

Minutes of Previous Meetings

ECONOMIC GROWTH SCRUTINY PANEL

5 SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Brown (Chairman), Mrs Bowman, Denholm, Mrs Finlayson (as substitute for Councillor Mitchelson), Meller, McNulty (as substitute for Councillor Mrs Atkinson) and Rodgerson.

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Ellis – Deputy Leader and Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder

OFFICERS: Investment and Policy Manager
Housing Development Officer
Policy and Performance Officer
Overview and Scrutiny Officer

EGSP.51/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Atkinson and Councillor Mitchelson.

EGSP.52/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct Councillor Brown declared an interest in respect of Agenda Items A.2, Housing Need, Delivery and Strategy Update and A.3, St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Progress Update. The interest related to the fact that she was a member of the St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Working Group.

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct Councillor Meller declared an interest in respect of Agenda Items A.2, Housing Need, Delivery and Strategy Update and A.3, St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Progress Update. The interest related to the fact that he was a member of the St. Cuthbert's Garden Village Working Group.

EGSP.53/19 PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and Part B be dealt with in private.

EGSP.54/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2019 were agreed.

EGSP.55/19 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

There were no items which had been the subject of call-in.

EGSP.56/19 HOUSING NEED, DELIVERY AND STRATEGY UPDATE

The Housing Development Officer submitted an update (ED.25/19) on the key findings of the following housing-related evidence bases:

- Updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Carlisle;
- 2018/19 Housing Completions and Activity Monitoring;
- Carlisle "Movers' Survey" 2018/19

The Investment and Policy Manager explained that the report drew out the key messages and conclusions of the SHMA. The information was important to ensure that the Council was on track with existing housing objectives as set out in the Carlisle Local District Plan. It was also important to keep all evidence bases up to date to ensure that future objectives met all needs.

The Housing Development Officer gave a brief overview of each of the evidence bases, full details of which were included in the report:

Analysis of the SHMA Key Findings

The SHMA primarily covered the period 2018-30, although some of the analysis relating to the St Cuthbert's Garden Village (SCGV) went up to 2050 as it was a long-term development. It was acknowledged that the affordable housing element of the SHMA would need to be refreshed after five years to ensure the evidence base remained up to date.

The Housing Development Officer explained that the SHMA provided a useful headline summary of the District's housing profile and considered a number of sources of information and trends to arrive at housing-based projections covering the SHMA period. The SHMA showed the affordable housing need broken down by tenure and housing market area along with comparison data with previous SHMAs. The Assessment included key findings regarding the family household and housing mix, older people, people with disabilities and the private rented sector.

Housing Completions and Activity Monitoring

It was an obligation of the Carlisle Local District Plan to monitor housing completions on an annual basis. The Housing Completions and Activity Monitoring Section presented the findings from 2018/19 monitoring period and included data on the total and affordable completions split into rural and urban areas, housing completions by property type and sites under construction.

Carlisle District Movers' Survey 2018-19

The Movers' Survey had begun at the start of the 2018/19 financial year and had been continued into 2019/20. The survey was an attempt to gather a better understanding of people's reasons for moving to new homes in Carlisle District to help inform wider strategies. Forms had been sent to occupiers of new build homes by the Council Tax section, the sample was smaller than originally anticipated but 55 forms had been returned and the intelligence gathered had proved useful.

The Housing Development Officer summed up by explaining that the latest findings acted to affirm that the Carlisle Local Plan was on course with respect to its intended objectives. The key findings would also support the development of the Council's emerging Economic Strategy.

The Investment and Policy Manager reminded the Panel that it was important to consider the update in the context of the wider economy. The number one challenge in Carlisle, and Cumbria, was the aging population and the difficulty in filling existing and future jobs. A key part of the response to the issue was to encourage people to remain in Carlisle and to attract people to live in Carlisle. There had originally been plans to prepare a stand-alone Housing Strategy, but it had become clear that housing development played an important part of the Economic Strategy and so the Economic Strategy would include strategic housing. This would also avoid duplication. Other strategies were already in place covering other key elements of housing including for example the Interagency Homelessness Strategy.

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

- When would the joint Economic and Housing Strategy be available?

The Investment and Policy Manager responded that now the Borderlands Growth Deal Heads of Terms had been signed and the LEP Local Industrial Strategy had been submitted it gave a degree of certainty regarding the whole strategic picture and it was a good time to make meaningful progress on the Strategy before the end of the year.

- How many Movers' Survey forms were sent out?

The Housing Development Officer stated that the approximately 150-160 forms had been sent out by the Council Tax section. This number was less than originally anticipated because the forms were sent to occupiers of new build homes, however, they were not sent where the developer was still responsible at the date the new property record was created.

The Investment and Policy Manager added that it was difficult to gather information from developers and the Council was reliant on the good will of residents completing and returning the forms at a time when they are very busy in the home. The return rate was average however the information gathered was extremely valuable to the authority.

Responding to further comments the Investment and Policy Manager agreed that a refresh of the process was timely, and more work could be undertaken with developers and estate agents to encourage new home owners to complete and return the questionnaire.

- How many properties were bought and sold in the 2018/19 period?

The Investment and Policy Manager responded that it was difficult to monitor the sale and purchase of properties but there was evidence of strong sales in Carlisle. The Housing Development Officer drew the Panel's attention to the table on page 23 of the document pack which showed consistently increasing construction rates from 2009/10 to 2018/19.

- A Member asked for clarification regarding the 'net need' for affordable housing by sub area.

The Housing Development Officer responded that the total annual gross need for affordable housing was 699 households, but once re-lets of affordable housing stock were taken into account this left a net need of 158 affordable homes per annum. The table provided a breakdown of the affordable housing need across Carlisle's three Housing Market Areas: Rural West; Rural East; and Carlisle City

- The SHMA included a profile on the private rented sector, had any work been carried out on profiling the social housing sector?

The Investment and Policy Manager responded that the report followed the national SHMA guidance devised by the Government. He explained that the best sample available was the Census as it contains all of the relevant questions on age, income, ethnicity, travel to work etc. The Housing Development Officer added that the SHMA was a large document summarised in the report for Members, he agreed to summarise any information on social housing and circulate it to Members along with a link to the full SHMA report.

- The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder highlighted the Local Plan's household growth figure of 565 home per annum and queried why it was higher than the objectively assessed housing need for the District of 200 dwellings per annum.

The Investment and Policy Officer reported that the National Planning Policy Framework required that local planning authorities identified objectively assessed housing need (the OAN), and that the Government's figures represented the minimum. It was the job of the Local Plan process to adjust figures to reflect local circumstances and translate those needs into land provision targets. Across Cumbria the Government's OAN figures were well short of what was needed. Some areas such as Barrow were shown as needing no new homes. Concerns by the Government itself had led them to recommend that the latest OAN figures should not be reviewed given concerns they underestimated need. There was robust evidence in place to support the figures within the Local Plan and the SHMA report also added that 200 dwellings would see a reduction in the local labour supply and would not support any job growth in the Council area.

- The Census data was from 2011, there was concern that this information was being used as the base line and may no longer be relevant.

The Investment and Policy Manager assured the Panel that other modelling and statistical information was used in conjunction with the Census data to ensure that existing strategies remained on track to achieve their intended objectives.

The Housing Development Officer added the next Census was due to take place in 2021 and the updated Census information would be used to inform the next SHMA, however, he felt that the current SHMA was still a robust data source for the authority.

- The housing need identified the requirement for 1 and 2 bedroom affordable home ownership, however, evidence on affordable rent showed that the need for 1 bedroom properties was limited. Could the Council influence this figure to specify a small amount of 1 bedroom properties and a larger amount of 2 bedroom properties?

The Housing Development Officer responded that the full SHMA report included more background detail on the figures however it did recognise the limited demand from local housing association to deliver 1 bedroom accommodation in any large numbers despite the 'bedroom tax' being in place and a significant supply of 1 bedroom social housing remained in many areas in Carlisle. Part of the issue had been that the majority of properties sold through the Right to Buy Scheme were family houses.

- Did Central Government set the target for the number of new build properties that had to be delivered?

The Investment and Policy Manager clarified that the objectively assessed housing need set only the minimum number of new builds required in each area.

- How much influence did the City Council have to ensure that developers complied with the requirement that dwellings met the M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) and M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings) standards as set out in the report?

The Housing Development Officer reminded the Panel that the Council had adopted the Affordable and Specialist Housing Supplementary Planning Document in 2018, which defined the number of bungalows or other suitable adaptable property types which must be included in certain sized developments. It also set out clearly the requirements of developers with regard to M4(2) and M4(3) standards. Developers had been resistant to the requirements at times in respect of delivering more bungalows, due to increased "footprint" required; however the

document was used as evidence and support to allow developers to factor in the requirements in their developments.

- Did a new build house cost more than an 'old' house? Members were concerned that those who needed new homes had more expensive mortgages as lenders had bigger risks or buyers may end up owing more than the property was worth.

