

Derry City and Strabane District Council

Open Minutes of Planning Committee (LDP) held in the Council Chamber, Guildhall on Monday 16 May 2016 2016 at 4.00 pm.

Present:- Councillor K McGuire (Chairperson); Aldermen Hamilton and McClintock, Councillors Hastings, Jackson, Boyle, D Kelly, Logue and Reilly.

Non Members of Committee: Alderman Hussey.

In Attendance: - Head of Planning (Ms M Fox), Senior Planning Officer for Local Development Plan (Mr J McNee), Planning Officer (Mr M McAteer) and Committee Clerk (Mrs D Melaugh)

PLDP4/16 Notice and Summons for Meeting

The Head of Planning read the Notice and Summons for Meeting.

PLDP5/16 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Aldermen Bresland and Kerrigan and Councillors Hassan and R McHugh.

PLDP6/16 Declarations of Members' Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

PLDP7/16 Deputations

There were no deputations.

PLDP8/21 Attendance of Non Committee Members

An Independent Member who was a non Member of the Planning Committee stated that it was his understanding that all non Members of the Planning Committee would be invited to attend meetings of this Committee which had the key purpose of considering the Local Area Plan and in this regard such Members should be officially recorded as being in attendance.

The Chairperson advised that non Members of the Planning Committee, whilst not Members had an opportunity to attend this meeting and welcomed the Independent Member to the meeting.

Open for Decision

Chairpersons Business

PLDP9/16 Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) – Revised Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs) (Ref P46/16)

The Senior Planning Officer referred Members to the March Meeting of the Committee and consideration of the above matter. Following which Officers had wrote to DRD confirming Council's concern about the low HGI figure being proposed. He stated that a further letter had now been received from DRD which indicated that the HGI figures provided an estimate of the new dwelling requirements for the Region from 2012 to 2025 and were mainly used to help designate housing land as part of the local development planning processes. He stated that the letter advised that the figures were an indicator rather than a cap on housing growth and had been calculated using the most up to date data sources and a previously agreed methodology. He advised that the DRD has now concluded the review process and were proceeding to publish the revised figures on the DRD website. The Senior Planning Officer further advised that whilst DRD indicated they were not planning to meet individual Councils to outline the implications of the revised figures for the development planning process it was proposed that planning teams at a local level would assist in the interpretation and application of the revised figures.

Various Members expressed concern regarding the impact of the proposed Housing Growth figures which were being used to designate housing land as part of the local development planning process. Members stated that the Revised HGIs gave an unfavourable and unfair allocation to the District. Reference was made to the current social housing crisis and the inability of the projections to meet demand. It was indicated that it was critical to acknowledge that such projections would be utilised beyond the function of housing provision by other Departments in terms of future economic and social growth.

The Senior Planning Officer advised that it was intended that the HGIs should be seen as guidance rather than a cap on housing development and were a statistically based projection. He stated that it would be

expected there would be opportunities for an increase beyond the given HGI however, such over provision would require evidence based planning rationale.

The Committee

Recommended that the incoming Minister for Regional Development be invited to a meeting of Council to discuss the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) Revised Housing Growth indicators

An Independent Member of Council who was a non Member of the Committee suggested that the Shadow Minister for Regional Development also be invited to the meeting with Council with regard to such matters.

PLDP10/16 Mod Gov – Accessibility

A Member of the SDLP grouping referred to the difficulties he was experiencing in accessing the Agenda and reports through the Mod Gov App.

The Member's comments were to be relayed to IT.

PLDP11/16 Overview of LDP Process and Structures for Delivery

The Senior Planning Officer advised that the purpose of the above report was to advise Members on the process of preparing the new Local Development Plan 2030 (LDP) for Derry City and Strabane District, as well as to set out the structures to be established to deliver the Plan. He indicated that the report also summarised the main component elements involved in preparing the Plan, together with an indication of the required work commitment and key milestones for Members' input.

The Senior Planning Officer stated that he wished to bring to the attention of Members paragraph 3.4 which referred to the setting up of a LDP Steering Group for the high level management of the LDP process. He indicated that it was envisaged that this would require one meeting every three months, with the first taking place in mid June. In this regard the Senior Planning Officer stated that it was requested that Members consider nominations from the Planning Committee to this

LDP Steering Group with possibly the Chair and one representative of each Party. The Senior Planning Officer stated it was important that nominations were made following the AGM on 6 June in order to facilitate a meeting in mid June.

A Member of the SF grouping proposed that the Chair of the Planning Committee be nominated as a Member of the LDP Steering Group.

A Member of the SDLP grouping stated that it was critical to acknowledge the challenging time commitment which membership of the Steering Group would require and in this regard he would propose that substitutes be also appointed. The Member stated that it was also important to acknowledge that membership of the Steering Group would extend over two terms which would present issues in relation to continuity of membership.

