
MEETING	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP
DATE	6 SEPTEMBER 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), POTTER (VICE-CHAIR), D'AGORNE, MERRETT, AYRE, REID, SIMPSON-LAING AND WATT

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda. Councillor Potter declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 (Student Housing Report) as Chair of Governors of Tang Hall Primary School.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Local Development Framework Working Group held on 5 July 2010 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to minute 4 being amended to read *“Reference to the housing waiting list and the need for **over a 1000 affordable units per year**”*.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/OTHER SPEAKERS

It was reported that there had been three registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme. An additional request to speak from a Council Member had also been received and granted by the Chair.

A student from York University made representation in respect of agenda item 4 (minute 8 refers) “Student Housing Report”. He stated that there was no evidence that areas with a high number of students resulted in a lower quality of life for residents. An Article 4 Direction would be deeply harmful to the student population and he urged that the committee supported Option 1 in the report to alleviate the uncertainty for students.

A representative from Osbaldwick Parish Council made representation in respect of agenda item 4 (minute 8 refers) “Student Housing Report”. He raised concerns that the council had not put in place a policy or statement of intent regarding this issue. He stated that the parish council had asked the local MP to support the request for an Article 4 Direction and drew attention to the number of students who required accommodation and the impact that this had on Heslington and similar areas.

Councillor Morley spoke in support of Option 2 of the Student Housing Report (minute 8 refers). He stated that it was important that students were able to live in the community but that there should be controls in place in some areas to prevent problems arising in respect of issues such as on-street parking. He welcomed the recommendation that officers carried out further work on this issue.

Councillor Morley also spoke in respect of agenda item 5 (minute 9 refers) "LDF Core Strategy". He drew attention to the comments previously expressed by the Executive in respect of greenbelt land. He also requested that the committee pressed the government to refine the national guidance on windfalls.

A representative of Meadlands Residents' Association made representation in respect of agenda item 5 (minute 9 refers) "LDF Core Strategy". He stated that he welcomed the government's commitment to hand back responsibilities to local planning authorities and stressed the need to involve local residents in the process. He stated that future intrusion of search area B (East of Metcalfe Lane, Osbaldwick) was both unwelcome and unnecessary.

8. STUDENT HOUSING REPORT

Members considered a report that gave an update on the work that had taken place in response to recent changes in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) legislation. Officers in the City Development team and in Development Control had been exploring a planning response to the issue of HMOs and specifically student housing, including the possibility of Article 4 Directions being used with regard to emerging government policy. The report also identified further work that could be undertaken.

Members questioned a number of points in the report and made the following comments:

- It was important that students were not stigmatised. There was general agreement that they could be good neighbours and that many landlords were proactive in managing their properties. Good community working was important and it was pleasing to note that the Student Union had indicated that they were keen to support this. It would be useful for the views of representatives from the higher education establishments to be sought regarding this matter to ascertain their plans in respect of the provision of suitable and affordable accommodation.
- There was a need for shared accommodation for other sections of the community and not just for students.
- It was important to have mixed communities and for there to be sufficient family accommodation. Further consideration needed to be given to the impact of student accommodation on local amenities and businesses.

- The comments from the Children's Services Directorate that "primary schools were not being seriously affected despite there being fewer school age pupils actually living in the surrounding area" was not supported by Members' local knowledge of falling rolls and potential school amalgamations in some areas. More data was required on this issue.
- There was anecdotal information that families who were looking to move into larger accommodation were having to move away from particular areas because family accommodation was being bought above the market value for the purpose of subdividing the accommodation. Members were keen to ascertain if this anecdotal evidence could be substantiated.
- Concerns were expressed that the use of council tax exemptions did not provide accurate figures regarding student housing and that the figures in the report may underestimate the situation.
- It was important that officers carried out further investigative work to ensure that decisions taken were appropriately informed and had a reliable evidence base.

Members considered the following options:

Option One: to accept the findings of work undertaken at ward level and continue to monitor student housing numbers and HMO applications in the city, awaiting the outcomes of the Government's consultation on its proposed changes to HMO legislation.

Option Two: to instruct officers to undertake the proposed further work identified in paragraph 31 of the report to identify local concentrations of student housing and request a future report to the LDFWG setting out further work to be undertaken.

Option Three: to instruct officers to undertake all of the proposed further work identified in paragraphs 31 to 34 of the report.

RESOLVED: (i) That officers be instructed to undertake further proposed work in accordance with the approach outlined in Option Two.

- (ii) That, in addition to the information requested in respect of pupil numbers, officers also provide data referred to in paragraphs 32-34 of the report including:
- Indicators of student housing and their impact
 - Information on thresholds

- Consultation arrangements with higher education establishments, including students

REASON: To explore if there is compelling evidence to justify an Article 4 Direction as a means of exerting tighter controls on the spatial extent of student housing and if required, develop a policy approach.

9. LDF CORE STRATEGY

Members received a report that considered the implications of recent government policy changes on the LDF Core Strategy, in particular the revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies.

Some Members expressed concern at the identifying of sufficient sites and broad areas for development for a fifteen-year period only, as a previous planning inquiry had indicated that a period of between 20-25 years was required in terms of green belt permanency.

Members requested that the second sentence under Issue 2 – page 31 of the report should not be used in future, as the information was misleading.

- RESOLVED: (i) That officers be requested to produce a report for the next meeting in line with option 1 outlined in paragraph 29 of the report.
- (ii) That officers be requested to press government to refine the national guidance on windfalls, as outlined under issue 4, paragraph 28 of the report.

REASON: To help progress the LDF Core Strategy to its next stage of development.

Cllr S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 5.25 pm].