

**STAFFORD BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK  
MEETING WITH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
COUNTY SERVICE PROVIDERS**

**DATE OF MEETING – 17 JUNE 2008**

**Name of Attendees**

Tony Lovett -	Staffordshire County Council, Development Services
Chris Smailes -	Staffordshire County Council, Property Services
Mike Winks -	Staffordshire County Council, Head of Estates
Lynsey Palmer -	Staffordshire County Council, Planning Officer
John Goosey –	Staffordshire County Council, District Manager for Social Care & Health
Alex Yendole -	Principal Planning Officer, Stafford Borough Council
Naomi Perry -	Planning Officer, Stafford Borough Council

**Matters Arising**

- The notes of the previous meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008 were agreed.
- The Principles for Settlement Development consultation document was shown to the group. The document will be available for comments on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2008 with the deadline for responses being Friday 1 August 2008. AY promised to e-mail the document to officers at the meeting.
- AY introduced the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) work and the SHLAA partnership. Encouragement was given for a representative from Staffordshire County Council to be involved. The Council will be publishing a map highlighting sites, which landowners have put forward at that time, using the Internet.
- Staffordshire County Council (SCC) has submitted sites to be considered as part of this exercise. The sensitivities around SCC sites were discussed and it was agreed that sites would not be publicly viewable until all the relevant Cabinet meetings and staff briefings had been carried out

**Details**

- AY provided information about Stafford being a Settlement of Significant Development within the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). 10,300 new homes are proposed for Stafford Borough with 7,000 at Stafford town and 3,000 elsewhere in the area. Stafford Borough Council Cabinet Member's consider that the level of housing development proposed in the RSS is appropriate provided that this is supplemented by major employment and infrastructure provision. The County and Borough Council have submitted an Expression of Interest for Stafford Borough to becoming a Growth Point.

If successful funding would be provided for evidence base work to assist in delivering the Development Plan.

- AY provided an update on the 'Borough wide Development Strategy' document which was out for consultation in January & February 2008. Over 500 comments from more than 100 organisations and individuals were received including 40 additional development sites put forward. Government Office for the West Midlands advised Stafford Borough Council (SBC) to further explore spatial options before selecting a preferred option or strategy approach. This advice led to the 'Principles for Settlement Development' consultation document which sets out groups of settlements and describes the type and level of development that may be appropriate within each group based on existing services and facilities.
- JG suggested it would be of value to look at settlements where development would assist new healthcare facilities. In addition Holmcroft in Stafford was suggested as an area where a new surgery may be required.
- CS enquired whether the list of settlements takes into account the capacity of schools. AY confirmed that whilst this is very important the County Council are not yet in a position to provide this information, until more certainty on specific sites and locations is available. However the level of development in Stafford will require new primary schools. Further work will need to take place alongside the Building Schools for the Future programme with consultation through head teachers to the year 2020.
- Population changes, in particular for certain age groups, were discussed along with the effect that this would have on education, social care and the health agenda. It is projected that there will be a 40-60% increase in the over 65 years olds in Stafford Borough between 2006 – 2026.
- TL raised the issue of education provision at the Eco-town Fradley proposal, in particular the reference in comments from SCC's Children & Lifelong Learning Directorate about the need for some form of open competition if new school provision was considered necessary. MW stated that this may be more to do with design specification rather than the level of services.
- AY raised the topic of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), in particular the setting up of SHLAA partnership, with the first meeting taking place on 15<sup>th</sup> July. The work will focus on potential future housing sites in terms of deliverability, timescales and achievability.
- AY introduced the new Planning Policy Statement (PPS12) and its implications on the Stafford Borough Local Development Framework (LDF). The first step will be to prepare a new Local Development Scheme (LDS) and secure its agreement with Government Office West Midlands. TL stated that the previous system had strict tests to be adhered to and led to uncertainty. The latest system has relaxed the approach and therefore may be less demanding but shows little overall improvement. Questions still

- TL gave an update on the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), in particular providing information on the work currently being carried out by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, looking into the spatial distribution of the additional housing requirement. New figures have recently been released from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) representing population projections based on 2006 data. Stafford's population will see an increase of 12.3% through to 2026, not an increase of 6.2% as stated in the 2004 based projections. The conversion of these population figures into household numbers is expected in the Autumn 2008. Note was taken that there had been up to a 20% drop in land values over recent months as a result of the credit crisis.
- A second presentation by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners is taking place in July 2008. The RSS Phase 2 Revision consultation will now close on 8<sup>th</sup> December allowing consideration of the Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners study due to be published on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008. The RSS examination is expected in April 2009 and the Panel Report in late 2009 / early 2010.
- TL discussed the role of the Regional Development Agency, called Advantage West Midlands (AWM) who will be taking over the role of the Regional Assembly after 2010. AWM are currently preparing for the transition and have commissioned independent work from ARUP consultants, similar to that of Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, due to assess the economic / market approach rather than the population / household projections. The results of this work will be used as evidence at the RSS examination and may be used as a future option leading to housing being directed to Warwickshire / Worcestershire rather than to Staffordshire based on the Regional Economic Strategy.
- TL discussed the Growth Point status, in particular how the Expression of Interest is still being considered. Currently there are Treasury concerns over the cost of transport infrastructure nationally and this is being looked at in more detail before an announcement is made.
- The cross boundary issue of providing houses for Stafford Borough in South Staffordshire district was discussed, and a meeting in July is taking place to discuss this matter through the RSS process. Work is on-going with Natural England and relevant local planning authorities concerning the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Habitat Regulation requirements (i.e. Appropriate Assessment).
- Phase III of the RSS was introduced, in particular the topics it will cover including gypsy and traveller accommodation, and critical rural services / the role of rural services. TL stated that an approach is currently being put forward as part of the Section 4 (4) Brief from the Regional Assembly for consideration that focuses new development on settlements without services in order to increase the level of services and facilities. Health and

social care could be supported through a new GP surgery if new development occurs.

- AY discussed the role of the Ministry of Defence land at Stafford. An announcement on the future role of Stafford is expected in the Autumn of 2008 with the expectation that there may be a significant increase in service personnel. Along with dependants this may lead to an increased demand for housing in Stafford beyond the levels currently being considered through the RSS.
- CS discussed the sites owned by SCC, which have been sent in for consideration to SBC. Some of these sites require staff briefings and a Cabinet meeting to be finalised before being published in the public arena. It is expected that this will be completed by July. An announcement on the future of Tipping Street is expected by the end of the week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> June 2008.
- Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 14 October 2008.

Notes prepared by Alex Yendole  
Forward Planning Section  
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