PLANNING FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4 February 2010 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Warwick District Councillors of the Forum: Councillor Dhillon (Chairman); Councillors Illingworth, Mrs Sawdon and Mrs Tyrrell.

Representatives of Town and Parish Councils and other Organisations of the Forum:

Barford Sherbourne & Wasperton Joint Parish Council	Councillor R Clay
Barford Sherbourne & Wasperton Joint Parish Council	Councillor D Morrow
Barford Sherbourne & Wasperton Joint Parish Council	Councillor R Mulgrue
Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council	Councillor S Dealy
Finham Residents Association (Coventry)	Mr B Fryer
Kenilworth Society	Mrs J Illingworth
Leek Wootton & Guys Cliffee Parish Council	Councillor R Coates
R.O.C.K	Mr A Garsed
Warwick Society	Councillor Mrs L Bromley
Warwickshire Association of Local Councils	Mr A Moore
Whitnash Town Council	Councillor N Colls
Whitnash Town Council	Councillor J Falp
Whitnash Town Council	Councillor B Smart

Apologies for absences were received from Warwick District Councillors Barrott, Ms Dean, Mrs Bunker, Guest, Kirton, MacKay and White.

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1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

   There were no declarations of interest.

2. **MINUTES**

   The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2008 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

   There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

   The Head of Planning updated the Forum on the current position with regard to the Regional Spatial Strategy.

   The draft regional spatial strategy was submitted to the Government in December 2008. This proposed that 10,800 additional dwelling be built in the district between 2006 and 2026. This was based on 2004 household projections.

The proposed total of 10,800 new homes submitted was lower than raw figures from 2004 which was around 20,000 new homes. The original raw total had been reduced by Coventry City Council taking on additional home development targets with an understanding by Warwick District Council there would be overspill back into this district.

The Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners survey suggested that a further 5,000 to 10,000 additional homes should be included on top of the 10,800 homes. The Warwick District Council Executive resolved that these higher figures were unacceptable.

There is to be an examination in public of the Regional Spatial Strategy starting in late April 2009 and running through to June 2009. Pre enquiry meetings had taken place and the main focus of the review would appear to be on housing levels and infrastructure to support these. The full programme for the review had been confirmed and participants had been put in place. The full details could be found by googling West Midlands RSS phase two.

The assessment of the Coventry and Warwickshire Warwick District aspect at the public examination would take place on 4 June 2009.

The panel had set a number of questions they wanted addressed by participants at the hearing. These were around housing needs and the infrastructure requirements for additional housing within the district. Particularly in relation to the suggested lower limit for housing compared to the NLP predictions.

A two thousand word limit had been set for submissions to the assessment. Both the Warwick District Council and Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sub Region submissions had been made. In brief this why it was felt that over 10,000 homes was inappropriate for Warwick District because of the infrastructure requirements for these homes.

It was believed that the report on the examination in public would be made in September or October 2009. Central Government would then consider this and produce guidance on West Midlands RSS. This guidance would be submitted for consultation followed by further consideration and approval by the Government. This would formulate the Policy for Housing needs within the sub region and district.

There were core documents to be considered at the examination in public this would include Nathaniel Lichfield Partners study and any evidence that this council wished to submit as a core document. These could then be referred to in the 2000 word submission.

The evidence submitted for consideration at the examination in public and to be considered would be available via the EiP website that was continually updated, but information did take a few days to appear.

5. **CORE STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Core Strategy was an approach that looked at development within the district over the next 20 years and defined how the local authority would envisage developments to be undertaken, but allowing for adaptation for changing circumstances.

At present the Council has been asked to look at how 10,800 could be built within the district and allow for possible overspill from Coventry on top of this figure.

The Core Strategy actually runs from 2006 to 2026. Therefore the Council can claim any properties built since 2006, all approved post 2006 and an allowance for windfall can be made against this figure. This reduces the requirement to the Council needing to find sites for around 6,000 new homes, which need to be met n allocated sites which the Core Strategy would state.

The draft Core Strategy should be adopted by the Council in early 2010. It would then be passed to Central Government for consideration, followed by public consultation and a hearing in 2010, with a view to formal adoption in early 2011.

The Regional Spatial Strategy would affect this process and could lead to a delay if for example there was a requirement for the Council to reconsider the number of properties it was required to allocate land for.

