

SCRUTINY BOARD (CITY DEVELOPMENT)

TUESDAY, 6TH APRIL, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor R Pryke in the Chair

Councillors S Armitage, C Beverley,
R Downes, T Grayshon, A Ogilvie,
D Schofield, S Smith and G Wilkinson

111 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the April meeting of the Scrutiny Board (City Development).

112 Late Items

The Chair agreed to accept the following documents as supplementary information:-

- Briefing Note on Employment Land (Agenda Item 7) (Minute 116 refers)
- Draft Final Report – Inquiry to review the Method by which Planning Applications are Publicised and Consultation Undertaken (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 118 refers)

The documents in question were not available at the time of the agenda despatch, but circulated by email and made available to the public on the Council's web site prior to today's meeting.

113 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

114 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors R Harington, M Lobley and T Murray.

115 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th March 2010 be approved as a correct record.

116 Request for Scrutiny - Loss of Land Allocated for Employment

Referring to Minute 105 of the meeting held on 9th March 2010, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on a request for scrutiny concerning the loss of land allocated for employment.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents:-

- the original request received for scrutiny from Councillor B Cleasby concerning the loss of land allocated for employment which had been considered by the Board at their meeting on 9th March 2009
- a list of Lost Employment Sites along the A65 Corridor 2010

In addition to the above documents, a copy of a report entitled 'Briefing Note on Employment Land' prepared by the Team Leader, City Development was circulated for the information/comment of the meeting.

The Chair also allowed the submission of a document provided by Councillor B Cleasby entitled 'The Local Economy' which had been extracted from the Leeds UDP Review – Volume 1; Written Statement- Adopted July 2006 to assist the Board with their deliberations.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to the request for scrutiny and to Members' queries and comments:-

Councillor B Cleasby
 Councillor C Fox, Chair, Development Plan Panel
 Paul Gough, Team Leader, City Development
 Terry Smith, Planner Data Team, City Development

The Chair invited the above attendees to provide relevant background information and to highlight key issues in relation to the request for scrutiny and Board Members sought clarification on the points raised.

Councillor B Cleasby

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- the need for the Scrutiny Board to consider an inquiry to look into the loss of employment land for housing across the city, and the enormous pressure this places on existing infrastructures particularly in the North West
- re-development of the former Kirkstall Forge and Clariant sites were cited as examples
- a view that there seemed to be no designated plan in place to protect and retain employment land on a city-wide basis
- identification of employment sites for specific purposes as set out in "The Local Economy' document

Councillor C Fox

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- the need for the Board to consider whether or not an inquiry into the use of employment land was the appropriate way forward in view of the current work being undertaken by the Development Plan Panel on employment land through the emerging update and review of the Local

Development Framework. The work being guided by the Development Plan Panel included the preparation of the Core Strategy to be adopted in 2011, the Site Allocation Development Plan to commence in early 2011 and the Employment Land Review which was underway and would report to the Panel in mid 2010

Paul Gough

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- the briefing note circulated on employment land and the proposed timetable around the preparation for the Core Strategy and Site Allocations Development Plan and Employment Land Review
- that Councillor Cleasby's concerns on employment land had been fully recognised and that such comments would be fed into the reviews being undertaken which would include wide public consultation and the public inquiry process associated with the Core Strategy and a future Site Allocations Development Plan
- that the bank of current employment land was sufficient to provide 33 years of supply at current take up rates
- the need for officers to continue to apply the criteria in UDP Policy E7 in examining whether employment sites and premises can be used for alternative, non-employment uses

Terry Smith

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- the background criteria behind the current UDP Policy E7 proposals
- reference to windfall sites and the Council's failure to win such cases on appeal
- reference to the recently published Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4) issued by the Government which has given a broader interpretation to what constitutes economic development and which will need to be taken into account in the future application of Policy E7

In addition, the following points were referred to:-

- clarification of whether or not the mixed development at Kirkstall Forge could be changed over a period of time
(The Team Leader responded and confirmed that the developer at Kirkstall Forge was currently looking at the configuration of the development mix that the amount of employment uses was proposed to be increased)
- preference for using brownfield sites for housing development in order to reduce the pressure to encroach on Green Belt sites
- the national measure of 'local' employment sites being a 15 minute drive time and the fact that this provided a 'catchment' which enabled developers proposing the development of employment sites for alternative uses being able to point to alternative employment sites

in that locality. The consequences people travelling further to work by car led to a discussion about road congestion and poor transport infrastructure

(The Team Leader responded and referred to the preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which is being prepared as part of the emerging Core Strategy. He stated that Leeds, as a growing city, was suffering from increased congestion in a number of locations within the District but confirmed that such issues were being addressed in the Core Strategy)

The Chair then invited Councillors Cleasby and Fox to sum up prior to the Board making a formal decision on the request for scrutiny.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That, on balance this matter was best left to the Development Plan Panel and consequently the request by Councillor Cleasby for scrutiny of this issue was refused.
- c) That, in order to monitor progress of this issue, the successor Scrutiny Board be asked to consider the report of the Director of City Development on the Employment Land Review which was to be considered by the Development Plan Panel in the summer of 2010.

