

**NORTH DEVON COUNCIL AND TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKING GROUP**

Minutes of a meeting of LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKING GROUP held at Barum Room - Brynsworthy on Friday, 28th January, 2022 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillors:

North Devon Council: Councillor  
Councillors Chesters, Lofthouse, Prowse, D. Spear, Tucker, Worden  
and Yabsley

Torrige District Council: Councillors Clarke, Cottle-Hunkin, Hames,  
Hicks, James, Watson and Wiseman

Officers:

North Devon Council: Head of Place, Property and Regeneration  
(SM), Head of Programme Management and Performance (NL),  
Service Manager (Development Management) (MB), Senior Planning  
Policy Officer (ED) and Customer and Corporate Communications  
Manager (CH).

Torrige District Council: Planning Manager (SH), Senior Planning  
Policy Officer (DB) and Staci Dorey (SD)

Also Present:

Councillors

**1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED (unanimous) that Councillor Prowse be appointed as Chair.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

RESOLVED (unanimous) that Councillor Hicks be appointed as Vice-Chair.

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Hackett who had appointed Councillor Wiseman as their substitute.

**4. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE MEETING AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.**

There were no urgent items brought forward for consideration.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest announced.

**6. LOCAL PLAN REVIEW PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT, PROJECT PLAN AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

The Committee considered a report by the Planning Manager (SH) regarding the Local Plan Review Project Initiation Document, Project Plan and Local Development Scheme (circulated previously).

The Planning Manager presented the report to the Committee and confirmed that:

- The complexity and number of associated tasks involved in the Local Plan Review Project Initiation Document, Project Plan and Local Development Scheme resulted in the works being divided into four separate phases; evidence gathering, policy development, finalisation of the draft Local Plan and submission for examination by an independent inspector.
- The prepared delivery programme provided that the Local Plan would be submitted to for examination in November 2024.
- An alternative project plan was examined, which would remove a consultation stage to bring forward the Local Plan adoption date. It was considered that the loss of a consultation stage would be prejudicial to the plan making process and community participation opportunities.
- The Local Development Scheme (LDS) was set out within the timetable and would be required to be publically available, and kept up to date. The LDS indicated that the Local Plan would be adopted in December 2025.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Planning Manager advised:

- If the five year land supply could be demonstrated, through a Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, it could be argued that the adopted plan was current and up to date.
- The Written Ministerial Statement of January 2021 did not define 'up-to-date' and this was not defined in legislation.
- A number of sites had underperformed, both in respect of the rate and number of dwellings delivered. Consequently the Councils had not been able to maintain a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

RESOLVED that the Local Plan Review Project Initiation Document, Project Plan and Local Development Scheme be endorsed.

**7. DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Committee considered a report by the Senior Planning Policy Officer (DB) regarding the Draft Statement of Community Involvement (circulated previously).

The Senior Planning Policy Officer advised;

- There was a requirement that this was undertaken within five years of the adoption of the Local Plan. Then reviewed every five years.

- The points at which consultation could take place were set out in the guidance/legislation.
- Community engagement during the early stages of the preparation of Neighbourhood plans was not just the responsibility of the District Council(s). It included stakeholders.

The Committee discussed the need for involvement by Parish and Town Councils and the options available to engage the public, in respect of plan-making and the development management process – such as using local press.

RESOLVED (unanimous) that the Draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) be endorsed for public consultation over a six-week period, and the Committee delegates to the Torridge Planning Manager and the North Devon Head of Place, Property and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, approval of any minor amendments and corrections to the draft SCI prior to the commencement of the consultation period referred to in recommendation 2.1

## **8. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS REPORT**

The Committee considered the Supplementary Planning Documents Report by the Service Manager (Development Management) (circulated previously).

The Service Manager (Development Management) addressed the committee and:

- Reconfirmed the list of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) identified in the Local Development Scheme published in 2016 for production. These were:
  - Affordable Housing
  - Rural Workers Accommodation
  - Air Quality
  - Design Guide
  - Green Infrastructure, and
  - Undesignated Heritage Assets
- Advised much work had gone into the Affordable Housing SPD. There was still added value with the SPD to ensure that the standard was acceptable to the social landlords to take on.

RESOLVED (unanimous) to create a Task and Finish Group to take the Affordable Housing SPD through to adoption. The Group would comprise of three Committee Members from each Authority. The nominations would be provided to the Corporate and Community Services Officer, and the Planning Manager (SH) within 24 hours.

## **9. BRANDING**

The Customer and Corporate Communications Manager (CH) presented the Committee with the branding options for the Local Plan.

The Committee was presented with the outcomes of the feedback in the form of a 'word cloud' diagram showing the words used most frequently during the sessions. The most prominent words were Inclusive, Community, Future, Understandable, and Engaging.

The Customer and Corporate Communications Manager presented the three draft design concepts which had been created in-house using the word cloud as a guide.

The Committee considered the three designs.

RESOLVED (unanimous) that the graphics/design concept numbered one, with the theme "People and Place, be used for the project.

## **10. VISIONING**

The Senior Planning Policy Officer (DB) presented the Committee with an update on the outcomes of the Member Visioning Workshops.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer advised that;

- The workshops had taken place during November and December 2021. One was held at Caddstown, Bideford. Two others had been held virtually via zoom. 62 people had attended the workshops in total; a significant level of attendance (over 85% of the Councils' membership).
- Four activities had taken place during the workshops which included:
  - Activity 1: Identifying the priorities for the future which were based on, but not restricted to priorities Members had previously identified. The majority (58%) identified Affordable Housing as the top priority.
  - Activity 2: Identifying how the participants wanted the local area to develop by "imagining our future". Nearly all participants mentioned transport. Other key areas discussed were related to the natural environment, and retaining young people in the area.
  - Activity 3: Branding the Local Plan (as previously presented on the prior agenda item).
  - Activity 4: Postcard from the Future. The participants were invited to look at what they wanted to achieve over the next 20 years and asked to write a postcard, as if written in 2041, to themselves reflecting on those 20 years as if reflecting on a changed northern Devon in 2041. Wide ranging achievements were identified, including improved economic performance and economic prosperity, suitable and affordable housing and a retained quality in the natural environment.
- The next steps were confirmed to include a feedback report (in Feb 2022), Stakeholder visioning workshops (end of first quarter of 2022), Vision aims objective development (second quarter 2022), followed by Members' Draft Vision, Aims and Objectives Workshop (second quarter 2022).

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

## **11. TO CONSIDER THE DATES FOR THE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2022-23**

RESOLVED (unanimous) that the future Joint Planning Policy Committee meetings be held on the dates as follows:

- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022 (10am)
- Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022 (10am)
- Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022 (10am)
- Friday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023 (10am)
- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (10am)

Chairman

The meeting ended at 11.09 am