

ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

1st February 2007

PRESENT:-

Labour Group

Councillor Dunn (Vice-Chair in the Chair) and Councillors Carroll, Mrs. Lane, Shepherd, Tilley and Whyman, M.B.E.

Conservative Group

Councillors Bale, Ford, Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Hood.

In Attendance

Councillors Bell, Lane and Richards (Labour Group).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillor Taylor (Chair), Councillor Venning (Labour Group) and Councillor Mrs. Walton (Independent Member).

EDS/66. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting on 16th November 2006 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

EDS/67. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Whyman M.B.E. notified that he might have an interest in item 9 – Burton to Swadlincote Regeneration Corridor and/or in item 11 West - Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy – Phase 2 Revision – Spatial Options, if specific sites were discussed and he would seek advice at the appropriate time. Councillor Ford declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as he was a Member of Derbyshire County Council's panel that had looked at the Street Scene Review.

EDS/68. **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11**

The Chair had been advised of the need to consider an urgent item during the Meeting and he was satisfied with the grounds for urgency. This concerned the establishment of a Working Panel, to consider various aspects related to the Local Development Framework. The item was urgent because of the need to meet the Government's timetable for submitting a revised Local Development Scheme and milestones contained within it. Members were asked if they were willing to consider this matter, which was agreed.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

EDS/69. **REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – JOINT REVIEW WITH DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – “STREET SCENE” REVIEW**

Councillor Lane presented the report of the Community Scrutiny Committee, following its joint review with Derbyshire County Council of “Street Scene”. Background was provided to this review, with an explanation of the initial remit and the desire for County and District Contact Centres to be able to handle any service request. It was recognised that the project should be branded and should result in a more co-ordinated approach to street scene services provided by both authorities.

The report gave a definition of “street scene” as anything that pertained to the state and condition of the physical environment in any local community. Examples were provided of those elements that could be included.

The report then outlined the consideration of this matter by the Community Scrutiny Committee, together with its findings. This recognised the wealth of knowledge and experience available through employees of both authorities and the benefits of a co-ordinated approach. The impact of the local street scene and the benefits of a single point of contact were also highlighted, together with the links between street scene and the Council’s aims in its Corporate Plan and Community Strategy.

Councillor Bale sought further information about the report recommendation on enforcement against private landowners. In reply, Councillor Lane gave examples to demonstrate that the street scene included adjacent, privately owned sites. There was a public perception that local authorities did not act quickly enough to address such problems.

The Leader of the Council questioned one of the report’s conclusions relating to promotion of the District Council’s Contact Centre. It was confirmed that by linking the District and County Council’s Contact Centre systems, enquiries could be directed to the relevant authority. There might be some costs associated with linking these IT systems. If the Committee was minded to approve the Scrutiny Committee’s recommendations, this would need to be researched and further reports submitted to both the Policy Committee and the Scrutiny Committee. One issue highlighted by the Leader was the difference in each Contact Centre’s operating hours.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee notes the recommendations from the Community Scrutiny Committee and awaits a further, detailed report to a future meeting of an appropriate Policy Committee.

EDS/70. **‘ACHIEVING MORE’ – PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK SERVICE REPORTS THIRD QUARTER 2006/07**

A performance report was submitted to show the Committee’s contribution to the Council’s Corporate and Improvement Plans, the Community Strategy Action Plan and the Best Value Performance Indicators, that it was responsible for.

The report was based on the established approach to performance reporting, linked to the work of the Improvement Panel. The tables attached to the report provided information on actual performance at the end of the third quarter, 31st December 2006. This was summarised from the report to the Improvement Panel. The areas that reported to this Committee were

Environmental Services, Planning Services and Policy and Economic Regeneration.

The report enabled the Committee to review the performance information, to discuss service issues with the relevant Head of Service and to celebrate successes. A summary was provided of each service's achievements.

Councillor Lane spoke of the Community Scrutiny Committee's work on the recycling strategy in recent months. He congratulated the Committee and its Officers for the responsive approach to embark on an improved recycling regime, which was in line with public priorities. The Chair spoke of the vast improvements made in this area, which the public appreciated. Councillor Ford referred to a few problems experienced in Willington. The Leader thanked the Community Scrutiny Committee for its work and he spoke about the achievements made, particularly with regard to composting. He made a comparison to Lichfield District Council and whilst that authority had achieved a higher recycling rate, it also collected more waste than South Derbyshire.

Councillor Richards referred to the Safer Neighbourhood Wardens and the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices. There was a need to provide appropriate publicity when such notices were issued, to ensure the desired impact. The Leader gave a specific example in Hatton involving the service of a Fixed Penalty Notice and a number of final warning letters. A further case had been reported of fly tipping and this would be pursued. The Council would not tolerate fly tipping and would take appropriate enforcement action.

