

Local Development Plan Committee
16 March 2009

IRVINE, 16 March 2009 - At a Meeting of the Local Development Plan Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

John Reid, Robert Barr, Tom Barr, Ian Clarkson, Margie Currie, Anthea Dickson, Alex Gallagher, William Gibson, Jean Highgate, Alan Hill, Elizabeth McLardy, Ronnie McNicol, Pat McPhee, Elisabeth Marshall, John Moffat, David Munn, Alan Munro, David O'Neill and Robert Rae.

In Attendance

R. Forrest, Planning Services Manager, M. Ferrier, Team Leader, Development Plans, D. Hammond, A. Laurenson, K. McKelvie and A. McNair, Planning Officers, and I. Hossack, Policy Officer (Environment) (Legal and Protective); P. Shiach, Committee Services Officer and A. Wattie, Communications Officer (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor Reid in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Ferguson.

1. Appointment of Vice-Chair

The Council at its Meeting on 14 January 2009 approved the membership and Terms of Reference of the Local Development Plan Committee, including the appointment of the Economic Development Portfolio Holder as Chair. The Council further agreed that a Vice-Chair should be appointed by the Committee at its first meeting. Accordingly, the Chair called for nominations for this position.

Councillor T. Barr, seconded by Councillor Currie, moved the appointment of Councillor McLardy as Vice-Chair of the Local Development Plan Committee. There being no further nominations, the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly the Committee agreed to appoint Councillor McLardy as Vice Chair.

2. New Local Development Plan (LDP) for North Ayrshire

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective) on legislation relating to the reform of development planning and the implications for the Council.

Following the introduction of the White Paper in 2005, "Modernising the Planning System", Regulations under the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 relevant to the implementation of development planning were approved by the Scottish Parliament in February 2009.

The report indicated that the proposed new Development Plan will play a lead role in delivering the Scottish Government's objectives of efficiency, inclusiveness, fitness for purpose, and sustainability. The Plan must also be robust, fully justifiable, and align with the Single Outcome Agreement to demonstrate joined up local authority thinking.

The Local Development Plan Committee has been incorporated into the Council's Scheme of Administration and the publication of the Regulations will allow the Council to move forward to prepare the North Ayrshire Local Development Plan.

Details of the stages and timescale of the process and the main components of the Plan were contained in the report. The budget implications in terms of securing engagement and in publishing the Plan have been reflected in the budget allocations.

Noted.

3. Process for Public Engagement in Relation to the Development Plan Scheme

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective) on the content of the Development Plan Scheme.

Prior to the introduction of the Main Issues Report, a key part of the process to develop the new Development Plan, the Council is required to prepare and publish a Development Plan Scheme (DPS). This sets out the timetable for preparing and reviewing the Local Development Plan, indicates what is involved in each part of the process, and includes a statement on public participation. The Council is also required to formally adopt the completed DPS, submit a copy to the Scottish Government, publish it electronically and make available hard copies in all local libraries.

To achieve the aims of the new planning system, an extensive and varied programme of public consultation requires to be developed. In this regard a Draft DPS has been prepared for consideration which contains the framework for the consultation programme.

The DPS is a statutory requirement which the Council is compelled to produce and publish prior to the end on March 2009. There is no requirement for formal consultation on the DPS as it is an explanatory note on the process with a timetable for implementation.

The Committee agreed to (a) approve the Development Plan Scheme; and (b) authorise its publication.

4. North Ayrshire Local Plan (excluding Isle of Arran) and Isle of Arran Local Plan: Monitoring Statement

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective) on the conclusions from the initial work on the Local Plan Monitoring Statement, which will inform the Committee's consideration of a Vision Statement and preparation of the Main Issues Report.

In terms of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, the first stage of the Local Development Plan process is the publication of a Main Issues Report, for consultation by November 2009, and a Monitoring Statement.

The purpose of the Monitoring Statement is to focus on changes in the physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area, changes to the population, and the impact of the policies and proposals of the existing Local Plans.

Preparation of the Monitoring Statement is currently underway and a report thereon will be submitted to Committee in due course. The early conclusions were highlighted in the report to indicate what the adopted Local Plans attempted to do, how successful these were in this regard, and to inform consideration of the Vision Statement and the Main Issues. Full details of the initial conclusions from the Monitoring Statement were contained in the background paper accompanying the report.

Noted.

5. Setting the Vision

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective) on the Vision Statement for the Local Development Plan.

In terms of the requirements of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, the first stage of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process is the publication of a Main Issues Report accompanied by a Vision Statement.

The LDP will not require to conform to the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and the strategic development of North Ayrshire will be set out by a Vision Statement forming part of the LDP. The Vision Statement will guide the preparation of the LDP and eventually form part of its content. Once agreed, the Vision Statement will be used to identify preferred options within the Main Issues Report, the final version of which will be reported to the Council in November 2009.

The new Act requires the Vision Statement to incorporate a number of considerations, details of which were outlined in the discussion paper accompanying the report.

The Committee agreed that the issues contained in the discussion paper guide the general direction of the Local Development Plan Vision Statement.

6. Identifying the Main Issues

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective) on the potential issues to be addressed in compiling the Main Issues Report.

In terms of the new Planning legislation, authorities must prepare a "Main Issues Report" which must set out the authority's proposals for where development should and should not occur. This report should concentrate on key areas of change and ideas for future development, and will be prepared with reference to the emerging Vision Statement referred to in item 5 above.

In preparation of the Main Issues Report, all elected Members, through the Area Committees, were provided with a presentation on the proposals and invited submit opinions on what the "main issues " might be.

The issues raised included the following: -

- the overall scale , location and type of houses being developed;
- delivering housing development and the impact of the current slow down;
- imaginative delivery of affordable housing;
- ensuring adequate provision is made for uses generating economic benefit when reassessing "brownfield" sites;
- the role of town centres throughout North Ayrshire;
- regeneration and interaction with the Irvine Bay Urban regeneration Company and other initiatives;
- windfarms;
- design and quality issues;
- landscape setting of developed areas;
- the importance of supplementary guidance in the new Plan context, and
- a range of site specific matters.

As a result of the above, the main issues identified in the report related to housing, uses for old sites, the future of town centres, the provision of infrastructure and coastal and rural development.

In order to fully explore the issues, the report proposed that Member workshops be held to facilitate the preparation of the Local Development Plan. The Local Plan Committee meetings will therefore be preceded by morning workshop sessions to allow wider discussions, with the outcomes being presented for formal Committee agreement.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the potential main issues as outlined in the report as the basis for compiling the Main Issues Report; and (b) that future Committee meetings be preceded by workshop sessions with the outcome of discussions being presented for formal Committee agreement.

The meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.