

**DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 11 JUNE 2007  
(FROM 4.30 PM TO 9.32 PM)**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Harrison in the Chair. Councillors Beer, Trevor Chapman, Jim Clark, Mrs de Courcey-Bayley, Ellington, Fawcett, Galloway, Goss, Grange, Elwyn Hinchcliffe, Horton, Anne Jones, Pat Marsh, Bob Nash, Newby, Peter Phillips, Rothwell, John Savage, Simms, Geoff Webber, Willis, Willoughby and Wilson.

**In Attendance:** Councillor Don Mackenzie (Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport and ex-officio member of the Committee)

**Late Arrivals:** Councillor Goss at 4.32 pm  
Councillor Ellington at 5.23 pm

**Early Departures:** Councillor Wilson at 6.20 pm  
Councillor Goss at 7.25 pm  
Councillor Hinchcliffe at 7.30 pm  
Councillor Ellington at 7.30 pm  
Councillor Horton at 7.58 pm  
Councillor Savage at 8.30 pm  
Councillor Fawcett at 9.05 pm

**01/07 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES:** Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Atkinson and Wren. Notification had been received that Councillor Newby was to act as substitute for Councillor Ward and that Councillor Willoughby was to act for Councillor Houtt.

(4.30 pm)

**02/07 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Several Members sought the advice of the Principal Solicitor as to declaring interests and Councillor Mrs de Courcey-Bayley declared a personal interest as detailed in Minute 05/07 below.

(4.31 pm)

**03/07 - EXEMPT INFORMATION:** There were no exempt information items.

**04/07 - PUBLIC ARRANGEMENTS - QUESTIONS:** There were no questions to consider pursuant to Standing Order 27.

(4.31 pm)

**MATTER REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION**

**05/07 - THE HARROGATE DISTRICT CORE STRATEGY:** The Chair outlined the process for considering the report of the Head of Planning Services, which had been circulated previously and submitted to Cabinet on 30 May 2007. Cabinet would consider the matter and this Committee's Minutes at its meeting to be held on 21 June 2007. The Chair advised that a break would be taken during the proceedings and the meeting subsequently adjourned between 6.26 pm and 6.45 pm.

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The policies to be included in the core strategy would set the foundation for the other development plan documents. Consideration of specific sites would be considered later in the process. Since 2004, three major public consultations had been undertaken and the Chair outlined those to be undertaken in future. The documents would be required to pass nine tests of soundness, as outlined in appendix 3 to the report. He advised that each proposed policy would be considered and voted upon separately. In each case the relevant Officer would report on the policy and the explanations for its proposed inclusion. For ease of reference, a summary of all the policies was circulated at the meeting. The report also outlined the proposed core strategy objectives. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport was also in attendance to report and answer Members' questions.

### **Policy SG1 - Settlement Growth - Housing Distribution**

The Chief Planner (Forward Planning) reported that the district's housing requirement for the period 2008 to 2023 was determined at regional level through the Regional Spatial Strategy. The Council would be required to make provision for 400 gross (390 net) new homes per annum. (It was noted that the scale of affordable housing need within the district had been assessed to be 830 homes per annum.) The policy detailed the proposed distribution of housing growth throughout the district which had been based on the results of the 2006 Housing Needs Assessment. The Council would aim to achieve the proposed pattern of development by controlling the release of land. The housing trajectory was illustrated in appendix 4 to the report. The Housing Development Officer also reported on these figures. Certain Members considered that it was unnecessary to include dates when referring to past levels of housing development in core strategy objective 7.

The Chief Planner explained the situation with regard to brownfield sites and greenfield land and that, whilst not being site specific, the core strategy was required to identify the general location of future development. A full discussion ensued with regard to the need to identify the 'west' of Harrogate and 'east' of Knaresborough in the proposed policy and the soundness of deleting such references. The Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport reported on these issues. He would be considering the contents of the Harrogate & Knaresborough Urban Extension Study in due course and it was considered that the Committee should formally be consulted on that document.

