

CABINET

30 JULY 2013

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

AGENDA ITEM No.

7

TITLE OF REPORT: STRATEGIC PLANNING MATTERS

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, HOUSING AND ENTERPRISE
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR TOM BRINDLEY

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report informs Members of the current positions regarding:

- National and regional planning issues;
- The new North Hertfordshire Local Plan;
- The Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Plan; and
- Neighbouring authorities' consultations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the report be noted.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To keep Cabinet informed of recent developments.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

5.1 Councillor Brindley, as Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Enterprise, has been kept informed on the matters set out above.

6. FORWARD PLAN

6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

7.1 Members will be aware of, and familiar with, many of the issues surrounding the strategic planning matters referred to in paragraph 1.1 above. This report is intended to provide Members with the current positions on these matters.

8. ISSUES

National and regional planning issues

- 8.1 The Spending Review published on 26 June 2013 introduces a new "Single Local Growth Fund". Local Enterprise Partnerships will be able to bid towards money from this fund. The fund will be paid for through taking money from existing local authority transport funding streams, further education funding, and (critically for local authorities such as North Hertfordshire) from the New Homes Bonus.
- 8.2 The Government has said that it will consult upon the precise mechanism for taking money from the New Homes Bonus to give to the Single Local Growth Fund. The initial indications seem to be that local authorities will still receive their New Homes Bonus in the same way as now, but that a proportion of it will be ring-fenced to go to the Single Local Growth Fund, whereas at present all the money from the New Homes Bonus is not ring-fenced.

The new North Hertfordshire Local Plan

- 8.3 The consultation on Housing Additional Location Options is underway, closing on 2 August. An update on how the consultation is going may be given verbally.

Land West of the A1(M) at Stevenage

- 8.4 No further news has been received regarding the Secretary of State's intention to re-open this inquiry.

Neighbouring Authorities

- 8.5 A meeting is arranged for Cllr Tom Brindley to meet his counterpart at Stevenage, Cllr John Gardner, to discuss this Council's response to the draft Stevenage Local Plan. That response has yet to be finalised at the time of writing, but will have been submitted prior to this Cabinet meeting as the deadline for comments to Stevenage is 22 July 2013.
- 8.6 A response (attached as Appendix A) was submitted to Central Bedfordshire's Gypsy & Traveller document.
- 8.7 Meetings have also been held between the Council and officials at the Department for Communities and Local Government, both in conjunction with some other Hertfordshire authorities and individually. The way in which housing targets are to be set in future was discussed, and any other matters arising may be reported verbally.

Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Plan

- 8.8 The Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership has published a draft 'Strategy for Smart Economic Growth in Hertfordshire' for consultation. It includes the following vision:
"By 2030, Hertfordshire will be the leading economy at the heart of the UK's Golden Triangle."
- 8.9 The plan centres around three priorities:
- Nurturing science based enterprise and innovation;
 - Harnessing our relationships with London; and
 - Re-invigorating vibrant towns for the 21st Century.

- 8.10 A combined response to the consultation on behalf of all the county's planning authorities was discussed at a meeting of the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership last week. This group comprises the Portfolio Holders from the Districts and Boroughs as well as the County Council. An individual North Herts response to the consultation is currently being agreed with Cllr Tom Brindley. The deadline for comments was 18 July 2013.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Terms of Reference for Cabinet confirm that they should exercise the Council's functions as Local Planning Authority except where functions are reserved by law to the responsibility of the Council or delegated to the Strategic Director of Planning, Housing and Enterprise.
- 9.2 Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 sets out the duty to co-operate between local planning authorities and other prescribed bodies, to maximise the effectiveness in the preparation of development plan and other local development plan documents, so far as they relate to a strategic nature. These bodies should consider if they are able to work together jointly on such matters and must have due regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 No new financial implications arise from this report.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 No direct risk implications from this report but Sustainable Development of the District is a Cabinet Top Risk.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1st October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5th April 2011. There is a General duty, described in 12.2, that public bodies must meet, underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.
- 12.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions, give **due regard** to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.3 There are not considered to be any direct equality issues arising from this report.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 As the recommendations made in this report do not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied, although equalities implications and opportunities are identified in the relevant section at paragraphs 12.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no new human resource implications arising from the contents of this report.

15. APPENDICES

15.1 Appendix A - NHDC Response to Central Bedfordshire's Gypsy & Traveller Plan.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

Report author

16.1 Richard Kelly, Principal Strategic Planning Officer
01462 474847 richard.kelly@north-herts.gov.uk

Contributors

16.2 Ian Fullstone, Head of Development and Building Control
01462 474480 ian.fullstone@north-herts.gov.uk

16.3 Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager
01462 474359 louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk

16.4 David Hill, Senior Planning Officer
01462 474453 david.hill@north-herts.gov.uk

16.5 Clare Skeels, Senior Planning Officer
01462 474424 clare.skeels@north-herts.gov.uk

16.6 Andy Cavanagh, Head of Finance, Performance and Asset Management
01462 474243 andrew.cavanagh@north-herts.gov.uk

16.7 Liz Green, Head of Policy and Community Services
01462 474230 liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk

16.8 Fiona Timms, Risk Manager
01462 474251 fiona.timms@north-herts.gov.uk

16.9 Kerry Shorrocks, Corporate Human Resources Manager
01462 474224 kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

17.1 None.