

Start: 6.30PM

Finish: 7.40PM

**PRESENT:**

Councillor: J Hodson (Chairman)  
G Dowling (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: I Ashcroft J Davis  
N Furey E Pope  
D Westley

Officers: Assistant Director of Development and Regeneration (Mr I Gill)  
Strategic Planning and Implementation Manager (Mr P Richards)  
Assistant Strategic Planning and Implementation Manager (Mr S Bengel)  
Member Services/Civic Support Officer (Mrs J A Ryan)

20 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Yates.

21 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business.

22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

23 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 7 December 2016 be approved as a correct record subject to the amendment of Minute No. 17 bullet point 8 to now read:-

- At paragraph 1.2.3 some Members felt the longer plan period would be a concern and the allocation of sites

24 **LOCAL PLAN REVIEW - REVISED DRAFT ISSUES AND OPTIONS TOPIC PAPERS**

The Strategic Planning and Implementation Manager introduced the report of the Director of Development and Regeneration which sought members comments on the updated Local Plan Review: Issues and Options Papers, during which the following comments were noted:-

- Members were pleased with the amendments made to the document and that it made a good read, Officers were thanked for their work

**Appendix A – Strategic Development Options Paper**

- Paragraph 1.2.2 Members would like this worded slightly differently and that in the last phrase replace “consultation, and if we agree with your suggestion, additional

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material will be added” with something along the lines of “consultation – consideration will be given to your suggestion and additional material may be added” or “consultation, and, taking into account your views, additional material will be added....”

- Paragraph 1.2.6 Members felt that this paragraph needed to be in bold type re site submissions and details of deliverability
- Members felt that Appendix A was a well worded document and raised the issues to be faced well.
- It was felt that the process to be followed needed to be stated more explicitly and spell out what the Council were trying to achieve, what we want people to do and explain where their comments went to
- Members expressed a wish for a glossary to be added to explain such terms like “sustainable development”
- On pages 203-207, a Member questioned the appropriateness of offering an unrealistically low option for housing and employment land requirements when the Council wanted growth
- In respect of the plan period going from 2012 a Member asked whether we were assuming that all current allocated Local Plan sites are to be developed and whether this could be stated more explicitly/simple in the document
- A Member asked that if there was a longer period of the Local Plan would this mean that more Green Belt sites would be released and would this be more problematic and cause great public concern
- It was suggested that if we allocated many sites for development there was a danger of the best sites being cherry picked and the least attractive sites left undeveloped
- It was stated that legislation is constantly changing and there are uncertain times ahead – should the Council seek to plan so far ahead at the present time
- There was a discussion about the merits of safeguarding land
- It was raised that the railway station at Skelmersdale when developed would change whatever is put in the Local Plan now
- It was recognised that more homes had to be built on Green Belt land and that the aim of the Council was growth
- It was felt that we needed to identify main sites for development and get on with them
- It was noted that on page 224 the timescales stated were incorrect and that the Student Accommodation Needs Paper would be Spring/Autumn 2017 and not 2016 as stated and that this would be done in liaison with Edge Hill University
- Members raised the point that Edge Hill University needed to share their plans for development and share data on student numbers
- A question was asked about newly built student accommodation would the University prefer this to be on or off site
- A Member asked about the strategic plan for Edge Hill University and enquired when this went up to

### **Appendix B – Economic Policy Options Paper**

- Members raised no comments

### **Appendix C – Environmental Policy Options Paper**

- In relation to paragraph 2.1 on page 250 a Member had noted that surveys of nature conservation sites were ‘infrequent’ and asked how did we move towards an ‘ecological network’ approach and what advantage would an ecological network give this Council
- In relation to paragraph 3.4 a Member commented that the figure for renewable energy was high and assumed that there was an up to date study backing this up

**Appendix D – Social Policy Options Paper**

- A Member asked if the second bullet point on page 243 could be amended to read – The ageing population will lead to a need for a range of suitable housing to meet older people's specific needs, and in appropriate locations
- Officers were asked to look carefully at the wording in paragraph 2.13 re affordable housing and CIL as Members felt this could be seen to be a little 'defeatist'
- A Member stated that he strongly supported the concept of adaptable housing and that housing suitable for the elderly not be restricted to bungalows
- Members stated the need for healthy sustainable communities that work in areas and that this was what they wanted to see – sustainable healthy communities with an appropriate mix of housing
- A Member said that they were very pleased with the wording in relation to adaptable housing

**Appendix E – Spatial Portrait Paper**

Members raised no comments on this paper

**RESOLVED:** That the comments and points raised be noted.

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**CONSULTATION PROPOSALS FOR ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

The Strategic Planning and Implementation Manager gave Members an update on the consultation proposals for issues and options, during which the following comments were noted:-

- Members asked Officers how they intended to get the public interested and engage with the Council in the consultation exercise
- Ways of linking into Edge Hill University were discussed
- A Member commented that he had already spoken to local resident groups and that there was an important role for Members in the consultation process in engaging their communities
- It was noted that a workshop would be held with all Members of the Council and Parish Councils
- 6 forum events would be held scattered around the Borough including rural areas
- Officers stated they wished to engage with secondary school children, local youth groups and uniformed groups possibly meeting in local community centres as they didn't feel it worked going into a school environment
- It was noted that Officers did not intend to use Facebook as a way of getting information out to people this time round
- Officers informed Members that they would also be engaging with local house builders
- Officers intended to be out on market days and also at the Concourse in Skelmersdale carrying out consultation exercises
- It was noted that the consultation exercise would be commencing in March this year
- Officers outlined how Members would be involved in developing the Preferred Options paper in the future

**RESOLVED:** That the comments and points raised be noted.

**26      DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED:    That the date of the next meeting be confirmed.

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- CHAIRMAN -