

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

Tuesday, 17 October 2006

PRESENT:	Councillor Hadland	NBC (Chair)
	Councillor Amos	DDC
	Councillor Barnes	SNC
	C Berry	NBC
	R Boulton	NCC
	S Bovey	DDC
	Councillor Caswell	NBC
	C Cavanagh	NBC
	M Hayes	WNDC
	G Hughes	GOEM
	J Morgan	SNC
	S Pointer	NBC
	Councillor Smith	NCC
	R Strugnell	SNC
	C Thomas	NBC
	Councillor Townsend	SNC
	R Wood	DDC

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Millar, Councillor Harker, Richard Fox, Danny Brennan, Roy Pulling and S Flack.

2. NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2006

The above notes were agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING

(A) Project Manager

It was noted that this would be discussed under Item 4 on the agenda.

(B) Resourcing the Project Manager Post

C Thomas advised that the post was being evaluated through the Northampton Borough Council Job Evaluation Process and early indications were that the cost would be approximately £45,000 with on-costs. This was comparable with the equivalent post in North Northamptonshire. It was stressed that this was only an indication and it was anticipated that the full evaluation would be available during the next week.

(C) Change in the Name of the Post From Project Manager

It was noted that the post title had been changed to West Northamptonshire

Joint Planning Unit Manager.

(D) Line Management Arrangements for the Project Manager

C Thomas confirmed that it was proposed that the NBC Corporate Director would manage the post holder in terms of day-to-day arrangements including pay, appraisal, holidays and other such personnel procedures.

(E) Communication/Resources Plan

It was noted that a draft Communications Plan had been circulated and it would be discussed later in the agenda. This would require input from the Manager of the Joint Planning Unit once appointed. Work had begun in developing a Resources Plan.

(F) EDAW Report

R Boulton advised that work on the report was still ongoing and once it had been completed an executive summary would be produced. It was anticipated that this would be towards the end of November 2006. The whole study would also be available as a public document.

4. PROGRAMME DIRECTOR'S PROGRESS REPORT

C Thomas presented the report circulated, which updated the Steering Group in respect of the Joint Planning Team Manager, the Joint Planning Team office location, Resources Plan, Joint Planning Team secondments, Communications Plans and governance.

The Chair referred to the proposed Memorandum of Understanding appended to the report and suggested that members needed to discuss this with their respective Local Authorities and bring back any comments to a future meeting.

R Strugnell then referred to the Person Specification for the Joint Planning Unit Manager post and the essential criteria in respect thereof. He referred to the wording "substantial experience of project management" and the previous discussion in terms of ensuring that candidates were also planners. In view of this it was suggested and agreed that this wording be changed to "proven track record of project management".

Councillor S Barnes referred to the previous discussion relating to the "West Northamptonshire" badge and suggested that it would be more appropriate to reflect in the name the partnership between the three Local Authorities. There was also the problem that there may be confusion with the WNDC. The Steering Group discussed this suggestion and it was felt that this was a good opportunity to promote the message that the three Councils were working in partnership. Suggestions from the Steering Group members were invited.

Councillor Townsend requested that the short listing and interview dates for the Joint Planning Unit Manager post be set as soon as possible as members were involved in appointing to the post and therefore they needed to get the dates in their diaries.

Reference was made to the offer of office accommodation at Towcester Mill and C Thomas advised that a number of colleagues, including representatives from

each Local Authority, had visited the premises on 13 October. There were several issues to be resolved in terms of compliance with DDA and timing, in that the accommodation needed to be available for the life of the Team and SNC had their own plans in terms of the regeneration of that area. Also there were other practical issues that needed to be considered such as reception facilities. He advised that the requirement was for office space to accommodate a maximum of ten people with an area for displays which would be used at key points during the consultation process. In addition there would need to be appropriate IT and communication facilities available and the accommodation needed to be located at a site which was easily accessible for all officers.