(Councillor C Beverley arrived at 10.05am during discussions of the above item)

(Councillor T Grayshon arrived at 10.30am during discussions of the above item)

117 Public Buildings and Reducing CO2 Emissions

Referring to Minute 108 of the meeting held on 9th March 2010, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on Public Buildings and reducing CO2 Emissions.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Reducing CO2 Emissions in Council Buildings – Report of the Chief Officer Corporate Property Management
- Climate change – LZC technology delivery and in our estate – Report of the Director of City Development

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Member's queries and comments:-

John Kearsley, Chief Officer Corporate Property Management
Peter Lynes, Group Manager, City Development

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification as to why there was a 10% increase in street lighting in relation to NI 185 Performance data
(The Chief Officer Corporate Property Management responded that Highways had anticipated that this would be an impact in the early stages of the new PFI scheme but would change to a decrease in overall energy use as the scheme progressed)
- clarification of the Council's position in relation to installing LED lighting, especially in Morley Town Hall
(The Chief Officer Corporate Property Management responded and informed the meeting that a programme of energy efficiency surveys was being carried out to develop business cases for initiatives and if LED lighting was recommended for that type of building, then it would be installed accordingly)
- clarification of the Energy Project Board's role in relation to Low Zero Carbon Emissions
- clarification of how the department can promote the use of wind turbines to members of the public
(The Group Manager responded and outlined the department's current criteria in relation to wind turbines)
- the need for the department to address the issue of sustainable energy in the future and to consider installing micro generation on public buildings as a visual impact statement e.g. Leeds Civic Hall
(The Chief Officer Corporate Property Management and the Group Manager responded that priority was currently being given to initiatives to reduce consumption as these have more impact with shorter payback periods. Renewable energy schemes were being considered and may become more attractive and viable with the recent proposals for feed in tariffs)
- the need to continue the good practice of recycling within public buildings e.g. printer cartridges etc
(The Group Manager responded and confirmed that more and more items were being recycled within the authority)

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That a progress report on this issue be submitted to the new Board in the new municipal year.

(Councillor D Schofield left the meeting at 11.00am during discussions of the above item)

118 Inquiry to Review the Method by which Planning Applications are Publicised and Consultation Undertaken

Referring to Minute 104 of the meeting held on 9th March 2010, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Board's Inquiry to review the method by which planning applications are publicised and consultation undertaken.

A copy of a document entitled 'Draft Report – Inquiry to review the Method by which Planning Applications are publicised and Consultation Undertaken' was circulated for the information/comment of the meeting.

The Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser informed the meeting that he had received three comments from Councillor M Lobley, namely:-

- Recommendation 3 – clarification as to whether the Board had agreed disadvantaged areas or actually meant hard to reach groups
(The Board agreed to include both in the recommendation)
- Recommendation 3 – clarification as to whether the Board had agreed a 2012 date to seek funding of additional posts
(The Board agreed the date of 2012 in the recommendation)
- a request to include the need to improve the guidance note and correspondence sent to neighbours affected by planning applications explaining their rights
(The Board was in agreement with this comment)

The Board also noted that the Director of City Development and the Executive Member Development and Regeneration had been consulted on the content of the document and had not made any specific comments.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser reported that the main costs associated with the Board's recommendations was the potential for up to 8 Community Planner posts. At an average cost of £45K per post then this would mean a further investment in the service of about £360K over and above existing staffing levels.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That, subject to incorporating the above comments, approval be given to the Board's final report and recommendations.
- c) That the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to produce a formal response to the recommendations in line with normal procedures for scrutiny inquiry reports as set out in Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15.1.

119 Annual Report 2009/10

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting the draft of the Scrutiny Board (City Development)'s contribution to the Scrutiny Boards' Annual Report.

RESOLVED – That the Scrutiny Board (City Development)'s contribution to the composite Annual Report be approved.

120 Forward Plan of Key Decisions, latest Executive Board Minutes and the Board's Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st April to 31st July 2010, the Executive Board minutes of 10th March 2010 and on a list of issues which were not brought into the Board's work programme in the current year.

RESOLVED- That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

121 Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair reminded Members that this was the last Board meeting within the current municipal year. He personally thanked Board Members, external witnesses and officers for their support during the year.

(The meeting concluded at 11.20am)