

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet Member for Strategic Communities** held on Monday, 11th February, 2013 at Committee Suite 1 & 2, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor David Brown, Cabinet Member for Strategic Communities

In attendance

Councillor Sam Corcoran (morning session)
Councillor Louise Brown (afternoon session)

Officers

Paul Mountford, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies

Councillor Lesley Smetham, Cabinet Support Member

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

3 CHESHIRE EAST STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Communities announced that a ruling had been made over the weekend which may have an impact on consideration of this matter. He therefore intended to adjourn the meeting until 2.30 pm to allow time for the implications of the ruling to be considered.

Before the meeting was adjourned, Councillor S Corcoran was afforded the opportunity to speak. Councillor Corcoran asked that consideration be given to the exclusion of part of Sand 1, an area of land close to Junction 17 of the M6 at Sandbach which had previously been designated for employment use and which would, he felt, provide a good site for a business park; its inclusion within the SHLAA would, he felt, make it difficult to resist plans for residential development. He also asked that the number of houses proposed for Sand 1 be reduced from 700 which he felt was too many. The Cabinet Member undertook to consider the matter.

The meeting was then adjourned.

(Meeting reconvened at 2.30 pm)

The Cabinet Member considered the report which provided an update on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) required local authorities to do certain things in order to “boost significantly” the supply of housing. One was to ensure that the Local Plan met the full objectively assessed need for housing, as far as was consistent with the policies of the Framework. Another requirement was to identify and update annually a supply of specific “deliverable” sites sufficient to provide five years of housing against their housing requirements. The NPPF did not specify how the supply of housing should be identified and updated each year, but it was ordinarily done via a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

The advice provided that housing supply should be updated annually. To properly gauge supply, an assessment needed to be made at a single point in time to capture accurately all the various changes in supply and to provide a consistent baseline for measurement. Accordingly the current SHLAA took a base date of 1st April 2012.

The approach taken by the Council in certain key areas of preparing the SHLAA was detailed in the report.

The Cheshire East Local Plan Development Strategy stated that *‘Sufficient land will be provided to accommodate at least 27,000 homes between 2010 and 2030. This will be phased as follows:*

- *2010 to 2015 - at least 1,150 homes each year (5,750 total)*
- *2016 to 2020 - at least 1,250 homes each year (6,250 total)*
- *2020 to 2030 - at least 1,500 homes each year (15,000 total)*

This illustrated an intention to increase housing supply steadily over the plan period, and especially after 2020.

Employing the figures with the Development strategy document, a five year supply therefore equated to:

- 6,050 dwellings in Years 1 to 5 (April 2013 to March 2018)
- 7,000 dwellings in Years 6 to 10 (April 2018 to March 2023)
- 7,500 dwellings in Years 11 to 15 (April 2023 to March 2028)
- Totalling 20,550 for the 15 year period through to 31st March 2028.

One of the variables within the SHLAA methodology was how to deal with any under provision of housing within the current plan period. Over the decade leading to 2010, housing supply largely matched RSS provision, averaging 1147.5 homes a year. Consequently, it was assumed that there was no “carry over” from the previous decade and that the New

Local Plan base date of 2010 therefore started afresh. Supply was thus considered against the current Local Plan period:

- 2010-2012 Cheshire East net completions = 1,043 dwellings
- 2010-2012 Cheshire East Development Strategy = 2,300 dwellings
- Shortfall = 1,257 dwellings

This shortfall needed to be addressed so that there was no overall loss of provision over the plan period.

There were provisions within the NPPF for the application of buffers; this suggested that the redemption of any shortfall within a five year period should be limited to 20%. In any event it was recommended that this issue be addressed following the methodology proposed by the Home Builders Federation, as follows:

- Residual Plan Period = 2012-2030 = 18 years
- Residual dwellings = 27,000 – 1,043 = 25,957 dwellings
- Residual annualized figure = 1,442 dwellings
- Additional annual residual figure $1,442.06 - 1,350 = 92$ dwellings
- Additional 5-year residual figure $92.06 \times 5 = 460$ dwellings
- This therefore produces a new 5-year housing land supply figure (for years 1-5) of 6,510 dwellings, equating to an annual average of 1,302 homes.

Around 2,200 sites had been considered as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, of which approximately 1,600 sites were considered suitable for housing during the next 15 years. These sites could potentially provide a total of 49,645 dwellings over the next 15 years. It also identified 9,771 deliverable dwellings that were expected to come forward within the 1-5 year period.

The Council's Development Strategy and Policy Principles collectively comprised a draft Local Plan Core strategy. This would be followed by the Final Draft Core strategy which would then be submitted to the Secretary of State. Following examination, this would then be adopted and will become the Development Plan for the Borough. The Development Strategy was approved for consultation by the Council's cabinet on 10th December. At that meeting, it was also resolved that the Strategy be employed as a material consideration in decision-making.

Information on sites and build rates was set out in the report.

The revised SHLAA had examined all available sources of housing supply and assessed them in terms of their potential to contribute to housing supply over the next 15 years. The methodology had followed the example of the CLG good practice guidance and the approach of the Home Builder's Federation. Incorporating a 5% buffer within the 1-5 year supply, the SHLAA identified sufficient sites equivalent to 7.15 years housing supply for the years April 2013 to March 2018.

The Strategic Planning Board at its meeting on 8th February 2013 had resolved:

“That the Cabinet Portfolio Holder be recommended to approve for publication the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment attached at Appendix 2, subject to the minor amendments contained within the update report and subject to the inclusion of explanatory notes within the SHLAA document and reference within the map legend”.

Councillor L Brown attended the meeting in the afternoon and was afforded the opportunity to speak in relation to two sites in Macclesfield, the Rugby Club and Site C, which she felt should be redesignated from ‘developable’. The Cabinet Member commented that there was a need for a better definition within the SHLAA of such terms as ‘developable’ and ‘deliverable’, but also that the focus for the time being would be on the sites identified for the first five years. He stressed that the SHLAA was a rolling five year review and would be subjected to further testing and review.

RESOLVED

That

- (1) the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment should be amended to reflect the SPB recommendations, including expanded descriptions of ‘deliverable’, ‘developable’ and ‘not currently developable’;
- (2) the amended Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment should be published; and
- (3) the document should be used as part of the evidence base for the Cheshire East Local Plan.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 3.05 pm

Councillor David Brown (presiding)