

Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 6th January, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor C Fox in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, J Blake, P Gruen,
T Hanley, R Harker, T Leadley and
A Parnham

25 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made during the consideration of this item, however, two declarations were made at a later point in the meeting (Minute No. 29 refers).

26 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillor Ogilvie.

27 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2nd December 2008 be approved as a correct record.

28 The Housing Challenge: The Yorkshire and Humber Plan - 2009 Update

A report was submitted by the Director of City Development presenting a proposed response to the informal consultation exercise which was being undertaken on the 2009 Update of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan.

In considering the report the Panel was invited to recommend the draft response to Executive Board for approval and submission to the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Assembly by the 30th January 2009 deadline.

Following the adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy (Yorkshire and Humber Plan) in May 2008, the Panel noted that whilst there had been support for the Plan's commitment to regeneration, the need for affordable housing, the role of Leeds City Centre and the need for sustainable development, there had also been concerns raised in relation to the scale of the housing growth envisaged for Leeds. The Panel was reminded that such concerns had been reflected in the White Paper Motion entitled, 'Regional Spatial Strategy' which was unanimously resolved at the meeting of Council on 19th November 2008.

Members considered a wide range of issues relating to the proposed response. The key areas of debate were as follows:-

- The Panel noted that separate to the Council's response, individual Members could submit their own independent responses to the consultation exercise prior to the deadline;

- Members emphasised the need to promote the role of the Leeds City Region in terms of regenerating the housing market within Leeds and the surrounding area;
- The Panel suggested that evidence illustrating the decline in the number of planning applications which had been submitted in Leeds was incorporated into the Council's final response;
- In debating a reference within the proposed response which related to a more realistic target being established for housing growth in Leeds, specific concerns were raised in relation to how this proposal would affect the role of the local authority in addressing the problems associated with current levels of housing provision and affordability. Reference was also made to how a revision to the target may be perceived by the public;
- Members considered the proposed consultation responses relating to gypsies, travellers and travelling show people and raised concerns about the phrasing of the response relating to whether additional provision required in one local authority could be met by neighbouring local authorities;
- The Panel discussed the extent to which alternative sources of funding for regeneration and housing development had been sought, and made enquiries into any other potential sources which could be pursued;
- Having queried the focus of the questions set by the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Assembly as part of the consultation exercise, the Panel noted that concerns relating to this matter had previously been raised;
- Emphasis was placed upon the integral role which needed to be played by the Council in addressing the issues currently being faced in relation to housing provision and affordability.

In conclusion, the Panel acknowledged all of the points which had been raised and suggested that further discussions relating to such issues should be undertaken at Executive Board, when the Board considered the Council's proposed response for final approval.

RESOLVED – That Executive Board be recommended to approve the Council's response to the informal consultation exercise on the 2009 Update to the Yorkshire and Humber Plan for submission to the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly by the 30th January 2009 deadline.

(Councillor Blake joined the meeting at 2.00 p.m. during the consideration of this item)

29 Leeds Local Development Framework Area Actions Plans - Progress Report

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing an update on the overall progress made in relation to the four Area Action Plans (AAPs) which were being developed as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Leeds. Details were also provided on the further technical work being undertaken for inclusion within the submission documents required for independent examination.

Members received a brief introduction to the report and a position statement on each of the four AAPs. The key points raised were as follows:-

City Centre AAP

- Members noted that priority was currently being given to the development of the LDF Core Strategy rather than the City Centre AAP until the Strategy had been progressed to the 'Preferred Options' stage;
- The Panel discussed the current boundary of the City Centre AAP, and whether it could be revised in the future.

West Leeds Gateway AAP

- The Panel noted that it was currently anticipated that the pre-submission consultation on the AAP would be held in spring 2009, with final submission to the Secretary of State in late summer 2009;
- With regard to a range of system built housing in the New Wortley area, Members discussed the different funding arrangements available for the demolition and rebuilding of such accommodation as opposed to refurbishment in line with housing decency standards;
- Having noted that an assessment of Armley Mills was currently taking place to determine its future potential to accommodate alternative uses, Members enquired about what the alternative uses may be and emphasised the need to ensure that any proposals should not prohibit the use of the facilities by school parties;
- An update was also received on the requirement to review the area's greenspace and to undertake an assessment of transportation issues.

Aire Valley Leeds AAP

- Members learned that following the 'Preferred Options' stage, there was a requirement to establish a robust evidence base in order to demonstrate that the schemes within the AAP were viable. In line with this requirement, a financial model had been produced and was being tested, with further testing being undertaken on a transport model;
- The Panel received an update on the development of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme, the issue of waste management and a bid which had been submitted to develop an 'Urban Eco-Settlement' in the lower Aire Valley.

East and South East Leeds (EASEL) AAP

- Members noted the key issues arising from the consultation undertaken as part of the development of the AAP's 'Preferred Options' and received an update on the work currently being carried out to establish the satisfactory evidence base required in a range of areas. Such areas included the scale of development and potential demolition in the area, the EASEL drainage strategy, the EASEL transport strategy, the EASEL and Aire Valley Town and Local Centre Assessment and issues surrounding improved greenspace. It was confirmed that the firm evidence base was scheduled to be completed by March 2009;
- The Panel briefly discussed the location of sites which may developed as part of the EASEL initiative in the future and the role of Section 106 monies in the delivery of affordable housing.

RESOLVED –

- (a). That the progress which has been made in relation to the four AAPs and the proposed next steps in their development be noted;
- (b). That the next stages in the production of the submission documents for independent examination be noted.

(Councillor Anderson declared a personal interest in relation to this item due to his respective positions as Director of West North West Leeds Homes ALMO and Chair of the 'Friends of Leeds Museums' organisation).

(Councillor Gruen joined the meeting at 3.10 p.m. during the consideration of this item).

30 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 3rd February 2009 at 1.30 p.m. in the Civic Hall, Leeds.
(To be confirmed)