

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber of South Holland District Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding on Friday 9 September 2011.

**PRESENT:**

South Holland District Councillors: B Alcock, R Gambba-Jones, H R Johnson, F Biggadike, C J T H Brewis and R M Rudkin

Boston Borough Councillors: P Bedford, C Brotherton, R Leggott, F Pickett, O Snell

Lincolnshire County Councillors: E Poll, M Brookes, G K Dark, P Skinner

Paul Jackson, Planning Manager for Breckland Council and South Holland District Council;

Steve Lumb, Head of Planning and Strategy, Boston Borough Council;

Gary Alexander, South East Lincolnshire Joint Policy Unit Manager;

Phil Norman, Planning Policy Officer, South Holland District Council;

Alan Flintham, Acting Forward Planning Manager, Boston Borough Council; and

Simon Eldred, Forward Planning Officer, Boston Borough Council.

Jim Scarsbrook

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors M Wright, C J T H Brewis, W Webb and R Rudkin

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Nominations were invited for the election of the Chairman of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (Committee) for the ensuing year.

**DECISION:** That Councillor H Johnson be elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

(Councillor Johnson in the Chair.)

**2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman of the Committee invited nominations for the election of the Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year (to be from a different authority to that of the Chairman).

**DECISION:** That Councillor P Bedford be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

**3. LOCAL PLAN STEERING GROUP, TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members were invited to approve the terms of reference of the Local Plan Steering Group, as appended to the agenda.

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3. **LOCAL PLAN STEERING GROUP, TERMS OF REFERENCE** (Continued)

DECISION: That the terms of reference of the Local Plan Steering Group be approved.

4. **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE, TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members were invited to approve the terms of reference of the Local Plan Steering Group, as appended to the agenda.

Members requested that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be appointed annually.

DECISION: That the terms of reference of the Local Plan Steering Group be approved; and

That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be appointed annually.

5. **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE, STANDING ORDERS**

Members were invited to approve the Standing Orders of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee, as appended to the agenda.

Members were advised of some contextual amendments to the standing orders which would be rectified.

DECISION: That the Standing Orders of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee be approved.

A copy of the Standing Orders of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee is enclosed with the minutes.

6. **CONSULTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The report of the Joint Policy Unit Manager outlined the contents of the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and invited members to make amendments and/or additional comments to the proposed responses to the consultation exercise as contained within the report. The draft NPPF was published for consultation on 25 July 2011 with the deadline for responses to be received by 17 October 2011.

The committee had consideration for some suggested amendments that the Planning Manager for Breckland and South Holland District Council had circulated.

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**6. CONSULTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT’S DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (Continued)**

**DECISION:**

That the proposed responses to the consultation exercise on the draft National Planning Policy Framework be submitted by 17 October 2011 as follows:

- Response 1: Given the fragmented, complex and lengthy nature of the existing national planning framework, the principle of consolidating policy statements, guidance and circulars into a single, shorter document is supported;
- Response 2: The desire to promote sustainable development is supported. This sets a clear framework within which to plan positively in the context of a flexibly-delivered plan-led system. The emphasis on approving development which accords with the statutory framework is similarly supported as a means to promoting sustainable growth. There is a clear need to define the term sustainable development as the manner in which the presumption in favour of sustainable development is expressed is a cause for some concern. The expectation that development should be approved if a Local Plan has no relevant provisions might encourage the production of Plans that seek to include policies to cover all eventualities. This may have time and resource implications and could run counter to the aim to produce succinct Local Plans;
- Response 3: This reverses many of the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 in respect of plan production. Given that Local Development Frameworks have not always been understood by the public and have proved slow to produce, these changes are welcome;

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**6. CONSULTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING  
POLICY FRAMEWORK (Continued)**

