

**ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STEERING GROUP
16th December, 2011**

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Dodson, Doyle, Hussain, McNeely, Pickering, Whelbourn and Wyatt.

1. INTRODUCTIONS/APOLOGIES

Introductions were made and apologies for absence submitted from Councillors Hughes, Jack and Whysall.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 2ND NOVEMBER, 2011

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting.

Agreed:- That the minutes be approved as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING.

Councillor Hussain drew attention to communications issues regarding the LDF consultation and emphasised the need to keep all Ward Councillors informed. It was accepted that this consultation had the possibility of involving hundreds of sites and many members of the public, and that whilst there had been a very extensive consultation exercise, it was not possible to cover every site individually.

Resolved:- That the consultation procedures and responses be kept under constant review with a view to every one involved having their views heard.

4. LOCALISM ACT

Andy Duncan, Strategic Policy Team Leader introduced a report on the Localism Act and stated that the Localism Bill received Royal Assent on 15 Nov 2011. The report considered the implications of this changed context for the planning system and the preparation of Rotherham's Local Development Framework.

The Act aims to significantly decentralise power and decision making. The reforms cover the broad areas of:

- strengthening local democracy
- community empowerment
- reforming the planning system
- social housing reform

Part 6 of the Act addressed changes to the planning system. The measures were outlined below.

Plans and Strategies

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Neighbourhood planning

Enforcement

Nationally significant infrastructure

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It was noted that the Act could have significant impact on decisions to develop sites in Rotherham, possibly outside of the existing planning controls.

Resolved:- (1) That the report relating to the potential implications of the Localism Act for the planning system and the Local Development Framework be noted.

(2) That the Planning Board be asked to consider the Neighbourhood Planning consultation.

5. LDF ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to a report introduced by Neil Rainsforth, Principal Planner, which stated that the Council was required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report for the Local Development Framework. The draft 2011 Annual Monitoring Report was ready for submission to Government.

Annual Monitoring Reports were required to cover the financial year preceding December publication - this seventh AMR covers the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011. It sets out a monitoring framework which was evolving incrementally as the first round of planning documents and policies were prepared and additional ones were brought forward in the future. Accordingly, this seventh AMR builds on some of the initial broad principles to guide the monitoring of the developing LDF as well as a selection of performance indicators based on data that was most readily available.

Resolved:- That the submission of the 2011 Annual Monitoring Report to Government be agreed.

6. LDF CONSULTATION FEEDBACK REPORT

Consideration was given to a report introduced by Helen Sleigh, Principal Planner which stated that the Core Strategy (and the Sites and Policies Development Plan Document) Consultation Feedback Report summarised the key planning issues put forward in writing during the consultation period Monday 4th July 2011 to Friday 16th September 2011, it provided a summary of the key planning issues arising from the workshops held with communities of interest. An interim summary report was presented to Members of the Local Development Framework Steering Group on the 2nd November, 2011.

The Consultation Feedback Report summarised the number of representations received; the key planning issues put forward in writing during the consultation period Monday 4th July 2011 to Friday 16th September 2011; and a summary of the key or most pertinent planning issues arising from the workshops held with communities of interest. The "actions" arising from the consultation would guide the drafting of the publication version of the Core Strategy prior to its "submission" to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. These actions would also guide the drafting of policies for the Sites and Policies Development Plan Document and will assist in the allocation of sites.

Resolved:- (1) That the Feedback Report be noted.

(2) That the Feedback Report be submitted to Cabinet for approval prior to publication.

7. PROPOSED CORE STRATEGY CHANGES

Consideration was given to a report introduced by Ryan Shepherd, Senior Planner which set out the proposed changes to the Core Strategy to date arising from the consultation undertaken earlier this year. These changes will be used to prepare the Publication Core Strategy. Subject to approval by the Council, the Publication Core Strategy will be published for consultation in 2012.

In preparing the Publication Core Strategy regard will be had to:

Consultation comments and feedback
Recommendations of the Integrated Impact Assessment
The Localism Act and emerging changes to national planning policy
Whether any elements of the Regional Strategy should be retained (assuming that these documents will be abolished by the Government)
Legal advice
Feedback from consultants as a result of our involvement in the Planning Advisory Service's Direct Support programme
The outcome of cross boundary discussions with neighbouring authorities

Resolved:- That the proposed changes to the Core Strategy identified to date be noted and the report be updated for consideration at the next meeting.

8. AFFORDABLE HOUSING VIABILITY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report introduced by Nicholas Ward, Principal Planner, which stated that Rotherham's Affordable Housing Viability Study was a key part of the evidence base which would support and inform preparation of the Local Development Framework, and inform planning decisions. A draft update produced to ensure that the evidence supporting policies requiring affordable housing provision on new housing developments was kept up to date.

Rotherham's first Affordable Housing Viability Study was completed in 2007 by West of England University and provided a key element of the evidence base for the Council's Affordable Interim Planning Statement (IPS) adopted in 2008. Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3) required that policies securing affordable housing provision as part of housing developments were supported by two pieces of evidence; firstly a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) establishing levels of need and, secondly, an assessment of the financial viability of various levels of affordable housing.

Resolved:- That the report and the findings of the draft study be noted.

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9. RENEWABLE ENERGY AND LOW CARBON STUDY

Consideration was given to a report introduced by David Edwards, Area and Environmental Planning Team Leader which stated that Wardell Armstrong had been commissioned to prepare a report on Rotherham's Low Carbon and Renewable Energy resource. This had been required to enhance the evidence base to underpin proposals and policies within the Local Development Framework for the promotion of low carbon and renewable energy through the planning system.

There was a widely accepted need to plan for, adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. Proposals to do so within the Local Development Framework (LDF) were likely to be subject to scrutiny as part of Core Strategy examination. To be found sound at examination such proposals must be supported by a robust evidence base.

As part of preparation of the then Integrated Regional Strategy, Local Government for Yorkshire and Humber (LYGH) commissioned AECOM to prepare a report into the 'Low carbon and renewable energy capacity in Yorkshire and Humber'. Issued in April 2011 this was of some use to preparation of Rotherham's LDF but lacked the level of detail considered necessary to properly inform preparation of local policies and proposals.

Resolved:- (1) That Wardell Armstrong's Report on Rotherham's Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Resource as part of the evidence base for the ongoing preparation of the Local Development Framework be noted.

(2) That a copy of the report be provided to Dave Richmond.

10. INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY STUDY

David Edwards, Area and Environmental Planning Team Leader gave a presentation setting out the latest position with this Study.

Various options for the Community Infrastructure Levy were being reviewed.

Resolved:- That the position be noted.

11. BASSINGTHORPE FARM PLAN

David Edwards gave an update on informal discussions with representatives of Fitzwilliam (Wentworth) Estates on the options for the possible development of this area.

Resolved:- That the position be noted.

12. NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting be held on 20th January, 2012 at 10.00 a.m.