

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

THURSDAY, 15TH OCTOBER 2009 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Colella, Mrs. R. L. Dent, R. Hollingworth,
Mrs. J. D. Luck, E. J. Murray, S. R. Peters, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP,
E. C. Tibby, P. J. Whittaker and C. J. K. Wilson

Officers: Mr. D. Hammond, Mr. M. Dunphy, Mrs. R. Williams, Ms. J.
Carstairs, Ms. C. Biolcati, Mr. A. Harvey, Ms. S. Lai and Ms. R. Cole

1/09 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M. B. E. be elected Chairman of the Working Party for the ensuing municipal year.

2/09 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor P. J. Whittaker be elected Vice Chairman of the Working Party for the ensuing municipal year. In the absence of Councillor Mrs. Dyer, Councillor Whittaker then took the Chair.

3/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. M. Bunker, G. N. Denaro and Mrs. J. Dyer M. B. E.

4/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

5/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Local Development Working Party held on 16th March 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

6/09 **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY - EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC PANEL REPORT**

The Working Party considered a report which set out the key findings from the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Phase 2 revision Examination in Public (EIP) Panel Report.

The Strategic Planning Manager briefly reminded Members of the background to this item and reported that the EIP hearing sessions had taken place during May and June 2009. Officers had actively participated in two sessions and had attended and submitted evidence for other key sessions.

Members' attention was drawn to the findings of the Panel on a number of issues which had an impact on the Bromsgrove District.

Additional Birmingham Growth

It was reported that at present additional Birmingham growth had been ruled out by the Panel. The only reference to cross boundary growth was in relation to the 700 units already agreed as part of the Longbridge Area Action Plan and therefore there was no additional growth in Bromsgrove required for Birmingham's needs.

Accommodating Redditch Growth

Clearly this had been a key issue for this Council which had been given detailed consideration by the Panel in view of the controversy surrounding the matter. The outcome was that the overall housing figure for Redditch had increased to 7000 units with the level to be provided within Bromsgrove decreasing to 3000. The Panel had concurred with the view of this Authority that the choice of the location of development around the boundary of Redditch should be determined by the two Authorities working closely together. It was also clear that the timetables for the two Core Strategies would need to be closely aligned.

It was also noted that the Panel had concluded that the area around Studley could take housing growth without having a significant impact on rural character and had recommended that further work be undertaken to improving the A435 south east of Redditch in order to open up the possible growth in this area.

Bromsgrove's Housing Allocation

It was reported that a strong case had been made to the Panel that the preferred option housing allocation for Bromsgrove of 2100 units was wholly inadequate and that the figure should be increased to enable the Council the opportunity to address the housing imbalance whilst not significantly eroding the green belt. The Panel had agreed with this view and recommended an increased housing target of 4000 units, with reference being made to the possibility of an additional 2000 to 3000 dwellings after 2021 subject to the review of the Core Strategy.

The Panel had also endorsed and recommended to other Authorities, the Council's proposed approach to housing supply in targeting provision at the types and sizes that would address locally generated need for small low cost houses.

The Strategic Planning Manager also referred to other significant recommendations from the Panel which were set out in section 3.21 of the report.

It was reported that the findings of the Panel would now be reviewed by the Government Office West Midlands and the Department for Communities and Local Government and it was anticipated any proposed changes to these findings would be published for consultation by the end of 2009. It was intended to report to the Working Party further when this information had been received.

Members expressed their appreciation of the work undertaken by Officers in the preparation and presentation of the Council's case to the EIP which had led to the outcomes reported.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be noted; and
- (b) that thanks be expressed to Officers for the work which had been undertaken in developing and presenting the evidence to the EIP.

7/09

DRAFT CORE STRATEGY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Consideration was given to a report on the outcome of the consultation process undertaken on the Draft Core Strategy. It was noted that 135 representations had been received from organisations, companies and individuals during the consultation period.

The report summarised the key points of objection to the various policies within the Draft Core Strategy. Policy CP 2 relating to Distribution of Housing had generated the most comments and obviously the outcome of the RSS EIP had not been known at the time of the consultation process. It was now intended to produce a revised version of the Core Strategy taking account of the implications of the RSS EIP Panel and including Strategic Site Allocations.

It was also reported that as part of the process of producing the Core Strategy, the Authority had participated in the Spatial Planning Peer Programme. Draft feedback had been received on how the process of producing the Core Strategy could be improved and developed and the main points were set out in section 4.4 of the report.

There was discussion on how the Members of the Working Party could participate more fully in the development of the revised Core Strategy policies at an earlier stage, possibly by way of establishing small informal workshops or topic groups on a number of key issues in accordance with a suggestion of the Spatial Planning Peer Programme. The revised Draft Core Strategy would then be submitted to a future meeting of the Working Party.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the contents of the report including the responses to the Core Strategy consultation be noted;
- (b) that following the suggestions arising from the Spatial Planning Peer Programme, informal Member workshops be held to discuss and develop individual Core Strategy policies prior to consideration by the Working Party.

8/09 **DRAFT AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

Consideration was given to a report on a Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

It was reported that in the light of the outcome of the RSS panel report and the identification through a number of surveys of a significant level of need for affordable housing in the Bromsgrove district, it was considered to be appropriate to progress the production of an Affordable Housing SPD which would address this need. Following the consultation procedure and the approval of a final version by Members, the SPD would be linked to the Draft Core Strategy.

The proposed thresholds for provision of affordable housing as set out in section 5.4 of the draft SPD were discussed and it was felt that the threshold should be 5 dwellings for all sites whether in Bromsgrove Town or other settlements.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Environment Services in consultation with the responsible Portfolio Holder to revise the draft SPD as appropriate and to publish the document for formal consultation; and
- (b) that following the consultation process and the inclusion of any revisions arising from the responses received, a version to be adopted be submitted for approval by Members by early 2010.

9/09 **JOINT BROMSGROVE AND REDDITCH PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD**

It was reported that in view of the need for the Core Strategies of this Council and Redditch Borough Council to be closely linked it was intended to establish further joint working arrangements. At present the details of the arrangements had not been finalised and these would be reported to a future meeting of the Working Party.

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

10/09 **TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

The Working Party considered a report on a Conservation Area Character Appraisal which had been undertaken as part of a review of the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area.

The report sought approval to commence public consultation based on the draft Character Appraisal, proposed boundary revisions and management proposals. It was intended to review all of the other Conservation Areas in the District over a period of time.

Members felt it would be appropriate for Local Ward Members to have the opportunity to have an input into any proposed changes to the Conservation Area prior to further consideration by the Working Party.

RESOLVED that further consideration of the proposed changes to the Town Centre Conservation Area be deferred and in the meantime, the Local Ward Members meet on site with the Conservation Officer to discuss the issue further.

11/09 **TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK**

Consideration was given to a report on progress made on preparation of the draft Bromsgrove Town Centre Health check. It was noted that the findings of the Health Check would be an important feature of the evidence base required to support the regeneration of the town centre.

RESOLVED that the progress made on the preparation of the draft Bromsgrove Town Centre Health Check be noted.

12/09 **LONGBRIDGE DEVELOPMENT**

(The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this item as a matter of urgency as a decision was required thereon before the next meeting of the Working Party)

The Leader referred to an issue which had been raised with him regarding the Longbridge Development. The Strategic Planning Manager responded and explained the potential implications of the issue. It was

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

The meeting closed at 4.40 p.m.

Chairman