

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 30 JANUARY 2008

Present:

Members

Cllr Jill Baston
Cllr Ian Beardsmore
Cllr Matthew Balfour
Cllr Janet Duncton
Mr Alan Durrant
Mr Warren Finney
Cllr Miss Moira Gibson
Cllr Jonathan Glen
Mr Robert Hamlin
Mr Ian Hepburn
Mr Douglas Horner
Cllr Keith House
Cllr Alan Lovell
Cllr Keith Mann
Cllr David Munro
Cllr Jerry Patterson
Cllr Peter Pragnell
Cllr Tony Reid
Cllr Martin Tett

Officers

Catriona Riddell
Martin Tugwell
Heather Bolton
David Payne
Dawn Brown
Lesley van Dijk
Patrick Feehily
Sue Janota
Cath Rose
Dominick Veasey
Mark Williams
Steven Edwards
Jo Shockley
Julie Drayton

In Attendance

Howard Ewing (GOSE)
Tim Stansfeld (SEEDA)
Odette Cousin (RAISE)
Paul Geehan (SE District Council)
Barry Deller (ACTVAR)
Becky Whale (SECL)
Rachel Jones

1. Apologies and Substitutions

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Claire Denman, Cllr Mrs Mary Ballin, Judith Corcho and Rolande Anderson. The following substitutions were declared: Cllr Matthew Balfour for Cllr Paul Clokie.

2. Minutes of the Meeting on 28 November 2007

The Minutes were **AGREED** subject to the following amendments:

2.1 Page 2, para 2.4

The minutes from the meeting on 26 September 2007 (Page 5, last para and page 6 first para) should reflect that the new wording was **AGREED** by the Committee as shown below

Pages 38-67 Regional Performance - Summary of Regional Performance amend the Summary of Regional Performance column and the underlying indicators so that the region's performance is additionally compared with other global regions. Amend Page 33, 8th bullet to reflect the result of this comparison.

- 2.2 Page 3, para 4.12, line 4
The word 'stakeholders' to be replaced by '**principal authorities**'.

3. Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda

- 3.1 Robert Hamlin referred to page 7, para 6.8.1 of the previous minutes with regard to Christine Whitehead's report on housing, which had been promised for debate at this meeting. The Director of Planning, Catriona Riddell reported that a time extension had been given to the consultant and that it would be brought forward for debate at the next meeting in March. It was felt that the report could provide useful ammunition in the ongoing debate with Government which mainly centred on housing and affordability. Robert Hamlin suggested that this be used to initiate a National debate around the issue.

4. South East Plan Partial Review (Primary Aggregates Apportionment): Options for Consultation (herewith)

- 4.1 David Payne, Planning Manager gave a slide presentation which outlined the rationale and methodology used in the generation of the options. Approval would be sought at the March Plenary and would ultimately lead to a full public consultation. He sought Member approval of the 3 recommendations put forward.
- 4.2 The debate centred around the need for some flexibility in some areas, for example in East Sussex where there are very little land won resources. It was also felt that this review offered little guidance to planning authorities and that this could disadvantage some sites by putting them to the end of the queue.
- 4.3 It was **AGREED** that clarity should be given to option F in the fact that it was only to be used as a comparison.

The following recommendations were **AGREED**:

That the committee:

1. **NOTED** the methodology used to generate options for the sub-regional (Minerals Planning Authority area) apportionment of primary land-won aggregates and agrees that this provides a robust, rounded and forward looking apportionment.
2. **AGREED** a small number of aggregates apportionment options to recommend to the March 2008 Plenary for public consultation - options C 'Demand' led, D 'Environmental', and E 'Demand and Resource', with the current apportionment (Policy M3 of RPG9) presented for comparison.
3. **NOTED** and **AGREED** the arrangements for consultation.

