

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

Tuesday, 14 November 2006

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Hadland	NBC (Chair)
	Councillor Atterbury	DDC
	Councillor Barnes	SNC
	C Berry	NBC
	S Bovey	DDC
	Councillor J Caswell	NBC
	C Cavanagh	NBC
	M Chant	NCC
	R Fox	SNC
	M Hayes	WNDC
	G Hughes	GOEM
	J Morgan	SNC
	S Pointer	NBC
	R Pulling	BCW
	R Strugnell	SNC
	C Thomas	NBC
	Councillor Townsend	SNC
	R Wood	DDC

## ACTION

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harker, Councillor Smith, Councillor Millar, Councillor Amos, D Brennan and R Boulton.

### 2. NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2006

The notes of the above meeting were agreed.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING

#### (A) Area Action Plans

It had been agreed at the previous meeting that consideration would be given to the suggestion that some Area Action Plans could, where there was pressure to deliver growth, be developed ahead of the Core Strategy. This had been discussed previously at Officer level and the advice had been that they could be prepared in parallel with the Core Strategy but that examination of the Core Strategy and the Area Action Plans would need to be co-ordinated.

It was suggested that formal views be sought from GOEM in relation to this proposal and G Hughes confirmed that GOEM could investigate this and would discuss the suggestion with the Planning Inspectorate.

**AGREED: That the Board seek the views of GOEM in relation to the suggestion that, for certain areas where there are pressures to deliver growth, some Area Action Plans be developed ahead of the Core Strategy without adversely affecting the robustness of the planning process.**

(B) Longer Term Growth Option Study

It was noted that, as agreed at the last meeting, on 14 December 2006 members of the Steering Group would be provided with a briefing detailing the key messages that they could then share with a wider audience. This would ensure that a consistent approach was being taken. C Berry circulated a list, as had been requested at the previous meeting, detailing the technical stakeholders who would be attending the Stakeholder Event on 20 November 2006.

#### **4. PROGRAMME DIRECTOR'S PROGRESS REPORT**

C Thomas presented the report circulated providing an update on progress.

In relation to the Joint Planning Team Manager, it was noted that the job description and person specification had been evaluated at grade POD (£39,132 - £41,562). However to attract suitable candidates it was suggested that a market supplement of 10% be added therefore the advertised range for the post would be £43,000 - £45,000. The NBC Corporate Manager (Human Resources) had been involved in the recruitment of the Project Manager in North Northamptonshire and he had confirmed that the market supplement would be needed to attract suitable candidates.

C Thomas had discussed the recruitment process and agreed a timetable with Tribal. Tribal would produce the advertisement by 22 November 2006, the advertising deadline in the local and national press would be 30 November 2006, the closing date for applications being 14 December. It was anticipated that the short-listing would be completed by 21 December 2006, the invitation for the assessment interviews would be distributed on 22 December 2006 with the interviews taking place on 8 January 2007. It was then anticipated that the formal offer would be made by 12 January 2007 with the successful candidate earliest starting date likely to be the end of February 2007 (or longer depending on the notice period).

It was noted that work had commenced on producing the Resource Plan and it was anticipated that the resourcing of the remainder of the work programme would be reviewed and finalised, following formal approval by GOEM, at the end of January 2007.

C Thomas then drew the Steering Group's attention to the suggestions that had been made in relation to the branding and re-badging of the Joint Planning Unit.

The Steering Group then discussed the arrangements for interviewing the candidates for the Joint Planning Team Manager post and it was suggested that it may be useful for the holder of the equivalent post in North Northamptonshire Area to assist with the interviews. Councillor Barnes also suggested that it would be appropriate for there to be a Chair of the Interview Panel who could steer the process, enabling the Councillors to contribute more

productively to the interview process. C Thomas confirmed that he could ask the NBC Corporate Manager (Human Resources) to undertake this role if the Steering Group so wished. If this was agreed he suggested that the professional officer should be from either South Northants or Daventry District Council.

In relation to the seeking of office accommodation for the Joint Planning Teams, C Berry advised that consideration had been given to the Vacant Property Register maintained by the Borough Council and searches were also underway in the Daventry District and South Northants areas through the Invest In Northamptonshire database. There were still some final checks to be undertaken before a list for consideration could be compiled.

**AGREED: (1) That the advertised pay range for the post of the Joint Planning Team Manager be noted.**

**(2) That the key dates for the recruitment of the Joint Planning Team Manager and that members of the Selection Panel to reserve the whole of 8 January 2007 for interviews.** All

**(3) That the Interview Panel include, as well as a Councillor from each of the Local Authorities, the NBC Corporate Manager (Human Resources) to chair the Panel, the Joint Planning Team Manager from the North Northamptonshire and a professional officer be from either South Northants or Daventry District Council.** CT  
RF/SB

**(4) That the members of the Steering Group consider the initial ideas detailed in the report in relation to branding.** All

## **5. GOVERNANCE**

The Chair referred to the report circulated and advised that Councillors wished to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding further with their colleagues with a view to reaching a consensus in the near future.

**AGREED: That Councillors discussed the Memorandum of Understanding with their colleagues with a view to reaching a consensus in the near future.** Councillors

## **6. NORTHAMPTON LONGER TERM GROWTH OPTIONS STUDY - PRESENTATION**

S Pointer advised that EDAW were unable to attend this meeting but would be attending the meeting on 14 December 2006.

