

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

PLANNING & BUILDING STANDARDS MEMBERS OFFICER WORKING GROUP

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 31 JANUARY 2018

Present: Cllr Argyle (Chair), Cllr Aitchison, Cllr Ford, Cllr Hood, Cllr Mollison, Cllr Robertson, Cllr N Smith, Cllr Sutherland

Apologies: Cllr Cox

Officers: Bruce Stewart, Planning Service Manager (BPS)
Piers Blaxter, Team Leader Policy (PB)
Maureen Corley, Planning Service Manager (MC)
Ailsa Anderson, Senior Policy Planner (AA)
Katherine Southwell, Policy Planner (KS)
Alison Hogge, Policy Planner (AH)
Mrinmoyee Nath, Policy Planner (MN)
Fiona Reid, Policy Planner (FR)
Fraser Napier, Admin Support Assistant (Minutes) (FN)
Katie Cranwell, Admin Support Assistant (Minutes) (KC)

1. Minute of Meeting of 15 November 2017

The Minute of 15 November 2017 was agreed. Cllr Aitchison is to be added to the attendees list.

2. Development Plan Update

PB advised the group that that the Policy Team have completed 63 of the 67 Community Council meetings and they have been very positive. Affordable Housing turned out to be the main issue raised.

PB advised that the bids process began on 3rd January 2018 and closes on 31 March 2018. Bid are invited for both housing and employment land. Last time there was a total of 700 bids received. As the deadline ends over a weekend bids will be considered that are received on 2 April 2018. Other Services will be assisting with the Bids Assessments. Once the bids have been assessed we will then be able to start to form a spatial strategy. Reports relating to the bids will go to Area Committees in late August, with a further report to ISC in October.

PB advised new bid sites will go through the process with equal status to the sites currently in the LDP. The potential to remove sites from the LDP exists and therefore careful assessment of all sites is required.

There have been some issues with ICT regarding publishing documents on the website but hopefully this will be resolved.

3. Community Engagement Policy Issues - Discussion

PB presented details about the housing requirements and supply that the LDP is to provide.

There's an increasing gap between the need and delivery of affordable housing. In order to meet the affordable housing needs there needs to be a range of different house sizes. Planning obviously has to work closely with Housing regarding the whole issue. Housing figures on the need and demand of affordable housing were shown.

An issue exists with situations where developers who own land are leaving the land undeveloped until the economy improves more. There's a huge amount of effective building land waiting to be taken forward in a number of cases including Inverurie.

AA advised that in the preparation of LDP, Rural Development was a Main Issue and it still remains a major issue. There was also discussion regarding the greenbelt designation of towns and the possibility of altering it. Parts of the AWPR are in the greenbelt and there are therefore pressures on it, particularly around junctions. This has been identified in the SDP Main Issue Report.

It has not been possible to review the coastal zone designation and AA suggested that some strengthening of some policies may be required.

In the Aberdeenshire LDP area, AHMA is a pressured area, RHMA is an intermediate area and there are no remote areas. However development of a "cluster" is permitted in the RHMA.

It has proven difficult to come up with a set of guidelines that will work in every situation.

AA suggested identifying pressured, intermediate or remote areas to ensure development is directed to the right place.

FR provided ideas and options for encouraging rural development that supports prosperous and sustainable communities and businesses. The topic of derelict sites was discussed and FR advised that more clarity relating to derelict and brownfield sites is required.

The issue of huts was discussed and MOWG reiterated its reluctance to see huts promoted.

4. 2018-2021 Aberdeenshire Council Historic Environment Strategy

MC introduced the draft Historic Environment Strategy. It is intended to help environment teams set out what they will and won't do. The strategy will be accompanied by annual action plans.

Suggestions were made that some towns or sites should be removed from the strategy. The Conservation Area Management Plan was discussed. Kintore

Conservation Area was causing no issues and therefore there was no need to do anything with it yet. Some formatting in the Strategy was still to be corrected and it will now go to Area Committees.

MOWG welcomed the strategy and considered it to be good.

5. 2018-2021 Aberdeenshire Council Natural Environment Strategy

MC introduced the Draft Natural Environmental Strategy. The strategy is intended to create an overarching document that sets out all the work and processes of P&BS in relation to the natural environment. The role of the Cairngorms National Park was discussed as they have their own strategies so local plans may not affect it, but the overall Natural Environment Strategy will. It was agreed that the photo on the front page should be changed.

MOWG welcomed the strategy and considered it to be good.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 14 March 2018.

