

Derry City and Strabane District Council

Open Minutes of Planning Committee – Local Development Plan (LDP) held in the Council Chamber, Derry Road, Strabane on Monday 16 January 2017 at 4.00pm.

Present:-Councillor Boyle (Chairperson); Aldermen Bresland, M Hamilton, Kerrigan, Thompson; Councillors Gardiner, Hassan, Hastings, Jackson, D Kelly, and Logue.

In Attendance:-Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs K Philips), Principal Planning Officer (Mr P McCaughey) Senior Planning Officer (Mr J McNee), Project Officer (Mr E Molloy), Committee Services Assistant (Mrs J Short).

PLDP01/17 Notice and Summons for Meeting

The Principal Planning Officer read the Notice and Summons for the Meeting.

PLDP02/17 Member Attendance and Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor's McGuire and R McHugh.

PLDP03/17 Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

Open for Decision

PLDP04/17 Deputations

There were no deputations.

PLDP05/17 Chairperson's Business

Agenda Item 9: Housing in the Settlement Hierarchy – Options for Preferred Options Paper

Agenda Item 10: Economic Development and LDP – Options for Preferred Options Paper

The Principal Planning Officer (PPO) advised that the above appendices associated with the above reports had not been released into the public domain as they were works-in-progress and would be published as part of the Evidence Base along with the Preferred Options Paper (POP) in accordance with Regulation 10(2) of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (NI) 2015. Therefore, they will not be placed on the public website until after they have been updated and finalised.

The PPO also advised that the Planning Appeals Commission had recently released for consultation on Draft Procedures for Independent Examinations of the Local Development Plan (LDP), due for the end of February. He gave the web address of www.pacni.gov.uk if Members wish to read it. A Paper will be brought to the Planning Committee meeting on 1st February 2017.

PLDP06/17 Confirmation of the Open Minutes of the Planning Committee - LDP held on Monday 19 September 2016.

The Open Minutes of the Planning Committee – LDP (PLDP17/16 – PLDP29/16) held on Monday 19 September 2016 were agreed and signed by the Chairperson.

PLDP07/17 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

PLDP08/17 Overview of LDP Process and Stage towards Delivery

The PPO presented the above report, details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to remind Members about the process of preparing the new Local Development Plan 2030 (LDP) for Derry City and Strabane District and in particular to update Members on the progress achieved to date and the ongoing delivery of the Plan preparation.

A Member of the SF grouping commended the work achieved. He enquired if the PPO had any update in relation to the timeframe of the publication of LDP - POP, as he was aware that other Councils had reached that stage of the process already.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration advised that discussions had taken place with the Council's Chief Executive in conjunction with the Community Planning process and it was anticipated that a meeting of the Project Management Board would be convened shortly to agree a timeframe and a proposal would be brought before Committee at a future meeting.

The PPO advised a Member of the SF grouping that formal engagement with the public would commence following publication of the POP. He added however, that at this preliminary stage of the process, the public were invited to comment through the IMPROVE project on the Council's website and this process would be repeated over the coming period. Local Stakeholder groups would also be targeted to participate in the process, over the coming months.

A Member of the SF grouping suggested direct engagement with the tourism providers eg. Visit Derry and Tourism NI. She also commented that it would be beneficial to consult with young people to seek their views and aspirations for the City and surrounding District.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration assured Members that the LDP consultation process will continue to be as extensive and comprehensive as possible and that the Directorates within Council in particular Business and Culture will ensure that any proposals/ recommendations presented to Members will reflect interlinkages with the LDP process.

The SPO agreed to circulate the website details of the IMPROVE project, a European funded project of which the Council is a partner, which Planning Officials have developed to specifically enable the early and effective engagement by citizens into both the LDP and Development Management process. The SPO encouraged all Members to view and use the Improve website and also to promote it amongst their respective electorate through social media, etc to ensure they actively engage in the development of their LDP for the District.

A Member of the SDLP grouping commended the work of Officials to date. He highlighted the need to promote the North West and existing partnerships with Cross Border initiatives. He however referred to the difference in opinion from Members on various issues and queried how this would be reflected in the reporting process.

