

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE (SPECIAL MEETING)

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 30 APRIL, 2009

Present: Councillors P J Argyle (Chair), W A Agnew, G J Clark, J B Cox, M A Ford, A G Howie, J M M Humphrey, M C Kitts-Hayes, F McRae, I J Mollison, R J Merson, S W Pratt, A Ross and J Webster.

Officers: Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Head of Planning Policy and Environment, Team Leader (Policy), Director of Transportation and Infrastructure, Head of Law and Administration (Mr G Davidson) and Committee Officer.

Also in attendance Councillors H L Al-Kowarri, P W Bellarby, R Bruce, G W Carr, L Clark, K Clark, A J C Cullinane, I Davidson, A C Duncan, T A Fleming, A S Grant, A Hendry, F C P Hood, M F Ingleby, P K Johnston, M C Kitts-Hayes, J K Loveday, C R McKail, P J Melling, C H Nelson, G L Owen, M J Raeburn, E A Robertson, N J Smith, S W Smith, D M Storr, J J Strathdee, R C Stroud, M J D Sullivan, R H Thomas and R L Watson.

DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

The Chair asked Members if they had any interests to declare in terms of Standing Order 2 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

There were no interests to declare.

The Chair informed Councillors that there would be a Scottish Government Roadshow on the changes being made to the planning system, taking place on Wednesday 13 May, 2009. The event would be open to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councillors and was due to take place at 1:45pm at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre.

1. ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: MAIN ISSUES REPORT

There had been circulated a report dated 3 April, 2009, by the Director of Planning and Environmental Services which presented the Main Issues Report of the Local Development Plan, and other associated documents, and sought authority to publish them for public consultation, in line with the timetable within the Development Plan Scheme previously agreed by the Committee.

The report advised that the Main Issues Report was a key statutory document associated with the new system of development planning introduced by the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006. It built upon, and presented options for the delivery of, the Finalised Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan. The options presented in the Main Issues Report were likely to be sufficiently flexible to allow any changes to the Finalised Structure Plan to be accommodated. Associated with the Main Issues Report were two further supporting documents, the Interim Environmental Report associated with the Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Monitoring Report. Both of these required to be published at the same time as the Main Issues Report.

At the start of the meeting an updated errata sheet and information on the dates for the series of public meetings to be held across Aberdeenshire was circulated.

The Director of Planning and Environmental Services summarised the report and highlighted to Councillors that, unlike for previous Local Development Plans they were not being asked to approve a draft plan at this stage. The Main Issues Report had been prepared in accordance to the requirements of the new planning legislation and was very much an officers report at this stage. The Director stressed that the report was seeking approval to undertake a consultation exercise and while there would be some sites due to technical issues that would not be recommended for development, everything in the Main Issues Report could be open to change at the end of the consultation process; the only caveat being that the Local Development Plan must comply with the Structure Plan.

In response to questions, Councillors were advised that a paper copy of the report would be circulated to all consultees and should Councillors wish, they could be provided with a copy. However a copy of all the documents would be available through the Aberdeenshire website and in the Members' library for reference. Councillors were also advised not to make comments on any development proposal in the Main Issues Report at this stage of the process.

During discussion Councillors welcomed the Main Issues Report and made a number of comments and questions in relation to the documents. The officers' responses to these were as follows:

- As it was not a draft plan, should any additional proposals for development come forward, they could be included for consideration if they received appropriate support.
- Members were reminded that the Local Development Plan was to be reviewed every 5 years, and the associated documents would be updated every year. In light of this, should there be any changes in the development of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route or to the Structure Plan, appropriate amendments would be made.
- In relation to the Rural Housing Market Area and the Aberdeen Housing Market Area outside the Strategic Growth Areas, Councillors were advised that there were likely to be amendments to existing proposals as there were some issues over the scale and density of some developments and it was highlighted that the preferred sites were not the only sites to be considered.
- Officers advised that Newmachar could be included in the list of public meetings to be held.
- In relation to community councils, it was highlighted that should a community council not be able to provide a response within the formal consultation period, but advised planners that a response would be submitted close to the close of consultation it would be considered. Details on responding would be included in the letter to community councils.

Officer advised Councillors that the consultation period as had been discussed ran for 7 weeks from 18 May, to 6 July, and not 6 weeks as detailed in the report.

The Committee **agreed** to:

- (a) the publication of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan Main Issues Report for public consultation for a period of 7 weeks commencing on 18 May, 2009 to 6 July 2009,
- (b) the publication of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan Monitoring Report and Environmental Report to support that consultation, and
- (c) the publication of an explanatory leaflet to support the consultation.