The Investment and Policy Manager reported that there was no evidence to indicate that there were higher mortgage rates for affordable homes. There were strict covenants on low cost home ownership and lenders were much stricter in processing applications to ensure that the applicant was able to pay the mortgage and that it was affordable for them.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Housing Need, Delivery and Strategy Update be welcomed (ED.25/19);

2) That further work be undertaken on the promotion and circulation of the Movers' Survey to encourage more people to complete and return it;

3) That further information on the demographics of those in social housing be circulated to the Panel;

4) That the link to the full Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Carlisle be circulated to the Panel.

EGSP.57/19 ST CUTHBERT'S GARDEN VILLAGE PROGRESS UPDATE

The Investment and Policy Manager provided an update on progress of the planning and delivery of St Cuthbert's Garden Village, including the key next steps in advancing the project across 2019 (ED.28/19).

The Investment and Policy Manager reminded the Panel of the background to the St Cuthbert's Garden Village (SCGV) project and set out the four key project strands which had been identified:

- Masterplanning
- Plan Making
- Carlisle Southern Link Road
- Delivery

The Investment and Policy Manager reported that good progress continued to be made in advancing the project, including moving to Stage 2 of the masterplanning, underpinned by robust and ongoing public and stakeholder engagement. Progress had been aided by a series of successful capacity funding bids via the Government's Garden Villages programme, with a 2018/19 award of £300,000 in March. The Council had submitted a bid for £620,000 for the 2019/20 period.

The Investment and Policy Manager explained that the Stage Two Masterplanning aimed to test and evolve the outcome of earlier work and would develop a more detailed Masterplan that would cover:

- Land Use
- Movement and Access
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Urban Design.

Stage 2 Masterplanning would broadly follow a five stage process which started at the initial inception and went through to the finalisation of the completed Masterplan Framework. The Council had received both the Baseline report (stage 1) and the Option Development and Testing plans and report (Stage 2a).

The Investment and Policy Manager took the Panel through the three options which would be out to public consultation from 2 September until 14 October 2019. The three options showed different density of building, different options for the green space and how the development would meet the existing urban edge of the City.

In arriving at a preferred option, options would need to be tested against a number of factors including fit with the vision, drivers and principles, and viability and feasibility from a land assembly perspective. The preferred option would also be subject to transport modelling, a drainage assessment, health impact assessment and utilities assessment.

The Investment and Policy Manager informed the Panel that the Council remained committed to preparing a separate Development Plan Document for SCGV to be known as the St Cuthbert's Garden Village Local Plan. The Core of the SCGV Local Plan would be the masterplan and hence there was a clear interdependency between the two project strands.

The Investment and Policy Manager reminded the Panel that to realise the full scale and ambition of SCGV, and to improve strategic connectivity between east and west, a new link road connecting Junction 42 of the M6 and A595 was proposed. The Carlisle Southern Link Road (CSLR) had been given priority within the Cumbria Infrastructure Plan and had received endorsement as part of Transport for the North's Strategic Local Connectivity Workstream. A business case had been submitted to the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund and a successful outcome of £102m had been announced in February 2019 with an additional £10m from local contributions. A planning application for the CSLR would be submitted in October 2019 and construction was scheduled to commence in 2021 with completion in 2023.

The Investment and Policy Manager informed the Panel that, to support delivery of the Garden Village, Aspinall Verdi had been appointed to undertake a district wide baseline study of land values and development costs to underpin a potential Community Infrastructure Levy.

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

- Would allotments be included in the Masterplan?

The Investment and Policy Manager confirmed that allotments and food growing space was part of the Garden Village movement and would be included in the overall Masterplan.

- Would the proposed Local Plan and policies for the development be robust enough to prevent the merging of the City and the Garden Village?

The Investment and Policy Manager highlighted the 'green wedge' which sat between the Garden Village and the existing urban edge. The planning policies would define the area and would set out the reason, rationale and evidence for the area to remain a green space. There may be acceptable development of the land, such as a sports field, but it would remain a green space in the Masterplan.

- How would the Council and the planning policies guarantee an even mix of houses across the development and prevent developers building all of the affordable housing in one place?

The Investment and Policy Manager explained that policies similar to those already in operation including advice in the Affordable and Specialist Housing Supplementary Planning Document made sure that developments were appropriately mixed.

- Residents within the district had some concern that the City would be gridlocked because of all of the development that would be taking place across Carlisle, how would the consultation help residents understand that the Garden Village project would take place over 20-30 years?

The Investment and Policy Manager reassured the Panel that a key part of the consultation was to maximise people's awareness of the length of the project. At the public engagement event there was a plan showing how Carlisle had grown over the decades, the Garden Village was not going to grow any faster than expected but the Masterplan would help ensure that it was a managed strategic growth.

