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Joint Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning Group

Tuesday, 28 October 2014

JOINT STRATEGIC TRANSPORT AND SPATIAL PLANNING GROUP

28 October 2014

9.30 am - 12.45 pm

Present:

Cambridge City Councillors: Blencowe, Herbert and Smart

Cambridgeshire County Councillors: Bates, Jenkins and Hipkin

South Cambridgeshire District Councillors: Turner, Kindersley and
Wotherspoon

Officers Present:

Cambridge City Officers

Head of Planning: Patsy Dell

Urban Extensions Project Manager: Julian Sykes

Committee Manager: Toni Birkin

County Officers

Head of Transport and Infrastructure Policy: Dearbhla Lawson

Transport Policy Manager: Jeremy Smith

South Cambs DC Officers

Director of Planning and New Communities: Jo Mills

Planning Policy Manager: Caroline Hunt

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

14/7/JST Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

14/8/JST Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

14/9/JST Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 9th September 2014 were approved and signed as a correct record.

14/10/JST City Deal Member Workshop Programme briefing paper

The Committee received a briefing note and presentation from the Head of Transport and Infrastructure Policy, regarding the City Deal Member Workshop Programme.

The presentation considered covered:

- i. The background of the City Deal and an overview of the way forward.
- ii. Considered how to address the barriers to further growth.
- iii. Looked at the way transport networks needed to grow.
- iv. Considered how sustainable transport solutions could be delivered.
- v. Would be looking at both orbital and radial networks.
- vi. Funding was guaranteed for the first five years and ongoing funding would dependant on being able to evidence the value of the initial spending round.
- vii. Outlined the five year programme.
- viii. Work had been commissioned to identify where the most benefit from investment could be achieved.
- ix. The City Deal Board would be agreeing the initial stages of the work as their first decision.

Councillor Kindersley questioned where the Action Plan addressed the issue of opportunistic developments coming forward while there was no agreed Local Plan. A large Science Park had been proposed by Jesus College to the south of the City.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that no judgement had been made on the Local Plan. However, the Local Plan was underpinned by a Transport Strategy, the City Deal and strong joint working arrangements which offered a strong position to defend.

Members made the following comments in response to the presentation:

- x. Much of the focus appears to be on Cambridge but there is a need to understand the wider area.
- xi. Improved access for the West of Cambridge was needed.
- xii. Proposal present an incomplete picture and the on-going East West rail improvements were missing.
- xiii. Disappointment was expressed that the proposals appeared to lack a high level vision. In addition, it failed to reference other funding available

for projects such as the Chisholm Bridge. There was a lack of clarity over what was most important.

- xiv. Questioned why Histon Road bus priority schemes were back on the table when they had been abandoned previously following public consultation.

In response to Members' questions the Head of Transport and Infrastructure Policy, the Planning Policy Manager and Jeremy Smith stated the following:

- xv. The Transport Strategy works with the Local Plan in proposing solutions to accommodate the future planned growth.
- xvi. The Transport Strategy included walking and cycling.
- xvii. A five business case approach was used to consider the options being put forward as the first phase City Deal programme.
- xviii. Further public consultations would follow.
- xix. The figures presented today are an estimate and would change.
- xx. Plans for the A428 would evolve following the Local Plan examination and consultation.
- xxi. Garden Cities had not been included in the plan and had no current government funding.
- xxii. Newmarket Road has been recognised as a key route and action was needed quickly.
- xxiii. The Chisholm Trial Cycle Bridge had been identified as a priority scheme and had been recommended for government funding.
- xxiv. The funding available was a rare opportunity to achieve high level goals and, if value for money was evidenced, more money should follow.
- xxv. More work was needed to gain a better understanding of the use of orbital routes.
- xxvi. An City Centre access and capacity study would inform the next stage.
- xxvii. The County Council's long term transport strategy would be discussed at the first assembly meeting.
- xxviii. Communication events were planned and both the Board and Assembly would be considering timeframes for future consultations.
- xxix. The A10 Royston cycle route improvements had been included because although not a predicted housing growth area, growth in employment opportunities was expected. Evidence would be presented to support this need.
- xxx. The proposals recognised the finite capacity of streets in Cambridge and acknowledge that tough decisions would need to be made if increased use of buses was going to be encouraged.

- xxxi. Figures quoted in the report for City Deal schemes would change and the list of schemes proposed would evolve as technical assessments were completed.
- xxxii. The three Local Authorities had established transport priorities and connectivity. Evidence was available to support future bids should opportunities arise.

Councillor Herbert confirmed that the comments from this committee would be feed back to the City Deal Board.

Councillor Hipkin requested that the constitution of the Assembly be collectively elected to allow independent Members to be represented.

Members questioned how the Board could agree priorities in January when Local Plans would not have been signed off. The Head of Planning responded and stated that the Local Plan examination was expected to be completed in April 2015. However, the report would take longer. A decision was needed in the interim as the City Deal time frames allowed for mitigation of both existing and predicted future growth. The Head of Transport and Infrastructure Policy undertook to circulate a paper outlining how the priorities under consideration had been arrived at.

