

LOCAL PLAN CABINET ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014 at 2.00 pm in the Council Chamber,
Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Jack Cohen (Chairman); Councillors Bayford, Campbell,
K Gregory and H Scobie

In Attendance: Councillors Nicholson and D Green

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received at the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest received at the meeting.

3. DRAFT THANET LOCAL PLAN TO 2031 PREFERRED OPTIONS - PROPOSED CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Colin Fitt, Interim Head of Built Environment introduced the item for discussion. He said that a significant wealth of evidence had been collated over the last two years when the process to produce the draft Local Plan for Thanet was started.

Ismail Mohammed, Interim Strategic Planning Manager led the discussion with an initial power point presentation. He said that the local Plan Document should fit in with the Council's Corporate Plan. The Local Plan document had three parts:

1. Strategic Policies;
2. Land Use Site Allocation;
3. Development Management Policies.

Mr Mohammed said that it was important that the new Local Plan should protect, promote and develop strategic employment site to deliver future employment. He said that Westwood Cross would be the main town centre (retail shopping area) for the District. However the other three town centres in the hierarchy need to be recognised and preserved as well to provide for local shopping. The aims of retail of the retail hierarchy are to ensure that income generated in Thanet should be spent in the district and also attract customers from outside the district to come and shop and spend their income in Thanet. The new Local Plan should address the unemployment issue with a view to reducing unemployment in the district to 3%.

Future job growth was anticipated in the green sector, infrastructure and construction and public sector. Currently the area of Manston Airport is designated as an area for aviation activities. Designating the area of Manston Airport site as an "opportunity site" would then give Council the opportunity to prepare the Area Action Plan, wherein the Council can consider a number of development options for the area.

Mr Mohammed said that the local Plan should provide housing opportunities to enable people to choose where they want to live and future housing should be provide in most accessible locations in the district that is well served by existing infrastructure and facilities.

Identifying future housing development sites has been undertaken by the Council's Planning Department and landowners and developers have come forward with

suggested sites. Officers had to sift through the sites put forward to determine suitable sites taking into consideration the environmental concerns and quality of life desired for Thanet residents. Mr Mohammed said that a strategic housing market assessment was required before a pre-submission consultation of the proposed Local Plan was undertaken. This assessment would ensure that Council was using the most up-date information on the housing needs of the district.

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel will consider the process used, evidence gathered to date as part of drafting the proposed Local Plan and the options being considered by the Council.

Councillor Nicholson the Deputy Leader of Council and Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning Services said that it was important to get the public consultation underway as proposed and not face any further delays.

Once this informal consultation is completed, Council will be in a better position to submit to the Secretary of State the Council's proposed Local Plan. This informal consultation would help the Council gather views from key stakeholders that included the Thanet residents, and neighbouring districts.

Councillor Cohen, Chairman of the Local Plan Cabinet Advisory Group thanked Members and officers for the diligent work put into developing the draft Local Plan.

Councillor K. Gregory proposed, Councillor Campbell seconded and Members agreed to recommend to the Cabinet that the Draft Thanet Local Plan to 2031 Preferred Options Document be approved for a six week period of public consultation.

Meeting concluded: 3.15 pm