

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Advisory Panel - Places**
held on Wednesday, 12th November, 2008 at The Tatton Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1DX

PRESENT

Councillor G M Walton (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs E Gilliland (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors H Davenport, D Hough, J Macrae, A Martin, A Moran, B Moran,
D Neilson and C Thorley

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bebbington, D Brickhill, B Silvester and Mrs J Weatherill

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A number of Councillors who were existing County Councillors, Borough Councillors and Town and Parish Councillors declared a personal interest in the business of the meeting en bloc.

Councillor Barry Moran declared a personal interest in respect of all the agenda items, by virtue of the fact that he was the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development and in accordance with the Code of Conduct remained in the meeting during consideration of all the items.

3 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present who wished to address the Panel.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman referred to the successful site visits around districts that had been arranged for Task Group members, namely the visit to Congleton on 26 September, Crewe and Nantwich on 1 October and Macclesfield on 10 October. He formally recorded his thanks to officers for the arrangements that had been made.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2008 be approved as a correct record.

5 CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Prosperity Block Lead submitted a paper to enable the Panel to reconsider the decision at its last meeting in respect of the Draft Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Cheshire East. It was reported that following the Panel's last meeting, Congleton Borough Council's Executive on 8 October had passed a resolution to make representations to the Cheshire East Shadow Council for inclusion of the following items in the proposed Local Development Scheme:-

- (a) An area action plan for Congleton Town Centre with appropriate resources allocated once the Core Strategy is sufficiently advanced.
- (b) A area action plan for Middlewich Canal Corridor with resources allocated once the Core Strategy is sufficiently advanced.
- (c) A joint Design Statement for Sandbach as a community led approach, with work to start in November 2008 and appropriate resources allocated.

In addition, the Congleton Borough Council Executive had highlighted the urgent need for additional employment land to be allocated for the Congleton town area.

The Local Development Framework (LDF) Member Task Group held on 28 October had considered this matter and had agreed that:

The three additional items requested by Congleton Borough Council for inclusion in the Cheshire East Local Development Scheme (for Congleton town centre, the Middlewich Canal corridor and Sandbach) be agreed and included in the 2008 submission.

The LDS would make it clear that the preparation of the Core Strategy will take priority until it is sufficiently advanced. Once spatial priorities emerge from the Core Strategy across Cheshire East, plans and policies will be prioritised and resources allocated accordingly. This approach to the LDS should be agreed with the Government Office for the North West.

A copy of Section 5: Proposed Cheshire East Local Development Framework (to be inserted into the Draft Local Development Scheme) was tabled and considered at the meeting.

It was noted that Officers had followed guidance from the Government Office Northwest that until information regarding the structure and resources for the LDF team was available the LDS focus on the priority documents, namely the core strategy, site allocations DPD and a generic Development Control/Management Policies DPD. The LDS could always be revised at a future date if further resources become available and good timely progress was being made with the priority documents.

Members were reminded that the Draft Transitional Regulations require Cheshire East Council to submit a Local Development Scheme to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government before end of

December 2008. The same Regulations will transfer Local Development Framework powers to the Cheshire East Council.

During the debate members referred to the preparation of the Sandbach Town Design Statement and that it should be included in Paragraph 5.2 of the draft Local Development scheme. Members also noted that any changes would be subject to the allocation of appropriate resources.

RESOLVED – That

- 1 the Prosperity Block Lead Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Advisory Panel Places approve the wording of the amendment to the Local Development Scheme, to accord with the recommendations of the Task Group, subject to inclusion of a reference to the preparation of the Sandbach Town Design Statement in paragraph 5.2; and
- 2 the amended Draft Local Development Scheme be submitted to Cabinet on 2 December 2008 and full Council on 9 December 2008.

6 NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND PLAN

The Prosperity Block Lead submitted a paper for consideration of the adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West, the commencement of the Partial Review of that Strategy and the preparation of a Single Regional Strategy.

It was noted that the Regional Spatial Strategy was called the North West of England Plan and had been published on 30 September 2008. The Plan provided a framework for development and investment in the North West region until 2021. Despite only just being published, a partial review of some items in the Plan had begun earlier in 2008. In particular it was noted that the scope of that review was now limited to Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Show People and Regional Parking Standards. 4NW (the Regional Planning Body) were responsible for the partial review and a timetable for the review work would be circulated in due course.

