

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 24 MARCH 2015

Title of report	MINUTES OF LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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Purpose of report	For Council to agree the minutes and recommendations of the meetings of the Local Plan Advisory Committee
Council Priorities	<p>Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge</p>
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The cost of preparing the Local Plan is met from within existing budgets.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	A risk assessment of the project has been undertaken. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise these risks, including monthly Project Board meetings where risk is reviewed.
Equalities Impact Assessment	As part of the process of preparing the Local Plan an assessment of the potential impact of the policies and proposals of the Local Plan from an equalities perspective will need to be undertaken.
Human Rights	None
Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory

Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory
Consultees	None
Background papers	Minutes of meetings of Local Plan Advisory Committee dated 9 September 2014, 15 October 2014, 21 November 2014 and 17 February 2015 as set out in Appendix A , Appendix B, Appendix C and Appendix D respectively of this report.
Recommendations	<p>THAT COUNCIL:</p> <p>(I) RECEIVES THE MINUTES OF THE LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF 9 SEPTEMBER 2014, 15 OCTOBER 2015, 21 NOVEMBER 2014 AND 17 FEBRUARY 2015;</p> <p>(II) AGREES THAT THE NEW LOCAL PLAN HAVE A PLAN PERIOD OF 2011-2031 AS RECOMMENDED BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE;</p> <p>(III) NOTES THE AGREEMENT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO DEFINE LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT FOR THOSE SETTLEMENTS LISTED AT PARAGRAPH 2.9 OF THIS REPORT;</p> <p>(IV) NOTES THE VIEWS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN RESPECT OF THE SUGGESTED LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT AND TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARIES AS SET OUT AT PARAGRAPH 5.6 OF THIS REPORT.</p>

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of Council on 25 February 2014 it was agreed to establish a Local Plan Advisory Committee to work with officers on the new Local Plan.
- 1.2 Since the last report to Council on 1 July 2014 the Advisory Committee has met on five further occasions on 9 September 2014, 15 October 2014, 21 November 2014, 17 February 2015 and 4 March 2015. The purpose of this report is to consider the outcome from the first four of these meetings.
- 1.3 Minutes for the meeting of 4 March 2015 were not agreed at the time of preparing this report and have yet to be agreed by the Advisory Committee and so will be reported to a subsequent Council meeting.

2.0 MEETING OF 9 SEPTEMBER 2014

- 2.1 The meeting considered reports in respect of:
- an update of progress on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA);
 - risk management of the Local Plan;
 - an update on the plan period and;
 - the suggested approach to defining Limits to Development

A copy of the minutes is attached at Appendix A of this report.

- 2.2 In terms of the SHMA the Advisory Committee noted the intention to agree a Memorandum of Understanding with the other local authorities in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) and that separate housing forecasts for the Housing Market Area had been prepared in support of development elsewhere in the HMA.
- 2.3 Members will recall that a Memorandum of Understanding was subsequently agreed by Council at its meeting on 11 November 2014.
- 2.4 Since then the outcome of the SHMA has been supported by Inspectors on appeal and also at the examination in respect of the Charnwood Local Plan/Core Strategy.
- 2.5 In respect of risk management, the Advisory Committee noted that a robust risk assessment had been prepared which sought to identify the risks that were being managed as part of preparing the Local Plan, some of which were external to the Council.
- 2.6 The issue of the plan period had previously been considered at an earlier meeting of the Advisory Committee when it had been agreed to recommend a plan period of 2011-2036. The Advisory Committee was advised by officers that following discussions across the HMA in connection with the (then) proposed Memorandum of Understanding it was being suggested that the end date should instead be 2031 to provide consistency across the HMA. The Advisory Committee were also advised that Cabinet had considered this issue at its meeting on 29 July 2014 when it had asked the Advisory Committee to reconsider this matter.
- 2.7 The Advisory Committee therefore agreed that the end date of the plan should be changed to 2031 and this is therefore recommended to Council.
- 2.8 On the issue of Limits to Development a report was considered which set out that it was proposed to define new Limits to Development in the most sustainable settlements across the district. The Advisory Committee agreed with this suggestion and to the suggestion to hold a workshop for Members to provide an input in to the defining of the Limits to Development.
- 2.9 The Advisory Committee was advised that it was the intention to define Limits to Development for the most sustainable settlements only as set out in the list below:

Albert Village, Appleby Magna, Ashby de la Zouch, Belton, Blackfordby, Breedon on the Hill, Castle Donington, Coalville Urban area, Coleorton (the Lower Moor Road area only), Diseworth, Donisthorpe, Ellistown, Heather, Ibstock, Kegworth, Long Whatton, Measham, Moira (including Norris Hill), Oakthorpe, Packington, Ravenstone, Swannington, Worthington.
- 2.10 The Advisory Committee agreed that Limits to Development should be defined for these settlements.
- 2.11 This workshop was held on 9 October 2014. Following agreement at the meeting of the Advisory Committee on 15 October 2014 the proposed Limits to Development (and town

centre boundaries) were then subject of consultation with Parish and Town Councils and other interested groups between 17 November 2014 and 9 January 2015.

