

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

LOCAL PLAN TASK GROUP

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Local Plan Task Group held on
Wednesday, 15th March, 2017 at 10.00 am in the Miles Room - Town Hall**

PRESENT: Councillor R Blunt (Chairman)
Councillors A Bubb, J Moriarty, M Peake (Vice-Chairman), Miss S Sandell,
D Tyler and Mrs E Watson

Officers:
Alex Fradley, Planner

1 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C J Crofts.

2 **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the meeting held on 22 February 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

Review of Core Strategy Policy C505 Hunstanton

It was noted that the Regenerations Programmes Manager would attend the Task Group meeting on 17 May 2017 to provide an overview of the Hunstanton Masterplan.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

6 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

There were no Members present under Standing Order 34.

7 **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

There was no Chairman's correspondence.

8 **CONSIDERATION OF HOUSING NUMBER FLEXIBILITY IN THE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2016 - 2036**

The Chairman, Councillor Blunt commented that the following documents were difficult and complex to follow and invited comments on how to present the information in an easier format. Members of the Task Group commented that a PowerPoint presentation focussing on the key issues would be helpful.

The Planner reminded the Task Group of the discussions held at the previous meeting and advised that consideration was required as to the housing number flexibility of the Local Plan 2016 – 2036.

The Planner explained that the paper aimed to explore the flexibility of housing numbers, where the Council currently were, how the Council got there, what was the requirement, what sources of flexibility existed and were available and to propose a potential approach going forward.

The potential sources of flexibility and areas for consideration which could be incorporated with the Local Plan Review (2016 – 2036) are set out below:

- Windfall
- Development Boundaries.
- Infill Policy.
- Strategic Growth Option.
- Neighbourhood Plans.
- Allocate a Percentage above the FOAN.
- At least x Number of Dwellings.
- Site Density and Capacity Approach.

Members were informed that all of the options considered in the paper were almost entirely interlinked and altering one element would impact upon another. All the options discussed had advantages and disadvantages.

In response to comments and questions regarding windfall sites, the Planner explained that a windfall site was any residential development that was granted consent on land not specifically allocated for residential development in a Local Plan. This source of housing had made a significant contribution to the overall number of completions within the Borough over the plan period and it was anticipated that it would continue to do so.

The Planner responded to questions regarding sites being included/not included within development boundaries. Members were advised that development boundaries would be looked at in individual settlements.

The Chairman, Councillor Blunt commented that the infill policy be amended to read “extended infill policy.”

In response to comments and questions relating to an infill policy, the Planner explained that not all sites would come forward. It was acknowledged that some sites would be within and some would not be within the development boundary. Each site that came forward would be considered on its own merits. The Chairman, Councillor Blunt commented that consideration should be given to a clause being inserted to allow less than 10 units.

Following questions on strategic growth and how communities in West Norfolk reacted to development during the period when the Council did not have a 5 year land supply, the Planner explained that applications for more desirable locations came in from developers and gave an example of Gayton where applications were received for 150 dwellings. Comments were made that when the Council did not have a 5 year land supply sites came through which had not been identified during the LDF process, but, where appropriate and if the application was acceptable, the Planning Committee had no option but to grant planning permission.

The Planner responded to questions on the impact of Neighbourhood Plans on the Local Plan. Members were advised that Neighbourhood Plans had the same legal status as the Local Plan. Currently there were two Neighbourhood Plans in force – South Wootton and Brancaster.

Reference was made to the White Paper and penalties being incurred if Councils did not reach targets set. A general discussion took place on setting achievable and realistic targets to deliver the housing required in West Norfolk.

The Planner responded to comments and questions on “at least” not being defined and reminded Members that at the last Inquiry, the Inspector had determined that “at least” should be quoted in the documents and that had been the reason for “at least” to be included within the schedule of main modifications to the Local Plan.

Following further questions, the Planner explained that the Local Plan Team liaised closely with the Council’s Housing Services Team to look at housing need within the Borough. It was explained that all types of housing would be included within the custom build initiative.

AGREED: 1) The Task Group agreed with the approach outlined in 12.3 of the paper (as set out below), which it was considered would be consistent with national policy, the Borough Council’s existing Local Plan and would assist in both the Local Plan being ‘Sound’ and the ability to demonstrate a positive land supply:

- Seek to allocate 10% above the FOAN.

- Retain the 'at least' approach for the SADMP sites which would continue into the Local Plan review.
- For consistency the 'at least' approach applied to the new Local Plan review allocations.
- Reinstate Development Boundaries for Smaller Villages and Hamlets.
- Criteria based Infill Policy for areas outside of development boundaries for settlements listed in the hierarchy.
- Contain a windfall allowance within the Local Plan review.
- The Borough Council would support local communities through their Neighbourhood Plans to make their own allocations and decisions on which sites should be allocated for the growth need in their area.

2) A PowerPoint presentation to be scheduled for all Councillors.

9 **HOUSING NEED UPDATE - FULL OBJECTIVELY ASSESSED NEED (FOAN)**

The Planner explained that Neil McDonald, NM Strategic Solutions Ltd had been commissioned by the Borough Council to produce a report on the Full Objectively Assessed Housing Needs (FOAN). The report concluded that the FOAN of the Borough Council of King's Lynn was 13,400 homes over the period 2016-36, an average of 670 homes a year. The report provided a short summary of the process and the findings.

In response to questions, the Planner advised that the effect of Brexit was unknown; however, the report did include a reference to Brexit that it had not been taken into account.

A general discussion took place which included:

- Local occupancy clause.
- How the West Norfolk compared to East Anglia and nationally.
- Second Homes.

It was noted that the FOAN would be reviewed every two years.

AGREED: Neil McDonald be invited to attend a future meeting of the Task Group.

10 **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS UPDATE**

The Task Group received the update note circulated with the Agenda.

The Planner advised that 50% of officers' time was taken up assisting with Neighbourhood Plans and 50% with the Local Plan. It was

explained that the process of adopting a Local Plan took approximately two years.

The Task Group commented that it would be useful to have one page summary of the Neighbourhood Plan explaining what a Neighbourhood Plan was and the process for adopting one.

The Chairman, Councillor Blunt suggested that a briefing session be scheduled inviting all Borough Councillors to attend. A standard presentation could then be used by Borough Councillors who attend Parish Council meetings. The Chairman undertook to discuss the detail with the Planning Policy Manager.

AGREED: 1) Presentation to all Parishes in April on CIL to also include reference to Neighbourhood Plans.

2) All Borough Councillors be invited to attend a presentation on Neighbourhood Plans.

11 **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS PRESENTATION**

The Task Group received the above note for information purposes only.

Neighbourhood Plans Indicative Schedule

The Task Group received the above schedule for information purposes only.

12 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Task Group will take place on Wednesday 12 April 2017 at 10.00 am in the Miles Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.

Councillor S Sandell offered her apologies for the meeting on 12 April 2017.

The meeting closed at 12.02 pm