

## **FOI Response to Willoughby Waterleys Residents Association**

Please find attached the Terms of Reference for the Members' Advisory Group (MAG).

Please find attached the notes of the following Members Advisory Group meetings held over the last twelve months.

- 15 July 2020
- 24 September 2020
- 16 December 2020

The notes of MAG from 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 meeting will be agreed in May 2021.

**Strategic Growth Plan  
Members' Advisory Group  
19 October 2015**

**Item 3.1a**

**LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC GROWTH PLAN  
MEMBERS' ADVISORY GROUP  
TERMS OF REFERENCE (Further Revised Version)**

**Description**

1. The Members' Advisory Group is a meeting of key Members (or their nominee) of all local authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire area. The Members are responsible for assisting in the proper execution of the statutory Duty to Cooperate and providing advisory input to a Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire. The Members represent the City Council of Leicester, the County Council of Leicestershire and the seven Borough and District Councils of Leicestershire (viz. Blaby District Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Harborough District Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, Melton Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council). The Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership is invited to attend as an observer.

**Purpose**

2. The purpose of the Members Advisory Group is to:
  - a) facilitate the sustainable growth of Leicester and Leicestershire by assisting in the discharge of the statutory Duty to Cooperate (section 110 of the Localism Act 2011) and advising on the preparation of the Strategic Growth Plan;
  - b) provide Member-level advice to the Strategic Planning Group (the officer-level group tasked with preparing a non-statutory Strategic Growth Plan for consideration by Members) on all matters relating to the preparation of the Plan including its nature, form, content and programme;
  - c) convey the views held by constituent authorities on matters relevant to a non-statutory Strategic Growth Plan and have regard to the aspirations of the wider stakeholder group in the preparation of the Plan including matters relating to the Combined Authority proposal and the refresh of the Strategic Economic Plan prepared by the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP); and

- d) ensure that the preparation of a non-statutory Strategic Growth Plan fully integrates with existing or emerging spatial provisions of all up-to-date, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) compliant local plans across the Leicester and Leicestershire area in every strategic and spatial interest of acknowledged importance.

## **Background**

### *The Duty to Co-operate*

3. The Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) place a duty upon all local planning authorities to engage “*constructively, actively and on an on-going basis*” with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies on strategic planning matters such as housing and employment land provision, and essential infrastructure provision. The National Planning Policy Framework states:

*“Public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly those which relate to the strategic priorities...The Government expects joint working on areas of common interest to be diligently undertaken for the mutual benefit of neighbouring authorities.*

*Local planning authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans.” (Paragraphs 178 and 179, NPPF 2012)*

### *A Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire*

4. The Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities have been discussing how to work together, across the geographic area of Leicester and Leicestershire on strategic planning matters. A Plan will fully integrate with existing and emerging local plans across this spatial area in the planning period up to 2031 and potentially beyond on timescales yet to be agreed. This will ensure that the strategic spatial strategies of these local plans ‘flow’ across District, Borough and City boundaries on a county-wide scale. There is a shared desire to accommodate sustainable housing and economic growth while protecting important environmental assets. A Strategic Growth Plan will also be aligned with the review of the Strategic Economic Plan to be prepared by the Leicester & Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership.

### *Governance*

- 5 The Members’ Advisory Group will advise on the preparation of a non-statutory Strategic Growth Plan covering the Leicester and Leicestershire area. The Members’ Advisory Group provides advice, guidance and direction for the preparation of a Strategic Growth Plan. Its role is advisory. Any proposals or recommendations of the Members’ Advisory Group are not binding on the constituent member authorities.

Any decisions regarding proposals for the development and/or implementation of any statutory or non-statutory Strategic Growth Plan remain the responsibility of each individual member authority.

### *The Combined Authority Proposal*

- 6 The Leicester and Leicestershire authorities have submitted an initial proposal to government to create a Combined Authority whose responsibilities would include strategic land use planning and transport. The authorities believe that a Combined Authority will give investors, central government and other agencies assurance and confidence in the deliverability of their plans. If the proposal is accepted by government and the individual authorities covered by this document, the Combined Authority would oversee the production of the Strategic Growth Plan which will set the direction, and secure commitment, for aligned statutory Local Plans.

### **Functions and responsibilities**

- 7 The functions and responsibilities of the Members' Advisory Group are to:
  - a) receive briefings on new national planning policies and, as necessary, agree future direction in handling these matters as effectively and efficiently as possible;
  - b) assist decision-making in the procurement of the necessary evidence base, identifying the extent to which evidence should be shared, and in what proportions, and assist in the preparation and commissioning of future collaborative studies;
  - c) consider reports, plans, consultation documents and other material created for the purposes of preparing a Strategic Growth Plan and complying with the Duty to Cooperate, and give views on this material;
  - d) in so doing, set the overall direction for a Strategic Growth Plan and thereby provide the sub-regional context for the preparation of statutory development plans;
  - e) delegate work to other groups and ask for reports on matters relevant to the preparation of a Strategic Growth Plan and the Duty to Cooperate;
  - f) advise on the appropriate methodology for handling sensitive issues;

- g) demonstrate the commitment of the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities to the Duty to Co-operate and how this is implemented constructively, actively and on an on-going basis as required in the statutory plan-making process;
- h) communicate matters relevant to the Duty to Co-operate and a Strategic Growth Plan within the respective local authority of each Member; and
- i) ensure that a Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire will complement all existing and emerging Local plans across this geographical area in the period up to their collective expiry dates of 2031 or 2036.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

- 8 The Members' Advisory Group will meet regularly throughout the year as necessary for the effective and efficient execution of its work.

#### **Chair and Secretariat**

- 9 The chair of the Members Advisory Group will be the representative from North West Leicestershire District Council who will serve for a period of 12 months from July 2015, after which time a new chair will be appointed on an annual basis by the Group. The meetings will be held at the offices of North West Leicestershire District Council. The secretariat for each meeting will be the Joint Strategic Planning Manager.

### **Revisions to the Terms of Reference**

- 10 The Terms of Reference for the Members' Advisory Group will be reviewed annually in July or at any other such time as might be deemed appropriate by the Group.

