

SCRUTINY BOARD (SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND CULTURE)

THURSDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor M Rafique in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, D Cohen, M Lyons,
R Harington, M Ingham, J McKenna,
B Urry, J Procter, B Anderson and
S Bentley

57 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

58 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

59 Late Items

There were no formal late items submitted to the agenda. However supplementary information relating to Agenda Item 6 – ‘Leeds Local Development Framework Core Strategy – Appendix 2 maps’ had been previously circulated and published.

Also circulated at the meeting were summarised comments from the Scrutiny Board (Health and Wellbeing and Adult Social Care) on Leeds’ draft Local Development Framework Core Strategy. It was noted that this document was only received immediately prior to the meeting and as such had not been fully considered by Members present.

60 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations made.

61 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from Councillors P Wadsworth (J Procter substituting), J Chapman (S Bentley substituting) and J Marjoram (B Anderson substituting).

62 Leeds Local Development Framework Core Strategy

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the Leeds Local Development Framework Core Strategy (Core Strategy) to the Board. The Core Strategy forms part of the Council’s budget and policy framework and the Board was invited to make formal comments

before the final draft is considered by the Executive Board for recommendation to full Council.

Present to discuss the Leeds Local Development Framework Core Strategy with Members were:

Cllr P Gruen – Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services;
Cllr N Taggart – Chair of Development Plan Panel;
Cllr J Illingworth – Chair of Scrutiny Board (Health & Wellbeing and Adult Social Care); and
Steve Speak – Deputy Chief Planning Officer.

Councillor Gruen introduced the Leeds Local Development Framework Core Strategy to the Board. He highlighted the challenges faced by the Council both currently and in the future. He highlighted that new homes will be built across Leeds but that the Council had an opportunity to make sure that these properties are built in the right places.

Steve Speak went on to take Members of the Board through the chronology of the development of the Leeds Local Development Framework Core Strategy from its inception in 2006. Further to this Councillor Taggart confirmed that this Strategy has been scrutinised throughout its development through the work of the Development Plan Panel.

Councillor Illingworth addressed the Board and voiced his concerns about the importance of the links between spatial planning and public health. It was highlighted to the Board that deprivation is a serious issue in Leeds which is often masked by the affluence of outer suburbs.

Members went on discuss the report in detail firstly welcoming the Core Strategy and highlighting the importance of the Strategy being approved and adopted as soon as possible, and given a chance to succeed.

The Board expressed concern about the potential for confusion and future dispute arising from the current format of the key diagram, particularly in relation to the indicative depiction of potential new housing locations.

Having been informed that the diagram was a required element of the strategy, Members welcomed the support of the Executive Member and officer present to the proposal to add an appropriate note to the diagram and to emphasise the overriding importance of policy SP7 (Distribution of Housing Land and Allocations).

Members considered it important that the Core Strategy should be able to stand up to legal challenges and appeals that might occur in the future. The Board were informed of the engagement that had taken place with Counsel in the preparation of the strategy.

Members also commented that there were a number of drafting issues with the Core Strategy and thought it important that such documents are proof read before they are published.

Members debated the meaning of sustainable development and how this can be achieved economically, environmentally and in terms of education. At this point Members also highlighted the importance of maintaining allotments as green spaces and suggested that the Core Strategy should make more significant references to this issue. It was also suggested that specific reference to Leeds as a Child Friendly City needed to be included.

Public health was discussed by the Board, specifically that of the inner city, and it was agreed that the comments from the Scrutiny Board (Health and Wellbeing and Adult Social Care) should be included with the comments sent to the Executive Board.

Members also discussed the Site Specific Allocation process which is currently being progressed, and stressed that Member views needed to be taken into account.

The Chair sought reassurance that the core strategy reflected the Board's previous recommendation to include employment and skills obligations in planning applications over a certain threshold.

Discussions concluded with the Chair summarising the meeting stating that Members welcomed the Core Strategy and accepted the need for it to move forward.

RESOLVED –

(a) that the Board's comments be drafted by the Principal Scrutiny Adviser and agreed by email correspondence.

(b) that the comments of the Board be submitted to the Executive Board alongside the comments of the Scrutiny Board (Health and Wellbeing and Adult Social Care) in their entirety.

63 Date and time of next meeting

10 am, Thursday 22nd November 2012, Civic Hall, Leeds. (A pre-meeting will take place for Members at 09:30am.)