3.0 MEETING OF 15 OCTOBER 2014

- 3.1 The meeting considered a report in respect of proposals for town centre boundaries for the main settlements of Coalville, Ashby de la Zouch, Castle Donington, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham. A copy of the minutes is attached at Appendix B of this report.
- 3.2 The Advisory Committee was advised that the town centre boundaries set out in the existing Local Plan had not been reviewed for over 20 years and were in need of review. In most cases the suggested town centre boundaries were proposed to be smaller than the existing boundary to reflect the changes which had occurred and to provide more vibrant, viable and robust town centres in the future.
- 3.3 The Advisory Committee noted the need to review the boundaries and that the boundaries were to be the subject of consultation with parish and town councils and the town teams in Coalville and Ashby.

4.0 MEETING OF 21 NOVEMBER 2014

- 4.1 The meeting considered reports in respect of:
- Development strategy;
 - Affordable housing and;
 - the Statement of Community Involvement

A copy of the minutes is attached at Appendix C of this report.

- 4.2 In terms of the development strategy, the Advisory Committee was advised that it was being recommended to include some form of flexibility allowance in respect of housing due to concerns regarding the deliverability of sufficient housing to ensure that the needs identified in the SHMA would be met. This allowance would also provide some comfort to an examining Inspector that the Council would be in a position to meet its identified housing need during the plan period. In addition, two options for a settlement hierarchy were outlined, with officers suggesting the following preferred option:
- Coalville (Principal Town)
 - Ashby/Castle Donington (Main Towns)
 - Ibstock/Kegworth/Measham (Rural Centres)
 - Sustainable Villages
 - Rural Villages
- 4.3 The Advisory Committee was also asked to note a number of guiding principles which it was suggested be used when considering potential site allocations for development.
- 4.4 There was some concern at the suggestion that additional housing may be required and the Advisory Committee also raised concerns regarding whether the suggested settlement hierarchy was appropriate. Furthermore, there were concerns regarding the scale of development suggested in some of the settlements with Members suggesting that development should be capped to maintain their separate identities.

- 4.5 In view of these concerns it was agreed by the Advisory Committee to take a further report back to a future meeting of the Advisory Committee on these matters.
- 4.6 In respect of affordable housing, the Advisory Committee noted that there was a need for a policy and that there were options available to the council in terms of whether any thresholds and targets should be the same across the district or whether they should vary depending upon location. There was no clear consensus and it was agreed that a further report on this matter be considered by a future meeting of the Advisory Committee.
- 4.7 In respect of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), the Advisory committee was advised of the responses to the recent consultation and the intention that a report proposing a new SCI would be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 13 January 2015. This was subsequently agreed and adopted by Cabinet in January 2015.

5.0 MEETING OF 17 FEBRUARY 2015

- 5.1 The meeting considered two reports in respect of the following:
- Responses to the consultations in respect of proposed Limits to Development and town centre boundaries and
 - An update on other recent local examinations.

A copy of the minutes is attached at Appendix D of this report.

- 5.2 In respect of the consultations the Advisory Committee noted that a number of changes were proposed to some of the Limits to Development in response to comments received.
- 5.3 The Advisory Committee was advised that a number of representations had been received which considered that the methodology used to define the Limits to Development should be amended to include matters such as playing fields, allotments and protected open space. It was recommended by officers that no change be made to the methodology as these were matters which required separate consideration and, potentially, separate policies.
- 5.4 Some of the representations also suggested that Limits to Development should be defined for smaller settlements. As discussed and agreed at the Advisory Committee meeting of the 9th September it was felt that the most appropriate way forward was to define Limits to Development for sustainable settlements only, as the new Local Plan would be prepared in accordance with the NPPF, with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 5.5 In respect of town centre boundaries the Advisory Committee was advised that some amendment to the boundaries in Ashby and Kegworth were recommended in response to the consultation.

- 5.6 The Advisory Committee agreed to recommend to Council that the draft Limits to Development and revised town centre boundaries be included as part of the new Local Plan, with the exception of:
- i) Ashby town centre boundary
 - ii) Castle Donington town centre boundary
 - iii) Coalville town centre boundary
 - iv) Ibstock town centre boundary
 - v) Packington limits to development
- 5.7 In respect of other recent Local Plan Examinations the Advisory committee noted the contents of the report.

6.0 NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Whilst Cabinet are responsible for overseeing the drafting of the Local Plan, the final decision is the responsibility of Council.
- 6.2 Officers are currently in the process of preparing a draft Local Plan for consultation purposes. It is intended that this be reported to Council as soon as practical following the upcoming local elections.
- 6.3 Council will be asked to approve the draft Local Plan for consultation purposes. The consultation will commence as soon as practical after the agreement of Council and will be for a period of 12 weeks to ensure that sufficient opportunity is provided for people to consider and comment on the draft plan.
- 6.4 A further report will be brought to Council which considers the responses received to the consultation and how the plan may need to be amended accordingly. At this point Council will be asked to agree the Council's 'final' version which will then be published for consultation before being submitted to the Secretary of State for examination purposes.