- How had the Council engaged with young people and what plans were in place for engagement in the future?

The Investment and Policy Manager reported that engagement with schools and young people had been very successful. Events had taken place with local primary schools, the Youth Council, Carlisle Ambassadors and Carlisle College and had provided valuable information. Engagement with young people would continue right through the masterplan process.

- Had there been any interest from industries which would bring jobs and support the growth in the area?

The Investment and Policy Manager highlighted the areas which were earmarked as strategic employment space on each of the three options and stated that work was being undertaken to investigate which sectors nationally were expected to grow and how Carlisle could attract the investment.

- The proposals for the Southern Bypass were for a single lane road, would there be scope to develop this if required?

The Investment and Policy Manager reminded the Panel that Cumbria County Council were the lead authority for the bypass, but they had looked extensively at the road's future use and had factored it in to the design. The aim for the Garden Village would be to make the area as easy as possible to walk, cycle or access public transport and minimise the need for more road space.

- The Garden Village aimed to be 'innovative and ground breaking', how would the Council ensure that the older people housing and social housing met this goal?

The Investment and Policy Manager explained the overall goal to be innovative was to future proof the development and make it resilient, the strategic policy framework had a major role to play in meeting the aspiration.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder added that the Council was trying to be more responsive for self builds as there were not currently enough sites available. The

Garden Village would allow people to build their own home for life and bring a mixture of homes to the development.

RESOLVED – That the St Cuthbert's Garden Village Progress Update and three draft options (ED.28/19) be welcomed.

EGSP.58/19 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20

The Policy and Performance Officer submitted the Quarter 1 2019/20 performance against the current Service Standards and a summary of the Carlisle Plan 2015-18 actions as defined in the 'plan on a page'. Performance against the Panel's 2019/20 Key Performance Indicators were also included (PC.13/19).

The Policy and Performance Officer reported that there were no 'red' Service Standards or KPIs.

The Policy and Performance Officer asked the Panel to consider the closure of the Carlisle Plan Key Actions listed in the report and make a recommendation to the Executive when they consider the Performance Report.

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

- What did the 'ongoing support' to Carlisle Airport include?

The Policy and Performance Officer explained that one area of support was through Emergency Planning for the Airport.

The Investment and Policy Manager added that the support would be through the Council's role as the local planning authority along with partnership work with the tourism team to make the most of any opportunities presented by having the Airport in the area.

- Several of the Carlisle Plan Key Actions included the development of the Economy and Housing Strategy, how would the Strategy be monitored if the actions were closed?

The Investment and Policy Manager assured the Panel that the Economy and Housing Strategy would be scrutinised by the Panel at various stages in the process and on completion would be monitored by the Panel.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder explained that the Carlisle Plan was due to be refreshed when the Executive had finalised their priorities.

- Was there any evidence of the impact that the Airport had made on the City or the area?

The Investment and Policy Manager stated that it was too early to have any statistics however key partners and stakeholders were due to meet and this would be the first opportunity to discuss the impact of the Airport opening.

- The first phase of the public realm improvements had been completed, what was the next phase?

The Investment and Policy Manager understood that the next phase had originally been intended to cover gateway signage at key entrance points to the City, an idea previously

discussed with local businesses and Cumbria County Council. There had also been an aspiration to develop trails within the City but it was understood this would now be embedded in the City Centre Masterplan.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Quarter 1 Performance Report 2019/20 (PC.22/19) be welcomed.

2) That the Panel recommend to the Executive that the Carlisle Plan Key Actions as listed in report PC.13/19 be closed.

EGSP.59/19 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.22/19 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel.

The most recent Notice of Executive Key Decisions, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and made available online, had been published on 16 August 2019. The Panel were asked to consider any items within their remit that they would like to be added to the agenda.

The Panel's 2019/20 Work Programme had been attached to the report for consideration. The Panel discussed the Work Programme and agreed that an update on Carlisle Ambassadors be submitted to the October meeting.

The Investment and Policy Manager explained that an update on the Garden Village would not be available in November and that the Economic and Housing Strategy could be added to the February meeting's agenda.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer drew the Panel's attention to the progress on resolutions from previous meetings and reported that the visit to the Enterprise Zone had been arranged for 10.00am on 16 October 2019.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Key Decision items relevant to the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel (OS.22/19) be noted.

2) That the following items be scheduled in the 2019/20 Work Programme for the Panel;
Carlisle Ambassadors Update – 17 October 2019
Economic and Housing Strategy – 27 February 2019

3) That the following item be removed from the 2019/20 Work Programme for the Panel:
St. Cuthbert's Garden Village - 28 November 2019

(The meeting ended at 11.55am)