Version of 04.09.2015

**Strategic Growth Plan  
Members' Advisory Group**

**NOTES OF MEETING** held on 15 July 2020.

Virtual meeting held using Microsoft Teams

**Attendance:**

<b>Cllr Trevor Pendleton</b>	<b>Leicestershire County Council (Chair)</b>
<b>Cllr Terry Richardson</b>	<b>Blaby District Council (Vice Chair)</b>
Norman Proudfoot (NP)	Chair of Strategic Planning Group
Cat Hartley (CH)	Blaby District Council
<b>Cllr Richard Bailey</b>	<b>Charnwood Borough Council</b>
Eileen Mallon (EM)	Charnwood Borough Council
<b>Cllr Phil King</b>	<b>Harborough District Council</b>
<b>Cllr David Bill</b>	<b>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth Borough Council</b>
Matthew Bowers (MB)	Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
<b>Sir Peter Soulsby</b>	<b>Leicester City Council</b>
Grant Butterworth (GB)	Leicester City Council
Ann Carruthers (AC)	Leicestershire County Council (Highways)
Simon Lawrence (SL)	Leicestershire County Council (Growth Unit)
<b>Cllr Joe Orson</b>	<b>Melton Borough Council</b>
Chris Elston (CE)	North West Leicestershire District Council
<b>Cllr John Boyce</b>	<b>Oadby and Wigston Borough Council</b>
Stephen Hinds (SH)	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Rob Thornhill (RT)	Joint Strategic Planning Manager for L&L
Nicola Sworowski (NS)	Planning Advisory Service (PAS)
Stephen Barker (SB)	Planning Advisory Service (PAS)
Laura Graham (LG)	Intelligent Plans and Examinations (IPe)
Sharon Wiggins (SW)	Support to the Joint Strategic Planning Manager

ITEM		LEAD/ ACTION
1	<p><i>1.1 Welcome and apologies</i></p> <p>Cllr Pendleton welcomed all, including guests joining the meeting to give presentations.</p> <p>Apologies received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Lee Higgins, Melton Borough Council, Cllr Joe Orson attended as substitute;</li> <li>• Cllr Robert Ashman, North West Leicestershire District Council;</li> <li>• James Arnold, North West Leicestershire District Council;</li> <li>• John Richardson, Blaby District Council;</li> <li>• Tom Purnell, Leicestershire County Council</li> </ul>	
2	<p><b>Notes and Matters Arising</b></p> <p><i>2.1 Notes of last meeting</i></p> <p>The notes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020 were agreed.</p>	

	<p><i>2.2 Actions arising from last meeting</i></p> <p>All actions carried out.</p> <p><i>2.3 Matters Arising</i></p> <p>Cllr King asked when the meeting will be held with the MPs. Cllr Pendleton advised the COVID-19 pandemic had scuppered arranging the meeting with the three MPs as intended, and he sought advice from members as to whether they wished him to continue to pursue a date.</p> <p>Cllr King advised he considered it was sensible to have dialogue with the three MPs, and Cllr Richardson emphasised the importance of engaging with MPs.</p> <p>MAG transparency: NP advised the Monitoring Officer's are meeting on 23 July 2020, and he has asked if they can consider whether MAG could be a public meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Bill asked what the problem is with the MAG notes. NP advised consideration is being given to whether MAG could be a public meeting.</p> <p>Trans Midland Trade Corridor: NP advised districts have agreed to fund except H&amp;BBC. Cllr Pendleton asked if H&amp;BBC could reconsider. Cllr Bill advised they have serious reservations but will reconsider and come back to Cllr Pendleton.</p>	<p><b>TP/NP/RT</b></p> <p><b>NP</b></p> <p><b>Cllr Bill</b></p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Strategic Growth Plan</b></p> <p><i>Item 3.1 Planning Advisory Service (PAS) – Duty to Cooperate and Statements of Common Ground – Presentation from Nicola Sworowski and Stephen Barker from the PAS</i></p> <p><i>Circulate Nicola and Stephen's presentation to MAG</i></p> <p>Cllr Pendleton welcomed both and invited them to make their presentation on the Duty to Co-operate and Statements of Common Ground.</p> <p>A clear context was provided on the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the requirements of the Localism Act.</p> <p>Ultimately, it is the <b>strategic 'big cross boundary' issues</b> which we need to deal with.</p> <p>'Soundness test' for Duty to Co-operate strategic issue/s need to be <b>dealt with</b> not deferred, this is so <b>important</b>.</p> <p>It is clear in legislation and guidance and not always that easy to do. Critical it is all started as early as possible. It is recognised you can't force co-operation, need to keep going and keep trying.</p>	<p><b>RT</b></p>

Remember Local Plan must be 'positively prepared'.

Note Environment Agency etc subject to the Duty to Co-operate so crucial they are involved too.

Be clear about what you are going to work together on and what you are not going to be working together on. Use a functional area rather than an administrative area.

'How do you manage City growth with surrounding areas?' is a common strategic issue.

Production of shared evidence and shared plan making going forward is helpful. How can you make clear alignment as timetables do vary?

Requirement for Local Plans to be updated every five years is helping to 'group' the next round of Local Plans.

It requires open dialogue and the driving force will always be timetables of surrounding authorities.

How to demonstrate the Duty to Co-operate?

The main tool is through Statements of Common Ground (SoCG).

- Need to list the parties involved, this should include the County Council in two tier areas, and other partners if relevant to strategic issues eg Environment Agency.
- Need to list strategic issues/matters eg specific reference to distribution of housing being included, refer also to employment and infrastructure.
- Need to say when it will be updated and reviewed.

Note SoCG will get judged at point of submission **but** the 'live' document in draft which each local authority is working on should be in existence.

There are recent Duty to Cooperate examples to learn from:

- St Albans City and District Council: Told to withdraw their Local Plan, failed to show evidence that they had engaged with neighbouring authorities;
- Sevenoaks District Council: Had not quantified their unmet in enough time, to enable joint working with neighbouring authorities, before the plan was submitted;
- Wealden District Council: Hadn't shown their calculations, a technical failure, being open and transparent is key.



Oxford City, County and district partners: is a centralised City with boroughs around, produced ten statements of Common Ground. One for whole area and specific ones for specific strategic issues. Need an early and clear story as to how you have developed your strategy to deal with strategic issues, to show what those conversations have achieved. Outcomes of discussions need to be shown.

Unmet housing need and how it is handled will be looked at closely by Inspectors.

A local government reorganisation paper is muted. New national planning policy guidance is anticipated and new local housing needs figures are anticipated in next few months.

Key message is to think collectively and plan for where new housing and jobs are to go in a functional area.

Note if you do not have a Local Plan which is less than five years old by 2023 and it is not being delivered then there could be government intervention.

Questions were invited on the presentation and the key points raised were as follows:

- RT reinforced how much things have changed over the last 12 months and it is very important that we don't rely on past experience and assume it will be enough. We are going to need to do more joint working, MAG is critical to this.
- Question was posed by Cllr Boyce 'What is the quantum of evidence change which would make all of our Local Plans redundant?' Nicola and Stephen advised the ideal would be consider whether you make the decision across L&L to bring Local Plans into alignment, possibly through small reviews. It is likely that they will become more aligned anyway through the shorter timeframe to prepare.
- Cllr Bill asked to what degree the DtC applies across regional boundaries, citing as an example the airport proposal near Rugby, with Leicestershire County and districts not involved. Stephen advised the DtC applies across regional boundaries, particularly where a matter in a Local Plan has a cross boundary impact.
- Cllr King referred to dialogue with other regions which can be challenging. Harborough District has borders with parts of Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, Rutland etc. It was advised that a simple statement, for example, 'We will discuss housing, infrastructure etc', to initiate and take discussion forward could be an appropriate way forward, be sensible and proportionate. Take discussion as far as it goes, can have a single sided SoCG that says

discussions have been held and agreement has been reached. As HDC has a 2019 Local Plan, you can also look back and see who was spoken to last time and take it from there.

Cllr Pendleton thanked Nicola and Stephen for their clear input which will enable L&L partners to reflect with the benefit of their experience on DtC.

*Item 3.2 PAS Sense check of Leicester's housing capacity*

RT confirmed Laura Graham had joined the call.

RT explained the work had been carried out by a former Planning Inspector with over 20 years of experience dealing with complex Local Plan Examinations, including in areas with unmet need. Unmet need is relatively recent issue for L&L, but it is common in other areas across the country. The process of identifying land available for development is long established in planning policy and guidance, and it is important to bear in mind that the test of an authorities development capacity is a planning one.

The next steps for dealing with Leicester's unmet need, includes progressing work on a Sustainability Appraisal.

Cllr Richardson asked how crucial are the points made relating to the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)? We are already seeing the impact of COVID-19 on offices for example and there could be less student accommodation required in the future.

GB advised the City are planning to revise and update their SHELAA after their (Draft Local Plan Regulation 18) consultation (due to take place Autumn 2020). They will also look at retail going forward, and short, medium and long-term trends for employment. He referred to the Tall Building information the City Council has produced which may generate conversations during the consultation.

Cllr King suggested the City should consider dropping down to a five unit threshold for sites in SHELAA, as every small site helps. Noting communities in Harborough District have been unhappy with development over the last 20 years and with planned future growth over next 20 years.

Cllr Pendleton noted the 5,000 vacant dwellings figure for the City within the context of the 7,750 dwelling unmet need figure. GB responded that the vacant dwellings are already in the supply and it is the need figure which the City is having to respond to in its emerging Local Plan.

Cllr Bill noted high number of cases for COVID-19 in the City and the potential impact of a local lockdown, which could impact the

<p>reputation of the City. This could have an impact on housing demand and will need to be considered.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton referred to the top down nature of housing figures and need to take them into account.</p> <p>Cllr Orton referred to the action across the L&amp;L HMA which already shows co-operation.</p> <p>GB advised the COVID-19 pandemic may support open space provision but could work against higher density and noted pre-application discussions and planning applications numbers are increasing. Also noted the time and effort and compulsory purchase orders being used to bring vacant homes back into use in the City.</p> <p>Cllr Boyce noted it is quite right for the City to be under pressure to deliver new homes, but they are going to have an unmet need at some point, and this is why the SGP is so important.</p> <p>MAG agreed to progress the Sustainability Appraisal based on an unmet need of 7,750 dwellings and 23 Hectares of employment land.</p> <p><i>Item 3.3 Draft L&amp;L Strategic Transport Priorities (LLSTP). Presentation by Ann Carruthers</i></p> <p>RT to Circulate presentation to MAG</p> <p>AC referred to the LLSTP setting high level principles, with detailed work needing to be done in the future underneath.</p> <p>COVID-19 will have an impact on how we move in the future, and we may need to alter some of those weightings, but it is felt the principles are fit for purpose.</p> <p>Five themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Travel between cities:</b> emphasis on rail, maximising HS2 opportunities and role in supporting technology</li> <li>2. <b>Travel around Leicester:</b> Focus on active modes and mass transport</li> <li>3. <b>Travel around Leicestershire:</b> Shorter journeys and supporting active mode choices, importance of rural network resilience and maintenance (how will bus the industry fair as it comes out of COVID-19 pandemic? May see more demand responsive type service)</li> <li>4. <b>Travel around county towns and other urban areas:</b> Public transport and technology to give people an element of choice</li> <li>5. <b>Resilient transport:</b> Increased flooding, higher intensity of rain etc, not just road surfacing</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;">RT</p>
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	<p>Consultation was extended by five weeks to 29 June 2020.</p> <p>At the County Council the LLSTP will likely be considered by the Cabinet in Autumn 2020, and the City Council will be considering through the City Mayor.</p> <p>Discussion followed, key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr King advised that Harborough DC had commissioned specialist consultants to undertake the preparation of a response which has been submitted as part of the consultation. He referred to the specialist advice having been circulated to officers and Members, and suggested a 'pause' before giving endorsement. It contains constructive comment and suggests how things can be improved and said he would arrange for it to be circulated to MAG for information.</li> <li>• Cllr Joe Orton requested a MAG item on the Melton HIF bid and Cllr Pendleton agreed to bring back an Item to a future a MAG.</li> <li>• Cllr Richardson was supportive of increased walking and cycling, and suggested the need to be bold to help regenerate areas, for example, allowing cars to use bus lanes to access shops whilst buses aren't able to operate/operate less frequently. M1 J21 doesn't feature and needs to due to high level of congestion, also question was asked about proposed M1 J20A, and whether the HIF bid is going to be resubmitted?</li> <li>• AC referred to embracing the principle of flexibility and the continued importance of this moving forward. For example, in the short term have widened footpaths, in the longer term, if it is appropriate and viable, we will submit a bid for the next iteration of HIF (SHIF). Reference was also made to £4.97m secured for three stretches or road through Challenge Fund.</li> </ul> <p><i>Item 3.4 Potential MAG agenda items</i></p> <p>Cllr Pendleton noted the items are a good starting point for potential future items (which could be subject to change), and asked for potential future items to be mentioned so they can be listed and a slot identified at a future MAG meeting.</p>	<p><b>NP</b></p> <p><b>NP/RT</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p>	

	<p>Cllr Bill referred to questions posed at County Council Scrutiny Commission on 22 June 2020 about reviewing the SGP, and Tom Purnell’s reply that it would be a matter for the SGP L&amp;L partnership to decide when a review of the SGP is to be considered and undertaken, and that all new relevant evidence in the City and the County would be considered.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton advised there is no question that the L&amp;L partnership will always take into account new evidence.</p> <p>Cllr King referred to two broad areas of concern regarding the impact of COVID-19; firstly, the type and location of housing and secondly, the world of work. He also referred to the recent announcement regarding RIS2 which refers to a preferred route to the north and west of Leicester and asked where this left the SGP? Does this mean Government doesn’t have the route to the south and east of Leicester on its radar?</p> <p>AC referred to RIS2 being Highway England’s strategy to manage the strategic road network for 2020 to 2025. A narrow focus over a short timeframe.</p> <p>Cllr Boyce referred to timing being everything, the quicker you review, the quicker you need to review again, and suggested with Local Plans the best approach is to review the SGP in 2023.</p> <p>Cllr Richardson emphasised that the SGP gives all partners the building blocks to back up the DtC and Statement of Common Ground as articulated in the PAS presentations.</p> <p>Cllr King stressed the need to understand Government thinking.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton concluded by stating we are collectively looking to the future, we have future housing, and employment to deliver for communities.</p>	
6	<p><b>Future Meetings</b></p> <p><b>Note 21 May 2020 meeting was postponed until 15 July 2020 due to COVID disruption and was held virtually via Microsoft Teams.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>24 September 2020 (Virtual Meeting) 2pm start</b></li> <li>• <b>16 December 2020 potentially at HBBC (Hinckley Hub) 2pm start</b></li> </ul>	All

**Strategic Growth Plan  
Members' Advisory Group**

**NOTES OF MEETING** held on 24 September 2020.

Virtual meeting held using Microsoft Teams

**Attendance:**

<b>Cllr Trevor Pendleton</b>	<b>Leicestershire County Council (Chair)</b>
<b>Cllr Terry Richardson</b>	<b>Blaby District Council (Vice Chair)</b>
Norman Proudfoot (NP)	Chair of Strategic Planning Group
John Richardson (JR)	Blaby District Council
<b>Cllr Richard Bailey</b>	<b>Charnwood Borough Council</b>
<b>Cllr Jonathan Morgan</b>	<b>Charnwood Borough Council</b>
Eileen Mallon (EM)	Charnwood Borough Council
<b>Cllr Phil King</b>	<b>Harborough District Council</b>
David Atkinson (DA)	Harborough District Council
<b>Cllr David Bill</b>	<b>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth Borough Council</b>
Matthew Bowers (MB)	Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
<b>Sir Peter Soulsby</b>	<b>Leicester City Council</b>
Grant Butterworth (GB)	Leicester City Council
Tom Purnell (TP)	Leicestershire County Council
Ann Carruthers (AC)	Leicestershire County Council (Highways)
Simon Lawrence (SL)	Leicestershire County Council (Growth Unit)
<b>Cllr Leigh Higgins</b>	<b>Melton Borough Council</b>
Pranali Panikr (PP)	Melton Borough Council
James Arnold (JA)	North West Leicestershire District Council
<b>Cllr John Boyce</b>	<b>Oadby and Wigston Borough Council</b>
Adrian Thorpe (AT)	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Mandip Rai (MR)	Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership
Rob Thornhill (RT)	Joint Strategic Planning Manager for L&L
Simon Statham (SS)	Midlands Connect
Sharon Wiggins (SW)	Support to the Joint Strategic Planning Manager

ITEM		LEAD/ ACTION
1	<p><i>1.2 Welcome and apologies</i></p> <p>Cllr Pendleton welcomed all, including Simon Statham from Midlands Connect.</p> <p>Apologies received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Robert Ashman, North West Leicestershire District Council, James Arnold on the call;</li> </ul> <p>Tom Purnell, Leicestershire County Council, joined the meeting between 2.30pm and 3.30pm.</p>	
2	<p><b>Notes and Matters Arising</b></p> <p><i>2.1 Notes of last meeting</i></p> <p>Notes of the meeting held on 15 July 2020 were agreed.</p>	

	<p><i>2.2 Actions arising from last meeting</i></p> <p>MB advised if the action for Cllr Bill could be deferred until he arrived in the meeting. It was subsequently dealt with under item 3.2. All other actions were carried out.</p> <p><i>2.3 Matters Arising</i></p> <p>RT thanked Leigh Higgins and Officers at Melton for being willing to move the item on the Melton HIF bid to the next MAG meeting.</p>	
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Strategic Growth Plan</b></p> <p><i>Item 3.1 Feedback on MP engagement</i></p> <p>Cllr Pendleton explained Neil O'Brien MP had replied to his invitation and a meeting has been arranged for 3.30pm on Friday 9 October 2020. In addition to Cllr Pendleton (Chair of MAG), Norman Proudfoot (Chair of SPG) and Rob Thornhill (JSPM) will be present. Neil O'Brien asked for Cllr King to be present at the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton suggested it would be appropriate to extend the invitation to vice chair of MAG, Cllr Terry Richardson, but was keen to keep the numbers tight, and explained he would feedback on any MP meetings at the next MAG.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton also explained he was still keen to meet with the other MPs and would continue to seek to meet them.</p> <p>Action: RT to arrange meeting with Alberto Costa MP and Ed Argar MP.</p> <p><i>Item 3.2 Midlands Connect – presentation by Simon Statham</i></p> <p>Trevor Pendleton welcomed Simon (SS) to the meeting and invited him to outline the findings of the Midlands Connect A46 Stage 2 study.</p> <p>SS set the context which included the role of the A46 corridor as a new growth corridor for the whole of the UK.</p> <p>He noted 250 businesses were surveyed, 71% of which considered congestion adversely affected their productivity. The study looked at pinch points, collated data on origin and destination etc and arrived at an illustrative strategy to demonstrate the economic benefits this could generate. It included the southern/eastern bypass to Leicester at the time.</p> <p>The corridor has a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 3:1, proving the point that the corridor has a lot of value to add to the national economy.</p>	<p><b>TP</b></p> <p><b>RT</b></p>

SS noted the Newark bypass has now secured funding, at £400 million it is a substantial scheme.

The initial phase of the work looked short term to 2031, so reflecting growth in current Local Plans (used LLITM). Then undertook secondary testing taking into account the longer term and the SGP. In summary:

- At 2031 M69 J2 and Whetstone Pastures Garden Village proposal included in assumptions, the 'southern spur';
- At 2041 start to include Land East of Leicester, the creation of a 'northern spur';
- At 2051 join up the southern and northern spurs.

Key issues to resolve:

- M1 J21 congestion a major issue to resolve, tied in with moving LFE service station to new M1 J20a so can reconfigure M1 J21.
- Hobby Horse roundabout, hopeful would get into RIS2, unsuccessful so will need to try again.

Outcomes of study show:

- If upgrades to the existing A46 route happen by 2031 the benefits are eroded away by 2051, however, when the southern and eastern bypass proposal was added into the testing limited strategic traffic (long distance traffic) flips onto the south and southern bypass route.
- Proposed bypass route to south and east of Leicester would have benefit in and around Leicester but is not the magic bullet for resolving strategic network delay in Leicestershire.

Noted that the findings only hold true if growth comes forward as set out in the SGP.

SS was hopeful improvements to Hobby Horse roundabout would get into RIS2 but didn't so will try again.

