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LOCAL PLANS WORKING GROUP

TUESDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bateson (Chairman), Derek Wilson (Vice-Chairman), George Bathurst, Malcolm Beer, Phillip Bicknell, David Hilton, Leo Walters and MJ Saunders

Officers: Chris Hilton, Terry Ann Cramp, Robert Paddison, Simon Rowberry, Shilpa Manek, Phillip Gill and Jenifer Jackson

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Geoffrey Hill.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

MINUTES

Unanimously Agreed the minutes of the last meeting.

The Chairman invited Chris Hilton, Director of Development and Regeneration to inform Members about the way forward for the Local Plans Working Group. Chris Hilton explained to Members that:

- Regular meetings have been scheduled, every three weeks, to provide an update on the programme and the risk register. All concerns would be highlighted and what points required specific focus.
- The regular meeting would be short and not be too detailed, mainly for Members to be kept up to date regarding progress and key issues with the Borough Local Plan.
- Borough Local Plan draft documentation will be circulated, according to a pre-agreed timetable, to Local Plans Working Group members so that Members can give comments by email. The project timetable does not allow for the draft documentation to be circulated as formal LPWG papers in advance of each meeting.

Councillor Saunders raised concern that there may be some issues that require debate by the Group. It was agreed that if any Member of the Group wanted debate and discussion, then subject to the agreement of the Chair, an item would be placed on the next agenda for discussion. If it was only a couple of days before, then it would be a verbal update with no reports.

This was unanimously agreed by all Members.

The Chairman suggested that Members look at the timeline and suggest any items that they would like to be placed on the agenda.

PLAN PROGRESS - FEMA PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Phil Gill, Senior Planning Officer, explained that this was commissioned jointly by six Berkshire authorities. There was an initial meeting on 14 December. Part 2 of the work would be looking at the economic market. No timetable had yet been fixed but would be in the new year. Part 3

of the work would be looking at the supply side, essentially if we have too much or too little employment. A report would be ready by the end of January 2016.

Councillor Saunders asked what the economic growth assumption was and if it was at a variance. Chris Hilton and Phil Gill, both, confirmed that it was essentially the same assumption and LEP was happy.

ACTION: Phil Gill to check with NLP and report back to Members.

Other points discussed included:

- The FEMA would not include the Heathrow expansion and CrossRail.
- Councillor Saunders expressed that leaving out CrossRail may be questioned by the inspector.
- It was highlighted that the communications would be taken into account but not the impacts.

DUTY TO CO-OPERATE

Officers are liaising with other councils, informally getting views before meeting on 18 December 2015. Robert Paddison explained that there is only a duty to cooperate, not a duty to agree. We can see where they all are and since we would be showing effort that we were trying to agree, it may be sufficient.

Councillor Hilton asked if the right people were attending the meetings and was reassured that the correct officers were attending.

Councillor Saunders gave Members a little history about the meetings. He explained that a schedule had been put together and meetings were prioritised by himself and Sarah Ball. It worked very well. Wokingham was the other council that worked very efficiently.

Members discussed the formality of the meetings, whether they needed to be minuted and recorded. It was agreed that signed letters may be sufficient. The main point was that some sort of evidence was required.

Councillor Saunders explained that the four main points were:

- The parties all discuss their rationale.
- Demonstrate all bridged views.
- Identify all issues.
- Document why we are not accepting the counterparties issues.

DRAFT VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Flo Churchill, interim Borough Local Plan Team Manager, explained that this would be a draft version of how we would want the borough to develop. Flo Churchill went through the objectives one by one with Members and noted all the suggested changes. All amendments would be made to the report. The draft vision and objectives were agreed by all Members.

PLANNING POLICY IN REGARD TO POTENTIAL HEATHROW EXPANSION

Councillor Beer advised the Members that, in his view, it was now advisable to make submissions on the planning grounds since all other submissions had been made on environmental grounds. Councillor Beer suggested leaving the submission for further consideration. It would be advisable to put onto the LPWG agenda and put a formal response forward.

This was agreed by all Members.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion took place on items 9-10 on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The meeting, which began at 4.30 pm, finished at 6.50 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

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