

**STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY  
DRAFT MINUTE**

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN  
FRIDAY, 13 FEBRUARY, 2009**

**Present:-** Councillor Cassie, Chair; Councillor Argyle, Vice-Chair; and Councillors G J Clark (as a substitute for Cllr Pratt), Cox, Hunter, Jaffrey, Merson, Milne, Penny (as a substitute for Cllr Dean), Sullivan and Webster.

**Apologies:-** Councillors Cormie, Dean and Pratt.

**Officers:-** **Strategic Development Planning Team:**  
Strategic Development Plan Manager, Senior Planners (L Robertson and B Strachan), Planners (A Lyle and P Shannon)  
**Aberdeenshire Council:** Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Head of Planning Policy and Environment, Committee Officer  
**Aberdeen City Council:** Head of Planning and Infrastructure.

**1. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY OF 23 JANUARY 2009**

The Authority had before it a copy of the Minute of Meeting of the Authority of 23 January 2009.

**The Authority resolved:-** to approve the Minute.

**2. FINALISED STRUCTURE PLAN**

The Authority had before it a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager, which concluded the work of the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) on the preparation of a finalised structure plan for submission to Scottish Ministers. The report highlighted that the four main elements of this were to:

- agree responses to the comments received on the draft plan,
- agree amendments to the draft plan in light of these and other matters,
- agree the supporting documentation to the finalised structure plan, and
- seek a recommendation from the SDPA that Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils should agree the submission of the plan (as amended) and supporting documentation to Scottish Ministers as the finalised structure plan on, or before, 27 February 2009.

The Strategic Development Plan Manager began by summarising to Members the information contained in the appendices attached to the report. He also advised that Scottish Natural Heritage had been sent a copy of the Appropriate Assessment document on 2 February, 2009, and a response was still awaited, but it was hoped this would be received in advance of the two council meetings on 19 February, 2009. Reference was also made to the Background Paper (Appendix 9) and that a new section and appendix had been included which set out the early outputs from the Housing Need and Demand Assessment process, following on from guidance published by the Scottish Government in March 2008 on the new process.

The Strategic Development Plan Manager drew Members' attention to section 6 of the covering report which highlighted the timetable for the submission and what could happen if the Plan was not submitted by 27 February, 2009. It was also explained that there was a need to amend the Addendum to the Report of Survey as the first draft of the document had been compiled at the start of the development plan process and some of the information contained in the document was required to be updated.

During discussion, Members of the Authority put forward a number of amendments to the proposed structure plan. The amendments and the reasons for these were as follows:-

- i) that in recognition of the recent announcement of a substantial funding package for improvements to Peterhead Harbour, and the value which the harbour as an asset brought to the north east of Scotland, to add a bullet point to the list on page 783 headed 'Proposals' under the section 'Putting this plan into practice', worded:

"Improving the facilities at Peterhead Harbour to make the most of the deepwater opportunities, particularly for the energy and fishing sectors."

- ii) in order to highlight the contribution that the expertise within the north-east makes to the knowledge economy, to add the following words to the Issues detailed under the Economic Growth section on page 770,

"...and research organisations and from our skilled and innovative workforce"

- iii) to allow a more fluid reading of the text it was indicated that the numerous brackets used in the text should be replaced, where appropriate, with commas.

- iv) that, given the expected economic growth and developments in the Peterhead area, 200 houses should be moved from the allocation in the first phase of the plan for the Rural Housing Market Area to the allocation in the first phase of the plan for the Peterhead to Hatton Corridor.

- v) Whilst recognising the infrastructure constraints in the area, it was felt that some of the housing allocation to the Stonehaven to Portlethen corridor could be moved to the Ellon to Blackdog corridor as there was concern that it may have been given more than it could comfortably accommodate. It was also felt that support should be given to economic growth in the north by allowing for more housing in support of the aim to strengthen the economy. To do this it was proposed to move 400 houses from the first period in the Stonehaven to Portlethen corridor to the first phase of the Ellon to Blackdog corridor.

Some Members indicated that if the Ellon to Blackdog allocation was increased as proposed, reference should be included to the infrastructure issues affecting development in the area, and the extent to which this would limit how much development could take place prior to these being resolved.

Officers indicated that the following wording could be added to page 767, the Aberdeen to Peterhead section under the detail on the Strategic Growth Areas:

"...*Don Crossing*. Until this infrastructure is in place, development in the southern part of the corridor will be limited. This issue will be addressed in the Structure Plan Action Programme. *We will...*"

In response to questions on this matter, the Director of Planning and Environmental Services confirmed that Aberdeenshire Council would consult with the City on planning applications in this corridor during the first phase of the plan and would instruct developers that Traffic Impact Assessments for planning applications within the Corridor should be cross- boundary.

- vi) concern was expressed over the Bridge of Dee and that road improvements were not only required to the north of the City, and the following insert was suggested to page 783, to the list of Proposals under Putting this plan into practice,

- "...*Peripheral Route*, and associated schemes, including improvements at the Bridge of Dee, to provide..."

Officers indicated to the Authority that there were a small number of changes to the documents attached to the report as detailed in the errata sheet tabled to Members. A small number of amendments to the proposed responses to the comments received, and to the associated documents would have to be made in light of the discussion and what the Authority agreed. Reference was also made to the Key Diagram which would be amended to include all towns with a population of 3,000 and over as a solid black dot, and all places with over 1,500 residents as a black circle on the diagram.

**The Authority resolved to:-**

- (a) agree the proposed responses to the comments received during the consultation on the draft structure plan and associated documents (as detailed in appendices 1-3), subject to the changes required as a consequence of the amendments detailed in points i)- vi) above,
- (b) note and agree the Appropriate Assessment (Appendix 6),
- (c) agree to delegate to the Chair and Vice Chair the approval of the Addendum to the Report of Survey,
- (d) recommend to both Councils that, subject to the amendments as detailed in points i)-vi) above and the errata sheet, the finalised structure plan (Appendix 4) be submitted to Scottish Ministers on 27 February, 2009, along with the six supporting documents identified in section 5 of the report (appendices 5-9),
- (e) recommend to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils that the letter enclosing the finalised structure plan to Scottish Ministers be sent by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the SDPA on behalf of the two Councils,
- (f) agree that the letter to Scottish Ministers accompanying the finalised structure plan noted that in addition to the statutory requirements to consider the environmental impact of any modifications to the plan proposed by Scottish Ministers (both under the strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment legislation) that consideration be given to the equalities and human rights implications of any modifications; and
- (g) agree that the letter to Scottish Ministers accompanying the finalised structure plan communicates the wish, if at all possible, for the approved structure plan to have a Plain English Campaign Crystal Mark, following on from crystal marks secured for both the draft and finalised plans.