

Extraordinary Council – 14 October 2010

Minutes of the meeting of **Extraordinary Council** held on **14 October 2010** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr D G Stansby
Vice-Chairman: Cllr S P Smith

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Cllr C I Black | Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill |
| Cllr Mrs L A Butcher | Cllr J R F Mason |
| Cllr M R Carter | Cllr Mrs J E McPherson |
| Cllr T G Cutmore | Cllr D Merrick |
| Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt | Cllr Mrs J A Mockford |
| Cllr K A Gibbs | Cllr A C Priest |
| Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn | Cllr C G Seagers |
| Cllr K J Gordon | Cllr M J Steptoe |
| Cllr J E Grey | Cllr Mrs M J Webster |
| Cllr M Hoy | Cllr P F A Webster |
| Cllr K H Hudson | Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins |
| Cllr A J Humphries | |

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs P Aves, P A Capon, Mrs T J Capon, J P Cottis, Mrs L M Cox, T Livings, C J Lumley, Mrs J R Lumley, M Maddocks, R A Oatham and P R Robinson.

OFFICERS PRESENT

| | |
|----------------|--|
| P Warren | - Chief Executive |
| G Woolhouse | - Deputy Chief Executive |
| A Bugeja | - Head of Legal, Estates and Member Services |
| S Scrutton | - Head of Planning and Transportation |
| S Hollingworth | - Team Leader (Planning Policy) |
| S Worthington | - Committee Administrator |

261 ROCHFORD CORE STRATEGY – PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Council considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation providing details of proposed amendments to the Rochford Core Strategy following the decision by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation emphasised that the housing numbers detailed in the Core Strategy were maximum, rather than minimum numbers as was previously the case under the last Government. Extending the plan period to make the timescale for the Core Strategy a twenty-year period from 2011 to 2031 enabled the Council to take account of any potential windfall sites and to minimise the release of Green Belt land over the period. The Council was legally obliged to provide new housing, as set out in PPS3 Housing, and the May 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment demonstrated a real need for affordable homes. However, the

number of new houses proposed to be built annually for the District was the lowest rate ever.

The Portfolio Holder concluded by proposing a Motion that the amendments to the Rochford Core Strategy set out in appendix 1 to the officer's report be approved, together with appendices 2 to 5 and published for public consultation, then submitted with any consultation responses to the Inspector for consideration at the public examination in January 2011.

In seconding the Motion, the Leader of the Council referred to the recent statement from the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government revoking regional strategies, which made particular reference to the need to ensure that local spatial plans are drawn up in conformity with national policy, which would be the basis for local planning decisions. The Rochford Core Strategy does exactly that and enables this Authority to have control of development; it is anticipated that over the next 20 years just under 1% of Green Belt land might be released within the District.

During debate, concern was expressed that development proposals for the first phase of the plan were concentrated in the centre of the District, without appropriate infrastructure in place, yet there was no development proposed for Rayleigh for the first 15 years of the plan; this did not appear to align with the statement in paragraph 2.38. Disappointment was also expressed at the reduction in provision for affordable housing within the Core Strategy.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the possibility of any financial benefits associated with the release of land for housing, officers advised that the Government had not yet released any firm details relating to proposals to provide housing incentive grants. Officers further confirmed, in response to a supplementary Member question relating to housing supply after 2026, that policy H3 identified land to be safeguarded after the first 15 years of the plan.

Cllr C I Black moved an amendment to the Motion that policy H3 be deleted from the Core Strategy on the basis that there was no need to make decisions now about future housing, post-2026. Delaying any decisions about housing provision after 2026 would, he believed, allow additional time for any potential brown field sites to come forward for development.

Cllr M Hoy, in seconding the amendment to the Motion, argued that the removal of policy H3 would allow the Council more time in which to plan new housing after 2026; the proposed developments were often very large, swamping communities, ignoring the need for additional infrastructure.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, responding to the amendment to delete policy H3, asked whether the 900 plus homes proposed within policy H3 should therefore be moved to policy H2. It was anticipated that policy H3 would allow the opportunity for windfall sites, such as the E-on site being used for housing, rather than existing Green Belt land. A vote was taken on the amendment, which was lost.

Resolved

That the amendments to the Rochford Core Strategy set out in appendix 1 to the report, be approved, published for public consultation, together with Topic Papers 3, 4 and 5 and the Sustainability Appraisal (appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5), and then submitted with the consultation responses to the Inspector for consideration at the public examination in January 2011. (HPT)

(Note: Cllr J R F Mason wished it to be recorded that he had voted against the above decision.)

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Chairman

Date

If you would like these minutes in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 546366.