

ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE

20 JUNE 2018

PRESENT:

Councillors Cox (Chairman), Drinkwater (Vice-Chair), Mrs England, Mrs Evans, Mrs Grange, Marshall, Warfield and Mrs Stanhope MBE.

(In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.17 Councillor Wilcox attended the meeting).

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Baker and Mrs Fisher. The Cabinet Member, Councillor Pritchard also gave his apologies and Councillor Wilcox attended in his place.

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th March 2018 as circulated be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

20 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the Committee were circulated as a reminder of their role.

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference as taken from the Lichfield District Council Constitution be noted.

21 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee discussed the work programme for the forthcoming year and it was reported that in addition to what had been circulated, it had been organised to have the Environment Agency attend the September meeting to discuss their rational regarding giving planning application representations.

Member then requested an item on back land development policies as many applications had come forward recently and it was agreed that the Chairman would discuss this further with Officers.

It was then requested to have an initial briefing paper on performance of self builds in the district as the government were encouraging this. It was reported that there was a Council register that helped match interest to opportunities and so data could be reported.

It was noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen would be meeting with the Cabinet Member to discuss forthcoming items where the Committee could assist and have an input. Members were encouraged to forward any ideas for the work programme to the Chairman.

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted and amended as agreed.

22 LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

The Committee received a report giving an update on the Local Plan and related spatial matters. It was reported that the Local Plan Allocations document had now been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and was now awaiting an Examination date. It was then reported that the consultation on the Local Plan Review Scope had concluded with around 1000 comments received which were now being analysed by Officers with a report being brought to Members in due course.

The main area of discussion was centred on the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area Housing Shortfall and the Strategic Growth Study report that had been commissioned by the 14 Local Authorities that make up the Birmingham Housing Market Area and prepared by GL Hern and Wood. It was expressed that the study did not recommend numbers of housing to be allocated to each area but an aid to help communications between all the authorities and ensure the any development was right for the area with adequate infrastructure.

Members had concerns on the impact on the greenbelt and blurred boundaries with other areas and felt the report implied that it should be built on before other sites as the easier option. The Committee also sought reassurance that Birmingham City Council had considered all available brownfield sites had been considered. It was reported that not all sites within Birmingham would be allocated for housing or indeed suitable for housing and some might be for employment uses. It was confirmed that the independent study had verified the number of houses required to meet Birmingham's housing supply. It was also reported that from the study, this housing number shortfall had reduced by 10k and with the scope of high density housing, this could reduce even further.

Members felt that infrastructure was already stretched in the Lichfield District area and this would have to be addressed before any major development occurred.

There was further concern that the study was based on a date range up to 2031 and would set a standard of taking on housing beyond this date.

It was noted that there was an Officer Steering Group for the whole 14 authorities and a position statement would be published in the near future.

There was some discussion requesting an update to the Brook Hay/Twin Rivers site and it was noted that there had been some interest by developers and although not including in the Local Plan, was mentioned by the Inspector during examination and was a reason why a Local Plan Review was beneficial.

It was noted that Neighbourhood Plans would be progressing to referendums soon.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress associated with the Local Plan Allocations and Local Plan Review be noted;
- (b) That the issues surrounding the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area Housing Shortfall and the Strategic Growth Study be noted;
- (c) That the proposal to update the Council's Statement of Community Involvement be noted; and
- (d) The recent progress in relation to neighbourhood plans within Lichfield District be noted.

(The Meeting closed at 7.07 pm)

CHAIRMAN