

Duty to Co-operate Meeting between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Uttlesford District Council

Uttlesford District Council Offices 10.00am 13 January 2017

Present: -

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Cllr Peter Topping (Leader), Stephen Kelly (Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development), Caroline Hunt (Planning Policy Manager)

Uttlesford District Council – Cllr Howard Rolfe (Leader), Cllr Susan Barker (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder), Gordon Glenday (Assistant Director Planning), Richard Fox (Planning Policy Team Leader)

GG outlined the status of the draft Uttlesford Local Plan. It had been intended to undertake a Regulation 19 Consultation in November last year but a combination of factors relating to the need to gather further evidence, new population projections and some Member's concerns led the Plan to be "paused". It was now proposed to pursue a preferred options Regulation 19 Consultation in summer 2017, with submission anticipated in Spring 2018.

GG explained that he had attended a conference where Communities and Local Government (CLG) officials had said that the forthcoming Housing White Paper would emphasise the importance of joint working.

HR said that the Council's housing target had increased and may increase further.

SK enquired about Uttlesford's overarching strategy for their Plan.

SB explained that there were various givens and outstanding commitments. The focus was on the A120 corridor as a priority with some development targeted at the villages and Saffron Walden.

HR explained that most residents wanted to keep the District rural in character but he recognised the need for growth, particularly in relation to the "airport in the countryside" which employed 18% of Uttlesford residents. There was a current application which had been submitted for an arrivals hall. There was logic to development along the A120.

PT explained about economic activity in South Cambs and the biomed cluster. He referred to a number of emerging proposals for growth in the south of South Cambs.

RF said that the recent increase in population projections meant that a proposed new settlement at Great Chesterford had been brought into play.

SK felt that sub-regional planning was coming back into vogue being supported by the LEPs and the LSCC corridor. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Devloution Deal included a non-strategic spatial plan for the combined authority, recognising the interplay between Greater Cambridge and other authorities. Cambridge Ahead 2050 was also preparing a future vision for the area. The South Cambs Plan was

submitted in 2014 and it was anticipated that the Examination Hearings would finish in the summer.

HR had a long term vision for a greater Saffron Walden.

PT explained that the Genome Campus was a global level research facility with a thirty year agenda. They have emerging plans for major expansion of the campus including approximately 1,200 houses and to divert the road. It was envisaged that the houses would be “tied” to the campus. Whilst there had been presentations by the Wellcome Trust the proposals were not in the Local Plan or the call for sites.

SK felt it was important that the Biomed cluster reconnected with local communities over the next few years and delivered up amenities and transport improvements. There was a major issue with roads in South Cambs and the work that needed to be done hadn't yet been done. In terms of a potential new settlement at Great Chesterford, all the necessary transport modelling hadn't been undertaken, including key junctions in South Cambs.

CH emphasised the importance of sound evidence to support any new settlement proposal, in particular to demonstrate how sustainable transport provision would be made and that the transport network could cope with the proposed growth.

RF stressed that it was important that any further modelling work did not hold up progress on the UDC Local Plan.

SB felt that it was important that ECC met CCC to make the highways work.

PT considered that the modelling work was at a very embryonic stage and needed to be undertaken properly.

SK identified need to consider long term aspirations for the area.

HR thought that there was a group of landowners looking at a new town in the area.

PT believed that there was a proposal for a service station in the area.

HR agreed that the service station at Junction 8 would need to move in the long term when the Junction improvement works were undertaken.

SK believed that there would be challenges by local residents around congestion.

PT felt that there were more general infrastructure concerns not just highways.

SK agreed and stated that Sawston Sub Station was inadequate.

RF stressed the need for regular meetings to be established under the Duty to Co-operate.

CH explained that there had been bids to the Growth Deal and the government's Local Majors fund for a strategic scale study into the A505.

HR felt that there was a need to set out a vision for the area.

CH referred to a highways meeting that was being arranged between ECC/CCC/SCDC and UDC to discuss transport issues in the south of South Cambridgeshire.

CH set out the issues to be considered at the forthcoming South Cambs Examination Hearings. The most significant proposal outside the new settlements was for 500 houses east of Sawston.

GG said that UDC should attend some of the Hearings.

ALL agreed that it was important to meet on a regular basis under the Duty to Co-operate.