

STAFFORD BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

MEETING BETWEEN STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE & STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING – 4 APRIL 2008

Officers in Attendance

Jeremy Fryer	-	Staffordshire Police, Estates Advisor
Richard Gough	-	GPS consultant on behalf of Staffordshire Police
Alex Yendole	-	Stafford Borough Council, Principal Planning Officer

- AY set out the purpose and context for the meeting, to discuss future Police engagement with the new Development Plan, the Community Infrastructure Levy and contributions towards Police requirements and facilities in the Stafford Borough area. The Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001, adopted in October 1998, contains the Policy INT1 - Planning Obligations. However this policy provides no basis to secure Section 106 payments for new Police facilities. Furthermore Stafford Borough Council is not seeking developer contributions through individual planning applications for Police facilities at present.
- Stafford Borough Council is currently preparing the new Development Plan and part of this work will include an Implementation Strategy and future payment mechanisms through Section 106 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Council is currently preparing background work to set out future policy reference for planning obligations in the area. The Government continue to progress proposals for the Community Infrastructure Levy, scheduled for completion by the end of 2008.
- RG emphasised that different local authorities in Staffordshire were taking alternative approaches the seeking contributions towards future Police facilities. Although no local authority specifically refers to Section 106 contributions through the Development Plan process South Staffordshire District and Lichfield District have mechanisms to seek voluntary for the Police from developers. Generally this approach applies to large scale developments of 50 houses or more. The majority of local authorities in Staffordshire seek contributions from town centre developments to provide new public safety facilities such as CCTV installations. The policy basis for future developer contributions to Police facilities would be through securing a safer and more secure environment in settlements.
- AY explained that in the future the new Development Plan could require new Police facilities for large scale developments, to be delivered on-site such as a new Neighbourhood Policing Unit with a district retail centre. Alternatively the Community Infrastructure Levy could be used to collect contributions from new developments to provide capital costs for new Police facilities.

- The Police Authority should consider preparing robust evidence to justify the requirements and capital costs to provide new Police facilities through the new Development Plan. This evidence could be used in a future Examination in Public to support a Core Strategy policy on community infrastructure as well as the implementation strategy.
- Police Authority funding is provided by the Home Office based on current household numbers in an area. However this does not take into account new developments and it can take between 3 - 5 years for revised funding revenues to reflect new development with no back dating of new Policing costs incurred. The location of Stafford Police Station in the town centre means that there is less Police facilities in more sub-urban locations. However in the future the majority of new development in Stafford Borough will take place in these sub-urban locations
- AY explained the delay in adopting the new Local Development Framework because of the Regional Spatial Strategy. This delay will not adversely effect the Police in the short term as existing Stafford Borough Local Plan allocations may provide some level of contribution in the short term. The Police negotiate directly with developers for contributions on large scale developments but in the future a more formalised approach through the Local Development Framework is required. The Police gave support for the new Core Strategy to include a policy on the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Staffordshire Police have produced a paper setting out calculations for developer contributions to new facilities based on a rating approach across Divisional areas. The paper has been careful to avoid ghettoising certain areas by being non place specific. To provide robust justifications for the new Development Plans further work will be required to set out the situation for individual Districts in Staffordshire and key settlements if possible. In recent years with the increase of Anti-Social Behaviour has lead to communities calling for a greater Police presence on the streets. This new agenda will need to be reflected in re-calculations for contributions to future Police facilities, which may be expansion, upgrade or new. The Police Authority tend to use developer contributions and delivery of on-site facilities rather than Private Finance Initiative mechanisms.
- Staffordshire Police suggest that the key principle to be adopted is for the new Development Plan to include a policy seeking developer contributions for Police facilities as currently takes place for education provision. Therefore a clear policy framework should be in place through the new Local Development Framework.
- AY emphasised the importance of robust and effective evidence. Stafford Borough is almost completely contained within the Chase Division together with all of the key principal settlements. The evidence should support developer contributions focused at the settlement level rather than broadly at the Borough level to justify future contributions to Police facilities through the Development Plan. A level of support is being provided by Staffordshire Police's new Chief Constable for delivery of new property and estate management initiatives.
- Thresholds for Police contributions need to established through the evidence, distinguishing between on-site and off-site approaches. Further discussion is

needed concerning the level at which Police contributions apply to future planning applications. The evidence needs to identify existing Police facilities across the Borough and the potential capacity from existing properties in settlements for future operations. It is important to make progress on the evidence base in order to show the capacity issues which can subsequently support potential new development locations and where new Neighbourhood Policing Units might be required in the future. Staffordshire Police agreed to progress this work on the evidence base in order to support the delivery of a robust development plan policy framework and sound evidence base as is now required.

- Date of Next Meeting – June / July 2008

Note prepared by Alex Yendole

Date last revised: 08/01/2009

Forward Planning Section, Stafford Borough Council