SS emphasised Midlands Connect are keen to work with all partners in the L&L strategic planning partnership on the SGP and how it unfolds and referred to the idea of preparing a productivity growth plan.

Discussion amongst Members followed which included the following key points:

- Sir Peter Soulsby commented it was a very convincing and thorough piece of work. If we don't need an expressway I'm keen to explore what is needed to deal with planned growth to south and east of City.



- A copy of the presentation was requested (Cllr King). Considered that the study outcome puts a death knell on the A46 expressway. It raises the need for a review of the SGP, it needs a refresh, and this is the rationale for now doing so. Maybe a different distribution of housing and employment is needed.
- Cllr Bill welcomed the report and noted it was excellent news for the people of South Leicestershire.
- Cllr Higgins noted that we need to recognise that facts change and it's important to look at what we can deliver. He also emphasised the need to look more closely at rail to move people and products around the County. There are projects in the pipeline so can focus on what we can deliver now rather than longer term.
- Cllr Richardson queried where the dwelling figures had come from for the Whetstone Pastures proposal as it is for 3,500 homes. And emphasised that if we are to deliver growth in this area what should it look like needs to be discussed. We need new road infrastructure south of Leicester and now need to understand what that is.
- Publication date of the Midlands Connect A46 Stage 2 study document? SS advised that now this meeting with MAG has happened the intention is to put it on the Midlands Connect website soon so it will be in the public domain.
- Cllr Boyce recognised the study has said expressway is not appropriate but we need some sort of orbital solution to deal with growth.

SS made a second presentation on the Trans Midlands Trade Corridor (TMTC) Productivity Growth Plan. This changes the discussion, because if you look to the A46 for stimulating productivity you begin to secure the multiplier effect beyond the sum of the parts, there is a real opportunity if you look holistically.

TMTC vision includes the creation of integrated infrastructure and policy making beyond what we currently have.

High level of local planning authority willingness to collaborate across the TMTC geography willing to work with central government.

We have a wide group of organisations involved (BIS, LEPs, County Councils etc) across the geography. This doesn't replace local planning, this is about bringing the complementary elements together and creating the catalyst infrastructure. We are currently 'scoping the scope' (Atkins and Ernst and Young), if you put all

these elements in together and all pull in the right direction to feed into the TMTC strategy and delivery plan will help collectively achieve benefits for our area.

Discussion amongst Members followed which included the following key points:

- Cllr Richardson asked what work is being done on the algorithm which makes the SGP housing figures look small in comparison. Proposed J20A on M1 would help to sort out J21 on M1, M69/M1 link. Are we going to disadvantage our communities further?
- SS referred to need to change the conversation, sustainable development does not mean no road building. Need to link the two together much more clearly.
- Cllr King noted this is clearly leading us down the combined authority route. He asked whether we need to create some brand new towns across Leicestershire to secure the scale of infrastructure required to support the growth and suggested it is time to revisit our strategy (SGP) to check it is still fit for purpose.
- Cllr Boyce suggested two new towns could be part of the solution and also stressed the need to resolve how to get around Leicester, avoiding the need to go into the City if need to travel to the other side.
- Cllr Bill noted getting into the City is the problem, if travelling from the M69 area people join a queue straight away.
- Sir Peter Soulsby referred to development close to the City having an impact and noted that the challenge is squeezing decent transport infrastructure into the urban fabric.

Cllr Pendleton thanked SS for his clear presentation and time, and acknowledged the challenges ahead including the need for our future Local Plans to reflect what comes out of the Planning White Paper.

### *Item 3.3 Changing Context and Future Joint Work*

RT explained that there are various agendas that have gathered momentum since the SGP was approved in December 2018, and that further joint work is need to ensure the partnership is able to respond to some of these issues and that the strategic evidence base remains up to date for Local Plans.

It is important to bear in mind the SGP vision is long term to 2050 and that it doesn't start to bite until 2031. In this respect we need to be cautious not to overreact to short-term trends until we understand their long-term impact.

	<p>COVID-19 has had a huge and current impact on people's lives, but effects on people's behaviour long-term is difficult to know at this stage. COVID seems to have accelerated trends that were happening already such as more home working, online retail, impact on town centres etc. The housing market has been impacted as well.</p> <p>Moving forward understanding the need for different types and mix of homes, as well as, planning for the right type of employment land to support COVID recovery is important. It is important to have post-COVID joint evidence on this to ensure we have a strategic understanding of what we need to plan for longer-term, and to ensure the strategic evidence base is up to date for local plans.</p> <p>The findings of the Midlands Connect A46 (stage 2) study is also helpful, as it clarifies we don't need an expressway S/E of Leicester for people making long distance trips from the SW to NE of England for example, and recommends we need to do some more work to better understand what transport infrastructure we need.</p> <p>The Environment and Climate Change agenda has also gathered momentum over the last couple of years and continues to grow. The emerging Environment Bill etc for example. So we need to embrace and connect fully with approaches and requirements as we move forward.</p> <p>A basic high-level understanding of our sites and opportunities for growth, including environmental constraints will help develop our understanding.</p> <p>The Planning White Paper is hugely ambitious and lacks detail, it will require a whole suite of primary and secondary legislation; new national policy and guidance; and there will likely be transitional arrangements. In this respect it seems likely we'll be under the current system, including Duty to Cooperate for some time.</p> <p>RT explained SPG intend to carry out the following work over the coming months to respond to some of the issues highlighted and ensure the strategic evidence base remains up to date for local plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing &amp; Economic Needs Assessment – Including Strategic Distribution Sector Study</li> <li>• Strategic Transport Assessment</li> <li>• Environmental Constraints Mapping and Strategic Growth Options</li> </ul> <p>New standard method: RT explained that a combination of the 2018 based household projections and an increased affordability uplift are driving the differences between the current housing need figures and the newly proposed ones.</p>	<p><b>All to note</b></p>
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For most Leicestershire districts the new standard method produces significantly higher figures.

For the City the 2018 based household projections are much lower than the 2014 based household projections, so even with a higher affordability adjustment the figure for the City still falls.

If the high figures being consulted on become reality, the scale of the growth challenge becomes much bigger across L&L as a whole, which makes it more important than that we continue to work together across L&L.

Discussion followed which included the following:

- Cllr Bill informed MAG that H&BBC were putting in a objection to the technical consultation ending on 1 October 2020.
- Cllr Higgins referred to Government not looking to touch the Green Belt yet, which could put pressure on areas that don't have it. A lot of areas within the Green Belt are not always particularly valuable.
- Cllr King noted that he thinks the standard method it is likely to change as Government assumptions made in the new standard method aren't appropriate.

The changing context and future joint work were noted.

