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### EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 13 JUNE 2013

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#### **EEOSP.38/13 CARLISLE DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN 2015-2030 – PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder reiterated his comments to Council and thanked Officers involved. The issues in the report rose above politics as the framework took the Council up to 2030. The Portfolio Holder thanked the Planning Policy Team who had worked hard on the report and provided a technical and detailed policy that would assist the Development Control Committee in the future. The Portfolio Holder also commended the work of the cross party working group.

The Chairman stated that during her time as Chair of that working group the work had been interesting and she was sorry that she had not been able to continue. She believed that all Members were looking for the best for Carlisle.

The Director of Economic Development introduced the Policy and Investment Manager and presented report ED.13/13 that detailed the content of the draft Preferred Options stage of the Carlisle District Local Plan, and provided an overview of the topic areas that were covered by the Planning Policies alongside the strategic policy direction for Carlisle District for the period 2015-2030.

The Director of Economic Development outlined the background to the matter commenting that, as was the case with the Core Strategy, the Carlisle District Local Plan provided a new framework for development to 2030. It now, however, included a comprehensive range of policies to determine planning applications as well as identifying development sites essential to delivery of the Plan. That revised approach would ensure that the Plan would be finalised at the earliest possible opportunity and that deliverable development sites would be available across the District to deliver the Plan as soon as it was adopted. The Local Plan also embraced the concept of Localism, should communities wish to promote additional development through the development of Neighbourhood Plans.

The Preferred Options Local Plan consisted of:

- A clear economic vision and spatial strategy for the District
- Strategic policy direction
- Local policies to guide development and how the Council dealt with planning applications
- Site specific allocations of viable housing and employment land for strategic growth (that part of the Plan would be presented to the Executive in a separate report to be amalgamated with the policies appended to this report for full Council)
- Policies map

The Director emphasised that the Local Plan would seek to provide a planning framework for Carlisle which would instil developer confidence, resulting in the development of high quality

homes and businesses; support the delivery of infrastructure; attract inward investment and help to foster a wider cultural offer.

A wide range of topic areas were covered within the Plan, details of which were provided.

The Deputy Leader and Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder informed Members that work was ongoing to develop a comprehensive evidence base which had and would continue to inform the preparation of the draft Plan's strategy, the policies and the location for new development. He added that a number of other required assessments had been undertaken alongside the draft Plan to measure the impact thereof, and those would be published for consultation alongside the Preferred Options Local Plan.

In terms of the Plan preparation, the next stages were:

Publication – Winter 2013

Submission (to the Secretary of State) – Spring 2014

Examination (independent examination by Inspector) – Summer 2014

Adoption – Winter 2014

The preferred options consultation was therefore a very significant stage in development of the Local Plan and an important opportunity for the public to engage in preparation of the Local Plan.

The Policy and Investment Manager presented slides that outlined the Local Plan Preferred Options.

In considering the report Members raised the following comments and questions:

- *Broadband outside of Carlisle was not good and it may be difficult for those residents to access the report from the website.*

The Director of Economic Development advised that Officers would look at as many ways as possible to get the information out to the public and get responses back. There would be hard copies going out to libraries and community centres.

- *Part of the Council's vision is on tourism yet there was no mention of employment in tourism in the report.*

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder advised that tourism was included in section 2.23 and queried whether Members believed that was not strong enough.

- *There was a lot of work around tourism including bed and breakfast accommodation and workforce in general tourism. Those issues were worthy of a mention.*

The Portfolio Holder advised that tourism played a major role in the economy of Carlisle and agreed that it could be given its own heading and a higher profile.

- *What status in law would the Local Plan have in terms of Government Department? And how could the Council ensure that every department had the will to abide by the policies?*

The Director advised that the Local Plan would carry a lot of weight once it was adopted. The Environment and Tourism Portfolio Holder advised that, with regard to tourism, culture and heritage, the report mentioned the castle but not the cathedral. The Carlisle State Management Public Houses were not mentioned and the Portfolio Holder believed they were a unique part of the Council's heritage and linked with the commemoration of World War 1. The Portfolio Holder stated that not enough was done in respect of heritage.