The Core strategy was an over arching framework on which the Council could provide additional guidance underneath to provide defined responsibilities e.g. energy efficiency and car parking. Warwick District Council would be considering town centre action plans and others in due course

The aim of the Council was to maximise Brown Field site development however the biggest sites had already been developed on, therefore those premium sites which do exist the Council would aim to get the most from. However there would need to be Green Field site development.

The allocation for the sub-region was 82,000 dwellings with a 50/50 split between the major urban areas and shire Districts. This was based on providing regeneration and expansion of Coventry. Coventry now accepted that they cannot meet all this development within their boundaries. However these homes were originally allocated to Warwick District Council at a regional level ours and therefore this allocation was being passed back to us. The work of the Sub Regional Forum was designed to manage the impact on Warwick District.

New house hold development figures, produced by White Hall for this year show 19,000 new dwellings for Warwick district. These were produced in Whitehall and were hard to challenge, but the Sub Regional Forum has advised that they need to exercise policy to enable regeneration rather than allowing things to develop naturally.

Rugby Borough and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough had the same targets as Warwick District. The re allocation of the Coventry allocation would largely be to the north and south based on a sub regional strategy over a number of years. Development is needed in the most sustainable locations and these were not

perfect but were based on evidence and policy. Employment was suggested to expand into the Rugby area as there would be potential overspill from the East Midlands region for housing.

A phasing Policy would be included within the Core Strategy for both Warwick District and Coventry to avoid overspill areas being used as preferences for developers earlier on.

Employment played a key part in the core strategy. There was a requirement to maintain a five year rolling programme for employment land that was to be based upon trends. Warwick District Council had commissioned an employment study which was due to report locally at what land would be appropriate to retain for employment.

The Local Plan could be extended beyond 2011 if no policies through the Core Strategy have been introduced by then.

An observation was made by a District Councillor that Coventry had an ambitious plan for growth which was verified by Nathaniel Lichfield not giving them anymore homes. The moratorium within this District had stopped housing developments in this District and in last two to three years the numbers of housing had gone up in Coventry. However, even if this rate of build continued in Coventry it would take 25 years for Coventry to reach its requirement of 24,000 new homes.

6. **QUSETION FROM KENILWORTH TOWN COUNCIL**

Kenilworth Town Council had submitted the following question to the meeting for a response:

"This Council takes planning issues very seriously and in that regard is gravely concerned at the lack of detail and information within supporting plans and drawings, particularly over the last 18 months, supplied from Warwick District Council, who are requested to clarify the measures they are taking to resolve the situation."

Councillor Ryan, representing Kenilworth Town Council at the Forum explained that the Council had had an exchange of correspondence with Warwick District Council over this matter and that their concerns had now been answered, for which the Town Council were appreciative.

The Head of Planning thanked Councillor Ryan for his comments. The Head of Planning went on to explain that Kenilworth Town Council had been unsure if applications were complete or incomplete before they were copied and sent to local councils. All applications were copied and sent to local councils as soon as they arrived because validation of an application can take up to 10 working days. The local councils were not aware of this and as an interim Warwick District Council were looking to notify local councils when the application became valid or invalid, at the same time as the applicant.

The formal 21 day consultation only starts from when an application is valid.

In order for the Town/Parish Councils to be consulted, on receipt, the computer programme has to treat all applications as being valid at that time, even if they were subsequently found not to be, and that means they could receive a consultation letter, in every case, saying the application was valid.

8. **QUESTION FROM WARWICKSHIRE AND WEST MIDLANDS ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

Warwickshire and West Midlands Association of Local Councils submitted the following question for consideration:

"Please could the Head of Planning explain who has the authority to enforce the removal of illegally dumped builders materials and other debris from a river flood plain?"

The Head of Planning explained that originally the question had focussed on two specific sites within the district, of which he believed the situation had now been resolved at both.

The Head of Planning explained that the powers depend on the situation and based on t who has the best powers to resolve the situation. As an example, any potential change of use of land could be Warwick District Council Planning department, Waste material it could be Warwickshire County Council, fly tipping Warwick District Council Waste Management Team. Normally for flood plains the first point of call would be the Environment Agency because they had specific powers for resolving the situation quickly.

8. **JOHN ARCHER – HEAD OF PLANNING**

As this was the last time the Committee would meet before the retirement of the John Archer from Warwick District Council, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank him for the work he had undertaken for the Council and the help to the Forum.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Planning Forum is 21 September 2009 at 7.00pm. Any Items for inclusion on the agenda need to be submitted to Committee Services at Warwick District Council before 10.00am on 10 September 2009.

(The meeting ended at 8.35pm)