

**WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
DOCUMENT/LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN STEERING GROUP**

Wednesday, 20 September 2006

PRESENT:	Councillor T Hadland	- NBC (Chair)
	Councillor W Amos	- DDC
	Councillor S Barnes	- SNC
	C Berry	- NBC
	R Boulton	- NCC
	S Bovey	- DDC
	D Brennan	- NCC
	Councillor J Caswell	- NBC
	C Cavanagh	- NBC
	S Flack	- NCC
	R Fox	- SNC
	M Hayes	- WNDC
	G Hughes	- GOEM
	Councillor C Millar	- DDC
	J Morgan	- SNC
	R Pulling	- DCW
	Councillor B Smith	- NCC
	R Strugnell	- SNC
	C Thomas	- NBC
	Councillor J Townsend	- SNC
	R Wood	- DDC

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from S Pointer and Councillor Harker.

**2. NOTES OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 JULY
2006**

The notes of the above meeting were agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

4. PROGRAMME DIRECTOR'S PROGRESS REPORT

C Thomas presented the report that had been circulated elaborating on the recommendations on the appointment of a Project Manager, changes in the Joint Planning Team arrangements and a review of the Governance arrangements.

It was noted that the Programme Board had discussed the attributes the Project Manager should have, which would ideally include excellent project management skills together with a sound knowledge of planning and the wider development process. The key priority was the ability to successfully deliver the programme.

The Steering Group then discussed whether the Project Manager should

primarily be a Planner or a Project Manager. It was intended that the job description would be agreed by officers from all three Local Authorities who would also evaluate the post. The Steering Group were advised who sat on the Programme Board and it was requested that Members of the Joint Steering Group be provided with the copies of the minutes of the Joint Programme Board Meetings.

The Steering Group then discussed the recruitment arrangements for the Project Manager and it was suggested that the title of the post be reconsidered to ensure that the planning element was adequately reflected. The Steering Group requested clarification of how the post would be funded and it was noted that the intention was that cost would be met by the three plan making Local Authorities but if Northamptonshire County Council and West Northamptonshire Development Corporation wished to contribute their contribution would be welcome. The Steering Group then requested more details in relation to the costs associated with funding the post. It was suggested that this information be collated by the Programme Board.

As detailed in the report it was recommended by the Project Board that the Joint Planning Team be located in a neutral location and it was noted that South Northants Council had offered accommodation space that was not within the Council offices. The Steering Group then discussed the specific line management arrangements associated with the post and although the Project Manager would be accountable to the Programme Board, and in turn the Steering Group, it was proposed that the day to day line management arrangements be provided by Northampton Borough Council's Corporate Director.

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| AGREED: | (1) That the Steering Group approve in principle the recruitment of an experienced Project Manager to lead the joint Planning Team and to drive forward activities to ensure timely achievement of key milestones, subject to more detailed information relating to the costs associated with funding the post. | Board |
| | (2) That an indication of the above costs be provided as soon as possible, and certainly in advance of the next meeting, so work could begin in securing resources within each Local Authority. | Board |
| | (3) That the Programme Board consider changing the title of the post from "Project Manager" to adequately reflect the planning element of the role. | Board |
| | (4) That the candidates be short-listed by officers from the three local authorities but that the appointment be made by a panel of three Councillors, one from each Council. | NBC/SNC
/DDC |
| | (5) That the Project Manager be accountable to the Project Board and in turn the Steering Group. | Board |
| | (6) That the Steering Group be provided with more information in relation to what elements of the post it was proposed would be line managed by Northampton Borough Council's Corporate Director. | Board |
| | (7) That the Joint Core Team establish its own identity | NBC/SNC |

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| and be located in a neutral location whilst being conveniently located for the constituent authorities and stakeholders. | /DDC |
| (8) That WNDC and Northamptonshire County Council be invited to second resources to the Joint Core Team together with commitment (defined input) | WNDC
NCC |
| (9) That any resource implications in relation to the Project Manager post and the Joint Core Team be shared proportionately between the participating organisations subject to the further detail requested at agreed item 3 above. | NBC/SNC/
DDC |
| (10) That, once the minutes of future Programme Board meetings are agreed, they be circulated to members of the Joint Steering Group for information. | J McCaul |

GOVERNANCE

The Steering Group discussed the recommendations within the report relating to Governance and C Thomas advised that the aim of the recommended changes was to make it clear that the Councillors on the Steering Group had the necessary delegated authority, in a transparent and clear way, to make some decisions on behalf of their Local Authorities. The aim was to strengthen existing arrangements and not change decision making processes within individual Councils. It was important also that the officers on the Programme Board had the support of the leadership and the managerial authority within their organisations to resolve the issues discussed at the Programme Board as they felt appropriate.