Councillor Herbert suggested that this committee should meet again in December as it was unlikely that the Assembly would be in place at that point to scrutinise initial proposals going to the City Deal Board.

Councillor Kindersley expressed the view that the triumvirate Board would make what-ever decision is thought fit.

14/11/JST Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area Action Plan - Issues and Options Report

The Committee received a report from the Head of Planning and the Urban Extensions Project Manager regarding the Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area Action Plan.

The report outlined four options for development in the area. The document is currently in draft form and will be going forward for scrutiny and public consultation in the spring. Initial meeting with landowners and utilities companies had taken place.

Councillor Kindersley suggested that if expansion of the area under consideration, why not expand it further and include all the land to the river. This would allow additional transport links to be developed. Flood issues and sensitive handling of the traveller community would be required. Failure to include this land, at an early stage of the consultation process, would result in it being land locked forever. Councillor Hipkin suggested that a question reflecting this suggestion should be added to Section 4 of the draft report.

The Director of Planning and New Communities advised that increasing the area of the Northern Fringe East Policy area to either the North or the East was not consistent with the Local plan and would involve including designated green belt land. Consideration would also be needed existing policies regarding flooding and traveller sites.

The Head of Planning reminded members that documents such as an Area Action Plan would always be subservient to the Local Plan.

Members argued that there was a need to show vision and that land stretching towards the river would be ideal for a Country Park. In addition, the granting of permission for a new railway station had impacted on the value of land in the area.

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

- i. The options document is lacking detailed references to existing communities in the Chesterton area. More details were needed regarding integration.
- ii. Concerns were raised about the impact of additional traffic on Milton Road.
- iii. Local housing does not connect well with business developments sites; could additional housing be added to the mix?
- iv. Local residential streets would be filled with commuter cars.
- v. Clustering of employment opportunities away from the centre of Cambridge and into local 'hubs' was welcomed.

In response to Members' questions the Urban Extensions Project Manager, the Head of Planning and Director of Planning and New Communities stated the following:

- vi. Option four would be the most challenging and would involve relocating the water treatment plant.

- vii. Finding a suitable site to relocate the water treatment works would not be easy. Sites in South Cambridgeshire had been discussed.
- viii. Cross authority support for the proposals would be required and further meetings to discuss both planning and non-planning issues were needed.
- ix. The consultation process includes an open question regarding boundary issues.
- x. The Local Plan has a long timeframe for delivery. Some early scheme would need to be delivered to encourage future growth.
- xi. The function of the railhead for industrial use would remain part of the plan.
- xii. The Local Plan highlights the area as an employment site. However, additional housing could be explored.

The Chair brought the debate to a close and stated that relocating the water treatment plant had been discussed for many years. However, relocating would be prohibitively expensive and finding a suitable site would be difficult. The new station was a catalyst to examine the area again. Realistically, it appeared that only options one and two might be viable.

Resolved: The Joint Strategic Transport and Spatial Planning Group recommends that the councils agree the draft Issues & Options Report for consultation as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.

14/12/JST Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory

The Committee received a report from the Head of Transport Infrastructure regarding the Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory.

The Committee noted that a footnote would be added regarding the City Deal before this report moved forward.

The Planning Policy Manager (SCDC) stated that a request had been made to the Inspector considering South Cambs Local Plan, seeking an interim endorsement of the housing position. This request had been refused as the Inspector wanted to consider the strategic local plan issues in the round. Full details of the correspondence is available on the website as follows <https://www.scams.gov.uk/localplan>.

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

- i. Councillor Jenkins expressed regrets that little progress had been made regarding lobbying as suggested at the last meeting.
- ii. Councillor Kinderley stated that Officers had done their job while Members had failed to engage with the process and show the require leadership.

In response to Members' questions the Planning Policy Manager (SCDC) said the following:

- iii. The figures quoted in the report were accurate on new housing completions to-date. Future figures were predictions.
- iv. The increase in completions predicted for the period 2016-2020 were based on expected completions on the Fringe sites and Northstowe.

Members requested clarification regarding the ability of both Cambridge and South Cambs to fulfil the requirement to have a five year land supply available. The Planning Policy Manager responded and stated that Memorandum of understanding was in place. The City Deal also reflects a commitment to start a review of the local plan in 2019. There was a strong case for the Inspector to accept the plans.

Resolved: Members agreed to advise Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council that they:

- i. Support the joint housing trajectory for the Greater Cambridge area as set out in Appendix A.

14/13/JST New Government Funding Initiatives - Oral Report

The Committee received an oral report from the Director of Planning and New Communities regarding the New Government Funding Initiative.

The report outlined a new Government announcement of additional funding to bring forward development sites. Cambridge and South Cambs had been awarded £50,000 each.

South Cambs, working with the City, had been accepted as one of eleven local authorities to be accepted for the Right to Build Vanguards project. Registers of interest would be opening shortly for those interested in building and for land available for self-build projects.

The meeting ended at 12.45 pm

CHAIR