

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2009

Present: Councillors P Connolly, C Whiteside, G Scurrah, W Southward,
M Docherty

Officers: J Hughes, Regeneration Strategy Manager; V Gregg, Planning Policy Assistant

1. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 06 May 2009

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be a true and accurate record.

2. Apologies

Cllr Mossop and Cllr Blackwell.

3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Agenda Items

It was agreed that Members should raise any declarations of interest when relevant.

4. Arrangement of Agenda

Agenda to be followed.

5. Items for which the Press and Public will be Excluded

No items for which the press and public are excluded.

6. Report on responses to the Issues and Options consultation

The Copeland LDF Issues and Options Consultation took place between 28 May and 10 July 2009. The deadline was extended to the 7 August due to a number of public meetings which were held after the initial deadline.

The Planning Policy Team attended Neighbourhood Forum meetings during the consultation period.

Less than 50 responses were received overall to the consultation. Cllr Whiteside suggested that this may be that the document is not expressed in a way to engage with the majority of people within the borough which is something we should be mindful of in the future.

The Consultation Document incorporated three Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – Core Strategy; Development Management DPD and Site Allocations DPD.

Cllr Connolly noted he was surprised at those people/organisations who had not responded to the consultation.

John noted that the Preferred Options consultation document will focus on the Core Strategy and will need to be more focussed and a different approach taken. It was hoped that for the next stage a pamphlet would also be produced which would be aimed at a wider audience. Cllr Connolly requested a press release also be sent out and public meetings be held, it was agreed that a meeting should be held in each locality area.

Members went through the document, any issues are recorded below which should be read in conjunction with the Copeland Local Development Framework Issues and Options Consultation Document (May 2009) and the Copeland LDF Issues and Options Responses to Consultation document (August 2009).

Copeland LDF Issues and Options Responses to Consultation – Members Comments

Spatial Portrait, Vision and Objectives

Q1. - Members felt we should look at incorporating some of the responses to this question.

Environmental Protection and Enhancement

Q5. - Cllr Whiteside liked options 1 and 3 and wondered if we could incorporate both.

Councillor Scurrah asked how a SSSI could be downgraded. John Hughes noted that Natural England would need to be contacted as SSSIs are national designations.

Q6. and Q7. - Members noted clearer policy for wind farms was vital. Government guidelines and policy exist and regional targets but these do not provide much scope for manoeuvre. It was noted that the current Local Plan policy is relatively recent and an SPD has also been produced since adoption of the Local Plan.

Q11. - Members were in agreement with option 2.

Q14. - There was a mixed response to this question, it was suggested that perhaps people did not know what article 4 directions are.

Q18. - It was noted that some Parish Councils do not inspect footpaths and rights of way in their area.

Q19. - Cllr Southward declared an interest as his daughter has a number of horses in stables.

Sustainable Settlements

Q23. - John Hughes informed members that the Planning Policy Team had just started an audit of services in settlements and therefore the answers provide a useful overview of what respondents consider to be essential and desirable criteria.

It was noted that it must be taken into account that respondents were generally corporate companies as opposed to the general public, although it was recognised that 10 Parish Councils had responded. This was an issue overall with the low response rate.

Q25. - Cllr Whiteside agreed with option 3.

Q29. - Members noted that no real opinion is expressed with regards housing on previously developed land.

Q35. - With regards housing density options 2 and 3 were selected, therefore a 'one size fits all' approach was rejected.

Q37. - Both options 1 and 2 were equally supported. Cllr Whiteside felt strongly that there should be a detailed design standard. Cllr Connolly felt there should be some but not too many, sometimes he felt they could be too strict and there should be something on joint access. John Hughes noted that the Planning Panel need a range of guidelines and standards which can be used when needed but these should not interfere with good design.

Cllr Docherty was concerned with room sizes and asked if we could insist on rooms being a certain size. It was noted that the Code for Sustainable Homes, Building for Life and Lifetime Homes standards will enable this to happen.

Cllr Whiteside felt that large gardens were needed for executive homes but densities are mitigating against that. It was recognised that a balance and a mix was needed.

Q38. - With regards to the affordable housing question it was noted that quite divided responses received.

Q44. - Cllr Connolly thought it was a good idea to present these in a group as in the report. John Hughes noted that government guidelines want there to be less policies, however from the responses received it would appear that people want more detailed policies.

Q45. and Q46. - It was again noted that when considering responses to these questions the respondents should be taken into account.

John Hughes noted that we will be looking at these issues further as we will be producing an SPD on planning obligations especially in terms of the Infrastructure Planning Committee and also for planning applications. The SPD will be produced in Spring 2010.

Len Cockcroft is currently working for us on producing baseline information on infrastructure and identifying what capacity problems there are, in order that we may plug these gaps, and where there are no plans, how planning/development can assist.

Economic Opportunity and Regeneration

Q66. - It was noted that with regards to retail centres respondents wanted the LDF to be specific to each place.

Q68. - Cllr Whiteside questioned how the scoring worked on this question.

Tourism questions - It was noted that a waterfront hotel was critical if we wanted to develop tourism.

Accessibility and Transport

Millom station was noted to have the highest footfall of all stations on the Cumbrian Coast Line.

With regards to transport there was an opportunity to push connectivity between services and modes of transport.

Q79. Q80. and Q81. - Cllr Whiteside declared an interest as an employee of British Telecom. No debate was entered into the subject.

Q83. - Cllr Whiteside stated that the issue of car parking needs to be reviewed and noted that perhaps the response would have been different had more members of the general public responded. The RSS minimum standards are part of a push to discourage the use of a car by reducing car parking spaces, members noted that this could encourage people to use public transport but it may also discourage people to visit that particular centre.

Q85. - Cllr Whiteside noted the potential of ferry services to the Isle of Man.

7. New sites suggested for development during consultation

Maps were circulated to members. 27 sites were submitted.

Following the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Call for Sites exercise, there were now 280 sites to be considered.

Cllr Whiteside asked for numbers and site references to be checked as some did not correspond.

Cllr Connolly requested copies of the Frizington and both Whitehaven maps to be sent to him. Cllr Whiteside requested the Whitehaven North East map.

8. Verbal Update on Progress with production of Core Strategy

During the period of consultation, procurement of new consultants took place, a tender was sent out in May and Tribal were awarded the contract to provide support services to the LDF. It took two months to award the contract which has impacted on our production timetable. The contract with Tribal has been awarded for an initial 6 months when it will be reviewed and a further 6 months awarded if satisfactory.

The former consultants Scott Wilson, have completed their contract with us apart from the Sustainability Scoping Report, which needs to incorporate comments from the consultation.

The next stage in production is to work with the consultants on the production of Preferred Options. The LDF Working Party will need to meet in November / December to discuss Core Strategy Preferred Options.

The Preferred Options Report is expected to go to Full Council in January 2010 and go out to public consultation in February 2010. This is an amended schedule as the Preferred Options stage was timetabled for October 2009, however it has been delayed due to a number of studies and projections informing scenarios having just been released.

9. Saved Policies in Local Plan

A report was circulated to members regarding saved policies in the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 with the Agenda, the report had also been sent to the Planning Panel meeting. This was noted.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 26 November – provisional date for next meeting.

Thursday 12 November reserve date.

Items for next meeting Agenda: Preferred Options and timetable.

LDF Working Party to meet before any public meetings and members to attend any public meetings scheduled. It was agreed that they should be held in the locality areas but shouldn't be incorporated into Neighbourhood Forums .

The meeting closed at 12noon.