The PPO in response to a Member of the SDLP grouping advised that the consultation process provided Members with the opportunity to voice their opinions on the LDP POP process and the comments/concerns were reflected on the paper presented at the Meeting today. He added that there would be a series of opportunities to present options to the Planning Committee – (LDP) and hopefully a general consensus of the LDP process would be achieved in the coming months.

The Committee

Recommended that Council notes the report for information and agree that Officials proceed with the decision-making process and broad timescales as outlined within the Workplan.

PLDP09/17 Housing in the Settlement Hierarchy – Options for LDP Preferred Options Paper (POP)

The PPO referred to the above paper, details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the paper was to present a summary of the salient issues, discussed at the LDP Workshop and to seek Members agreement as to how best to progress this subject towards the POP stage of the LDP in early 2017.

A Member of the SDLP referred to the housing growth figure referred to within the report and commented that it was low. She sought clarification in relation to the figure quoted and if it reflected the overall housing need or just social housing need within the District.

The PPO in response to the previous query clarified that the figure was the DFI / RDS estimate of houses needed, based upon the population projections for the District up to 2030. He agreed that the figure did not seem to reflect the current social housing need throughout the District and the relevant statisticians that provided the figure had been

alerted to this issue. However, it was emphasized that the HGI was just an indicator of housing required and it needed to be considered against existing commitments, when putting together a sound case for the housing land provided.

Aldermen M Hamilton and Thompson left the meeting to attend to other Council business and would not be returning.

The PPO clarified for a Member of the SF grouping that it was necessary to repeat a review of the topics presented previously and discussed at the workshops that involved all Council Members. He further advised that it was now necessary for this Committee to reach a preliminary opinion/decision so that the POP was further developed.

A Member of the SF noted that other Councils had deviated from the Regional Development Strategy in terms of statistical information provided to the PAC and presented their own evidence in doing so. He also raised the issue of housing for Travellers, commenting that their representative wished to engage with the Council on their needs.

The PPO assured Members that there was ongoing negotiations with DFI and the PAC in terms of the assessment of the LDP and what level of proof or evidence would be required in order to produce a very good case for Derry City and Strabane District Council.

A Member of the Sinn Fein grouping commented on Housing in the Settlement Hierarchy – Options for LDP Preferred Options Paper (POP) and raised concern regarding the DfI housing growth indication figures which were considered low and stated that further evidence would be required before a decision to accept the HGI figures was made.

The PPO raised the various Scenarios put forward in the Paper for strategic allocation of housing across the settlement hierarchy, to which there was agreement that officers should pursue Scenario 4, the Balanced and Sustainable approach.

The Committee

Recommended **i) that Council accepts the contents of the paper as part of the Council's 'evidence base' and SA 'environmental baseline'.**

ii) that Council agrees for Planning Officials to proceed with the development of the options in line with the paper and in consultation with key consultees and stakeholders, including NIHE and the various Housing Associations. The updated Housing Monitor will also assist in ensuring that the options are firmed up as part of the subsequent LDP Preferred Options stage.

PLDP10/17 Economic Development and LDP – Options for POP

The SPO presented the above report, details of which had been previously circulated to Members. The purpose of the report was to present a summary of the salient issues discussed at the LDP workshop that dealt with the LDP Topic. The paper also sought agreement from Members as to how best to progress the topic towards the POP stage of the LDP in early 2017.

Discussion ensued after which Members raised the following concerns/opinions in relation to the above paper:

- There are more leisure facilities to be accommodated than those that are urban focused.
- Need to accommodate small businesses located in rural areas, especially in line with the Rural Development Programme
- Development of tourism in rural areas to be enabled
- Car parking provision is required with employment sites, especially near town centres, for the betterment of economic development
- Economic Development sites can also be close to city/town centres, as part of regeneration.
- Some industrial sites have been transformed into retailing, offices and leisure type provision – resulting in traffic management and conflict issues
- LDP is an opportunity for Council to be imaginative with employment land allocations and policies.

The Committee

Recommended that Council agree for Planning Officials to proceed to develop options as outlined within the report and in consultation with key consultees and stakeholders.

The Meeting went into confidential business.

The Meeting ended at 5.35pm.

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Date: _____

