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LOCAL PLAN LEADERSHIP GROUP held at ZOOM - [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/](https://zoom.us/), on MONDAY, 24 MAY 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor G Bagnall (Chair)
Councillors M Caton, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light, S Merifield,
R Pavitt (Vice-Chair), N Reeve, M Sutton and M Tayler

Guest (non-voting): Councillor J Evans

Officers in attendance: G Glenday (Assistant Director - Planning), J Hill (Planning Policy Officer), S Miles (Local Plans and New Communities Manager), L Mills (New Communities Senior Planning Officer), S Nicholas (New Communities Senior Planning Officer) and C Shanley-Grozavu (Democratic Services Officer)

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Freeman.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3 **LOCAL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

The Local Plans and New Communities Manager presented a report on the draft vision and strategic objectives for the new Local Plan. They confirmed that the document was draft, and additional changes could be added up until early 2022.

Members gave their feedback on the document, and the following points were noted:

- The introduction needed to be reviewed to include a clear and concise vision for the Local Plan.
- A clearer statement was required on the improved links to Cambridge, such as including the creation innovation hubs.
- The Strategic Objectives of the Local Plan would seek for villages to meet some of the needs of day-to-day living. This could be done through appropriately worded policies to protect assets, such as shops, however members advised not to encourage volunteer shops as this would not create additional employment opportunities.
- Further clarity was needed for how the Local Plan would change how people get around the district.
- There was a need for an additional heading to address water resistance and the impact of over extraction and wildlife.
- There should not be too much emphasis on the Cambridge-facing part of the district, as it does not solely represent the district of Uttlesford.

- There was a need to include further details about sustainability as communities can only be sustainable with the appropriate transport links and infrastructure in place.
- Whilst the Local Plan cannot advise farmers on how to farm, it can support and encourage the diversification of farming practices.
- The 2016 review of the Green Belt and CPZ will be considered for the evidence base of the Local Plan.

Members discussed the prominence of Stansted Airport within the document and considered whether a vision should be added, which included the “best use of” the land for the district.

Many members felt reluctant include it, given the uncertainty of the ongoing Planning appeal, the future of the aviation industry after the Covid-19 pandemic, that the airport was not a big employer of Uttlesford residents and that the last Local Plan relied too heavily of what the airport would offer. It was agreed that the Group would reconsider this at a later date.

Local Plans and New Communities Manager agreed to update the draft vision and objectives document and circulate to members for their review before it is forwarded to Cabinet for their consideration.

AGREED to recommend that Cabinet approve the draft vision and objectives for the new Local Plan

4 **LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

The Local Plan and New Communities Manager introduced a report which summarised the first consultation on the Local Plan (also known as the Issues and Options consultation) which closed on 21 April. Following the introduction, the Planning Policy Officer and New Communities Senior Planners were invited to present the comments from themes seven to nine, which had yet to be considered by the group.

The Planning Policy Officer presented comments received on the seventh consultation theme of “Local Economy” which was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 24 February 2021. Following the Forum, the theme was open for public consultation and 55 responses were received overall.

Members highlighted the lack of comments about self-employed Uttlesford residents, as well as the need for inward investment to encourage growth.

The New Communities Senior Planner then presented comments received on the eighth consultation theme of “Homes” which was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 10 March 2021 and received a total of 66 responses.

Members discussed the current cost of housing in the district, in comparison to the average wage, and the need for an increased supply of affordable housing. Officers confirmed that a Strategic Housing Assessment would be carried out for the plan, and should members wish to consider implementing a different affordable housing target, then evidence to prove viability would be required.

Lastly, the Senior New Communities Planner presented comments received on the final consultation themes of “Creating New Places and Communities” which was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 24 March and received 91 comments.

The following was noted from members discussions:

- Many of the comments received focused on housing, however they do bring in ideas of mixed use.
- The idea of village clusters divided opinion as some respondents felt that it would put a strain on infrastructure.
- The Council was able to build more affordable housing, however this could not be commanded in the Local Plan as it needed to be blind to the applicant and consistent for both developers and authorities.

Officers confirmed that a paper on the housing numbers will be brought to the next meeting of the Local Plan Leadership Group, for members to review and recommend to Cabinet.

Meeting ended at 20:49