



Minutes of the meeting of the LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ADVISORY GROUP held on 17 NOVEMBER 2009 at 6.00 pm

- Present:** Councillor Galloway (Chair)
Councillors Bristow, Ferrans, Hopkins, A Morris and White
- Officers:** N Fenwick (Assistant Director of Planning), I Haynes (Chief Spatial Planner), B Wilson (Development Plans Manager), M Moore (Senior Planning Officer) and J Zammit (Committee Manager)
- Apology:** Councillor Potts
- Also Present:** Councillors Bint, Crooks and Exon
- Public:** 5

LDF15 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

1. Councillor White declared a personal interest in Item 4 – Local Development Framework Core Strategy: Submission Document as the Secretary of the Federation of Small Businesses and as the Chair of the United Sustainable Energy Agency which administers the Council's Carbon Offset Fund.
2. Councillor Bint declared a personal interest in Item 4 – Local Development Framework Core Strategy: Submission Document as a member of Milton Keynes Forum

LDF16 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CORE STRATEGY: SUBMISSION DOCUMENT

The Group considered the Submission Document of the Core Strategy. Officers informed the Group that after a series of meetings of the Group, Members comments on the Core Strategy had been collated and incorporated where possible, the Core Strategy had then been submitted to the Planning Officers Society Enterprises (POSe) for an independent review of the document. The review produced:

- (a) An assessment of how the work undertaken to date stood against the tests of soundness;
- (b) Observations on the clarity and internal consistency of the document in planning policy terms and its readability;

- (c) Recommendations on actions considered necessary to deal with any areas of weakness or where clarification is desirable; and
- (d) Advice on finalising the Core Strategy so that it was likely that it would be declared sound at examination.

The Group was presented with POSe's response to and edits of the Core Strategy Document. It was reported that POSe had noted that the task required of MK's Core Strategy 'dwarfed' that of most other Core Strategies.

Officers informed the Group that the views of the Group would be reported to the 24 November meeting of the Cabinet and then the Core Strategy would be considered by Council on 8 December 2009.

The Group was informed that opportunities to change the document following approval by Council were limited. Once published, people could comment on the soundness of the document and the Council could put forward suggested changes in response to comments received for the examination Inspector to consider.

The Group noted that the Cabinet meeting would be able to make changes to the strategy and that there could also be a full discussion of the Strategy when considered by the Council, though it was recognised that changes not supported by evidence had the risk of making the Core Strategy unsound. The Group requested that officers provide an informative to Council to advise Members as to what extent changes could be made at Council.

The Group recognised that the Core Strategy document was now a much more acceptable document and that fewer edits were needed. Most decisions that were left would be in regards to the direction and remaining choices in the document. Members made the following comments with regards to the document:

- That references to business closures in the rural economy needed updating, especially with regards to Nampak.
- The role of Central Milton Keynes was not clear enough
- Transport should be identified as a Key Issue, rather than just referring to East West Rail.
- That the scale of planned growth (paras 2.2 – 2.5) should be included in the Key Issues.
- The Core Strategy should aim to improve people's quality of life.

- That sport needed to be referred to as a key driver for leisure in the city and that sports facilities would need to be placed near major transport routes.
- The definition of town centres needed to be clear to avoid challenge in the future.
- That the number of independent crafts people and societies within Milton Keynes needed to be recognised.
- Improving skill levels was not just about better higher education, the retention and strengthening of key business sectors including, for example, highly skilled engineering jobs relating to the motor racing industry needed to be addressed.
- That paragraph 10.3 was possibly too detailed in its reference to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. However Figures could be updated as new evidence came in, although the Core Strategy should indicate the scale of future housing needs.
- The document did not recognise that not all small businesses could be accommodated or would want to be located in CMK.
- New towns were often last in and first out of recession, which would have implications for the timing of infrastructure investment and housing delivery.
- In relation to the South West Strategic Development Area, the Strategy should include a statement setting out where there was disagreement with Aylesbury Vale's policy for the area.
- The Strategy should state that energy standards were above the norm.
- Competitions should be encouraged on how to deliver new energy solutions for the future to ensure innovative and imaginative ideas were at the forefront of Milton Keynes' future.
- There was a danger of large monopolistic housing developments, a way should be found of ensuring diversity of supply and a range of housing designs.
- There was a risk of losing the understanding of the design principles of Milton Keynes. For example the multi-purpose nature the linear parks for flood defence, recreation, nature and amenity.

- Key Issue (a) on the principles and standards for new development should be strengthened, and many people would not agree with (b) regarding the Strategic Development Areas
- That paragraph 10.7 with regards to the proposal for cars, had not incorporated points previously submitted by Cllr Bint.
- That the notion that there was an abundance of car parking spaces in CMK was false.
- That the 20% social housing figure was above the national average and there didn't seem to be a reason for it being so high.
- That 12 key spatial components had been articulated in the past, but were not represented within the document.
- Newport Pagnell as an example was described as being rural, when it was part of the conurbation. It was not correct to assume that where an area's deemed as being out of town it was rural, when in fact it was within the conurbation.
- The Strategy should ensure district centres are retained.
- The Strategy should address the need for the spectrum of job skill, in order to ensure that Milton Keynes did not come to rely on one type of industry.

Officers informed the Group that once the Core Strategy had been completed an executive summary could be produced which would bring to the fore key information that needed to be presented. The Group noted that an executive summary would be useful to inform the Council meeting when the Core Strategy was discussed.

Councillor Crooks informed the Group that he had talked to representatives of GOSE and that they had made it clear that they were expecting the Core Strategy to be completed by the end of the year. Councillor Crooks also suggested that consideration given to a Foreword to the Core Strategy to allow Members to get across their vision for the Core Strategy, this Foreword could be completed by a small number of Members on behalf of the Group meeting. The Group noted that this document could be a key discussion point for Council and would help identify any key policy differences between Political Groups.

The Group had concerns over how the organic growth of businesses would be addressed. The Group agreed that Councillor Ferrans and

Councillor White would look into the issue and submit some suggested additional wording for the Core Strategy.

The Group received comments from Representatives of Milton Keynes Forum, especially in regards to transport. MK Forum had highlighted that officers did not appear to have listed figures of how much demand for transport would grow in the future and had described it in such a way that indicated that only minor to moderate changes would be needed. It was noted that MK Forum had predicted that there would need to be a 4x to 10x increase in bus patronage to CMK, which was significantly more than officer comments had suggested. MK Forum's representatives suggested that evidence for such a level of changes had been present in prior published documents. The Group noted MK Forum's concerns and requested that officers liaise with MK Forum over the issue.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Core Strategy be agreed subject to further consideration of Member comments.
2. That Officers be requested to consult with MK Forum in respect of Transport issues
3. That a Foreword to the Core Strategy be produced by a group of Members comprising representatives from each political group

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 20.50pm.