

Melton Local Development Framework Task Group

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday 8th July 2010 at 6.00pm

Present:	Assistant Chief Executive (ACE)
Cllr Angrave (Chair)	Corporate Director (CD)
Cllr Chandler	Principal Policy Officer (PPO)
Cllr Freer	(Planning) Policy Officer (PG)
Cllr Jackson	(Planning) Policy Officer (SM)
Cllr Marks	Paul McKim (PM)
Cllr Moncrieff	
Cllr Wright	

ACE introduced SM and PM to the Task Group.

Apologies: None

Minutes of meetings held on 23rd February 2010

The Task Group minutes were agreed.

Election of Chair

Cllr Marks proposed Cllr Angrave as chair of the Task Group. Cllr Chandler seconded the proposal. Councillor Angrave was voted in unanimously as chair

Abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies

(Councillor Jackson joined the meeting at the start of this item)

ACE informed Task Group that an announcement revoking the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) was made on Tuesday 6th July. The area was extremely fast moving; since the report was produced further advice has been issued.

A letter and “questions and answer” advice from the Chief Planning Officer following the revocation was circulated. ACE summarised the previous planning system and then discussed the “question and answer” advice (see Appendix 1).

A paper to the East Midlands Leaders’ Board concerning implications of the abolition of strategic planning for the East Midlands was circulated.

ACE summarised the history of MBC’s position regarding RSS housing provision figures supplied in Appendix 4 of the report. At examination of the RSS the final figure of 170 dwellings pa was uncontroversial with no debate arising.

Other district’s position over housing provision figures was given: Hinckley & Bosworth have an adopted Core Strategy and will not be reviewing; Charnwood cannot abandon the figures; Oadby and Wigston are committed to the figures; North West are not abandoning the figures; Harborough are sticking with the figures but may consult; Leicester City are sticking with the figures; and, Blaby are considering challenging the figures.

A letter to Leaders of Housing Growth Authorities, of which MBC is one, was circulated. Growth Point funding is safeguarded but a statement of community engagement will be required. ACE informed that this was to be discussed at a meeting of Leicester and Leicestershire HMA authorities; a joint approach would be decided but further public consultation may be required.

Cllr Angrave proposed that the report's recommendation be amended to reflect the publication of follow-up guidance to "... 2) The East Midlands Regional Plan housing provision for Melton of 3,400 dwellings (170 dwellings per annum) between 2006 and 2026 should continue to be used; ...".

The Task Group accepted the amended recommendation.

Masterplanning

PPO introduced PM as Project Manager for the SUE Masterplanning and described the proposed arrangements for masterplanning of the SUE and governance structure. PPO advised that a developer consortium was assisting in the process. A political steer and reporting structure would be required for the masterplanning process. Cllr Angrave stated that steering issues need a wider involvement than just the Chair and should report to the full Task Group.

PM summarised his experience and the approach to be taken towards masterplanning which will provide a framework for planning applications but crucially assist in satisfying an Inspector that the Core Strategy can be delivered. Cllr Angrave enquired when a plan is likely to be available that shows the options for what the SUE might look like. PM responded that this should result following the technical review session proposed for 22nd October.

Cllr Angrave emphasised the need to ensure that the methodology for SUE location was sound. ACE informed that the various stages of the Core Strategy process would help ensure this. The final submission document still had to be produced which would require approval by Committees; a sustainability appraisal; and, legal checks.

The Task Group accepted the recommendation set out in the paper.

Review of Local Development Scheme

ACE advised that a revised programme would be required.

Any other business

Cllrs raised concerns over 5 year housing land supply and land allocation. ACE advised of the intention to present information to REEA in August. If the land supply is low it should be addressed by development management rather than by simply approving the next planning application submitted; for example by addressing the viability of sites which developer contributions may cause. ACE identified the role that Regulatory Services and Development Committee play in this process as crucial.

Date of Next Meeting

DONM– Early August
Meeting finished at 19:30.

Appendix 1 – Question and Answer Advice from Chief Planning Officer

Q1) RSS revoked in advance of Localism Bill

Q2) Changes to PPS3 were summarised

Q3) N/A

Q4) Determination of planning applications would be reliant on the Local Plan

Q5) Preparation of the Core Strategy should continue, RSS revocation is not a signal to stop work

Q6) The local plan is still in place; the timetable for the LDF will be affected

Q7) Preparation of the Core Strategy will be affected by the loss of various RSS policies, including housing provision figures. Cllr Angrave identified the need to look at which areas of the Core Strategy will be affected. Cllr Jackson highlighted that any revision to housing figures would need defending with evidence. ACE advised that the RSS housing figures were founded on evidence and had been through a consultation process, any alteration would require a sound evidence base.

Q8) Examinations in public will continue.

Q9) Data and research used at the regional level will be made available.

Q10) The Local Planning Authority (LPA) will be responsible for determining housing numbers; if there is an intention to review this should be indicated quickly. ACE confirmed that we were now the decision maker, having formally been a consultee under the RSS system. Cllr Angrave stated that the housing figures and the decision making process from which they were reached should be revisited to confirm MBC is satisfied with these and they can be defended in case of challenge.

Q11) Housing numbers will require justification. ACE informed that this would have resource implications as MBC is now the responsible authority and will need to defend the figures. The RSS figure was not challengeable, having gone through a formal examination and adoption process. Members noted that the RSS housing numbers had been agreed by Full Council, formulated from an evidence base and undergone a consultation process; any changes would need to be supported by a new evidence base.

Q12) RSS housing targets can be revised to those submitted to the original RSS examination. In Melton's case this was 160 dwellings pa, similar to the final figure of 170 dwellings pa.

Q13) A 5 year land supply should still be provided.

Q14) The level of travellers' site provision should be assessed using the existing evidence base.

Q15) and Q16) N/A

Q17) The abolition of the hierarchy of centres will have no impact.

Q18) Regional policies on the natural environment have been removed.

Q19) N/A

Q20) Some policies on renewable energy in the Core Strategy have been based upon RSS policy and will have to be revisited.

Q21) Regional policies on transport have been removed.

Q22) N/A