

### **Strategic Development Member Task Group**

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2008 at 9.30 a.m. in the Leaders Room, Westfields, Sandbach.

Present:

Councillors D Brown, H Davenport, B Moran, D Neilson, G Walton, Mrs J Weatherill

Officers: Richard House, John Knight; Alan Millington, Stuart Penny, Paul Urwin

1. **Apologies:** Councillors Macrae and Bebbington. Andrew Ross; Cedric Knipe; Andrew Farrow.
2. **Introductions:** Councillor Walton welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Task Group.
3. **Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008 were agreed.
4. **Matters Arising:** None
5. **Overlap with LDF Task Group:** A general discussion took place regarding the overlap between this group and the LDF Task Group. The terms of reference for the group had been agreed at the last meeting but it was felt that there should be a steer from the portfolio holders (David Brown, Jamie Macrae and Andrew Knowles) as to what role the task group should perform in terms of providing them with advice and support. It was agreed
  - 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.
6. **Regional Spatial Strategy (Paul Urwin):** The Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West was adopted on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008. The strategy provides a framework for development and investment in the North West to 2021. Planning policy documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework must be in general conformity with the RSS and planning applications should be determined in accordance with it, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The new strategy replaces the previous RSS and the Cheshire Structure Plan. However, a small number of policies from the Structure Plan have been 'saved' and will be replaced by a future review of the RSS.

The Strategy is based on eight key spatial principles:

- Close the gap in economic performance
- Manage travel demand
- Marry opportunity and need
- Promote environmental quality
- Reduce emissions and adapt to climate change
- Promote sustainable communities
- Make best use of existing resources / infrastructure
- Mainstreaming rural issues

Growth and investment within the region should take account of the stated spatial priorities:

- 1<sup>st</sup> priority: the regional centres of Manchester and Liverpool
- 2<sup>nd</sup> priority: the inner areas surrounding these centres
- 3<sup>rd</sup> priority: 23 towns and cities in the three city regions (including Crewe and Macclesfield), with the potential for Local Development Frameworks to designate additional large suburban centres for growth
- 4<sup>th</sup> priority: towns and cities outside the city regions

The annual average rate of new housing provision to 2021 is 300 per annum for Congleton and 1,150 per annum for Cheshire East as shown below. For Congleton at least 80% should be on brownfield land. These overall and annual average housing provision figures are not absolute targets, and may be exceeded where justified by evidence of need, demand, affordability and sustainability issues and fit with relevant local and sub-regional strategies. Government Office for the North West has indicated that there may be potential for some aggregation of housing figures for Cheshire East but this would depend on evidence forthcoming from Strategic Housing Market Work and levels of need identified.

Local Development Frameworks are required to develop policies setting out requirements for decentralised renewable and low carbon energy provision in new developments. In advance of local targets being set, the RSS requires that new non-residential developments of 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> or more and residential developments of 10 or more units should secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources unless it can be demonstrated that this is not feasible or viable.

Influencing the forthcoming Partial review of RSS and the new single Regional Strategy was identified as a future role for the Group.

## **7. South Cheshire Sub Regional Study (Stuart Penny)**

In order to address the regional question of what impact the growth of Crewe (and to a lesser extent Congleton Borough) had on the regeneration of the North Staffordshire Conurbation, the North West Regional Assembly had commissioned a study, project managed by Cheshire County Council. Arups were appointed to undertake the project which focuses on Crewe and Congleton Boroughs but also covers a wider study area including Macclesfield, Stoke, Newcastle, Staffs Moorlands and North Shropshire.

The purpose of the study is to look at relationships and future policy. The consultants had produced a baseline study which has been subject to consultation and is nearing finalisation. The draft report shows that there is no discernible effect on regeneration in the Potteries from development in Crewe and Congleton. There is no need for a wider sub-regional strategy for the area at present.

## **8. Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Paul Urwin)**

The commissioning of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is a key step in producing the evidence base for the Cheshire East Core Strategy. A SHMA is required by Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' for housing market areas identified in the RSS.

The SHMA should:

- estimate housing need and demand in terms of affordable and market housing
- determine how the distribution of need and demand varies across the plan area.
- Consider future demographic trends and identify the accommodation requirements of specific groups such as homeless households, Black and Minority Ethnic Groups, first time buyers, disabled people, older people, Gypsies and Travellers and occupational groups such as key workers, students and operational defence personnel.

Although the SHMA would be funded by Crewe and Nantwich, Congleton and Macclesfield Councils out of existing budgets, because the total cost may exceed £100,000, the advice of the Cheshire East Governance Group is that authority to commission consultants to undertake this work should be first obtained from the Cheshire East Shadow Cabinet in December.

Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council will lead on the project and deal with the tendering process. The work should be completed by the early summer of 2009.

## **9. Major Projects Update**

A schedule of major projects was circulated. It was agreed that the number of sites on the schedule should be reduced and confined to strategic sites only. It should also be updated regularly and contain information on funding and any partnerships involved. Alan Millington and John Knight agreed to do this jointly. It was also agreed that members would look at one or two schemes in detail at each meeting.

**10. Sub-Regional Economic Development Partnership (Alan Millington)**

The proposal for a new Cheshire Warrington Sub-Regional Economic Partnership was currently on hold pending a meeting of the Sub Regional leaders and Directors of East and West Cheshire. The Cheshire East shadow Cabinet had expressed concerns regarding the emerging model which envisages a company limited by guarantee, creating 5 new posts and centralises a lot of activity that should be carried out by the three local authorities themselves.

It was agreed that there was a need for Jamie Macrae to explain to the task group what its remit is in terms of economic development.

With regard to the work already underway in relation to economic development under the Places steering Group, it was agreed that a report on the 'as is' situation for Congleton, Crewe and Nantwich, Macclesfield and the County Council should be considered at the next Task group meeting.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place at 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008 at Westfields, Sandbach.