

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Friday, 11 September 2015 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

R Gambba-Jones (Chairman)  
P Bedford (Vice-Chairman)

B Alcock  
P E Coupland

D Brown  
A Austin

M Brookes

Head of Built Environment and Development (Boston Borough Council), Joint Policy Unit Manager (South Holland District Council), Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager (Boston Borough Council), Strategic Planning Manager (Breckland and South Holland District Councils), Two Forward Planning Officers (Boston Borough Council), Strategic Planning Manager (Lincolnshire County Council), Senior Planning Policy Officer (South Holland District Council), Planning Policy Officer (South Holland District Council), Sustainable Places Planning Specialist (Environment Agency), Principal Housing Strategy Officer (Boston Borough Council), Area Manager (Homes and Communities Agency) and Planning Solicitor (Legal Services Lincolnshire).

In Attendance: Councillors F Biggadike, C J T H Brewis, B Pierpoint, B Rush and M D Seymour and six members of the public.

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors C Brotherton and M G Chandler.

12. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor M Brookes declared a personal interest as a friend of his, whom had a landowning interest in Swineshead, was present at the meeting. He did not consider himself as having a prejudicial interest or a disclosable pecuniary interest and therefore would remain in the meeting for the debate and vote.

Councillor B Alcock declared a personal interest as he had promoted a site for development through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment process. He did not consider himself as having a prejudicial interest or a disclosable pecuniary interest and therefore would remain in the meeting for the debate and vote.

Councillor D Brown declared a personal interest as he had a landowning interest in Sutterton. He did not consider himself as having a prejudicial interest or a disclosable pecuniary interest and therefore would remain in the meeting for the debate and vote.

Cllr A Austin declared a personal interest as a member of the Wyberton Church Parochial Church Council. She did not consider herself as having a prejudicial interest or a disclosable pecuniary interest and therefore would remain in the meeting for the debate and vote.

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13. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 24 July 2015 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

14. **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL PLAN: DRAFT LOCAL PLAN  
(INCLUDING SITE OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT)**

Consideration was given to the report of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Policy Unit Manager which sought approval of Policies Map elements of the Draft Local Plan and supporting background papers for the purpose of public consultation.

The Chairman introduced the proceedings by stating that the consideration of the draft Policies Map Insets was the start of a process and that there would probably be a number of changes to the contents of them as matters were progressed.

The Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager then explained the purpose and contents of Appendices C and D and Revised Appendix A, as follows:

**Appendix C**

No concern about the approach was expressed.

**Appendix D**

Councillor Brookes expressed concern about the large amount of land in certain settlements that was the subject of consideration for housing development.

In response, the Joint Policy Unit Manager referred Councillor Brookes to para 1.5 of the covering report.

Councillor Brookes accepted the approach with a view to identifying possible options but noted that the emphasis needed to be placed on the word 'options'. This point was reiterated by the Chairman.

Councillor Austin expressed concerns about the need to provide additional infrastructure in support of new housing and questioned how new schools - as opposed to school extensions - were to be provided.

The Chairman referred to the role of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and how difficult it was to produce. He noted that both Boston Borough and South Holland District were in the 'same boat' regarding the need for additional infrastructure to support development in these areas and the desire for new major relief roads in both Boston and Spalding. The conundrum was how the limited money available for funding infrastructure was to be divided up between competing needs. He explained that the possibility of introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was being investigated but, currently, the prospects for it were not good.

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**Revised Appendix A**

The Joint Policy Unit Manager explained the basis for the preparation of Revised Appendix A (distributed to councillors in advance of the meeting), which included the new housing provision targets for South Holland District and its designated settlements following the recent completion of the 2015 update of the Peterborough Sub-Regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

Councillor Biggadike enquired as to how the revised figures for Holbeach could be reconciled with the current and emerging proposals for residential development in the town, and the Strategic Planning Manager for Lincolnshire County Council reiterated this concern with particular reference to the current County Council-owned allocation in the South Holland Local Plan. The Joint Policy Unit Manager said that further consideration would be given to this matter.

Councillor Alcock noted that current circumstances could change and enquired about the approach of 'over-allocating' of sites for residential development to ensure delivery. The Joint Policy Unit Manager explained this approach and recalled the previous support for it indicated by councillors.

The Chairman confirmed his support for such an approach.

Councillor Coupland expressed concern about a reduction of seven hundred and fifty dwellings in the housing provision assigned to the Main Service Centres in South Holland District.

The Joint Policy Unit Manager noted the impact of the updated SHMA on the Sub-Regional Centre of Spalding and the Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager explained the additional housing opportunities available via the 'Exceptions Policy'.

The Chairman noted the concerns about the impact of new residential development and that it didn't necessarily happen all at the same time. Furthermore, some developers were promoting sites without any interest in saving local services. He reiterated the importance of infrastructure provision in delivering sustainable development and considered the Exceptions Policy to have become tarnished by the Government's introduction of a possible market-housing element in such schemes to encourage their promotion.

Councillor Brewis expressed support for the Chairman's concern about occupants of new residential developments not using local services.

The Chairman considered that local builders could be supported by identifying a higher number of smaller sites for housing which would be unattractive to national companies. This view was endorsed by Councillor Coupland.

Councillor Alcock noted that some settlements were happy with additional development while others were not, and that the situation 'balanced out'.

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Councillor Brookes referred to the current Boston Borough Council policy on 'infill' residential development, and sought clarification as to whether the new policy approach would require additional 'planning contributions'.

Councillor Austin queried whether there was an inconsistency in the approach to boundary definition between the Boston Borough and South Holland District settlements.

The Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager responded that boundary definition was based on officer judgement 'on the ground', and was not a science. He noted that he had previously suggested that some settlement boundaries be deleted (ref. Appendix C on the Agenda) but that the Local Plan Steering Group had requested the identification of settlement boundaries for all the proposed 'Other Service Centres and Settlements'.

The Chairman noted the difficulty in determining settlement boundaries for certain settlements in view of their geography; e.g. Deeping St Nicholas.

Councillor Rush stated that he was encouraged by the conversation on this matter and that the proposals provided a firm basis for consultation.

The Joint Policy Unit Manager then explained how settlement boundaries could be revised.

## **Appendix B**

The two Forward Planning Officers led councillors through the contents of the Policies Map Insets (Insets) for the Sub-regional Centres, Main Service Centres, Minor Service Centres and Other Service Centres and Settlements.

### ***Sub-Regional Centres***

The Forward Planning Officer explained the process for identifying site options for residential development in Boston, which included three tiers of site.

Councillor Austin expressed support for the approach.

There was a general discussion relating to issues of phasing of development, infrastructure provision and the deliverability of sites.

### ***Main Service Centres***

Councillor Coupland enquired as to why site options had not been identified to the east and south-east of Holbeach. The Forward Planning Officer explained that two sites originally promoted through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) process but had been rejected as unsuitable.

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The Strategic Planning Manager (Breckland and South Holland District Councils) suggested that all rejected SHLAA sites, and the reasoning behind their rejection, should be presented as evidence during the forthcoming public consultation exercise.

Councillor Seymour questioned the location of 'Holbeach sites' in Fleet parish; and in response the Forward Planning Officer explained that parish boundaries were not a relevant consideration in determining settlement-based proposals.

Councillor Alcock queried whether, in light of the two large housing site options in Holbeach (one of which had been granted outline planning permission subject to a 'section 106 agreement' and the other currently allocated for development in the South Holland Local Plan) and the revised target housing provision for the town, there was any scope to give serious consideration to the other options identified on the Inset.

The Chairman referred to efforts to explore whether conditions could be attached to some residential planning permissions in order to secure the involvement of local builders.

With regard to the Crowland Inset, Councillor Alcock considered that the reasoning behind the proposed commercial allocation was fundamentally flawed and that there were other options. However, he was content for these issues to be explored through the public consultation exercise.

The Sustainable Places Planning Specialist noted that she would not want the public to be misled by the current flood-risk information relating to the Crowland, Pinchbeck and Surfleet areas in view of the Environment Agency's current work on updating the 'Welland Catchment Strategic Model'.

With regard to the Pinchbeck and Spalding Insets, the Chairman noted that a number of 'Spalding' site options for housing development could, if developed, impact on the village of Pinchbeck. He considered that it would be appropriate to hold discussions with Pinchbeck Parish Council on this and the general issue of retaining separation between the built-up areas of Pinchbeck and Spalding.

With regard to the Sutton Bridge Inset, Councillor Brewis questioned the suitability of site options for housing development situated on the north side of the A17 given flood-risk concerns but, nevertheless, expressed satisfaction with the general approach.

Councillor Rush stated that the need for a Boston Distributor Road should influence the choice of housing sites in the town.

The Chairman considered that the same situation applied to the proposed Spalding Western Relief Road and mentioned the ongoing deliberations about whether a CIL or the use of section 106 agreements was the most appropriate mechanism for funding the provision of road infrastructure.

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***Minor Service Centres***

With regard to the Tydd Gote and Tydd St Mary Insets, Councillor Brewis requested that their contents and status be reviewed.

With regard to the Deeping St Nicholas Inset, the Forward Planning Officer informed the meeting that, following recent comments from the Highway Authority, housing site option Dsn006 was no longer considered suitable for development.

With regard to the Wrangle Inset, the Forward Planning Officer informed the meeting that, following recent comments from the Highway Authority, housing site options Wra011 and Wra014 were no longer considered suitable for development.

With regard to the Fishtoft Inset, the Forward Planning Officer informed the meeting that, following recent comments from the Highway Authority, housing site option Fis016 was no longer considered suitable for development.

With regard to the Fleet Hargate Inset, the Forward Planning Officer informed the meeting that the housing site options amounted to a total dwelling provision which fell four short of the target for the village.

In response, Councillor Coupland suggested the 'old bull field' as a means of rectifying the deficiency in provision in Fleet Hargate.

Following further discussion on these matters, it was proposed by Councillor Brewis and seconded by the Chairman that the status of Tydd Gote be changed to that of Other Service Centres and Settlements and that Tydd Gote's housing provision target be transferred to Tydd St Mary; and after being put to the vote this proposal was unanimously approved.

The Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager informed the meeting that Tydd Gote's new status would still permit the possibility of new affordable housing in the village under the 'Rural Exception Sites' policy.

Councillor Brewis stated that he didn't want to encourage further 'ribbon development' as exists in places like Saracen's Head.

***Other Service Centres and Settlements***

Councillors indicated that they were content with the proposed settlement boundaries in this category.

**DECISION:**

- a) That the contents of Revised Appendix A and Appendices B, C and D be approved for public consultation with the reported amendments;

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- b) That following a) above, authority be delegated to officers to make any necessary changes to Revised Appendix A and Appendices B, C and D in respect of matters relating to presentation or factual correction or updating; and
- c) That following b) above, the final versions of Appendices C and D form part of the published supporting documentation accompanying subsequent stages of Local Plan preparation.

15. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There was none.

(The meeting ended at 12.30 pm)

(End of minutes)