

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

Wednesday, 19 July 2006

PRESENT:	Councillor Hadland	NBC (Chair)
	C Berry	NBC
	R Boulton	NCC
	S Bovey	DDC
	Councillor Caswell	NBC
	C Cavanagh	NBC
	M Chant	NCC
	Councillor Clarke	SNC
	R Fox	SNC
	M Hayes	WNDC
	Councillor Millar	DDC
	S Pointer	NBC
	R Pulling	BCW
	Councillor Smith	NCC
	R Strugnell	SNC
	C Thomas	NBC
	Councillor Townsend	SNC
	R Wood	DDC

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harker, Councillor Barnes, Councillor Amos, G Hughes, M Alker, C Sarris, D Brennan and Sue Flack.

An apology for lateness was also received from J Morgan.

2 NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 JUNE 2006

The notes of the meeting held on 5 June 2006 were agreed as a true record.

3 MATTER ARISING

EDAW

It had been intended that there would be a presentation at the meeting in relation to EDAW's land value capture report, however it was now anticipated that the presentation would take place at the next meeting.

The Chair then advised that a discussion had taken place in relation to the date of the next meeting and it was suggested that the meeting on 15 August 2006 be cancelled and therefore that the next meeting be held on 20 September 2006.

AGREED: That the meeting of the Joint Steering Group on 15 August 2006 be cancelled and therefore that the next meeting be held on 20 September 2006.

4 PROGRAMME DIRECTOR'S PROGRESS REPORT

A report was circulated for the information of the Joint Steering Group and it was noted that a half day Risk Workshop had been arranged for 26 July 2006. This would begin the process of creating a Risk Register which would then be updated as necessary.

The report also referred to the options for the Core Strategy and stressed the need to consider whether both options 1 and 6 were legal and "wednesbury reasonable". This would be discussed in detail at item 5 on the agenda.

AGREED : That the report be noted.

5 PROGRAMME FOR THE PRODUCTION OF THE CORE STRATEGY

The Chair referred to the decision at the previous meeting that option 6 be pursued subject to Counsel opinion that it was legal and offered a robust process and confirmation from GOEM that they would not object if option 6 was agreed. If both of these conditions could not be satisfied it had been agreed that option 1 be pursued.

Since the last meeting advice had been received that both option 1 and option 6 were legally permissible but it had been unclear whether GOEM would object to option 6. Both C Sarris and M Alker had been invited to attend the meeting but were not able to do so. However a letter from GOEM had been received that morning and had been e-mailed to all the members of the Joint Steering Group.

The Joint Steering Group discussed the letter received from GOEM which reiterated their support of option 1 and stated that they would not support the production of separate Core Strategies. One of the reasons for this, as detailed in the letter, was that in their view separate Core Strategies were less likely to provide a clear and comprehensive framework for Planning and future growth of the area. Concern was expressed that a representative from GOEM was not present at the meeting as it was felt that guidance and advice was needed as to how they envisaged the joint working arrangements operating in practice if option 1 were pursued and what the implications were likely to be for South Northamptonshire and Daventry District Councils.

It was noted that both Daventry District and South Northamptonshire Councils had deferred the decision in relation to agreeing an option pending the outcome of this meeting and in the knowledge that Northampton Borough Council would not be making a decision until 11 September 2006. It was now anticipated that they would reach a decision at their September meetings.

The Chair referred to the importance of all three Local Authorities being clear how

the joint working arrangements would happen in practice and for a solution to be reached that, although not ideal, was considered by all parties as an acceptable compromise. He stressed that if a consensus could not be reached an arrangement may be imposed and it was important that the Councillors on the Steering Group made this clear to the other Councillors within their respective Local Authorities.

The Steering Group discussed further the role GOEM could play in clarifying how joint working arrangements would operate in practice and how such arrangements worked in other areas such as North Northamptonshire. It was also suggested that further information be sought in relation to the risks for Daventry District and South Northamptonshire Councils associated with pursuing option 1.

Reference was then made to the potential "policy vacuum" that may be created however M Hayes suggested that this risk would be the same whichever option was pursued. He referred to a letter dated 13 June 2006 from Rowena Limb at GOEM which advised that there was considerable protection for rural areas until the Core Strategy was produced which suggested that this might not be as significant an issue as was being anticipated.

- AGREED:**
- (1) That the Joint Planning Team consider in more detail :-**
 - **how the joint working arrangements would operate in practice if option 1 was pursued.**
 - **what the final Core Strategy document would look like based on Option 1.**
 - **The risks, particularly for Daventry District and South Northamptonshire Councils, if option 1 was agreed.**
 - (2) That a final decision in relation to the Core Strategy be made at the meeting of the Steering Group on 20 September 2006.**

6 NORTHAMPTON LONGER TERM GROWTH OPTIONS STUDY - UPDATE

C Berry advised that the interviews with the preferred Consultant had taken place and discussions in relation to some contractual issues were coming to a conclusion. Northampton Borough Council and South Northamptonshire Council had confirmed the appointment and confirmation was still awaited from Daventry District Council. Once this was received the consultant would be appointed.

R Boulton referred to the NIA figure consultation exercise discussed at the previous meeting and advised that 5 consultants had been short listed and interviews would be taking place the following week. It was expected that the project would be completed by the end of November 2006.

C Berry confirmed that it was anticipated that the Longer Term Growth Options Study would be completed by the end of December 2006 and it would then be up to all the individual Councils to consider how the results could be reflected in the Issues and Options document.

AGREED: That the position in relation to the Longer Term Growth Options Study be noted.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

RESOURCE STATEMENT

M Hayes referred to a discussion at the last meeting in relation to the resource statement and asked how this work was progressing. C Thomas confirmed that all efforts were currently focussing on resolving the issues relating to the Core Strategy. Also it was important that the Consultant that was appointed would have an understanding of the context in which they would be working.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 15 AUGUST 2006

As previously agreed it was noted that the date of the next meeting would be 20 September 2006.