*Item 3.4 Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) – Sustainability Appraisal Approach*

RT introduced the circulated paper and outlined the initial options which officers have identified to be tested through the Sustainability Appraisal. From these initial findings a hybrid option will likely be developed to help inform the final version of the Statement of Common Ground dealing with Leicester's unmet need.

Cllr Bailey noted that Charnwood Borough are struggling for space to accommodate new development noting Charnwood Forest and other environmental assets limit the identification of allocations in their emerging Local Plan.

Sir Peter Soulsby noted that developing existing urban areas rather than building on greenfield would assist with this, better to intensify development within the City.

RT asked if there were any further comments to get in touch with him before the end of Fri 25 September 2020 as it is important to give AECOM the go ahead to proceed so the SA work can inform the emerging SoCG.

	<p>Cllr Pendleton asked for and was given MAGs agreement for the approach and recommendations in the report.</p> <p>Action: SPG/RT to instruct AECOM to carry out the joint Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <p><i>Item 3.5 MAG Transparency (verbal)</i></p> <p>NP advised that officers had considered this, and the general view was that MAG should be set up on a more formal basis at some point.</p> <p>Crucial point is that we need to take this through our own respective structures and update the Terms of Reference etc. This could be a lengthy and complex process. Government have indicated an intention to abolish the Duty to Cooperate and the devolution white paper is expected soon. So it was suggested that it may be better wait for a clearer picture on Governments ambitions, if MAG are comfortable to do so. Otherwise we may have to go through the process more than once.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton asked if there was agreement, agreement was granted.</p> <p><i>Item 3.6 Harborough District Council Letter to MAG</i></p> <p>A letter from Harborough District Council (HDC) was sent to the chair of MAG. It restates the informative caveats that HDC Council noted when approving the SGP and includes reference to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and that MAG should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• future needs and changes including negative economic growth;</li> <li>• additional and changing infrastructure needs;</li> <li>• potential of not meeting 5 year housing supply;</li> </ul> <p>MAG as a whole should look at provision of Gypsy/ Traveller sites and logistics provision across the MAG area, and to note HDC has taken far above any requirement and should be released of any future commitments. It also suggests a review of the strategic growth plan should take place.</p> <p>Cllr King referred to the letter followed a Scrutiny Review of the SGP at HDC.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton agreed to respond to the HDC letter on behalf of MAG.</p> <p><i>Item 3.7 Growth Unit update</i></p> <p>SL, Head of the Growth Unit at the County Council, spoke to the update report and the draft collaboration proposal circulated for the meeting.</p>	<p><b>RT/SPG</b></p> <p><b>All to note</b></p> <p><b>TP/RT</b></p>
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	<p>He highlighted work the Growth Unit is undertaking with Blaby DC and NWLDC, emphasising that the detailed collaboration with NWLDC is bringing place (district) and infrastructure (County) closer together.</p> <p>He noted that Blaby District is a very exciting area that is moving fast and that collaboration is progressing.</p> <p>SL referred to Ann Carruthers coming to a future meeting of MAG to talk about work within E&amp;T, and referred to work with partners to draft a programme based on the Local Transport Plan to take through the Cabinet at County.</p> <p>He noted that the reality is other work comes along which puts pressure on this and also third party requirements, for example, districts needing to undertake strategy work to underpin Local Plans within a certain timeframe.</p> <p>Will advise where can take capacity and if not have framework to use.</p> <p>MoUs available, increasing demand. Good time to make sure priority work is being done at the right time.</p> <p>Cllr Higgins noted that from a Melton BC perspective welcome the collaborative approach, have for some time asked that a similar approach is taken with MBC. Flexible and very happy to ensure road infrastructure and housing development is delivered. Seek achievement, Leicestershire will be able to demonstrate achievement in the E. Mids.</p> <p>Cllr King stressed need to recover the full costs of growth and queried whether there is a distinction between baseline and growth?</p> <p>AC referred to highways funding being for maintenance and for Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR) etc we have to bid for funding. There is no allocation for capital schemes, small and diminishing.</p> <p>Over next few years it is going to be very difficult to have money and resource to develop up schemes.</p> <p>Cllr Higgins strongly advocated the collaborative approach, referring to 99.5% delivery on S106 in the MBC area and need to focus on shovel ready sites.</p> <p>Cllr Boyce asked that if for some projects the Borough needs to fund or part fund could the borough go outside for transport support? AC replied yes, no requirement to come to the County Council.</p> <p>Cllr Richardson noted that Stoney Stanton etc in Blaby District have no status as they haven't even come forward in the Local Plan, and that the days of bidding are largely over and local</p>	
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	authorities need to consider borrowing. SL noted work can start early on and help to avoid delivery challenges by getting involved early in the process.	
<b>4</b>	<b>AOB</b>  None.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Future Meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>16 December 2020 (Virtual Meeting) 2pm start</b></li> <li>• <b>11 February 2021 (Virtual Meeting) 2pm start</b></li> </ul>	<b>All</b>

**Strategic Growth Plan  
Members' Advisory Group**

**NOTES OF MEETING** held on 16 December 2020.

Virtual meeting held using Microsoft Teams

**Attendance:**

<b>Cllr Trevor Pendleton</b>	<b>Leicestershire County Council (Chair)</b>
<b>Cllr Terry Richardson</b>	<b>Blaby District Council (Vice Chair)</b>
Norman Proudfoot (NP)	Chair of Strategic Planning Group
John Richardson (JR)	Blaby District Council
<b>Cllr Nick Rushton (NR)</b>	<b>Leicestershire County Council</b>
<b>Cllr Richard Bailey</b>	<b>Charnwood Borough Council</b>
<b>Cllr Jonathan Morgan</b>	<b>Charnwood Borough Council</b>
Eileen Mallon (EM)	Charnwood Borough Council
<b>Cllr Phil King</b>	<b>Harborough District Council</b>
David Atkinson (DA)	Harborough District Council
<b>Cllr David Bill</b>	<b>Hinckley &amp; Bosworth Borough Council</b>
Matthew Bowers (MB)	Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
<b>Sir Peter Soulsby</b>	<b>Leicester City Council</b>
Grant Butterworth (GB)	Leicester City Council
Tom Purnell (TP)	Leicestershire County Council
Ann Carruthers (AC)	Leicestershire County Council (Highways)
<b>Cllr Leigh Higgins</b>	<b>Melton Borough Council</b>
Pranali Panikr (PP)	Melton Borough Council
<b>Cllr Robert Ashman</b>	<b>North West Leicestershire District Council</b>
Chris Elston (CE)	North West Leicestershire District Council
<b>Cllr John Boyce</b>	<b>Oadby and Wigston Borough Council</b>
Stephen Hinds (SH)	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Rob Thornhill (RT)	Joint Strategic Planning Manager for L&L
Sharon Wiggins (SW)	Support to the Joint Strategic Planning Manager