Work had also commenced on a Single North West Regional Strategy. An Issues and Principles paper was to be published in December 2008 and a consultation exercise on options and vision development would run between January and March 2009. Further reports updating members on the Consultation would be presented to members in due course.

Given the importance of the North West of England Plan, Members requested the summary of its contents, as appended to the report, be circulated electronically as an Information Item to all members of the Council.

Members noted that Cheshire East would face a huge challenge as currently there were three different affordable housing policies across the County. It was important that a Core Strategy should be developed and any threshold be sensitive to local area needs. It was expected that any guidance in respect of Retail investment or the average rate of housing provision from the Government Officer North West would be shared with the Planning Inspectorate to ensure consistency in decision-making.

RESOLVED – that the contents of the report and attached appendix be noted and all members of the Council be sent an electronic copy of the Summary of the North West Plan as appended to the report.

7 FEEDBACK FROM TASK GROUPS

In addition to the papers submitted with the agenda the following verbal feedback was provided by the Chairman in respect of the current areas of work for the other Task Groups set up by the Advisory Panel: -

Waste Collection and Disposal

- Garden Waste Collections
- Update on Waste Treatment PFI
- Current refuse collection and recycling services
- High level Outcomes
- Visit to Greencycle's materials recycling facility at Durham on 10 November by members

The next meeting would be held on 27 November at Westfields, Sandbach

Car Parking

- Civil Parking Enforcement in Congleton Borough
- Car Park Enforcement powers after vesting day
- Draft Car Park Strategy

The next meeting would be held on 1 December at 10.30am in Pyms Lane Depot Crewe.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership/Community Safety Task Group

- Expansion of Task Group remit to become the Community Safety Task Group
- Community Action Teams
- Offender Management
- Developments in Regulatory Committee Structures
- Visit to Styal Prison

The next meeting would be held on 8 December at 2.00pm in Pyms Lane Depot Crewe.

The reports of the Task Groups were noted.

(a) Strategic Development - 22 October 2008

It was reported that the Task Group meeting on 22 October had considered the following matters:

- Overlap with LDF Task Group
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- South Cheshire Sub Regional Study/ potteries regeneration
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- Major Projects update
- Sub Regional Economic Development Partnership

The following recommendations were noted from the Group:

- That the Strategic Development Task Group should remain separate from the LDF Task Group for the time being.
- That David Brown would discuss the role and purpose of the Group with Jamie Macrae and Andrew Knowles and report back.
- That a Development Management Task group would need to be set up in due course.

It was noted that the next meeting would take place at 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday 3 December 2008 at Westfields, Sandbach.

(b) Local Development Framework – 28 October.

It was reported that the Task Group meeting on 28 October had considered the following matters:

- Local Development Scheme progress
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Core Strategy (Cheshire East) evidence base
- Member training
- other business:-
 - Existing Development Plan policy and other informal guidance: carry forward / adoption by Cheshire East
 - Joint Working on Minerals and Waste

It was noted that the next meeting would take place at 1.00pm on Wednesday 3 December 2008 at Westfields, Sandbach.

8 ESTABLISHMENT OF TWO NEW TASK GROUPS FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND VISITOR ECONOMY

(a) Development Management Task Group

The Panel considered the setting up of a Development Management Task Group for Cheshire East.

The concept of Development Management had been introduced to members at the Places Induction Day in June 2008. A wide range of

Development Control and related services will comprise the new Development Management block. A copy of the original briefing note for members was attached to the paper

There were now urgent issues requiring wider debate and decisions among members including the Portfolio Holder and Cabinet. Namely:-

- 1) Committee governance arrangements.
- 2) Tiers of decision-making including some area based decision.
- 3) Scheme of officer delegation/member call-in.
- 4) Consistency of customer and front-line services including e-planning and location of services.
- 5) Consistency of charging for a variety of services.

The proposed terms of reference for the Task Group were suggested as follows

- To develop proposals for taking forward the Day 1 Development Management issues of concern to members (as listed above).
- To consider and recommend on continuity of service issues towards the integration of the four authorities into one Cheshire East.
- To oversee and develop a co-ordinated approach to Development Management including member training.
- To support the preparation of a Development Management Service Delivery/Business Plan.