A motion was moved and seconded that the policy as printed should be recommended for approval. An amendment was moved and seconded that the bullet point referring to 'extensions to the existing built up areas of west Harrogate and east Knaresborough' should be deleted from the policy along with the corresponding explanation detailed in paragraph 3.20. That amendment was then changed to just delete the words 'west' and 'east'. On a vote being taken on this revised amendment, 10 members voted for the motion, 12 against and there were 2 abstentions, and was consequently lost. The following recommendations were then approved,

### **RECOMMENDED:**

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That (1) Policy SG1 be approved;

(12 Members voted for the motion, 10 against and there were 2 abstentions)

(2) Cabinet be requested to afford the Committee the opportunity to consider the contents of the Harrogate & Knaresborough Urban Extension Study; and

(21 Members voted for the motion and 3 against)

(3) the words 'the 1991 to 2004 levels' be replaced by 'past levels' in core strategy objective 7.

(Unanimous decision)

### **Policy SG2 - Settlement Growth - Hierarchy and Limits**

The Chief Planner (Forward Planning) and the Planning Policy Manager reported on this policy. Development or infill limits would be drawn around the settlements listed. The Planning Policy Manager explained the criteria by which settlements had been categorised and answered Members' questions as to why certain settlements were listed in a particular group. It was evident that certain of the criteria attributed to some settlements may be out of date and the Officers confirmed that amendments would be made at the appropriate time to ensure that the Planning Inspector was presented with as up-to-date information as possible at the examination to be held next year.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

That Policy SG2 be approved (subject to any necessary updating referred to above).

(23 Members voted for the motion and 1 against)

### **Policy SG3 - Settlement Growth - Conservation of the Countryside Including Greenbelt**

Following the report of the Planning Officer, Members considered the wording of this policy and whether development in the countryside should be 'encouraged' or 'allowed'. It was moved and seconded that the policy be approved as written. An amendment was accepted as detailed in the following recommendation.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

That the policy be approved, subject to the last paragraph being amended to read: 'Affordable homes referred to in clause 1 of this policy will also be allowed within the Green Belt and.....'

(22 Members voted for the motion and 1 against)

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### **Policy SG4 - Settlement Growth - Design and Impact**

In answer to a Member's question with regard to the inclusion of the word 'significantly' in the last bullet point of the policy with regard to travel impact, the Planning Policy Manager advised that the Planning Committee would determine this on a case by case basis when dealing with planning applications. It was noted that the words 'impacts' should be corrected to 'impact' in the final bullet point of the policy.

#### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy SG5 - Settlement Growth - Managed Release of Housing**

The Chief Planner (Forward Planning) and Planning Policy Manager answered Members' questions and advised that the authority would have more control over the release of land than in the past.

#### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy HLP1 - Affordable Housing Provision - Single Dwelling Developments**

The Chief Planner reported on the proposed policy which would enable the Council to negotiate a financial contribution to secure an element of affordable housing off-site and to ensure that the affordable homes provided under the policy were available initially and successively to local people in affordable housing need, for as long as the local need existed. The Housing Development Officer also reported, answered Member's questions and confirmed that the policy could only be applied where there was a proven local need.

The Planning Officer reported that the Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport would be considering the mechanisms of applying the policy for inclusion in a supplementary planning document. In response to potential concerns over how the policy would be applied, as detailed in the draft, the Chief Planner identified two possible options. Firstly, to apply a flat rate contribution of £35,000 across the district, and secondly to introduce a deferral of such payment in exceptional cases for family members. Councillor Mackenzie also reported on these matters. In answer to a Member's question, the Officer agreed to examine, for clarification, the situation to be applied when agricultural occupancy conditions were removed.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

That (1) the policy as written be approved; and

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(2) when considering the mechanisms regarding payment of financial contributions, the Cabinet Member be requested to note that whilst accepting a figure of £35,000, the Committee would not wish any exceptions to be made to that requirement.

(16 Members voted for the motion, 5 against and there was 1 abstention)

### **Policy HLP2 - Affordable Housing Provision - Development of Two or More Dwellings**

The Principal Solicitor also answered Members' questions on this policy. It was noted that typographical error in the penultimate sentence of the policy would be corrected.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

That the policy be approved.

