

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

MONDAY, 16TH MARCH 2009 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. (Chairman), P. J. Whittaker (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker, G. N. Denaro, Mrs. R. L. Dent, R. Hollingworth, S. R. Peters, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, E. C. Tibby and C. J. K. Wilson

Officers: Mr. D. Hammond, Mr. M. Dunphy, Mrs. R. Williams, Mr. A. Fulford, Ms. S. Lai and Ms. R. Cole.

28/08 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. R. Colella, Mrs. J. D. Luck and E. J. Murray.

29/08 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

30/08 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Local Development Working Party held on 23rd October 2008 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

31/08 **LONGBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN - ADOPTION**

The Working Party considered a report relating to the Longbridge Area Action Plan (LAAP). The report detailed the procedures which had been followed in order to produce the LAAP which had been prepared in conjunction with Birmingham City Council, Worcestershire County Council and key stakeholders including St. Modwen Properties PLC and Advantage West Midlands. There had been public consultation at all stages and an Examination in Public had taken place at the end of 2008. The final report of the Inspector was binding and the minor changes contained in the report had now been incorporated into the final version of the LAAP. The Secretary of State had assessed the LAAP and found it to be sound.

It was recognised that the delivery of the various aspects of the LAAP would be a significant challenge for the Authorities involved. The Leader of the Council stated that although formal decisions had not been made, it was anticipated that a Joint Board would be established consisting of officers and Members from the Authorities involved in order to facilitate the project.

The significant achievement of all those involved in the production of the LAAP was acknowledged and thanks were expressed to officers and Members for their input to the process to date.

RECOMMENDED that the Longbridge Area Action Plan be adopted as the development plan for the former MG Rover Site.

32/08 **DRAFT CORE STRATEGY - CONSULTATION STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a report on the latest position in relation to the consultation undertaken on the Draft Core Strategy following the approval of the Draft Core Strategy for consultation purposes in October 2008.

It was reported that a variety of methods had been used to consult on the Strategy including letters and e-mails, use of a dedicated website, presentations to Parish Councils, displays in local libraries and the Customer Service Centre and “drop in” days. This had resulted in the receipt of approximately 120 individual responses and these were now being analysed and would be reported to the Working Party in due course. Although the level of response was not high this was not felt to be surprising as specific site allocations were not yet included.

It was also reported that the Government Office for the West Midlands had raised a number of concerns about the document particularly in relation to cross boundary issues with Redditch. Similar issues had been raised in relation to Redditch Borough Council’s Draft Core Strategy and a meeting with both Councils had taken place on 9th March 2009. It had been stressed at the meeting that officers and Members from the two Authorities had worked well together, particularly in view of the difficulties regarding the lack of certainty on housing growth. It was not intended to submit the final Strategy until the outcome of the Examination in Public of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy was available.

It was felt that a peer review of the Core Strategy would be helpful in particular if it was undertaken by the same person who had recently carried out a similar review at Redditch.

RESOLVED that the latest position on the consultation process in relation to the Draft Core Strategy be noted.

33/08 **BROMSGROVE HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

The Working Party considered a report on the key findings of the Bromsgrove Housing Market Assessment (HMA) and on the implications of these findings for the formulation of policies within the Draft Core Strategy. Members focused on the figures set out in section 4.6 of the report which identified the housing requirements of each type arising from household growth by 2026.

It was reported that the results of the HMA had been utilised to inform a number of Core Policies within the Draft Core Strategy including not only detailed housing policies but also transport and employment policies. The

HMA would also be used by Bromsgrove District Housing Trust to support this Authority's position in relation to housing growth.

RESOLVED that the key findings of the Bromsgrove Housing Market Assessment be noted, together with its role in informing policies within the Draft Core Strategy.

34/08 **DRAFT STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report on the progress made in the preparation of the Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The SHLAA was a key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing. The document itself however would not allocate sites for development and would merely include sites which may be suitable for housing development.

In response to questions from Members, it was reported that the criteria used to assess all submitted sites had been drafted in consultation with Redditch and included a range of factors such as sustainability, flood risk, physical constraints and planning policy. It was stressed that to be potential housing sites, the site must be suitable, available and developable during the plan period. The consultation had focused on major land owners and developers in the District as they had the ability to ensure potential sites could come forward for development.

RESOLVED that the progress made on the preparation of the Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment be noted.

35/08 **PPG17 OPEN SPACE SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY**

The Working Party considered a report on the findings of the Open Space, Recreation and Sports Needs Study .The study had been undertaken both to inform the Core Strategy and to assist Street Scene and Community Services in the development of long term strategies in relation to open space, sport and recreation within the district.

It was reported that the study had been undertaken in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance 17 and covered ten categories of open space, sport and recreation facilities throughout the district. Section 3.33 of the report set out the recommended quality and accessibility standards in respect of each category. The study would be used to help to ensure there is adequate provision of such open space and facilities.

RESOLVED that the findings of the Open Space, Recreation and Sports Needs Study, together with its influence on the Draft Core Strategy be noted.

36/08 **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY PHASE 2 REVISION UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report on the latest position regarding the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) phase 2 revision. The report clearly set out

the background to the current position and the key milestones in the process so far, together with the likely next steps.

It was reported that the RSS Examination in Public would take place between 28th April and 26th June 2009. This Authority had been allocated a “seat at the table” for the Worcestershire Sub Regional sessions and would have the ability to “hot seat” at other sessions. This was to be the subject of further discussion with the County Council.

The Strategic Planning Manager also referred to the recent receipt of a document from the West Midlands Regional Assembly which posed a set of questions and invited this Authority to submit further representations (of not more than 2,000 words) on a number of issues particularly relating to housing allocation figures. The additional submission was required by 31st March 2009.

Members were extremely concerned that this Authority should be able to participate in any sessions of the Examination in Public which whilst they were dealing with issues at a regional level, became more detailed and focused on sub regional issues i.e. housing and employment growth related to Bromsgrove and Redditch/Stratford districts and South Birmingham. This was in addition to the sessions which would focus directly on these issues at a sub regional level where full involvement of the County Council and District Councils involved would be essential.

It was felt that the letter dated 16th February 2009 from the Strategic Planning Manager to the Examination in Public Panel clearly set out the difficult position of this Authority and the complexity of the issues faced. It was noted that further meetings involving both officers and Members of the Authorities involved were to take place to address these issues further. The Head of Planning and Environment and the Strategic Planning Manager fully acknowledged the strong desire of Members to protect the interests of the District and to ensure the best outcomes for its future development were achieved, but re-iterated the limits of the influence which could be exerted over the process.

RESOLVED that the latest position in relation to the RSS phase 2 revision including the Examination in Public stage be noted, together with the on-going work being undertaken to achieve the most favourable outcome for the District of Bromsgrove.

The meeting closed at 3.55 p.m.

Chairman