RESOLVED - To set up a Development Management Task Group with the following membership and its terms of reference be as set out above:-

Councillors B Dykes, C Thorley, H Gaddum, G Walton, J Macrae (portfolio Holder) B Moran and S McGory

(b) Visitor Economy Task Group

The Panel noted that tourism was a significant sector of the local economy of Cheshire East, contributing around £600 million directly in 2007. Around two-thirds of revenue was generated from day visitors. A strong sense of place existed in Cheshire East and visitors were attracted by many factors such as natural environment, built heritage, cultural activities, strong local brands (such as Tatton Park and other gardens), and accessibility links to the adjoining conurbations of Merseyside, Manchester and the Potteries.

It was noted that Visitor economy services are delivered in a number of ways at present, but a number of issues had now been identified which required a member input at this stage. These included:-

- 1) How should the importance of the visitor economy be reflected in Cheshire East's organisation and resource?

- 2) How can the visitor economy be supported at the highest executive and political levels within the Authority?
- 3) How can balanced and effective alternative partnership models be achieved?
- 4) Does Cheshire East require a Visitor Economy Strategy to drive forward the key areas of the Authority (such as Planning, Transport, Cultural Services, Economic Development) and co-ordinate delivery with partners?

RESOLVED –

That a Visitor Economy Task group be established with representation from across the existing authorities to ensure continuity of service issues are reflected in the work programme and with the following terms of reference:

- 1 To develop a visitor economy model for both the strategic and delivery interface that could be regarded as an example of good practice in partnership working.
- 2 To consider and recommend on continuity of service issues towards the integration of the four authorities into one Cheshire East.
- 3 To oversee and develop a co-ordinated approach to visitor economy issues and opportunities.
- 4 To consider the need for a Visitor Economy Strategy to co-ordinate efforts within the Authority and with partners.

9 PLACES STRUCTURE

The Prosperity Block Lead presented a paper informing the Panel of the approval of the Places Structure for Cheshire East.

It was noted that the draft Places Structure had been circulated to staff and many comments had been received. These had been reviewed and many of them reflected in the final Structure, which was tabled at the meeting.

In particular it was noted there would be four Heads of Service with responsibility for the following areas of business: -

- Environmental Services
- Safe & Stronger Communities
- Planning & Policy
- Regeneration

Recruitment to these posts was currently underway and the third tier managers were expected to be appointed during November. The structure

also set out fourth tier managers who will report into them (e.g. Refuse and Cleansing Manager, Highway Operations). The Heads of Service, together with the Strategic Director, will take the lead in supporting the work of this Panel, the Portfolio Holders with responsibilities within Places, Cabinet and Council on place making and management matters. Until these posts are filled, interim arrangements have been established by the Chief Executive to provide appropriate support in the short-term including policy and budget development.

The Officer Places Steering Group, which had been co-ordinating the transition to the new Directorate, would be reorganised to align the block work to the functional structure.

RESOLVED – that the Places Structure and arrangements for supporting the Places Advisory Panel be noted.

10 **CHESHIRE SUB-REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY**

The Prosperity Block Lead submitted a paper for the Panel to consider the recently published draft Sub-regional Housing Strategy and the implications for Cheshire East. The Strategy had been published on behalf of the Cheshire Housing Alliance, representing Registered Social Landlords and Local Authorities across Cheshire.

The vision of the Strategy was to provide a housing offer that supports the creation of balanced, sustainable communities and the regeneration of the sub-region's most deprived neighbourhoods, through effective lobbying, partnership working and community engagement, to create a sub-region where all residents can achieve independent living in good quality, affordable homes that are appropriate to their needs.

The four priorities listed below have been identified as the key issues for the sub-region:

PRIORITY ONE: To increase the supply of affordable housing to support economic growth and development.

PRIORITY TWO: To make best use of the sub-region's existing housing stock.

PRIORITY THREE: To meet the housing and accommodation-related support needs of the sub-region's most vulnerable residents.

PRIORITY FOUR: To increase the supply of market housing to support continued economic growth and regeneration and to meet local housing needs.

RESOLVED - To endorse the emerging Sub-regional Strategy and the proposed housing priorities and confirm this as part of the consultation process.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.15 pm

Councillor G M Walton (Chairman)