of approximately 1,050 homes and 5 traveller pitches, a new local centre including retail, community and health facilities and the erection of a new primary school.	Advanced stage of discussion	2022/23	14/07/2019 and 06/08/2021	Topic based meetings have taken place on transport issues, green infrastructure, SANGS provision, urban design and land drainage with Countryside. Workshops have also been held with the North Weald Bassett Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The site promoters submitted their updated draft Masterplan for review by the QRP in August 2021. Further topic based meetings and further input from the QRP are being arranged with the site promoters.	Masterplan	Not commenced	James Rogers
North Weald Airfield	Policy P 6: NWB.E4	Provision of new B1/B2/B8 employment uses on NWB.E4 and retention and expansion of aviation uses to the west of the main runway.	Advanced stage of discussion	2022/23	04/12/2020 and 12/11/2021	The Council's consultants who are preparing the NWA masterplan are meeting regularly with the Implementation Team. Member workshops were held between October 2020 and February 2021 to discuss the consultants approach to the Masterplan and a series of technical meetings took place in Spring 2021 with key stakeholders, including specialists at Essex County Council. The draft Masterplan is due to be presented to Council's Cabinet in November for endorsement prior to a period of public consultation. A follow up QRP session is scheduled for 12th November 2021.	Masterplan	Not commenced	James Rogers
South Epping	Policy P 1: EPP.R1 and EPP.R2	Provision of approximately 450 homes (via Main Modification), a new neighbourhood centre to include community facilities, employment, health facilities and retail uses as well as a new primary school and early years childcare provision.	Not commenced	2023/24	N/A	The Local Plan Inspector's advice from August 2019 raised concerns regarding the potential impact of development on landscape character, Green Belt and the EFSAC. As a result of this advice and following further work on the potential capacity of the SEMPA, the Council proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan to reduce the indicative housing capacity from 950 down to 450. The Main Modifications consultation ended in September 2021 and responses to the consultation have been sent to the Local Plan Inspector for her consideration.	Masterplan	Not commenced	James Rogers
Waltham Abbey North	Policy P 3: WAL.R1, WAL. T1, WAL.R2 and WAL.R3	Provision of approximately 740 homes and 5 traveller pitches as well as a new local and community centre.	PPA signed November 2020	2022/23	Feb-21	The site promoters held a developer-led public consultation between July and September 2021 to seek feedback on their draft Masterplan. EFDC are discussing the next stage of topic based meetings with the site promoters, in accordance with the PPA, to discuss the public consultation feedback and other technical matters.	Masterplan	Not commenced	Richard Schunemann
Jessel Green	Policy P 2: LOU.R5	Provision of approximately 154 homes.	Not commenced	2028/29	N/A	Following the advice received from the Local Plan Inspector, the proposed allocation is to be deleted from the plan via Main Modification.	Not commenced	Not commenced	N/A

Masterplan Area / Concept Framework Area	Local Plan policy and site reference	Description of proposed allocation	PPA status	Delivery due to commence (Housing Implementation Strategy 2019)	QRP	Timescales / progress update	Proposal stage	Section 106	Case officer
Limes Farm	Policy P 7: CHIG.R6	Regeneration led development to provide an additional 100 homes on the site as well as new community and local service facilities.	Not commenced	2028/29	N/A	Following the advice received from the Local Plan Inspector, the proposed allocation is to be deleted from the plan via Main Modification.	Not commenced	Not commenced	N/A
West Ongar Concept Framework Area	Policy P 4: ONG.R1 and ONG.R2	Provision of approximately 234 homes	Initial discussions	2022/23	N/A	The site promoters are awaiting the outcome of the Local Plan examination before proceeding. Early discussions have indicated a willingness to enter into a PPA	Concept Framework	Not commenced	James Rogers
South Nazeing Concept Framework Area	Policy P 10: NAZE.R1, NAZE.R3 and NAZE.R4	Provision of approximately 93 homes.	Initial discussions	2021/22	N/A	Discussions regarding a PPA and a project plan are at an early stage, initial drafting has been completed (October 2021). A series of technical meetings will be agreed between EFDC and the site promoter in Autumn/Winter 2021/22 as well as engagement with the local community and QRP	Concept Framework	Not commenced	James Rogers
Epping Town Centre Sites	EPP.R6 (Cottis Lane) + EPP.R7 (Bakers Lane)	Comprehensive redevelopment of the sites.	ETCS Strategy PPA signed March 2020; ETCS Details PPA at an advanced stage of discussion		Multiple	The two planning applications were registered in December 2020. The applications were subject to a Member Briefing on 11th October 2021 and will be considered at DDMC on 27th October 2021. The officer recommendation is for approval of the proposed development subject to conditions and S106	Planning Applications x2	Not commenced	Nick Finney
Epping Town Centre Sites	EPP.R4 (St Johns) + EPP.R5 (Epping Sports Centre) + EPP.R8 (Civic Offices)	Comprehensive redevelopment of the sites.	Advanced stage of discussion - not yet signed	2028/29	Multiple	Three planning applications for residential development were submitted and registered at the beginning of April 2021. The applications were subject to a Member Briefing on 11th October 2021 and will be considered at DDMC on 27th October 2021. The officer recommendation is for approval of the proposed development subject to conditions and S106	Planning Applications x3	Not commenced	Nick Finney