

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet Member for Children and Families**
held on Thursday, 24th September, 2015 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor Rachel Bailey

Councillors in attendance:

Councillors Rhoda Bailey, E Brooks, T Dean, J Macrae' R Menlove, A Moran,
D Newton, M Sewart and D Stockton

Officers in attendance: -

Lee Baumanis
Adrian Fisher
Stuart House
Stewart Penny
Caroline Simpson
Cherry Foreman

Apologies

Councillors (none)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Councillor Laurence Clarke (Poynton Town Council) spoke of their concern at the level of consultation to date with town and parish councils. With reference to housing numbers he reported that the Neighbourhood Plan for Poynton Town Council supported the provision of 200 units, with there being no objection to housing, but that there was an objection to large developments; it was also considered that better use could be made of brownfield sites and they had estimated that 100 units could be provided by the use of such sites.

Henry Brooks (Tatton Estate Management) said he was delighted at the quantity of work carried out to keep the Local Plan on track and they had worked with the Team to ensure it was sound and completed in time. He did, however, query why land to north and west of Parkgate Industrial Estate had not been included as an infill site for which there had been 50% support in the consultation on the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan. He considered that sustainable development across the Borough needed to concentrate on mixed use

developments which would provide communities in which people could both live and work without having to use their cars.

Brian Chaplin (South Knutsford Residents Group) said residents were generally supportive of the plan so far and welcomed the strengthening of heritage policies as this was a vital aspect of both the visitor economy and business attractiveness. He asked whether sites not currently earmarked would become safeguarded and also whether more land would need to be taken from the green belt; as with Poynton there were other 'added value' sites which could be drawn into use.

Terry Griffiths (Knutsford Nether Ward Community Group) said she supported the other Knutsford Groups and that their concern was with the work in progress, sites that were potential additions, and also those in the green belt that had not been included in the proposals. They objected to the release of green belt for use as employment land. Also what scope was there for amending the proposed sites or for proposing new ones.

During the following speech the Portfolio Holder declared a personal interest as her husband was a farmer and knew the dairy farmer concerned.

Paul Moonan (Knutsford South East Residents Association) requested an assurance they would be engaged in the final amendments of the plan, and for confirmation of when this would be. He drew attention to 3 Council owned brownfield sites in Knutsford that could provide approximately 250 additional houses, prevent incursion into the green belt and make up some of the shortfall in housing being looked for. They did not support the use of land labelled 'L', on the Booths Park Estate, one of the main reasons for which was the effect it would have on a Site of Biological Importance and a local dairy farm. He also referred to a site 'K', adjacent to the Longridge Estate, which had the support of all the Knutsford Residents Groups for use for further housing and safeguarded land.

Paul Banford (Governing Body of Lower Park Primary School, Poynton) was concerned that the additional site, on land north of Hazlebadge Road, could affect the School due to the ability of that road to take increased traffic; this was the only access to the proposed site and there were already severe congestion problems. In addition the School and others in the vicinity were already full to capacity and substantial additional funding would be needed to accommodate extra pupils.

Ian Burton (Hatherton and Walgherton Parish Council, and ChALC) reiterated concerns regarding town and parish council consultations and said they would appreciate an opportunity to participate in the resumed hearings due to recommence in October.

Sue Helliwell (Local Resident) asked for clarification concerning the brownfield site at Radway Green (page 10) and also what was proposed for the land north of Radway Green as detailed on page 95. In addition she asked whether or not Alsager Town Council had been consulted and if not, could they be.

In response to the questions raised the Head of Planning Strategy reported that: -

In the light of the limited time available in which to prepare the revisions requested by the Inspector the usual 4 – 6 week period for consultation had not been possible. A meeting with Poynton Town Council and its Neighbourhood Planning Group had, however, been held at Poynton Civic Centre in August to try and ensure that the proposals were in line. He also stressed that the urban potential studies had looked at the use of brownfield sites as well as those on the periphery of the town.

The concerns regarding land around Parkgate would be taken on board and fed into future considerations. A design guide for the Borough was being prepared and they would be willing to work with local communities to pursue the objectives of mixed use communities.

The Inspector's timetable, Appendix 1 of the report, showed a clear level of engagement in respect of sites with further consultations built into it following publication of both the revisions and main modifications, so enabling the consideration of other sites not yet included although some might be too small to feature in a strategic plan. When assessing sites a variety of aspects including green belt, biodiversity and heritage were all taken into account and therefore sites needed to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The access difficulties of Hazelbadge Road were recognised and these would have to be looked at very carefully before making a final decision on its inclusion.

Clarification was provided that there were two sites at Radway Green, and it was the extension area that fell in the green belt; no decision had as yet been made with regard to the use of the site in Alsager.

4 CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL PLAN STRATEGY - SUGGESTED REVISIONS

The Head of Planning Strategy introduced this report and the decisions being requested. The Examination of the Local Plan Strategy had been suspended to allow further work to be carried out on key areas of evidence; that additional work had been carried out and submitted to the Inspector at the end of July 2015 following its consideration by the Cabinet at its meeting on 21 July (Minute 22 refers).

The Council had agreed to prepare modifications to other policies, to be submitted before the potential re-convening of the examination between July and September 2015, and to present draft modifications to sites to show how any uplift in housing and employment provision/numbers could be accommodated in terms of new or amended sites. In line with this commitment, the information appended to the report provided suggested revisions to strategic policies in Chapters 9-14 of the submitted Local Plan Strategy (LPS).

The Report summarised the feedback from engagement workshops, held in early August, with Town and Parish Councils, community groups and parties

interested in the spatial distribution of development in the LPS. It explained the comments made and considered whether changes should be made to the suggested revisions approved by Cabinet in July 2015.

Also included was an update on the Council's continuing site selection work which was intended to provide the Inspector with an update on the progress of that work, which was reaching the final stages of the Site Selection Methodology (SSM), and to demonstrate that the Council's programme to complete the remaining work met the identified target dates within the Inspectors timetable.

The Portfolio Holder recognised the clear desire of local councils and groups to work with the authority to help deliver the Local Plan. There would be a full opportunity to participate in the consultations and for input across the winter period the results of which would be fed back into the resumed hearing in the spring. The Plan was being prepared on two levels with the high level policies and housing numbers being considered at the hearings in October, at which there would not be any site discussions, and in parallel preparations were being made for the hearings in the spring into the site allocations.

In considering the very valued contribution of Neighbourhood Plans, and their reflection of local issues, it was reported that the tension was in respect of timing. Whilst the progress of the Local Plan could not be slowed very careful consideration was being given to how best to gather all that information together and how to incorporate it into the Local Plan process and there would be room for it to influence the site allocation stage in respect of both local and rural issues.

The Portfolio Holder was asked to endorse the suggested revisions to Chapters 9-14, 16-17 and to the Appendices of the submitted Local Plan. She thanked everybody for their comments and contributions, the Spatial Planning Team for bringing forward the report in the very challenging timeframe available and the Members and residents who had attended and joined in the debate; and

RESOLVED

That:

1. the suggested revisions to the submitted Local Plan Strategy, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be submitted to the Inspector;
2. the feedback from the engagement workshops held in early August 2015, as set out within Appendices 3, 4 and 5 of the report, be noted;
3. the Inspector be informed that, as a consequence of recommendation 2 above, no further suggested revisions are proposed;
4. it be noted that the sites included within Appendix 7 of the report are amongst those currently being considered by the Council as potential new or amended strategic site allocations and potential new additional Safeguarded Land.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.20 am