

ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STEERING GROUP
Friday, 10th December, 2010

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Dodson, Jack, Pickering, R. S. Russell, St. John, Sharman and Whelbourn.

together with:-

Andy Duncan	Strategic Policy Team Leader
Neil Finney	Assistant Technician
Ken Macdonald	Solicitor
Bronwen Peace	Planning Manager
Nick Ward	Planner

10. INTRODUCTIONS/APOLOGIES

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Steering Group and officers:-

Councillor Hussain	Cabinet Member, Community Development, Equality & Young People's Issues
Councillor Lakin	Cabinet Member, Safeguarding & Developing Opportunities for Children
Councillor Walker	Senior Adviser, Regeneration & Environment
Councillor Wyatt	Cabinet Member, Resources & Commissioning
Councillor Whysall	Chair, Regeneration Scrutiny Panel
Adrian Gabriel	Waste Manager
Tracie Seals	Sustainable Communities Manager (Interim)

11. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19TH NOVEMBER, 2010

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th November, 2010.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record.

12. MATTERS ARISING

The following issue, from the previous minutes, was raised:-

Houses in Multiple Occupation:-

It was confirmed that officers were working on the requested briefing note

for all Members and the three local MP's. It would be issued at the earliest opportunity.

13. STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT (SHMA)

Nick Ward, Planner, presented a report relating to Rotherham's Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This is a key part of the evidence base which will support and inform preparation of the Local Development Framework, and inform planning decisions.

The report provided an update of the key outputs and had been produced in the light of the substantial changes to the housing market and wider economy since the original was produced.

Reference was made to:-

Assessment of current need:- total (net) annual affordable housing need estimate = 1,155. It was noted that this was much larger than could be met through developer contributions.

Assessment in the longer term:- based on the most recent ONS projections, it was recommended that a target of 35% of new homes should be affordable.

Reference was made to the Council's policy re: employment of consultants and to relatively small size of this piece of work.

Resolved:- That Steering Group notes the content of this report and the final draft of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update.

14. STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHLAA)

Nick Ward, Planner, presented a briefing note in respect of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment which would also form part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework.

The assessment indicated how likely it was that land would come forward within the plan period. The assessment looked at 2 areas:-

(i) overall 15 year supply:- this was important for the overall LDF process. It was reported that the Borough should have more than enough sites from which to choose,

and

(ii) 5 year supply:- which was more concerned with development control. It was pointed out that following consultation with partners from the house building industry this was likely to result in a smaller supply figure. This figure would be complicated by the RSS requirement and reference was made to the latest ONS household projections of 824 houses per year.

In order to provide clarification for the Panel, Ken Macdonald, Solicitor, summarised the background, recent events and decisions surrounding the RSS. It was noted that a further Court hearing was scheduled in January, 2011. Reference was also made to proposals within the Localism Bill.

It was pointed out that this was still work in progress.

Resolved:- That the contents of the briefing paper be noted.

15. SUBMISSION OF THE BDR JOINT WASTE PLAN

Neil Finney, Assistant Technician, presented a report in respect of the Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham (BDR) Joint Waste Plan that has been produced by the three local authorities in order to provide policies to determine planning applications for waste management facilities, as a Development Plan Document (DPD), and which will form part of the Local Development Framework.

It was pointed out that the Council, at the meeting held on 27th October, 2010 (Minute No. A60 refers), resolved that the formal publication of the BDR Joint Waste Plan be approved.

It was explained that the formal publication activated a statutory six week period during which only representations on the soundness of the DPD could be made. After this period, the regulations provide that the DPD should be submitted to the Secretary of State, together with any representations, to be considered by a government inspector who will hold an examination in public to decide if it is 'sound' (fit for purpose and meets statutory requirements). Local authorities are required to publish the document they intend to submit to the Secretary of State, under the premise that the Plan is considered sound at the time it is published. Planning officers from the three authorities consider that the Plan is sound and valid for submission.

Reference was made to the designation of 4 sites for strategic waste management facilities together with the reasons for them being chosen. It was also pointed out that the BDR Joint Waste Plan proposed to safeguard important existing facilities and would prevent the loss of waste management sites and loss of treatment capacity.

The following issues were raised and discussed:-

- timescale of the approvals process (29 weeks - noting this would be driven by Government)
- consultation with Ward Members
- possible community pay back

In order to facilitate the timely submission of the BDR Joint Waste Plan, members of the Steering Group were asked to consider recommending to

Cabinet the submission of this DPD.

Resolved:- That this Steering Group recommends that a report be submitted to Cabinet seeking approval for the submission of the BDR Joint Waste Plan.

16. LOCALISM BILL

Andy Duncan, Strategic Policy Team Leader, presented a briefing paper in respect of issues emerging from the Localism Bill.

Reference was made to:-

(i) **Neighbourhood groups to shape where they live:-** a general right for a neighbourhood, parish council or neighbourhood forum to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, subject to a "light touch inspection" by an independent inspector. If these Neighbourhood Plans were in line with the Council's plan and national planning guidance, and had approval through a local referendum, then councils would have to adopt them.

It was envisaged that councils would step in to mediate re: neighbourhood boundaries and to provide resources to help neighbourhood prepare these plans.

Members present referred to

- already emerging tensions
- the need to get communication right with existing parish councils, noting the existing Parish Charter
- the need to bring together and review all existing neighbourhood plans, noting some overlap
- areas of Rotherham not parished
- the need for an all Members seminar and/or discussion at the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel
- resourcing and costs
- confusion and delay arising from the way the Government was working i.e. announcing framework legislation followed up by regulations and guidance 1 – 2 years later

(ii) **Direct democracy:-** power to local community to approve certain types of development.

Concerns were expressed in regard to:-

- How this would work in practice
- Legal and professional aspects
- Probity
- Complexity
- How to ensure consistency

(iii) **Local benefits:-** incentives e.g. New Homes Bonus to encourage the right kind of development and financially reward councils and communities that deliver new homes and businesses in their area. Reforms to the Community Infrastructure Levy whereby a proportion of the levy is handed over to the local neighbourhoods where development takes place.

Concerns were expressed whether this approach would work and what evidence there was.

(iv) **Vanguards:-** Government's call for communities to come forward to act as vanguards to trial Neighbourhood Plans – noting that to date six had volunteered.

Reference was also made to the impact on housing targets and the confusion around the RSS. Members present were also reminded that there was a requirement to consult in 2011 and it was noted that the latest projections from the ONS (824 per year) might form the middle ground. However consultation would take place on 2 or 3 targets.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the briefing paper be noted.

(2) That a report on the RSS and housing targets be submitted to a future meeting of this Steering and Group and Cabinet early in 2011.

17. **DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING.**

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group be held on Friday, 21st January, 2011 at 10.00 a.m. in the Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH.