

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 26 JULY 2010

Present: Councillor Lusty (Chairman), and
Councillors Barned, Burton, English, Harwood, Horne,
Marchant, Mrs Stockell, J.A. Wilson and Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillor Greer and Nelson-Gracie

13. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Chittenden.

14. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

The following substitutions were noted:-

Councillor Mrs Wilson for Councillor Chittenden
Councillor Mrs Stockell for Councillor Thick

15. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillors Greer and Nelson-Gracie were in attendance.

16. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

Councillors Barned, Burton and Marchant declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 – Core Strategy – Public Consultation. Councillor Barned as he is on the Board of a Housing Association, Councillors Burton and Marchant as they are Chairmen of Parish Councils.

17. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

18. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

RESOLVED: That the Items on the Agenda be taken in public as proposed.

19. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 June 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed.

20. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 11 – Core Strategy Spatial Vision and Objectives – It was agreed at the last meeting that a ballot be held to choose from members’ suggestions a strapline for the Core Strategy.

8 suggestions had been forwarded to the Democratic Services Officer and each member was asked to vote for one only.

This vote resulted in a draw between suggestion 1 and 4 and members were then asked to vote again for either of the two.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET: That the Core Strategy Strapline be “Maidstone Town and Country”.

21. CORE STRATEGY - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Group considered the report of the Head of Spatial Planning regarding the draft Core Strategy for public consultation.

The Group were informed that the policy on sustainable transport will be included in the document at a future date.

There was discussion on Village Design Statements (VDS) and officers were requested to prepare an A4 sheet for Parish Councils setting out how they can go about, and what the criteria are, getting a VDS or Parish Plan adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

A member of the Group had submitted a list of suggested amendments to officers prior to the meeting and this was circulated to all, and agreed that these should be taken into account together with those discussed at the meeting.

The Group went through the document and dealt with each section of the draft Core Strategy in turn:-

The design of development text and policy CS7 – to include wording with regard to the “look” of the building and the liveability of the design, and to incorporate a reference to the skyline in paragraph 7.2. It was agreed that officers would seek guidance from the Council Leader on the issue of priorities and the production of village design statements as Supplementary Planning Documents, and that a response would be emailed to members of the Group.

Sustainable development and climate change text and policy CS8 – this section to be amended as necessary following the publication of the results of the Water Enquiry. The Group felt it was important for all districts in Kent and Kent County Council to have the same rigorous standards regarding water usage and water neutrality for new developments, although it was acknowledged that water usage can not be policed. It was agreed that officers would work on this issue with other districts through the Kent Planning Policy Forum agenda. Councillor Mrs

Wilson agreed to supply some wording to insert in the Core Strategy in respect of water usage and water neutrality.

Economic development text and policy CS10 – agreed.

Housing mix text and policy CS11 – the Group suggested the addition of the following at the end of paragraph 3 – “seeking to ensure the delivery of mixed communities, housing mix needs to be produced as a mix across the Borough as a whole and at a community level.”

Affordable housing text and policy CS12 – to amend the reference to “absolutely eliminate all housing need” in paragraph 7.67 to reflect the fact that it’s the elimination of identified need through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Local needs housing text and policy CS13 – agreed although it was suggested that the length of residency criterion should be further considered

Officers were requested to ensure there are links across CS11, 12 and 13

Gypsy and traveller accommodation text and policy CS14 – the Group were informed that we now need to set our own targets for Gypsy and Traveller Sites and that a separate report will deal with this particular issue at a future meeting. The agreed target will then be included in the Core Strategy. Officers were asked to consider how agricultural workers accommodation should be addressed in the Core Strategy. It was suggested that the local needs criteria used in policy CS13 should be the starting point for defining local need in policy CS14. The issue of the intensified use of land for gypsy accommodation in parts of the borough was raised, and there was a suggestion that flooding considerations should be included in the policy. Evacuation warnings and information for gypsy sites in flood risk areas was a concern, and officers agreed this issue should be addressed although the Core Strategy was not the right tool.

Green and blue infrastructure text and policy CS15 – Point 8 – it was felt this should also refer to informal and natural open spaces and officers agreed to ensure this is reflected here and throughout the document where relevant.

Biodiversity text and policy CS16 – agreed

In response to a query from a Member of the Group, officers said that polytunnels were dealt with in Core Strategy policy CS7 but that any more detailed reference to specific types of development should be included in a Development Management Development Plan Document or Supplementary Planning Document as it was a very detailed issue.

A Member suggested that industrial food processing practices should be included in the document as farming and food production have changed dramatically over recent years.

RESOLVED:

1. That the amendments agreed at the meeting listed above and those submitted by a member be included in the draft Core Strategy for public consultation.
2. That a further revised draft be presented to the Local Development Document Advisory Group before it is recommended to Cabinet.
3. That the new Government's revocation of the Regional Strategy on 6 July, and the outline of the initial proposals for changing the plan making system as in Section B of the report of the Head of Spatial Planning and the adjustments in work programme and actions of mitigation as outlined in Section C of the report of the Head of Spatial Planning, be noted.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET: That the LDF Core Strategy process be advanced to public consultation at the earliest opportunity, consistent with having proper regard to the opportunities now presented to the Council in the development of the Core Strategy.

22. DURATION OF MEETING

6.00 p.m. to 8.25 p.m.