#### Policy S1 – Sustainable Development

The Director stated that Policy S1 – Sustainable Development – was a fundamental policy within the National Planning Policy Framework and was included in the Local Plan.

- *It would be useful if the meaning of Blue Infrastructure could be included in the glossary for clarity.*
- *Once the maintenance of trees was passed to the County Council how could the City Council ensure a relationship with the County Council?*

The Director of Economic Development advised that once the Local Plan was adopted that responsibility would transfer to the Local Environment Directorate and the Director would liaise with Officers in the County Council.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the Highways and Transport working Group would have responsibility for trees on the highway.

#### Policy S5 – Regeneration policy

- *When would Policy S5 – Regeneration Policy – be available?*

The Director of Economic Development explained that the Regeneration Policy would be covered in the Special meeting as part of the site allocations and City Centre Masterplan.

#### Policy S7 – University Development

- *Carlisle College was not mentioned as part of Policy S7 – University Development. Would it be included as part of higher education provision?*

The Director of Economic Development advised that discussions could be held with the college. The economic growth of the university had a section of its own. She explained that she was in discussion with the Director of Property regarding the business plan to articulate the policy in a spatial manner.

- *If there was a separate policy for the university would that policy be the same for the college?*
- *There was concern about the development of the university and it was important to notify residents of ideas that the university had. Good rapport with the university was important.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder believed the policy was essential and was included to avoid the University of Cumbria moving to Lancaster. The Portfolio Holder

believed that the headquarters should be in Carlisle and Carlisle should be the main development of the university in Cumbria. If the Council provided the expansion for expansion the university should retain a presence in Carlisle.

The Deputy Chief Executive suggested that it may be useful to invite a representative of the University to attend a meeting of the Panel and outline their intentions.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder stated that he was disappointed that the Business School was moved to Lancaster and he hoped that at some point it would be moved back to Carlisle. The Portfolio Holder added that it would be useful to weave the University into city life and ensure that the university was anchored in the City. The Portfolio Holder also stated that Officers were working with companies in the City to tie the arts into the growth of the City.

### Policy 3 – Mixed Commercial Areas

- *Did the policy protect primary retail areas?*

The Director explained that the policy was not specific to the retail area but related to mixed commercial use and the City Centre would have its own policy.

- *Was there any land allocated for retail use?*

There were specific areas of land allocated and the policies applied with regard to those areas.

### Policy 4 – Office Development

- *When the County Council move into their new premises there will be a lot of office space in the City Centre. How would that be utilised?*

The Director advised that the National Planning Policy Framework and Government guidelines allowed change of use and that Planning Authorities should be flexible. Planning Officers would look at what would be the best way to bring those offices back into use with the specific focus on regeneration. The Director confirmed that although the retail area would be protected there would be flexibility to allow change of use to residential if required and that flexibility could be included in the policies.

### Policy 7 – Retail Proposals Outside the Primary Retail Area

- *The Local Plan was designed to last for 15 years and take into account the future of out of town development. A Member did not believe the Plan would be robust for the full 15 years and could be out of date in 5-6 years.*

The Director advised that the Plan would provide policies for 5-10 years and that most of the aspirations would come to fruition within 7 years. Officers would continue to review the Local Plan and keep it up to date. In 5 years Officers would look again at the policies to ensure they were still sound and there would be a revised plan after 10 years.

- *The Council's focus was on healthy living. What effect could the Local Plan have on takeaways close to schools to encourage children to eat more healthy food?*

The Director advised that that issue was being investigated and there was an alternative policy that would prohibit takeaways from opening within 400m from schools, etc. However, it had been agreed that it would be difficult to enforce such a policy. Applications for takeaways would be determined on a case by case basis but Officers would ensure that there was no concentration close to schools, etc.

- *Was anything proposed to prevent to closure of more community pubs as the focus seemed to be on the City Centre?*

The Director explained that the situation was due to the present economy and there was nothing that the Council could do from a planning perspective. If people stopped using the pubs and they subsequently go out of business the Council would have to deal with the consequences.