(15 Members voted for the motion, 4 against and there was 1 abstention)

### **Policy HLP3 - Affordable Housing Provision - Rural Exception Sites**

The Senior Planner advised that reference in the proposed policy to policy SG1 should be corrected to 'SG2'. In answer to Members' questions, the Chief Planner and Solicitor to the Council reported on the reference in paragraph 4.30 to compulsory purchase powers available to the Council. A discussion took place on the need for its inclusion and the Cabinet Member confirmed that this could be looked at. However, on a vote being taken on this matter, 7 Members voted for the motion, 12 against and there was 1 abstention; it was therefore lost. It was then,

#### **RECOMMENDED UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy HLP4 - Affordable Housing Provision - New Build Associated with Rural Conversion Schemes**

Subject to the correction of the typographical error, it was

#### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy HLP5 - Replacement of Restricted Occupancy Conditions**

It was agreed that the words 'in perpetuity' be added to the policy so as to read:

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'Where, exceptionally, planning permission is granted to relax an agricultural worker, forestry worker or holiday occupancy condition, the future occupancy of the dwelling will be limited in perpetuity by means of a legal agreement or planning condition to a household with a connection to the local area.

### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy amended as detailed above be approved.

### **Policy JB1 - Supporting the Harrogate District Economy**

It was,

### **RECOMMENDED:**

That the policy be approved.

(16 Members voted for the motion and there were 2 abstentions)

### **Policy JB2 - Conference and Business Tourism**

In answer to a Member's question, the Chief Planner advised that whilst reference could be made in the policy to securing significant improvements to accessibility between the Yorkshire Showground and Harrogate town centre, the Council could not specifically support an individual business by encouraging its expansion and improvement.

### **RECOMMENDED:**

That the policy be approved.

(18 Members voted for the motion and 1 against)

### **Policy JB3 - Land for Jobs and Business**

The Chief Planner answered questions with regard to derelict land allocated for employment use.

### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy JB4 - Retail and Town Centre Development**

It was **agreed** that 'public realm' in the proposed policy should be replaced with 'environment'.

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In answer to a Member's question regarding shop vacancy figures, the Head of Property & Economic Development advised that these were monitored on the basis of performance indicators. The Planning Policy Manager agreed to amend core strategy objective 13.2, currently indicating 'no target', to reflect that. In answer to a Member's question regarding specific local shopping centres, the Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport confirmed that the explanation to the policy would be amended to include reference to specific local centres such as Starbeck and Leeds Road.

### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

That, subject to the amendments detailed above, the policy be approved.

#### **Policy TRA1 - Accessibility**

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the proposed policy dealt with spatial implications of other transport strategies and programmes, including the Local Transport Plan. Members considered that accessibility issues were relevant not only in rural areas but also in parts of the urban areas.

### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That (1) the policy be approved; and

(2) the words 'particularly those in rural areas' be removed from core strategy objective 14.

#### **Policy TRA2 - Transport Infrastructure**

Members considered that both references to 'and funding identified' in the policy should be removed as this would cause the exclusion of certain preferred schemes which had previously been identified.

### **RECOMMENDED:**

That, subject to the amendments detailed above, the policy be approved.

(17 Members voted for the motion and 1 against)

#### **Policy TRA3 - Travel Management**

Whilst not being topics for the meeting, the Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport agreed to take on board the comment by a Member regarding the possible re-designation of the A59 through Knaresborough and to note the need for a new rail halt in that town.

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### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy EQ1 - Reducing Risks to the Environment**

In answer to Member's questions, the Head of Planning Services advised that the policy wording accorded with government's code of practice.

### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy EQ2 - The Natural and Built Environment and Green Belt**

It was,

### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy C1 - Inclusive Communities**

In answer to Members' questions, the Planning Policy Manager advised that the policy reflected the Community Strategy. It was agreed that reference to gypsies and travellers should be removed from this particular policy. It was also agreed to refer to elderly, young and disabled people instead of using the generic 'the'.

### **RECOMMENDED:**

That the policy be approved subject to the correction detailed above and to the removal of reference to gypsies and travellers.

(16 Members voted for the motion and there was 1 abstention)

### **Policy C2 - Gypsies and Travellers**

It was,

### **RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That the policy be approved.

### **Policy C3 - Community Sports Regeneration Area**

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(Councillor Mrs de Coursey-Bayley declared a personal interest as Governor of Harrogate High School regarding playing field land identified for possible leisure development, but remained in the meeting room and voted)

It was,

### **RECOMMENDED:**

That the policy be approved.

(14 Members voted for the motion and there were 3 abstentions.)