

Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 7th November, 2006

PRESENT: Councillor A Carter in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, R Harker,
T Leadley and N Taggart

18 Declaration of Interests

The following Members declared personal/prejudicial interests for the purpose of Section 81(3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 8 to 13 of the Members Code of Conduct

Councillor Carter and Councillor Blackburn – declared personal interests in item 8 ‘Local Development Framework – Update and Progress Report’ through being members of the West Leeds Regeneration Board which had been consulted on proposals for the West Leeds Gateway AAP (minute 22 refers)

Councillor Harker – declared a personal interest in item 8 ‘Local Development Framework – Update and Progress Report’ through being a trustee of the Thackray Medical Museum which is sited on the edge of the EASEL AAP (minute 22 refers)

19 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Blake, Congreve and J Procter

20 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the last Development Plan Panel meeting held on 15th August 2006 be approved as a correct record

21 Local Development Framework - Annual Monitoring Report 2006

The Panel received a first draft of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Annual Monitoring Report

Officers advised Members that work was still ongoing to obtain the information which was not available when the report was prepared, and that further discussion was being undertaken with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to clarify the indicators the LDF will be monitored against

RESOLVED –

- (i) To note the contents of the draft AMR for 2006
- (ii) That a further draft report would be presented to the next meeting

22 Local Development Framework - update and progress report

The Director of Development submitted a report setting out the current position and next steps on various documents which would comprise the Leeds LDF

Additional information comprising leaflets advertising consultation events for West Leeds Gateway AAP, a summary and comments from the informal, Regulation

25 consultation on the EASEL AAP and information relating to the 9 tests which will comprise the Test of Soundness against which Development Plan Documents (DPDs) will be measured, were circulated at the meeting

Officers spoke to the report and provided the following information:

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

This was currently with the Planning Inspectorate, with the Inspector's report anticipated in December 2006. Once the SCI had been approved it would need to be adopted through the Council's processes and would become the route map for how consultation on planning issues would be conducted

City Centre AAP

Following Regulation 25 consultation, the responses received have been considered with officers now working on a set of Preferred Options, focussing on the following key areas:

Open Space – with work on mapping the existing green areas in the city centre being undertaken together with aspirations for new spaces including pedestrian and cycle routes being considered, including how these would link with other developments

Proposal areas, ie areas which have the potential to be significantly redeveloped over the next 10-15 years – with discussions being undertaken with major landowners, ie the LGI and the Universities on their aspirations

Transport – with internal meetings being held to develop an innovative transport strategy

Members were advised of a proposal from Metro to extend the loop road south of the city centre. Whilst this was considered a radical suggestion and had implications for bus routes and car parking, it could lead to greater pedestrian areas, for example around Leeds Parish Church and City Square

Whilst further public consultation would be carried out in Spring 2007, officers requested an informal session with Panel Members to discuss the Preferred Options at an early stage ahead of a formal report to Development Plan Panel

Concerning the informal consultation which had been carried out, officers advised that whilst there had not been a huge response, the comments made represented a good balance of different interests with comments from both the community and statutory bodies

EASEL AAP

Details of the Regulation 25 consultation process were provided. Officers stated that the response had been positive and that through working with Yorkshire Planning Aid, areas of the community which were usually hard to reach had been engaged, although work was still needed to target younger people and Asian men. A range of events held at different times through the day had proved successful as had a system to obtain immediate feedback on proposals

Further work would be undertaken on baseline information and a draft set of Preferred Options would be drawn up with consultation on these being anticipated in February/March 2007

Officers were reminded of the need for this work to be advanced quickly to harmonise with the finalisation of the EASEL contract

Members expressed concerns on whether the level of housing being demolished within the scheme would be replaced by Affordable Housing. Officers

stated they were working with the ALMO on this matter and Members were informed this would be an issue for the developer to deliver what was specified in the contract

In response to a query regarding the involvement of Education Leeds officers in issues relating to Bankside and Harehills Primary Schools, Members were advised that dialogue between the departments was ongoing

Aire Valley Leeds AAP

Members were informed that following the consultation which had been carried out, an assessment was being made of the responses together with technical work, including a financial viability study to help underpin the Preferred Options which would be drawn up. Whilst the responses had come mainly from landowners this maybe reflected the limited residential development currently within the subject area

Regarding the consultation process whilst a variety of events had been held, officers stated that communities in Hunslet, Middleton, Holbeck Moor and Richmond Hill perhaps did not see the direct impact of the Aire Valley AAP on their area

Members stressed the importance of good and frequent public transport links to the area to enable access to new jobs and new homes

Regarding the Knostrop WWTW, whilst remediation work had been undertaken by Yorkshire Water, Members considered that further work would be needed to enable the pollution to be dealt with effectively. Officers stated that they were working with Yorkshire Water on this matter and that whilst the company considered the treatment works were still necessary, with better technology a smaller operation might be possible. Members were also informed that through raised environmental standards and legislation, it was likely that Yorkshire Water would need to review the way it operated on site

It was suggested that this matter could be taken up by the Council's representatives on the Aire Valley Partnership Board

West Leeds Gateway AAP

Members were advised that the consultation process was currently underway on issues and options for the WLGAAP, with the current round of consultation concluding on 11th December. The feedback which had been received so far was positive and a variety of events and venues had been arranged to engage as widely as possible

Reference was made to an anonymous leaflet which had been circulated in the area which contained erroneous information about the future of the area. Members were informed that officers had been working hard to dispel the rumours and to focus on the positive developments which were emerging in the area

Core Strategy

Officers informed Members that early engagement on the Core Strategy was occurring, with workshops, exhibitions and briefings being carried out. Once the current consultation had been undertaken then an options paper would be worked up for the informal, Regulation 25 consultation to be carried out

Leeds Evidence Base

Officers referred to the paper which had been tabled regarding the Test of Soundness and informed Members that at independent examination a DPD would be looked at against 9 tests. Anecdotal evidence suggested that some Local

Authorities had failed the Test of Soundness mainly on the evidence base which should be robust and credible to support the strategies, policies and allocations in the LDF

Members were informed that officers had met with the DCLG on this matter but that little information was available and that it would be for the Planning Inspector to judge whether the evidence base was sufficient. The Head of Planning and Economic Policy stated that whilst work was already evidenced it could be that a more strategic approach would need to be adopted in the future

Regional Spatial Strategy

Officers advised that the Evidence in Public had concluded and that the Inspector's report was anticipated in early 2007. There would be the opportunity for changes to the plan and Members were advised that issues relating to housing, transport and Leeds City Region might wish to be considered, with the final plan anticipated in Autumn 2007

Saved Policies

A formal protocol for saving policies had now been issued by DCLG. However there was insufficient information relating to saving of supporting text. Members were advised that some policies had been updated with no changes to the supporting text and vice versa, and that advice from the Chief Legal Services Officer was being sought to clarify the position

In response to queries from the Panel, officers reported their intention was to save as many policies as possible to ensure continuity of the planning process

RESOLVED – To note the report, the circulated information and the comments now made

23 Any other urgent business

Further to minute 11 of the meeting held on 18th July 2007. where approval was sought to establish an LDF Consultation Advisory Group, with the Chair being a member of the Development Plan Panel, Members were asked to confirm the nomination made at that meeting

RESOLVED – That Councillor Cleasby be nominated as Chair of the LDF Consultation Advisory Group

24 Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 5th December 2006 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall