

Notes of the meeting of the **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK GROUP** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday 26 January 2005 at 4.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor A F Richardson

Councillors: Mrs J M Munt
Mrs A C Willshaw

Also Present: Mr R Christian – LSP Port of Dover
Mr B Curtis – Parish Representative
Mr R Haines – LSP Dover District Chamber of Commerce
Town Councillor M B Trussler
Councillor G F Henson

Officers: Strategic Director (Community & Regeneration)
Chief Planning and Building Control Officer
Forward Planning Manager
Community and Leisure Services Manager
Principal Planning Officer
Recreation Development Officer
Committees and Members Services Officer
Property Services Manager

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S G Leith and N S Kenton.

46 NOTES

Subject the fourth sentence in Note No 44 being amended to read "The report referred to the effect of CTRL Domestic Services on property prices", the Notes of the meeting of the Group held on 1 December 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Mr Haines reiterated his concern at the use of expressions such as "large" and "significant" in the notes of meetings of the Group rather than the use of precise figures.

47 PRESENTATION BY PLOSZAJSKI LYNCH CONSULTING ON THE GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

Mr T Ploszajski gave a presentation to the Group on the Green Spaces Strategy and answered questions from Members. Points raised in the ensuing discussion included:

- The steeply sloping topography of much of Dover.
- The inability to use school playing fields when schools were closed.
- Beaches were excluded from the Strategy unless they were also Nature Reserves.

- Dover District deficit of green spaces compared favourably to elsewhere in the country.
- The three areas where parks and gardens had been identified as lacking were North Deal, Sandwich and Aylesham.
- The shortage of allotment sites identified had not included an assessment of unused allotments.

Mr Ploszajski clarified that although Aylesham had green open space, the lack of formal parks and gardens had been identified. The open spaces that were included in the Green Spaces Strategy did not apply to the Adopted Local Plan but would be incorporated into would the LDF. Action would be required by the Council on managing its own land in order to ensure that the it was being used for its maximum potential. The Recreation Section was undertaking an improvement programme, unifying various studies undertaken and investigating how to implement improvements. This would entail partnership working and identifying funding. A shortfall in children's play areas had been identified and it was queried whether the shortfall was in the quality or the quantity of play areas. The Recreation Development Officer reported that every play area within the District has been reviewed and workshops had been held with parishes in preparation for the action plan. Application of the local standards of provision indicated an over-provision of these play areas in some parishes. Green corridors were identified as green linear spaces between urban and rural areas with provision for walking, cycling or horse-riding and which provided an opportunity for movement of wildlife. The Chairman identified that new housing developers could be given the opportunity to commute their obligations into sums for the improvement of existing play areas rather than create completely new facilities.

Mr Ploszajski was thanked for his detailed presentation.

48

SOUTH EAST PLAN

The Chief Planning and Building Control Officer explained the timetable for the South East Plan, the consultation period for which ended on 15 April 2005. The key dates for note by the Group were as follows:

24 January	Commencement of SEPLAN Consultations
23 February	Briefing to Council on main issues for the District
3 March	Presentation and Workshop at The Ark in Dover on the future shape of the District
7 March	Next meeting of the LDF Group to consider the outcome of the Workshop
8 March	KCC led presentation to Members and others
4 April	Cabinet and Special Planning Committee to consider SEPLAN
6 April	Scrutiny (Management) Committee

7 April	Cabinet followed by meeting of Council
15 April	SEPLAN consultations end

Members of the LDF Group would attend the meetings to be held on 3 March and 7 March and those who attended the Council meeting on 23 February might not need to hear the KCC presentation on 8 March. As limited numbers would be able to attend the event to be held at The Ark on 3 March, Town and Parish Councils could be represented by Members of the Planning Focus Group.

The Chairman referred to a meeting held earlier that day on the corporate approach to the SE Plan and housing growth within the District over the next 20 years. A range of possible options had been discussed:

1. A standstill option – meeting the Structure Plan requirements only and housing the existing population, plus the provision of CTRL.
2. Dover Pride Option – a population growth of 10,000 over 30 years in Dover town and its environs but not over the entire District.
3. Expanded Dover Pride Option – population growth of 20,000 over 30 years in Dover town and its environs.

The opinion of Members of the Group on these options was requested together with any further suggestions. Councillor Mrs Willshaw referred to the decline in pupil numbers at schools in Deal and Sandwich and suggested that a fairer option would be to provide a population growth of 15,000 in Dover with a further 5,000 elsewhere within the District. The counter-argument was made that the focus should remain on Dover as the largest economic player within the District with much larger problems than the comparatively healthier and more successful towns of Deal and Sandwich. The Group was advised that Thanet and Dover had been the only Districts to advise SEERA of their willingness to consider accepting increased growth. Mr Haines recommended that Dover and its environs should increase population growth by 10,000 with a further 10,000 spread over the District. However infrastructure, roads, schools, libraries, etc would be required first. The vital importance of CTRL with associated roads, parking and public transport was reiterated together with provision of housing for local workers in addition to long-distance commuters. The skills base in Dover required changing with more "white collar workers" attracted to live in the town. Clutton's view was that CTRL and town centre development in Dover would change investor perception but would not be sufficient on their own to attract employment. Large scale housing development was also required and commercial interest would follow. The fact that the District appeared to be the only authority in Kent willing to take extra housing could prove useful in negotiations.

The Forward Planning Manager presented two growth options for East Kent as a whole:

- (1) 56,600 extra homes (including the Ashford growth area).
- (2) 71,900 extra homes (including the Ashford growth area).

The distribution of this housing required clarification and the potential for 1,000 extra homes per annum presented a significant challenge. Mr Haines considered that

private enterprise should be given greater opportunities with more small developments and relaxed planning conditions, including conservation areas. Concern was raised by the Forward Planning Manager as to what this actually meant. It would still be important to ensure that any development that took place in the District should still be of a high standard.

49 GENERAL UPDATE

The Forward Planning Manager reported that the Local Development Scheme had been sent to GOSE for approval. GOSE's request to restructure all the documents had been resisted and as GOSE has not formally responded to the documents inside the 28 day period, the LDS could be deemed to have been accepted.

The Statement of Community Involvement had completed public consultation and the comments received were being investigated.

The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report had been submitted to limited consultation and depending on other work priorities it was hoped that the outcome of the consultation would be reported back on 7 March. Consultants had been appointed to work up a questionnaire for the Public Opinion Research and 5,000 households around the District would be targeted. Initial results of the Public Opinion Research would be reported to the meeting on 3 March at The Ark with further refined results presented on 7 March and a full report in April.

The Forward Planning Manager reported that a review was currently being undertaken on land allocations and site specific policies in the Local Plan.

It was further reported that the part-time Administration Assistant would start work on Monday 31 January and the Senior Planning Officer would join the Forward Planning Section on 7 January.

50 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Group would be held on 7 March 2005 with a further meeting on 27 April 2005.

The meeting ended at 6.12 pm.