He advised that the purpose of the presentation was to update the Steering Group on the progress to establish the growth options for Northampton and to present the emerging growth scenarios. There would also be information provided in relation to the next steps to complete the study.

The objectives of the study included reviewing the housing base-line position,

identifying factors that could influence the location and form of development and ultimately to determine the most sustainable direction of growth to 2026 and then 2031. EDAW were currently at the stage of developing and analysing the preferred direction of growth options.

S Pointer then advised the Steering Group in relation to the number of new homes that were being planned for, a good percentage of which could be located within the existing urban area. Essential to the process was to have an understanding, before the housing development was started, of what future services and infrastructure that would be required to support the growth. This included offices, schools, health service provision and open space. It was important that a sequential approach was taken in that brownfield sites should be considered before greenfield. The Steering Group were reminded of the principles for sustainable growth which included creating safe, welcoming and inclusive places, the efficient use of land and the achieving of social diversity.

It was noted that three themed growth scenarios had emerged, scenario one focused on neighbourhood centres, scenario two focused on urban renaissance and scenario three was employment and skills base led. Work had been undertaken in identifying the advantages and disadvantages associated with each scenario. It was stressed that the scenarios were merely designed to promote debate and discussion around the most appropriate direction of sustainable growth. S Pointer explained how the scenarios would evolve into options and this involved the creation of a menu for growth, which would include the best elements selected from each scenario. Ultimately realistic and deliverable options would be generated and tested against a range of land suitability criteria. It was anticipated that the potential options for growth would most likely be, following the application of environmental, social and economic drivers, a hybrid including the advantages and benefits of each scenario.

In terms of the timetable, it was noted that the scenarios would be discussed at a technical workshop on 20 November 2006 and a draft document in relation to the potential options for growth would be prepared in late November 2006. Feedback would be received from the Officer Programme Board on the draft options in late November/early December and the views of Councillors on the Steering Group in relation to the draft Study Report would be sought at the meeting on 14 December 2006. It was anticipated that the study would be finalised in late December 2006.

The views of the Steering Group were then sought and a discussion ensued in relation to the number of new dwellings. In relation to the housing figure the Steering Group commented that it was essential that all parties were clear in relation to these figures when the study was presented and J Morgan requested that the Steering Group be provided with information in relation to how the figures were compiled and their source.

The Steering Group expressed disappointment that EDAW had been unable to attend and make the presentation themselves and C Thomas advised that every effort had been made to persuade them to attend but they had confirmed they would definitely be attending the meeting on 14 December 2006.

R Pulling requested that the Borough Council of Wellingborough be invited to attend the technical workshop on 20 November 2006 and questioned whether the study would have any indication of phasing. C Berry confirmed that it was

anticipated that there would be an indication of phasing included in the final study document. The Steering Group then discussed the importance of effectively managing the employment opportunity aspect of the study and the view was expressed that presentation did not give the emphasis to the importance of the delivery of infrastructure that had been anticipated.

Councillor Townsend requested clarification as to the way forward after the presentation on 14 December 2006 and how details of the study would be advised to all Councillors from all three Local Authorities. The Steering Group stressed the importance of there being buy-in by all Councillors and the importance of managing this process effectively was acknowledged.

The Steering Group discussed the timing of this and agreed that at this stage the study was more of a technical appraisal rather than a detailed consideration of the options. C Thomas suggested that the briefing, that it had already been agreed would be provided at the next meeting, would assist this process. S Pointer suggested that once the report had been finalised a presentation be made in January to the Councillors from all four Local Authorities to ensure that a consistent message was conveyed in terms of the study and the implications thereof. It was suggested that professional assistance may be necessary in terms of packaging the presentation and the information provided for circulation.

**AGREED: (1) That the progress in relation to the Northampton Longer Term Growth Option Study be noted.**

**(2) That the Borough Council of Wellingborough be added to the list of invitees for the technical workshop being held on 20 November 2006.** CB

**(3) That a presentation be made during January 2007 to the Councillors from all four local authorities in relation to the findings of the study, the detail of which to be considered by the Programme Board.** Board

**(4) That if necessary professional assistance be sought in packaging the presentation in January and the information for wider circulation and consultation.** Board

**(5) That the Steering Group be provided with details as to how the housing figures were compiled and their source.** SP

## **7. JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME AND JOINT CORE STRATEGY UPDATE**

C Berry presented the report circulated at the meeting providing an update on the Joint LDS and the Joint Core Strategy. It was noted that the Joint LDS would be considered by each of the three councils before submission to GEOM in December 2006 and the Board had set a target of the scheme being approved by 31 January 2007. A copy of the LDS timetable was appended to the report.

In relation to the Joint Core Strategy, it was noted that, following agreement by the Steering Group at the last meeting to the timetable, work was now underway on the pre-production stage of the strategy. It was noted that the Joint Planning Team was currently preparing a discussion document to informally test options for the spatial vision and objectives with selected stakeholders who were listed in the report.

The Chair thanked the members of the Joint Planning Team for all their work in taking these issues forward.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### Dates of Future Meetings

S Bovey advised that the Leader of Daventry District Council was unable to attend meetings on Tuesdays and therefore requested that future meetings (those after 14 December 2006) were rescheduled. C Berry reminded the Steering Group that it had been originally intended that the Group would meet bi-monthly and therefore the frequency of meetings could be reconsidered.

**AGREED: That the frequency of future meetings be discussed at the next meeting of the Steering Group on 14 December 2006.**

**All**

## **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 14 DECEMBER 2006**

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