AGREED: That the governance arrangements for both the Steering Group and Programme Board be reviewed in order to build on and strengthen the existing arrangements. Also that the Programme Board prepare a report as to how this should be taken forward.

Board

COMMUNICATIONS AND RESOURCE PLANS

It was noted that the Programme Board had already agreed the need for a Communications Plan and a Resource Plan for the programme. Work had already begun on drafting a Communications Plan however the completion of this draft, as well as a producing a draft of the Resource Plan, would not be possible until the Project Plan had been agreed in detail identifying key milestones.

AGREED: That draft versions of both the Communications and Resource Plan be submitted to the next meeting of the Steering Group.

Board

5. PROGRAMME FOR THE PRODUCTION OF THE CORE STRATEGY

C Berry presented the report circulated and confirmed that last week Daventry District, Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire Councils' Cabinets had all agreed to prepare one Joint Core Strategy covering the priority of the three Councils' administrative areas (Option 1). Work was continuing in

preparing a detailed timetable for production of the Core Strategy ensuring that it was also robust and expeditious.

All of the tasks required to prepare the Core Strategy had been identified and the duration of each task had been estimated and dependencies identified having regard to the legal procedure requirements and experience of similar tasks.

The Joint Planning Team were now satisfied that the first two stages of the timetable were robust and work was already underway on the identified tasks. The timetable for stages 1 and 2 was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The remaining stages of the Core Strategy Timetable were in the process of being finalised and would be subject to independent external challenge and further discussion with GOEM and the Planning Inspectorate. In terms of external challenge a copy of the timetable had been sent to Andrew Langley, the Project Manager for North Northamptonshire, and also to a consultancy recommended by the Planning Advisory Service. They would be considering the timetable to see if there was any way of making it more efficient therefore reducing the timescale, while at the same time ensuring that the process remained robust.

C Berry explained some individual tasks within the timetable and how it was intended that these particular issues would be progressed. Some members of the Steering Group expressed concern about the timing of the Issues and Options consultation exercise and the Steering Group discussed whether this could be brought forward in the programme.

G Hughes suggested that consideration be given to moving forward the public consultation element of the timetable.

AGREED: That C Berry discuss with G Hughes moving the public consultation exercise earlier in the timetable. C Berry

6. EDAW - LAND VALUE CAPTURE STUDY

R Boulton updated the Steering Group in relation to the draft report by EDAW which would be changed to correct any inaccuracies, include some caveats in relation to the examples used, and to make it clear that the report could only go so far along the process. Once these changes were made to the report it would be considered as completed and would be used as a knowledge base from which to move forward. The areas now to be progressed were the role of the Local Delivery Vehicles in driving the delivery plans and the further work that was required on the Planning Policy Framework to enable the delivery of what was required.

From a planning perspective S Bovey advised that the Chief Executives of the Local Authorities had requested the Chief Planning Officers Group to prepare a technical report which would be submitted to them at a meeting in October 2006. Planners anticipated that the report could be used as an evidence base although there was further work to be done as to how the principles could be transferred to a Supplementary Planning Documents.

The Steering Group then discussed the need for a transparent mechanism between developers and Local Authorities and welcomed the move towards a single tariff. The Chair requested an executive summary to identify the key

issues with the report and D Brennan, on behalf of the County Council, offered to provide this if members of the Steering Group would find it useful. He stressed the importance of the “banker” role and explained several options that were currently being investigated.

AGREED: That the County Council be requested to provide an D Brennan executive summary of the EDAW report.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 17 OCTOBER 2006

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 17 October 2006.