- Response 4: The Duty to Co-operate and the requirement to be 'positively prepared' are intended to alleviate concerns that, without a 'higher level' policy context, neighbouring Local Plans might be inadequately coordinated or that some local authorities might decide not to address e.g. local housing needs. Indeed, the establishment of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee is a good example of how this duty can be met. However, there are concerns that these provisions may not go far enough to credibly plug the gaps left by the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies. Other measures may be required to ensure that strategic issues such as infrastructure, economic development and residential development will be managed in a co-ordinated way and properly addressed through the planning system;
- Response 5: The statements that Neighbourhood Plans must conform to the Local Plan's strategies but that their policies may take precedence are potentially contradictory and would benefit from clarification;
- Response 6: Offices are part of the mix of uses that creates vital and viable town centres, and the proposed removal of offices from the list of 'town centre uses' runs the risk that out-of-town office development is promoted which adversely impacts upon the vitality and viability of market towns in rural districts. This is not to oppose small office developments in villages;
- Response 7: These changes are intended to ensure that there will be no shortfalls in the supply of land required to meet local housing needs and are welcome;
- Response 8: These provisions will allow more flexibility to respond to local circumstances and are welcome;

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**6. CONSULTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (Continued)**

- Response 9: The omission of a 'brownfield' preference is potentially retrograde, as it may reduce the likelihood that vacant sites can be brought back into beneficial use. However, this may bring positive benefits where 'greenfield' sites with a more realistic prospect of development come forward as an alternative to brownfield sites which may otherwise be hampered in terms of their deliverability by constraints such as flood risk.

**7. CONSULTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S LOCAL PLANNING REGULATIONS**

The report of the Joint Policy Unit Manager provided members with draft responses to the consultation on the Government's proposed new local Planning Regulations, which were contained within the Localism Bill currently going through Parliament. The new Regulations would apply to the preparation of Local Plans.

The revised Regulations would consolidate changes made in the 2004 Regulations into a single document and would ensure the Regulations were as effective and simple as possible. The consultation only asked for comments on how the Regulations had responded to the planning reform programme and had not sought views on the Localism Bill or the National Planning Policy Framework.

**DECISION:** That the conclusions and recommended response to the consultation document in Part 6 of the report be sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government as the views of the Joint Committee subject to an amendment to question 2 which should now include utilities in the list of bodies included in the duty to co-operate.

**8. INFORMATION REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

Consideration was given by members to the report of the Joint Policy Unit Manager which provided an overview of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the provisions governing its operation.

The report advised that the CIL was a new planning charge which allowed local authorities to raise funds from developers. The monies could then be used to pay for infrastructure that was needed as a result of development. Should an authority decide to adopt a CIL it must adhere to the provisions of the Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) had produced guidance to support authorities who wished to adopt a CIL.

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**8. INFORMATION REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**  
(Continued)

Members recognised that this was a new and complex area of work and agreed that any future progress should be reported back to the committee. Members agreed that proper consideration needed to be given to the CIL and therefore this should be included in the work programme with a view to deciding if it was something that was needed and if so what priority was to be put on a CIL.

DECISION: That consideration of the Community Infrastructure Levy be placed on the work programme.

(Councillor R Gambba-Jones and Simon Eldred left the meeting after consideration of the above item)

**9. DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS) FOR SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE**

The report of the Joint Policy Unit Manager sought members' approval for a Local Development Scheme (LDS) for South East Lincolnshire, the draft LDS of which was appended to the report. The LDS was required to be submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government by 30 September 2011. Subject to a satisfactory response from the Secretary of State, the LDS would be effective from 31 October 2011.

DECISION: That the draft Local Development Scheme be approved and submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government by 30 September 2011; and

That subject to a satisfactory response from the Secretary of State, the Local Development Scheme shall have effect from 31 October 2011.

**10. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The following meeting dates were confirmed for the remainder of the municipal year 2011/12:

- Friday 27 January 2012, 10am at Boston Borough Council
- Friday 27 April 2012, 10am Council Chamber, South Holland District Council
- Friday 8 June 2012, 10am, Annual General Meeting

(End of Minutes)