

**ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL**

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

**ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 23 MAY 2008**

- Present:** **Aberdeenshire Council**  
Councillors P Argyle (Chair), J B Cox, R Merson, S W Pratt, and J Webster
- Aberdeen City Council**  
Councillors S Cassie, B Cormie, K Dean, and J West (substitute for M Jaffrey)
- Apologies:** Councillor D Storr, Aberdeenshire Council; Councillors J Hunter and A Milne Aberdeen City Council
- Officers:** Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Head of Planning Policy and Environment, Head of Law & Administration (Mr G Davidson), Committee Officer, Aberdeenshire Council  
Head of Planning and Infrastructure and Committee Manager, Aberdeen City Council.  
Interim Strategic Development Plan Manager, Strategic Development Plan Manager, Planner; Strategic Development Plan Team

At the start of the meeting the Chair indicated that Councillor Webster had taken over the position of vice chair of Infrastructure Services Committee, and was now a Member of the Joint Committee. Members were asked to appoint Councillor Webster to the position of joint vice chair of the Joint Committee due to the vacancy created by the change of Aberdeenshire Councillors on the Committee.

Members **agreed** to appoint Councillor Webster as the Aberdeenshire vice chair to the Joint Committee.

**1. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 28 JANUARY 2008**

There had been circulated and **approved** a copy of the minute of meeting of 28 January 2008.

**2. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 20 MARCH 2008**

There had been circulated and **approved** a copy of the minute of meeting of 20 March 2008.

**PLANNING**

**3. ABERDEEN CITY AND ABERDEENSHIRE PLANNING UPDATE**

There had been circulated a report dated 12 May 2008, by the Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Aberdeenshire Council and Head of Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council which advised Members of progress of the Development Plan and other planning issues within the two Councils.

The Head of Planning and Infrastructure highlighted to Members that Aberdeen City had published a 'notice of intention' to adopt its Local Plan on 2 and 9 May, 2008 and it was anticipated that the Full Council would adopt the plan at its meeting on 25 June 2008. Members were also informed that there had been discussions on the inclusion of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and Aberdeen Airport Master Plan in the National Planning Framework 2. Assessment was still underway on the inclusion of the airport in the

Framework, however Scottish Ministers had already recognised the need for the AWPR and therefore there was no additional benefit for its inclusion in the Framework.

The Head of Planning Policy and Environment advised Members of the work being undertaken on the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan in order to deliver the emerging structure plan. The first formal preparatory act for the new Local Development Plan would be the publication of a Development Plan Scheme however publication of the new regulations was awaited from the Scottish Government. It was also highlighted that there were 3 planning applications of regional or national significance being considered by Aberdeenshire at present.

During discussion, comment was made on some important planning applications being considered by Aberdeen City, these being the urban village development at the former Donside Paper Mill site and the relocation of Cockers Roses Garden Centre.

The Joint Committee **agreed** to note the report.

#### **4. STRUCTURE PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

There had been circulated a report dated 12 May 2008 by the Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Aberdeenshire Council and the Head of Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council, which advised Members of the progress on the new Structure Plan and the implementation of the Development Plan Scheme published to support the plan preparation process.

The Strategic Development Plan Manager summarised the report to Members and highlighted that a second version had been received back from the Plain English campaign since the report had been written. A briefing for MEPs, MPs, and MSP's was scheduled for late May 2008 to provide them with an overview of the draft plan before the formal consultation process began. During discussion, Members indicated that there had been positive media coverage following the press conference by the Joint Chairs to coincide with the publication of the 'Provisional Draft Structure Plan' for consultation by both Councils.

The Joint Committee **agreed** to note that work on the Structure Plan was proceeding in accordance with the programme set out in the Development Plan Scheme, although the timescale had been put back as a consequence of the decisions made at the September 2007 meeting of the Joint Committee and the timing of the relevant Committees of the two Councils.

#### **5. DRAFT STRUCTURE PLAN**

There had been circulated a report dated 12 May 2008 by the Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Aberdeenshire Council and the Head of Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council, which advised Members of the ongoing work to prepare a draft Structure Plan for consultation. A map was circulated to Members at the meeting, which indicated the proposals contained in the draft plan.