5. South East Plan Partial Review (Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople): Options for consultation

- 5.1 Mark Williams, Regional Planner gave a slide presentation and full overview illustrating background, process and options going forward.
- 5.2 Douglas Horner reiterated the need for more managed sites to be set up across the country, as the concentration of these were currently disproportionate. He also voiced the humanitarian issue that should be considered. He fully supported the Options C1 and C2.
- 5.3 Cllr David Munro fully supported Douglas Horner and believed that there were a high majority of well run sites with insignificant problems. However a concern was raised by Cllr Jonathan Glen with the practicality of Option C1 as this reappropriates 50% of pitch requirements which may prove impractical.
- 5.4 Overall feedback from the Steering Group Workshop had proved a positive way forward. It was acknowledged that there would be real challenges ahead in terms of delivery, but that this could be aided by Government reassuring residents and keeping them fully informed of the changes. Mark Williams thanked Members for their continued support.

The following recommendations were **AGREED**:

That the Regional Planning Committee:

1. **NOTED** the recommendations of the independent audit report.

It was **AGREED** that recommendation 2 be reworded to read

2. **RECOMMENDS** to the Assembly support for the overall provision of 1,347 new pitches between 2006 and 2016. **In the light of page 9, para 6.1 for the purpose of public consultation options A and B were agreed as audited and Options C1 and C1 as proposed** (subject to further discussions with local authorities on the results of the auditing process).
3. **NOTED** the provisional pitch requirements for Travelling Showpeople and for transit purposes, and that they are additional to the above.

6. Regional Sustainability Framework

- 6.1 Patrick Feehily reported to Members on the successful completion of the above consultation.
- 6.2 Members collectively acknowledged the excellent work of the Sustainable Futures Group, with particular thanks to Patrick Feehily for all his efforts. A special vote of thanks was also given by Catriona Riddell.

- 6.3 Any comments on grammatical content to be e-mailed to Patrick by 8 February at the latest.

The following recommendations were **AGREED**:

The Committee:

1. **NOTED** the successful completion of the consultation on the Regional Sustainability Framework (RSF).
2. **RECOMMENDED** that the Assembly endorses the final version of the RSF at their next full meeting in March.

7. Thames Basin Heaths: Interim Strategic Delivery Plan

- 7.1 David Payne, Planning Manager reported that the consultation on Thames Basin Heaths would be open until 15 February 2008. Following the EiP the Assembly had taken on the role of co-ordinator. He referred Members to Annex I of the paper, which set out 9 key policy approaches that were proposed in the draft ISDP.
- 7.2 Cllr Jonathan Glen voiced his support for the joint strategic approach set out in the draft ISDP, but emphasised the need for greater flexibility as he felt that the framework was too prescriptive in some cases. As an example he felt that it focused too much on SANGs and not enough on the wider green infrastructure network. There needed to be more emphasis on how SANGs would tie in with existing countryside sites and the rights of way network, not just on providing new land. He proposed that an additional point 3 be inserted as follows:

It will require money, specialist staff and time to implement the arrangements proposed in the ISDP and then to deliver the SANGs, which is likely to constrain the delivery of the draft South East Plan's 2006-2026 housing targets for the area, and should certainly rule out any increase in those figures.

- 7.3 Following further discussion a vote was taken with 8 votes **FOR** the proposed addition and 13 votes **AGAINST**. The motion was lost.
- 7.4 The Committee agreed **TO RECOMMEND** a review of membership of the Steering Group to ensure that the two counties and Bracknell Forest were represented.

The following recommendations were **AGREED**:

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee advise the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board that:

1. The **NEED** for joint working is identified as a requirement within the draft South East Plan and that this was supported by the independent Panel of Inspectors that conducted the Examination in Public.

2. The **NEED** for a document, such as the ISDP, that encourages and supports cross boundary working between local authorities on a consistent basis was recommended by the independent Panel of Inspectors and that such a requirement is likely to be included with the proposed modifications to be published by the Secretary of State.