- *There were a number of takeaways concentrated in the Botchergate area. Would it be better to dilute that number?*

The Director advised that that could be done through planning matters and the number of hot food establishments in Botchergate could be limited to prevent saturation.

#### Policy 14 – Caravan, Camping and Chalet Sites

- *Was the policy positive enough and could it link better to tourism?*
- *The policy was related to tourism as Carlisle was close to the Lake District and Hadrian's Wall.*

The Director believed that that was a matter for debate. The creation of sites would cause tension in some areas as it would have an effect on an area but it would also bring in tourism which would have an impact on the economy. Each application would be dealt with on a case by case basis.

#### Policy 21 – Housing Development

- *A lot of consultation is done with the Parish Councils in rural areas but it may be better to include residents as well.*

The Director explained that the Parish Councils were involved in the rural Masterplan as they had knowledge about their own areas and understood the pressures on growth.

- *Did the current policy presume in favour of development?*

The Director confirmed that was the case but added that when applications were submitted they had to comply with current policies and that it was national policy to presume in favour of development.

- *There was concern about housing within villages and Members believed it was difficult keeping families together in villages. Was there enough emphasis in the Local Plan to find to find houses for those families?*

#### Policy 25 – Rural Exception Sites

The Policy and Investment Manager advised that Officers had tried to include those issues in policy S1.

- *Development had been encouraged over the years in Corby.*
- *Were the statement boundaries open for flexibility?*

The Director advised that the boundaries were an artificial device used to form planning perspectives. Sites would be allocated to specific sites then planning rules would want all development beyond those areas.

- *The policy would need to ensure that there were houses were offered to local people first.*

#### Policy 32 – Special Needs Housing

- *There was evidence that the population of Carlisle was getting older and the policy needed to be expanded or a separate section included on aging population for the life of the Local Plan.*

The Director explained that that could be looked at as part of further responsibilities.

The Economy and Enterprise Portfolio Holder advised that there was a role for the County Council in respect of high level needs and there was a move away from high residential schemes. By next year Officers would identify people currently in hospitals outside of the area to be moved closer to families. Those people would need appropriate accommodation.

#### Policy 33 – Traveller Site Provision

- *When would the policy be ready?*

The director explained that Officers were working with other districts in Cumbria and Lancashire and were pushing to complete the policy. However the Director could not be certain of an exact date of completion.

#### Policy 39 – Waste Minimisation and the Recycling of Waste

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that details were included in planning applications. Developers and the planning authority needed to work together to enable waste to be collected efficiently and roads constructed to make it easier for refuse vehicles to access the waste bins.

### Policy 49 – Educational Needs

The Director advised that there were currently no significant issues regarding primary schools however there were issues with some schools. She agreed that the wording needed to be amended.

- *The lack of schools was stopping development and people were not keen to develop areas where there were no spaces available in schools.*
- *The policy should link to the issues around the University.*

### Policy 58 – Location of a New Cemetery

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that something needed to be done as the Carlisle cemetery was becoming full and it would be difficult to do anything in the future if there was nothing in the Local Plan.

### Policy 59 – Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site

- *There was not enough emphasis on heritage in the area. A section of Hadrian's Wall had been covered up at a local hotel which would not have happened in an area such as York.*

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder also believed that the areas history in relation to the debateable lands should be exposed more.

- *A number of people had advised that they often drove past Carlisle on the motorway as there was no indication of the history on the city. A Member suggested erecting a statue that would indicate that history.*
- *There was concern about the timescale for consultation as the summer was fast approaching and people would be on holiday. Also some Parish Councils only met every 2-3 months so their replies could be restricted.*

The Director advised that she was aware of the issues and that Officers would be flexible in receiving comments. The Plan had to be finalised by February 2014.

She advised that there would be regular updates to the Local Strategic Partnership Executive and that she would be happy to take the presentation to them.

RESOLVED: (1) That Report ED.13/13 – Carlisle District Local Plan 2015-2030 – Preferred Options consultation be noted and the recommendations be submitted to the Executive for their consideration before submission to Council in July.

(2) That the Panel acknowledged the hard work undertaken by the Planning Policy Officers.