

**ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL**

**PLANNING & BUILDING STANDARDS MEMBERS OFFICER WORKING GROUP**

**WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 25 April 2018**

**Present:** Cllr P Argyle (Chair), Cllr D Aitchison, Cllr J Cox, Cllr I Mollison, Cllr D Robertson, Cllr I Sutherland (sub for Cllr N Smith)

**Apologies:** Cllr N Smith, Cllr F Hood

**Officers:** Bruce Stewart, Planning Service Manager (BPS)  
Piers Blaxter, Team Leader Policy (PB)  
Ailsa Anderson, Senior Policy Planner (AA)  
Alison Hogge, Policy Planner (AH)  
Wendy Forbes, Team Leader (WF)  
Claire McArthur, Acting Team Leader, SDPA (CM)  
Toni Cocker, Admin Planning Support Officer (TC) - Minute

**1. Minute of Meeting of 31 January 2018**

The Minute of 31 January was agreed.

**2. Local Development Plan Update**

PB advised that his team are in the middle of evaluating the bids for the Local Development Plan (LDP). There were over 600 bids submitted and he is confident that all bids will be evaluated prior to Area Committee Seminars.

PB disused the issues regarding Education and Waste Water and advised that meetings with the Education Service and Scottish Water will be taking place.

Following discussion with Members it was agreed that Sustainable Development, Place and Landscape are very much linked and they should be prioritised ahead of Community Aspiration.

PB advised that there will be a delay in publication of the Main Issues Report because of the timing of the publication of the proposed Strategic Development Plan. The delay should only be two months. If the new Scottish Planning Policy is published earlier than anticipated (no indication that this will happen) it may cause issues regarding our LDP timetable but if it is later than previously indicated then our LDP should have already been submitted.

PB confirmed that there is not currently a draft guidance of the reviewed Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and CM advised that the timetable to begin involving Local Authorities with the SPP and enhanced National Planning Framework will be in Autumn/Winter 2018.

PB advised that his team will be producing the required assessments that go alongside the LDP. The Strategic Environment Assessment is being completed as a matter of urgency.

The Seminars with the Area Committees will provide Members with detailed information relating to settlements for discussion in the Main Issues Report.

### **3. Main Issues Report**

PB advised that since the last MOWG meeting Area Committee Seminars to discuss the issues identified during the community engagement exercise have concluded. The Policy Team has also met with rural stake holders and colleagues in Development Management. Their comments, along with the comments made by Community Councils will all feed into the Main Issues Report. It should be appreciated that there have been some mixed views on the issue of rural development.

### **4. Design**

AH presented 2 options in relation to issues with Development Design. It was agreed that Option 1 (Additions and minor policy changes – design review process; implementation of SP=EED; clarity on the application of the 6 criteria; and when adherence to a masterplan is required) was the best option to go forward.

### **5. Rural Development**

AA provided a verbal update on progress made with regard to reviewing the Shaping Development in the Countryside policies. This included an update on work to identify the pressured, intermediate and remote rural areas, review of the greenbelt as well as suggesting a recommended preferred approach and reasonable alternative option on the coastal zone. Members agreed that redevelopment of brownfield sites should not necessarily be limited to “small-scale” if it is established that a site is capable of accommodating a greater scale of development, but that there should be a cap on the scale of development permissible in order to avoid suburbanisation of the countryside. A new issue raised through consultation with Area Committees, was a suggestion that the definition of “primary industry” should be expanded to include those employed in a trade. Members recognised this is an issue for debate as part of the MIR, however urged caution at suggesting this as a preferred approach.

### **6. Enforcement**

BPS explained that this was the 1<sup>st</sup> of 3 sessions on Enforcement with a Report going to Infrastructure Services Committee on the 10 May and an Enforcement Seminar taking place in May. BPS also emphasised that Enforcement was a delegated matter and that all legislation and guidance seeks to solve breaches rather than punishing those involved.

WF presented a slide show of statistics from 2014 to 2017 which showed the number of complaints, cases closed, and nature of cases, comparison with other Councils etc. Aberdeenshire Council was the 3<sup>rd</sup> busiest Authority in Scotland with regard to Enforcement cases. One of the main service improvements has been with an improvement in speed in closing cases and now much more time is spent “vetting” complaints when first received.

WF advised Councillors of legislation that exists in England called Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) which is allowing Local Authorities, through the Procurator Fiscal to seek to recoup money. More clarification of how this could work in Scotland is required. All Councillors agreed it was something that required further investigation.

### **7. Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 5 July 2018. 14:00pm Committee Room 4