ITEM		LEAD/ ACTION
1	<p><i>1.3 Welcome and apologies</i></p> <p>No apologies received.</p>	
2	<p><b>Notes and Matters Arising</b></p> <p><i>2.1 Notes of last meeting</i></p> <p>Notes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020 were agreed.</p> <p><i>2.2 Actions arising from last meeting</i></p> <p>Feedback on MP engagement taken as item 3.1.</p> <p><i>2.3 Matters Arising</i></p> <p>None.</p>	
3	<b>Strategic Growth Plan</b>	



Item 3.1 Feedback on MP engagement

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

RT

Item 3.2 Changing Context and the Strategic Growth Plan

RT introduced the circulated report. Key messages:

- Growth challenge doesn't come from SGP itself. The Government set housing targets which could get bigger if the proposed changes to the standard method are brought in.
- It is about two years since approval of SGP so it's appropriate to look at the relevance of the SGP and what has changed.
- There is no evidence that points to the SGP being out-of-date at present. National plans and strategies from 2018 remain relevant and the NPPF has only had minor tweaks since 2018. Future Government

reforms to the planning system will need to be considered at the time they are introduced, but it is likely to be sometime until the White Paper proposals are introduced so we will be working with the current system for some time.

- Protecting environmental assets was one of the key pillars underpinning the SGP and most of the evidence gathered was environmental.
- Notwithstanding this we need to ensure the SGP and the partnership remains relevant moving forward.
- Covid-19 pandemic: is impacting peoples lives and behaviour at present, but it is important to bear in mind the SGP is a long-term vision that doesn't start to bite until 2031. The SGP doesn't quantify the need for employment in recognition of the difficulties of doing this over such long timescales. Instead it includes map showing our major economic generators from the Midland Engine Strategy. On the face of it Covid could make these sectors more, not less relevant. Spatially they are clustered in/close to Leicester, near East Midlands Airport, and along the A5. An SGP strategy which focusses on these areas doesn't appear to be out-of-date. One of the key issues is getting into and out of Leicester. It is busy because people need to travel in/out for all sorts of reasons and government have made clear they see cities as the engines of growth for Covid recovery. Focusing growth towards Leicester which reduces travel distances and is close to existing commercially viable public transport doesn't seem to be at odds with where people need to be post Covid. The City and immediate surrounding area will likely remain a focus for growth.
- Focussing growth towards Leicester isn't new, it is a strategy that has been persuaded for decades, the only difference is the SGP shifts the focus of strategic development away from the west and north in the long-term to the south an east.
- Environment and climate change is not a new issue, it has been at the centre of planning in UK for decades. One of The pillars of the SGP is protecting our environmental assets. The Sustainability Appraisal assessed the environmental impact of the SGP including climate change. The spatial strategy in the SGP helps by focusing growth away from rural areas and towards the City and other economic generators.
- SGP also supports delivery of Garden Communities (towns, villages etc). Includes active design, renewable energy etc. The SGP sets a common

agenda for Garden Communities. Local Plans are best placed to deal with the specifics at site level.

- Midlands Connect A46 (stage 2) study: Doesn't support the redistribution of growth away from that proposed in the SGP. Most queries are dealt with through FAQs on the SGP website.
- Strategic Transport Assessment: Will look at SGP and other alternatives and will test them from a transport perspective.

Cllr Pendleton asked for recommendations slide to be left shown for discussion.

Cllr Richardson referred to the announcement by Robert Jenrick MP just prior to the start of MAG. It included reference to the provision of funding to assist delivery for the 20 largest cities in England. The third bullet point of the recommendations about lobbying for infrastructure is key as we need to secure significant infrastructure. Cllr Richardson gave support to all three recommendations.

Cllr Bill asked for the slides to be circulated. **ACTION:** RT to circulate slides. There is a lot of information given in the presentation and Cllr Bill would like the ability to share presentations/documents with colleagues. There are so many factors changing that he would like commitment to review the SGP sooner rather than later.

RT

Cllr Pendleton advised we can't try and update the SGP every time there is small instances of movement on something.

Cllr Higgins advised being careful, there appears to be an increase in City residents contacting estate agents in towns and villages as they are looking to move elsewhere. Also agricultural and other workers can't afford houses in locations they need to be, we still need to provide housing. Cllr Higgins referred to part of the problem before us now being the unwillingness to touch the Green Belt in the South East. He emphasised that MAG is well placed to work well with infrastructure providers etc and recognised there can sometimes be challenges at individual sites, it is crucial that we work together in an integrated way to lobby government. Cllr Higgins supported the three recommendations.

Cllr Boyce advised in relation to SGP he considers Covid-19 less of an issue. However, potential changes to Toton and HS2 might have an impact. Hopefully we will have clarity in coming months.

Proper new settlements should be considered as an alternative, garden villages may not be big enough, we might need to consider a new settlement of 20,000/30,000dws. Happy to lobby Government to secure appropriate infrastructure to support delivery of growth.

Cllr King referred to when process started on the SGP in 2015 it was always put that the SGP would help to secure infrastructure funding. Cllr King took on a different portfolio and when he returned to MAG meetings in 2017 it seemed clear that alternatives were not on the agenda. It is not clear that alternatives were considered. We need to address this and MAG transparency.

HDC agreed the SGP on condition that if the expressway is not delivered the SGP will be reviewed and an alternative distribution of growth considered. In this respect, Cllr King could not support the first two recommendations as they stand.

Cllr King mentioned he respects the content of the report, the lack of a Strategic Transport Assessment is a big weakness and many recall Pennbury (significant amount of funding to find out it wasn't deliverable). To deliver the scale of growth being discussed a strategic plan is needed, otherwise we will go around in circles.

Sir Peter thanked Cllr Pendleton and RT, and was happy with the report recommendations. In context of Government's announcement on 16 Dec 2020 he considers Government will direct attention to cities in the north with a focus on brownfield land. Leicester has a different character to many industrial cities with limited brownfield opportunities in comparison to Sheffield for example.

Sir Peter mentioned he is keen to maximise opportunities for development within the City, where is the right thing to do environmentally. He also noted that the City Council also has land interests as it owns many of the potential sites.

Sir Peter emphasised where there are opportunities to build upwards the City Council will look to do so. He noted there is a point at which the environmental quality of the City and protecting its attractiveness as a place to live and visit comes in.

Cllr Ashman stressed the huge problem that houses are not available to people on average salaries. People choose where they want to live and we need to build houses where people want them. We need supporting infrastructure and supports the recommendations in the report, including strengthening them. Green-belt is not a helpful designation nationally and we need to lobby Government. It is easier to build new villages/towns than bolt them onto existing ones and welcomes the consideration of alternatives.

