

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

17 April 2012
4.30 - 5.30 pm

Present: Councillors Nimmo-Smith (Chair), Saunders (Vice-Chair), Marchant-Daisley, Stuart and Znajek

Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport: Councillor Ward

Officers: Emma Davies (Senior Sustainability Officer), Patsy Dell (Head of Planning), James Goddard (Committee Manager), Myles Greensmith (Principal Planning Policy Officer), and Sara Saunders (Planning Policy Manager)

Other Officers in Attendance: Andrew Keeling (Hotel Solutions)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

12/14/DPSSC Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Herbert.

12/15/DPSSC Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Saunders	12/18/DPSSC	Personal: Member of Transition Cambridge
Councillor Znajek	12/19/DPSSC	Personal: Long standing interest in Garden House Hotel.

12/16/DPSSC Minutes

The minutes of the 14 February 2012 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

12/17/DPSSC Public Questions

None.

12/18/DPSSC Community Energy Fund for Cambridgeshire**Matter for Decision:**

In February 2010, Cambridgeshire Horizons commissioned consultants to scope the potential for the development of a Cambridgeshire Community Energy Fund, linked to national zero carbon homes policy. This work was commissioned alongside work to establish the Cambridgeshire Renewables Infrastructure Framework (CRIF), developed to assist the county's transition to a low carbon future. The establishment of a Community Energy Fund (CEF) could help to deliver some of the renewable and low carbon energy projects identified as part of the CRIF. The development of such a fund would also assist developers in meeting their carbon emissions obligations by offsetting residual emissions associated with development through payment into a fund at a set price per tonne of carbon. The fund would then channel this investment into local energy efficiency of energy generation projects to help deliver emissions savings. This initial piece of work, which was presented to Councillors from across the county in July 2010 raised a number of key issues that required further investigation.

In response to these issues, consultants were commissioned to carry out further work, which considered these issues in detail. The study was included as Appendix A of the Officer's report. The study concluded that a county-wide fund would be the most sensible approach to adopt and provides a basis to continue work on developing a Community Energy Fund across the districts and in consultation with Central Government.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:
Noted the findings of the Stage 2 report (Element Energy 2012) and supported officer engagement in the next stages of developing a county-wide fund.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The committee received a report from the Senior Sustainability Officer regarding the Community Energy Fund for Cambridgeshire.

The committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- (i) Targets for on-site carbon reduction could make a greater impact on long term carbon reduction than off-setting payments. It would be beneficial to explore options on how to encourage this through the Local Plan Review.

In response to Members' questions the Senior Sustainability Officer confirmed the following:

- (i) The Decarbonising Cambridge Study provided an evidence base that on-site carbon emissions could be reduced by up to 70% for sites in the city. An option would be included in the Local Plan Review to require developers to do more than the nationally defined target of 44 – 60%. Officers recognised it was not practicable to reduce carbon to meet the full requirements of national zero carbon policy on all sites (eg small ones due to constraints on land availability), but the intention was to head for zero carbon overall.
- (ii) Developers would have a statutory duty to contribute towards carbon reduction. Developers would have the option to undertake carbon reduction work, or off set carbon emissions through payment into a fund at a set price per tonne of carbon. The fund would provide monies for carbon reduction projects.
- (iii) The CEF could fund projects in the city and Greater Cambridge Area. There was potential for inter-authority projects so joined up work could be undertaken. The national verification scheme setting out project criteria was still being developed by Central Government.
- (iv) The City Council would monitor and feed into the Central Government policy development process. The zero carbon policy should be finalised by 2016.

The committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

12/19/DPSSC Cambridge Hotel Futures Study**Matter for Decision:**

In February 2012, the Council commissioned consultants to advise it on the performance, plus existing and future demand and supply for new hotels in the City and immediate surrounding area. This was to update the Council's evidence base for the review of the Local Plan, and help inform any decisions relating to applications for hotel development in Cambridge.

The interim study (Appendix A of the Officer's report) has been the subject of a stakeholder consultation on 29th March 2012.

Further work is in progress on comparator historic town benchmarking. 'Fair share analysis' is exploring the role of the colleges, the bed and breakfast and guesthouse sector in relation to recent expansion of budget provision. Work on this will be concluded by the end of April 2012.

As part of the Local Plan review, housing and employment forecasts are being updated and the hotel forecasts will therefore be adjusted accordingly before the report is finalised. The final report will be brought back to committee in June 2012.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

Noted the findings of the interim report (Cambridge Hotel Futures by Hotel Solutions) and supported officer engagement in concluding the study and developing the implications within the Council's Issues and Options Consultation planned for summer 2012.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The committee received a report from the Principal Planning Policy Officer regarding the Cambridge Hotel Futures Study. The Officer highlighted some typographical errors in the report:

- (i) Table 1 (P49) – Total Cumulative Need (2016 Rooms) should read 507 not 347.
- (ii) Table 1 (P49) – Total Cumulative Need (2021 Rooms) should read 714 not 748.

- (iii) Paragraph 4.7 (P51) – Following concerns about loss of permanent residential apartments, an investigation by Enforcement Officers revealed that conversion to serviced apartments did not require planning permission.

In response to Members' questions the Director of Hotel Solutions, Planning Policy Manager and Principal Planning Policy Officer confirmed the following:

- (v) The Officer's report referred to hotels in the city and Greater Cambridge area that serviced Cambridge. Only hotels in Cambridge City and the areas immediately bordering the city boundaries were included in the bedroom forecast.
- (vi) Projections for future hotel demand were forecasts from a model developed by the consultants. Details were set out in the full report. Growth assumptions were based on primary source information (ie trend information direct from hotels). City centre and periphery trends were modelled. 70% occupancy expectations were standard for the industry.
- (vii) Demand for hotels in Cambridge was split 35% for leisure/tourism (including UK and overseas visitors), 65% for business and corporate demand. Other historic towns/cities generally had a 40% tourism and 60% corporate business split, whereas 'corporate' towns had a 30/70% split. Despite being a historic city, Cambridge appeared to have a greater corporate bias than other historic towns/cities. International visitors wanted to stay in the city centre and were prepared to pay a premium to do so.
- (viii) Methodology for measuring business denied (eg people turned away when a hotel was full) varied between hotels and companies. Some monitored and compiled figures more than others.
- (ix) The report referred to the potential to locate hotels near to business parks. Opportunities for new hotels could be explored through the Cambridge Local Plan Review.
- (x) There appeared to be more demand for hotel bed space in Cambridge city centre than on the outskirts. If hotels were built on the outskirts, customers were likely to travel into the city centre, which impacted on traffic generation and demand for city centre car parking.
- (xi) If it was deemed appropriate to source a five star hotel for the city, a location site would have to be identified prior to considering other options. Interest would have to be sought from a relevant hotel chain. A site would likely have to accommodate a minimum of 130 bedrooms. Officers recognised that it was not possible to allocate land for a five

star hotel. Competing economic and housing land needs would have to be reviewed through the Local Plan and market forces.

- (xii) Some hotels were currently rebranding and looking at selling sites. The Council could meet hotel bed space demand through planning policy and engaging with land owners, property developers and hotel companies.

The committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm

CHAIR