A Member of the SF grouping referred to the Rural Needs Bill which had been introduced in 2015 and sought clarification on the proposed stage of rural proofing activity within the process.

The Senior Planning Officer advised that similar to other assessments/appraisals as outlined in the above report Rural Proofing would be an ongoing process linked with the development of the LDP.

In response to a point of clarification from an Independent Member of Council who was a non Member of the Committee the Senior Planning Officer advised that the proposed Workshops were open to all Members of Council.

In response to comments from a Member of the SF grouping the Head of Planning advised that outcome reports arising out of workshop would be presented to the Planning Committee (LDP) every two/three months in order to allow decisions to be made on the various LDP topic directions.

The Committee

Recommended that (i) the contents of the above report in relation to the LDP preparation process, LDP content and delivery structures to administer the LPD be noted;

(ii) membership of the LDP Steering Group would comprise of the Chair of the Planning Committee plus agreed Members of that Committee plus substitutes, the Chief Executive /Director of Environment and Regeneration and the Head of Planning;

(iii) nominations to the LDP Steering Group be made at the June 2016 Planning Committee Meeting; and

(iv) the Chair of the Planning Committee also be nominated as a Member of the LDP Team.

PLDP12/16 Draft LDP Workplan

The Senior Planning Officer advised that that the purpose of the above report was to provide Members with a potential Workplan for officials to work with Members and the public/stakeholders to deliver the initial stages of the Local Development Plan 2030 (LDP) for Derry City and Strabane District.

The Committee noted the information contained in the above report.

PLDP13/16 Draft Timetable for LDP

The Senior Planning Officer advised that whilst the above report had initially being tabled as a matter of information on the Agenda Officers were now proposing that it be tabled for decision. He stated that this would permit the Draft Timetable for LDP to be ratified by Council at the end of May and subsequently give Officers authorisation to pursue formal agreement of the Timetable with the Department in early June. He stated that this would facilitate the formal launch of the LDP Timetable and Statement of Community Involvement, SC1 before the holiday period in July/August.

The Committee

Recommended that the Draft Timetable in relation to the production of the Local

Development Plan (LDP) be endorsed and submitted to the Department of the Environment (DOE) for their agreement prior to the Timetable being published along with the previously ratified Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in May/June of this year.

PLDP14/16 Sustainability Appraisal and other Technical Assessments of the LDP

The Senior Planning Officer advised that the purpose of the above report was to provide Members with an overview to the main Assessments and Appraisals required to be produced in association with preparation of the Local Development Plan (LDP). The report primarily focused on the important Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which incorporated the legislatively required Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). An outline of the other required assessments; Habitats Regulation Assessment Equality Impact Assessment and Rural proofing was also provided.

A Member of the SF grouping in reference to the targeting of social need highlighted the positive outcomes in terms of consultation with Chairs of Neighbourhood Renewal Boards.

The Senior Planning Officer advised that the Local Development Plan would be fully composite which would embrace all groups and sectors in addition to selected stakeholder consultation.

The Committee

Recommended that the above for information report which outlined the importance of the reference assessments/appraisals in ensuring a fit for purpose and sound LDP be noted.

PLDP15/16 DOE Update on Status of Current Strabane Area Plan 1986-2001

The Senior Planning Officer advised that the purpose of the above paper was to update Members to an amendment made by the DOE

(Planning Policy Division) to the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. The amendment was required to legislate for the inclusion of four DOE produced Development Plans, including the Strabane Area Plan 1986-2001 which were prepared under the Planning (NI) Order 1972.

A Member of the SF grouping sought clarification on the implications of the status of the current Strabane Area Plan with regards to the determination of a recent planning application.

The Head of Planning advised that the amendment made by DOE that came into force on 29 February 2016 now ensured that the Strabane Area Plan would be treated as the extant Development Plan for the former Strabane area until such times as the Council adopts its own LDP for the Derry City and Strabane District. She stated Member's reference to the impact of a recent decision which ruled against the legality of the existing Plan would be considered by Council's Solicitor subsequent to which further clarification on the matter would be presented to Members.

In response to comments from a Member of the SDLP grouping the Senior Planning Officer confirmed that previous planning policy statements had now been brought into line with current operating legislation.

The Committee

Recommended that the amendment made by DOE (Planning Policy Division) that came into force on 29 February 2016 and which now ensures that the Strabane Area Plan will be treated as the extant Development Plan for the former Strabane Area until such times as the Council adopts its own LDP for the Derry City and Strabane District be noted.

Additional Item

PLDP16/16 RPTI - 'The New Planning Landscape': A Year On - Playhouse – 19 May

The Head of Planning outlined details of the above event which would take place in the Playhouse on 19 May which would be open to all Members. She requested that any Member wishing to attend should contact Officers whereupon further relevant information with regard to the programme would be circulated.

The Committee

The Meeting terminated at 5.20 pm