Cllr Boyce commented Sir Peter is right we have to provide a good quality of life, and much of the Pennbury proposal was good it was just in the wrong place.

Cllr Bill said he couldn't support the first two recommendations. The focus largely seems to be around housing, but the LLEP does other plans the strategic plans and would like to challenge

	<p>the concept of the golden triangle. It is leading to undesirable development.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton noted points raised and advised getting them sorted as part of moving forward. NP to pick up issues and take back to SPG.</p> <p>Cllr King asked for a clearer resolution. He noted a commitment had been made by RT's predecessor, so he couldn't accept recommendation 1. He asked for HDC's resolution regarding the SGP approval to be noted and also the letter sent by HDC to Trevor Pendleton in July 2020 to also be recorded.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton acknowledged that the reply letter was attached as item 3.4 and advised that the points raised will not be ignored, it is important and will take back to SPG to track a path through.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> SPG to consider how to lobby Government on infrastructure funding and consider a way forward as all authorities could not agree to the recommendations.</p> <p><u>Item 3.3 Draft Statement of Common Ground (SCG) text</u></p> <p>RT explained the ongoing work, in particular on the Sustainability Appraisal which will provide an objective way of looking at alternative ways of dealing with Leicester's unmet need.</p> <p>The SCG will set out what we agree and what we don't agree with. There is a matters of disagreement section, and it is important to bear in mind that any position taken by an authority may need to be justified with evidence at a Local Plan Examination. Because there is a legal duty for each authority to engage constructively and actively it easy to score an 'own goal' if an authority takes an unjustified position as could harm their ability to get their own Local Plan in place.</p> <p>Doing and updating SCGs is something the partnership and authorities are going to have to get used to doing, as they will be needed to support each Local Plan. Each SCG reflects a point in time based on the latest evidence and it is therefore important to recognise the Duty is an 'ongoing' process, where SCGs are updated and plans submitted on a rolling basis. It is critical partners stay together on this to help ensure each Local Plan can get 'over the line'.</p> <p>The final version of the SCG will be considered by MAG 11 Feb 2021</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton acknowledged there are three/four Local Plans currently coming up and reinforced how important SCGs are to all partners.</p> <p><u>Item 3.4 MAG response to Harborough District Council letter</u></p>	<p><b>SPG</b></p> <p><b>All to note</b></p> <p><b>All to note</b></p>
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Noted under item 3.2.

*Item 3.5 Emerging County Council Policy on Development Projects*

Cllr Pendleton invited Tom Purnell (TP) to talk about the County Council's thinking.

TP referred to the County Council having made reference in a Cabinet report (Melton MMDR 15 Dec 2020) to the County Council developing a policy. The intent at present is to take the policy to Feb 2021 County Council meeting.

TP explained a policy was needed due to the big challenge for the County Council and all partners - £600 million or more to deliver infrastructure.

He stressed the importance of early engagement to develop and agree masterplans.

A draft policy is to be worked up with input from partners before it goes through LCC governance in the new year.

Cllr King explained a district can't guarantee there is no shortfall from developers, no way HDC could agree to this. Small authority with a small budget how can HDC guarantee?

Masterplanning is a very expensive process, are developers going to foot the bill? How does this fit in with Government's ambition to speed up development?

Cllr King also has some concerns. From a district point of view it may not be legal, districts will need to seek advice.

TP advised there could be a cap in terms of shortfall, and advised on larger schemes it is appropriate for developers to contribute.

Cllr Morgan pointed out that it was a very tight timeframe for such an important issue and requested more time.

Cllr Ashman advised a realistic timetable with sufficient time would be required. Need to check with relevant S151 officers.

Cllr Ashman noted the aims are laudable and language quite direct. He would like officers to look over this and is happy to take legal advice. It is important we investigate and that this is an open and proper two-way consultation.

If we can give confidence to Government that we can secure and deliver infrastructure in L&L it reflects very well. Let's talk together more before this is progressed. We will not win for Leicestershire if we don't talk so let's work together on this.

	<p>Cllr Higgins explained it is imperative this works everyone. It is challenging for Members on planning committee having make decisions constrained by the law. There are sometimes occasions when we can't extract S106 money we need for everything and sometimes it's taken out of our hands by PINs and Secretary of State. It is important we work collaboratively on this, lets work together.</p> <p>Cllr Richardson stated MAG was set up for authorities to work collectively which benefits us all. One authority developing a plan seems to be against the spirit of MAG. Why have we not seen this before and what legal advice has been requested and secured? Emphasised we all want to work collaboratively together and this flies in the face of wanting to work more collegiately. It's important we work together as partners and friends for the future of Leicestershire.</p> <p>Cllr Boyce noted the importance of evidence and invited all districts to test/seek legal advice.</p> <p>Cllr Higgins noted the word 'ensure' may be too strong for a small authority, market risk is beyond our control and made the point that affordable housing is still needed.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton noted two key points arising from discussion, the tight timeframe and the willingness to engage and value of working together.</p> <p>Cllr Ashman noted the discussion was looking at detail that isn't there yet, and suggested support in principle and to seek legal advice to move this forward.</p> <p>Cllr King noted the 'devil will be in the detail' and that after the economic downturn of 2008 viability has become more of an issue.</p> <p>Cllr Richardson asked for delay in going to February 2021 meeting of the County Council to allow for engagement.</p> <p>TP said the absolute intention is to work it up through engagement, as it stands it is a framework. Many questions will be answered when we see full policy and supporting text. He said he would take back point raised about the timescale, though noted there is also an urgency to progress this.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton agreed to feedback concerns regarding timescales, considering better to take time getting it right now.</p>	<b>TP</b>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Cllr Morgan asked for future meetings to be on Zoom as it is better platform than Teams. Also asked when it comes to agenda setting can we make sure items are considered by officers first.</p> <p>Cllr Ashman expressed preference for Teams as it prioritises audio over visual.</p>	

	<p>Cllr Bill asked for clarity about reporting back, he would like to share with colleagues. It is unclear how to proceed with the current protocol set up.</p> <p>Cllr Pendleton agreed all Members of MAG ought to know as soon as possible what is to be discussed at future meetings, would stick with Teams for time being and said arrangements would be made so the legal advice can be seen. Action: NP/RT to arrange for the Legal Advice to be shared.</p> <p>Cllr Richardson asked whether we needed another MAG in January. Cllr Pendleton wasn't opposed, and suggested officers consider this.</p> <p>Best wishes for Christmas and a Happy New Year, and thanks for the level headed contributions.</p>	<p><b>NP/RT</b></p> <p><b>NP/RT</b></p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Future Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>11 February 2021 (Virtual Meeting) 2pm start</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>All</b></p>