8. Planning Bill and related amendments to PPS12

- 8.1 The Director of Development, Martin Tugwell updated the Committee, having previously set out its concerns to Government on the Planning White Paper. The Committee were asked to consider the representation and response.
- 8.2 Page 5, para 2.2.1
Cllr Jonathan Glen supported the call for an explicit reference to adding Unitary and Regional Planning Bodies in the list of Local Authorities to be consulted on National Policy Statements, but requested that we should add to that list the County Councils in England. (If the new act does not include these it would be at odds with the previous 2004 Planning Act, which recognised County & Unitary Councils as “Principal Authorities”).
- 8.3 Page 7, para 4.1
It was acknowledged that indicative thresholds are helpful, but principal authorities should be able to make the case to the proposed Infrastructure Planning Commission that any given application is only of local importance and should therefore be determined locally.
- 8.4 Page 7, para 5.1 – Community Infrastructure Levy
There were concerns that this could not be done without having a full matrix to enable funding streams to be identified.
- 8.5 It was **AGREED** that the response would be sent to Government and to the Select Committee. In addition copies will also be sent to all South East MP's and the Regional Minister.

Taking into consideration the above comments it was **AGREED** that the Committee;

- i) **ENDORSED** Annex 1 as a representation in respect of the provisions of the Planning Bill 2008
- ii) **ENDORSED** Annex 2 as a response in respect of the consultation on proposed changes to PPS12.

9. Draft Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4)

- 9.1 Douglas Horner declared an interest in this item.
- 9.2 Clarification was sought from Members particularly on the subject of windfall sites. A letter will be circulated that was sent from Cllr Sean Woodward, Chairman of PUSH to Hazel Blears MP, together with the response received yesterday from Iain Wright MP.

- 9.3 It was **AGREED** that the Planning & Development Directors would pull together all the information and advice in relation to housing and windfall sites that the Assembly and Local Authorities have received from Government.
- 9.4 It was **AGREED** that the representations would be strengthened, taking into consideration the viewpoints raised. This would be undertaken by Catriona Riddell in consultation with Moira Gibson.

The Committee **NOTED** the consultation paper and **AGREED** as para 9.4 that the representations would be strengthened.

10. Adding Capacity at Heathrow Airport: consultation response

- 10.1 The Director of Development, Martin Tugwell asked Members to examine the 5 key issues in the report and asked for any additional points to be taken into consideration in the prepared response which would be agreed by the Leadership Group.
- 10.2 Robert Hamlin asked for it to be minuted as to the fact that the Leadership Group is a closed group and that minutes are not available to the RPC Members.
- 10.3 Additional points raised were:
- The increased pressure on housing demand and infrastructure and ultimately sustainability together with the environmental impact
 - Modelling/forecasting work would need to be carried out in relation to the impact of development at Heathrow on the infrastructure and road network in and around Hampshire
 - Consideration should be given on issues of access, with consideration being given to the introduction of Airtrack as an essential tool in order to address the poor access to the South West part of the region
- 10.4 It was also acknowledged that there are powerful arguments to support additional capacity at London Heathrow, including employment and economic growth over the next 20-50 years.

11. Extension of Saved Berkshire Structure Plan Policies

The Committee **AGREED** the response set out in the Annex and its submission to Government Office as the formal advice of the Regional Planning Body.

12. Items for Information

12.1 Sub-National Review Verbal Update

The Government are in the process of preparing their consultation. Planners, developers, councillors and regional stakeholders are invited to a free event to consider the proposals for a single regional strategy in the Sub-National Review of economic development and regeneration to take place on Wednesday 12 March 2008 from 10.00 hrs to 14.00 hrs at The Jolly Hotel, St Ermin's, 2 Caxton Street, Westminster/Victoria, London SW1H 0QW.

This item was **NOTED**.

12.2 Implementation Plan – update and attached annex

This item was **NOTED**.

12.3 Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPSI)

This item was **NOTED**.

12.4 LDD Conformity – Statistics

This item was **NOTED**.

12.5 Major Planning Applications – Statistics

This item was **NOTED**.

12.6 Freight

This item was **NOTED**.

13. Any other business

- 13.1 Rolande Anderson is to leave GOSE, to be replaced by Colin Byrne. We wish her well.

14. Date of next meeting

- 14.1 Wednesday 19 March 2008 commencing at 10.30 a.m. at the Institute of Materials, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5DB.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 13.35 hrs.