

Copeland Local Development Framework Working Party Meeting

Minutes of Meeting Held on 27th September 2012 at 4.30pm – Nicholson Room

Present: Councillor S Haraldsen (Chair)
Councillor G Sunderland
Councillor J Williams

Alison Earnshaw - Planning Officer – Notes (AE)
Chris Hoban – Senior Planning Officer (CH)
Chris Bamber – Senior Planning Officer (CB)
Louise Kirkup – Senior Planning Officer (LK)
John Groves – Head of Nuclear, Energy and Planning (JG)

CH introduced the Councillors to John Groves who has recently been appointed to the post of ‘Head of Nuclear, Energy and Planning’.

Appointment of a Chair: As both the Chairman and Vice Chairman were absent, Cllr Sunderland nominated Cllr Haraldsen and Cllr Williams seconded this.

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2012**
2. **Apologies** – Cllr Clements, Cllr Connor, Cllr Downie, Cllr Jackson, Cllr Norwood, Cllr Riley
3. **Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Agenda Items** – Councillors agreed that they would raise any issues as they arose.
4. **Order of Agenda Items**

Agenda items to be followed as laid out.

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

No members of the public or press present.

6. **Copeland LDF Submission**

Results of the consultation on publication of the Pre-Submission draft of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD.

CB told Members that we are on track to submit the documents to the Secretary of State on the 31st Oct for examination. He explained that the current draft had already been approved by Full Council to go out for the final round of consultation (pre submission) and that that consultation had now taken place. The Planning Policy team have collated the comments made in response to that consultation and these now form Appendix A. Appendix B is a list of suggested minor changes put together by the team in response to the consultees’ comments. CB asked members to agree the minor changes.

Change Ref 28: Cllr Haraldsen said that he had concerns about the addition of the word ‘encouraged’ in the first sentence of policy DM2 and that he would prefer it to be removed again. He asked whether it would be more sensible to leave it with the word ‘encouraged’ included and let the Inspector decide. CB felt that it would probably be best to remove it again ourselves prior to submission if that is what Members want to do. The word ‘encouraged’ had been added in response to a comment from a wind farm developer that the policy was not positive enough and therefore was not in conformity with the NPPF. There is a feeling amongst some of the members that the NPPF is too positive for Copeland’s particular circumstances (i.e. proximity to National Park etc.). Members agreed that it is the criteria within the policy that matters and they **rejected the change**.

All other minor changes were agreed.

7. South Whitehaven SPD (LK – verbal update)

LK described the geographical area that will be covered by the South Whitehaven SPD and explained that the Council are working with Rachel Lightfoot, a consultant working for Story Homes, to produce this. She explained that the first draft of the SPD would be brought to the next LDF Working Party for approval so that it could go out to consultation.

Cllr Haraldsen asked if there had been discussions with the County Council regarding the option for a new school to serve the development and Woodhouse estate. LK said there had been conversations and that CCC was not particularly keen due to potential impact on existing schools. There are options – a new school, the amalgamation of existing schools etc. This is a big decision and it will take time.

CH added that once the SPD is approved by the Council, then the application for the South Whitehaven site will come in to be considered by Planning Panel.

8. West Whitehaven SPD (LK – verbal update)

LK described the geographical area that will be covered by the SPD – from the Candlestick along the coast to Birkham’s Quarry and taking in the whole of the former Marchon site.

LK passed a document around the table providing some details of comments made at a consultation event in St Peter’s Church hall on the Woodhouse estate (20th Sep) and meeting notes from the Stakeholder (land owners) meeting on the following day. LK reported that there was a lot of interest from the local community and that this would be really helpful. There would be strong opposition to any wind farm proposals on the site. Officers do not feel that this would be a good place for that sort of development in any case.

LK explained that she had started preparing the Issues and Options draft of the document (using the comments received) and said that policy officers intended to carry out a detailed landscape character assessment for the area and that this would also inform the SPD.

Market research carried out by Story Homes and NPL (both new owners of different parts of the site) had struggled to demonstrate the economic viability of commercial development on the site of the, now demolished, Tamar Buildings. It is important that enough money be made from any development on the

site to pay for the remediation of the more contaminated areas so that these can be opened to the public for leisure and recreation.

9. **LDF Programme (CH – verbal update)**

The 1st November was suggested as a possible date for the next LDF Working Party. The Draft South Whitehaven SPD and West Whitehaven Issues and Options would be brought to this meeting. The Draft Developer Contributions SPD may also be presented at this meeting. If Members are unable to make it on 1st November then 31st October was suggested as an alternative date.

The next LDF Working Party meeting after that will probably take place in January 2013 and the team will be bringing the Draft West Whitehaven SPD and the Draft Design SPD for Members approval.

A third meeting may be planned for late February for approval of the South Whitehaven SPD and Developer Contributions SPD. The exact date of this meeting will be dictated by Full Council deadlines to have the SPD adopted.

Councillors liked the new layout of the LDF Programme provided by CH as it provides clarity as to what will be discussed at each meeting and when Members will be asked to consider different documents. Cllr Haraldsen asked that this sort of programme document be provided more often.

Cllr Haraldsen asked when the current 'saved policies' would expire. CH confirmed that they would no longer be in place after the end of March 2013 and that there would be a couple of months of uncertainty whilst the Council waited for the Inspector's report on the examination of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD. CB added that the Core Strategy will have a lot of weight by the time of the examination in February and that Planning Panel could use both the Local Plan and the LDF documents during this two to three month period.

Cllr Sunderland enquired as to whether the budget was there to pay for the examination of the LDF documents. CH confirmed that it had been in the budget for some time. With regards to the South and West Whitehaven SPDs, the funding is there for both documents until the end of March.

The Developer Contributions and Design SPDs are funded to the end of January, when the temporary contract of the officer who is producing them comes to an end. Although this contract ends at the end of January there is a wish to extend this at least until the end of the Core Strategy examination. Cllr Haraldsen said that it would be important to raise this issue with Cllr Clements, as Members would be starting to shape the budgets for the various departments in October.

Cllr Haraldsen thanked CH for taking on a lot of John Hughes' work after John's retirement at the end of August.

The meeting closed at 5.45pm