The Strategic Development Plan Manager informed the Joint Committee of the how the draft Structure Plan was progressing. It was highlighted that the provisional draft Structure Plan had been agreed under delegated powers by the Joint Chairs, in consultation with officers, and had been circulated to both Councils for comment. Appended to the report was a copy of the draft plan, as circulated to both Councils, a copy of all the comments made by Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City councillors on the draft plan and the proposed responses to those comments. Also attached to the report, as an appendix, was the first assessment of the draft plan by the Plain English Campaign. It was highlighted that it was a complex process to obtain a crystal mark from the Plain English Campaign for a policy document given the language it contained. A second version had been received from the Plain English Campaign since the report had been produced and it was anticipated that only a few further changes were required to obtain the mark.

During discussion Members made the following comments on the draft plan:

- Housing Allocation: the figure for Ellon to Blackdog for 2007-2016 should be reviewed as it was felt the dualling of the A90 and the start of the Energetica Project would be underway by 2012. The current '0' figure looked out of place in contrast to the allowances for other areas. Officers responded that this could be amended, and would assess the feasibility of an allocation of around 400 houses.
- Economic Growth: there should be reference to the importance of a 'knowledge economy' and innovation and inventiveness, in this section of the plan in addition to the reference to the universities in the area. Officers indicated that there was an issue for the Plain English Campaign for some of the terminology, but they would look into rewording the sentence to convey the idea that knowledge was not only from the universities and research organisations.
- It was highlighted that the map indicated the two possible sites for a community stadium that were undergoing a feasibility study and an alternative site may still require to be identified. It was also felt that under the section 'Putting this Plan into Practice' further comment was required on the benefits of the stadium, similar to the details on the other projects outlined. In response, Officers indicated that the wording would be amended accordingly.
- The Spatial Strategy: Regeneration Priority Area. Examples should be included to indicate what was meant by site-specific developments. Members were informed that this referred to developments such as mineral extraction which would be highly site specific, and examples would be provided in the text, and
- While it was recognised that a number of options were neither in nor out of the plan, a reference to the possibility of a new settlement should be considered for inclusion in the draft plan for the purpose of the consultation to assess the public reaction to such a proposal.

Aberdeenshire Councillors also indicated that a further explanation was required in response to some of the comments raised by Members at Area Committees. It was highlighted that several issues were not for the Development Plan, but would be addressed through the Local Plan. Members were advised that a paper would be prepared indicating where issues were for the Local Plan and providing a schedule of when they would be considered, for Aberdeenshire Councillors.

The Joint Chair for Aberdeen City sought to re-affirm the position of Aberdeen City in that they were committed to delivering their share of development as identified in the plan.

The Joint Committee **noted** the report and **agreed**:

- (a) the responses to the comments raised by both Councils as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, and
- (b) that final changes to the draft plan and associated documents be made (including those made by the Joint Committee as detailed above) and that the final draft be submitted to a meeting of the Joint Committee in mid-June to authorise publication and start of consultation.

## **6. PROPOSED "STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY"**

There had been circulated a report by the Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Aberdeenshire Council and the Head of Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council, which advised Members of the background to the designation of the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) and sought comments on the proposed draft Minute of Agreement and other administrative arrangements in setting up the new SDPA. The report highlighted that following discussion by the Joint Committee, the Minute of Agreement would be submitted for approval to both Councils.

Officers highlighted that the proposed Boundary was required to be submitted to the Scottish Government within three months of the Orders being in Force. The designation Orders were to be laid before Parliament on 25 June and therefore the deadline for the boundary submission was 25 September 2008. Consultation was to take place with Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils, all neighbouring local authorities, key agencies and community councils.

Members of the Joint Committee were asked to comment on the draft Minute of Agreement and were advised that a few minor changes were required to the document before a final version would be submitted for approval to both Councils.

The Joint Committee **agreed**:

- (a) that consultation be carried out on the proposed draft boundary and accompanying statement of justification for the SDPA as attached at appendix 1 to the report, and
- (b) to delegate to the Joint Chairs, in consultation with Officers, the authority to sign-off the Minute of Agreement ahead of the report being considered by the Policy and Strategy, Aberdeen City Council and Infrastructure Services Committee, Aberdeenshire Council in June 2008.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **7. MINUTE OF MEETING OF NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP OF 20 DECEMBER 2007**

There had been circulated and **noted** a copy of the minute of meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership of 20 December 2007.

### **8. MINUTE OF MEETING OF NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP OF 20 FEBRUARY 2008**

There had been circulated and **noted** a copy of the minute of meeting of the North East Scotland Transport Partnership of 20 February 2008.

## **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee **agreed** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 9 June, 2008 and would be hosted by Aberdeen City Council.