- AGREED:**
- (1) **That officers and Councillors on the Steering Group discuss the proposed Memorandum of Understanding appended to the report within their respective Local Authorities and that feedback be provided at a future meeting.** NBC/DDC /SNC
 - (2) **That the progress on the recruitment of the Joint Planning Team Manager, the Joint Planning Team office location, the Communications Plan, Resource Plan, Joint Planning Team secondments be noted.**
 - (3) **That the wording in the Person Specification in relation to the essential criteria “substantial experience of project management” be changed to read “proven track record of project management”.** S Pointer
 - (4) **That members of the Steering Group be advised of the dates for the short-listing and interviews for the Joint Planning Team Manager post within a week.** C Thomas
 - (5) **That any ideas for re-badging “West Northamptonshire” be forwarded to C Thomas.** All

5. PROGRAMME FOR PRODUCTION OF THE CORE STRATEGY

A report was circulated in relation to the programme for the production of a C Core Strategy. C Berry presented the report, particularly referring to the timetable and the proposal to jointly produce the LDS. Reference was made to Appendix 1 and it was noted that Daventry and South Northants intended submitting the proposals and timetable in relation to the LDS to the November 2006 meetings of Cabinet and/or Strategy Group. NBC would be submitting these to the Cabinet meeting on 4 December 2006. S Bovey stressed the importance of identifying which task could be done in parallel within each Local Authority and ensuring that all three Councils progress at the same rate when possible.

M Hayes requested that the Steering Group consider whether it were appropriate, in the context of the growth agenda, to produce some Area Action Plans in advance of the Core Strategy where there were particular pressures to deliver growth. The Steering Group discussed this suggestion and whether it was an approach that could be of benefit to all three Councils. C Thomas suggested that this was an issue that required careful consideration by the Board as such a decision needed to be soundly based and be of benefit, as far as possible, to all three partners. It may also be that expert advice in respect of

this was necessary.

The Steering Group then discussed the importance of ensuring infrastructure was delivered to support housing growth.

- Agreed :**
- (1) That the timetable for the production of the Core Strategy as set out in paragraph 4 of the report be approved.**
 - (2) That the principle of one joint West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme for Daventry District, Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire Council be approved.**
 - (3) That the principle of jointly preparing those Local Developments Documents listed in paragraph 8 of the report be approved.**
 - (4) That the Board consider the suggestion that some Area Action Plans be developed ahead of the Core Strategy for certain areas where there are pressures to deliver growth.**

Board

The Chair thanked members of the Joint Planning Team for the work they had undertaken in producing the programme.

6. NORTHAMPTON LONGER TERM GROWTH OPTIONS STUDY - UPDATE

C Berry presented the report circulated referring to the six stages of the study and particularly Stage 5 relating to the Key Stakeholder Consultation Proposals. It was suggested that a workshop style event be held on about 20 November 2006 for a “technical” group of key service providers, utilities and statutory bodies. This would be followed by presentation to the Steering Group at its meeting on 14 December 2006. Thereafter it was proposed that a meeting be held with the Ward Councillors in Northampton Borough and those members of Daventry District Council, South Northants Councils, Borough Council of Wellingborough and Northamptonshire County Council who represent wards adjacent to the Borough.

The Steering Group then discussed the proposed consultation process and sought clarification as to who the “technical” key stakeholders would be. It was suggested that the term “stakeholders” be changed as this may give the impression to lots of parties that they should be involved in the consultation at this stage. It was noted that public consultation would take place at the issues and options stage. The Steering Group discussed the timing of some of the elements of consultation and it was suggested that the study be signed off by the Steering Group at its meeting on 14 December 2006. It was also suggested that, at that meeting, the Steering Group were provided with a briefing (one piece of A4) providing the key messages which could then be shared with a wider audience. In relation to the “technical” consultees it was requested that information be provided at the meeting on 20 November 2006 as to who these key stakeholders would be.

AGREED: (1) That the progress towards the Northampton Longer Term Growth Options Study be noted.

- (2) That the proposals for the Stage 5 – Key Stakeholder Consultation be agreed subject to the study being signed off at the meeting of the Steering Group on 14 December 2006.
- (3) That at the meeting on 14 December 2006 members of the Steering Group be provided with a briefing providing the key messages which they could then share with a wider audience ensuring that a consistent approach was being taken. Board
- (4) That, at the meeting on 14 November 2006, members of the Steering Group be provided with details of the “technical” stakeholders who would be attending the stakeholder event. C Berry

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 14 NOVEMBER 2006

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 14 November 2006.