The Direct Services Manager explained the role of the Enforcement Officers and agreed that publicity was important, to provide a deterrent to others. In response to a question from Councillor Bale, he gave further information on the joint work with Derby City Council, using government funding through an initiative called Business Resource Efficiency and Waste. This sought to reduce the illegal disposal of waste by businesses and an outline was given of the campaign undertaken. The Officer also spoke about the number of investigations being pursued and the prosecutions secured. He outlined the publicity efforts and the enforcement work using mobile CCTV cameras.

Councillor Richards praised the approach taken by a Warden when dealing with an improper parking issue. The Leader referred to the fly tipping incident in Hatton and noted that the waste might have been deposited by residents from another area. In response to a question from Councillor Dunn, Officers confirmed that the deregulated powers on parking offences would be managed by Derbyshire County Council.

The performance reports on Planning Services and Policy and Economic Regeneration were received. Members voiced their appreciation to Officers for the achievements made.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee notes the performance report and acknowledges the achievements made in recent years, which demonstrates the hard work of the staff concerned.

EDS/71. **'ACHIEVING MORE' – PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK
OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL & DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Further to Minute No. EDS/70 above, a report was submitted to summarise the position in relation to this Committee's responsibilities. It provided an opportunity for Members to note performance levels and to review those areas that were not "on track" to achieve agreed targets. Reports were provided on the Corporate Plan, Improvement Plan, Community Strategy Action Plan and with regard to Best Value Performance Indicators.

The Committee had responsibility for twelve actions from the Corporate Plan. A table showed the proportion on track, those at risk and those likely to fail at the end of the first, second and third quarters of the current year, as compared to the totals for the Council. A subsequent table focused on those targets at risk or indicating a probable failure, giving more detailed information and proposed remedial measures.

The Council had 19 actions under the Improvement Plan, which focused mainly on internal business improvement issues. In the current year there were no targets within the Improvement Plan for which this Committee had responsibility. The Council had joint responsibility for 30 actions on the Community Strategy Action Plan. This Committee had responsibility for 7 of those actions within the "Vibrant Economy" and "Sustainable Environment" themes. A further table showed projected performance at the end of the first, second and third quarters, as compared to the totals for the Council.

There were a total of 83 measurable Best Value Performance Indicators across the Council and this Committee had responsibility for 33 of them. Overall, there were 31 priority indicators and 12 of these were the responsibility of the Committee. A summary of the BVPI performance was also shown in terms of all indicators and priority indicators, those on track, at risk or predicted to fail. This was supplemented by a table showing a summary of the BVPI position for review by the Committee, together with proposed remedial measures.

Councillor Bale referred to the indicator on the Rural Transport Partnership and expressed his concerns about changes in service provision. He was sceptical if this issue could be resolved, whilst being grateful for the support given to a motion at a previous Council Meeting. He had been advised that the Community Transport Service would now only visit the northwestern parishes once each fortnight, as compared to the previous weekly service. He questioned whether there should be encouragement for a service into Swadlincote and asked how an equal travel service could be secured for the rural areas. The Leader explained that discussions were still ongoing on this issue. There was a need to secure a service for vulnerable people, for example to attend hospital appointments. At present, there was no direct service to the hospital from Hatton and he explained how residents were having to incur costs through using taxis. He had sought a deviation to a current route to meet this need, but it had been declined on cost grounds. The Leader also referred to the Community Transport Service and the CVS Social Car Scheme. He publicised the Social Car Scheme and felt this might be a way of meeting the needs of residents.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Committee notes the continuously improving performance within its' areas of responsibility.***
- (2) That where performance is not on track, the Committee agrees the proposed remedial measures suggested.***
- (3) That a report be submitted to the Improvement Panel on the agreed actions.***

EDS/72. BURTON TO SWADLINCOTE (A38-A444-A511) REGENERATION CORRIDOR

It was reported that for several years there had been proposals to develop land to the south of Burton that was constrained by the existing highway network. Consultants undertook a short investigation into the development potential of the area, particularly around Drakelow. The report concluded that a link road between the A38 and A444 would be key to unlocking the development potential and that the level of developer contributions would make a scheme viable.

In order to progress the matter, Staffordshire County Council commissioned the consultants to undertake a more detailed study of such a route. A steering group was established, involving Officer representatives from the respective County and District Councils, the Highways Agency, the two regional development agencies and the National Forest Company. It was as a result of an early meeting that the study area was extended, to continue the link from the A444 to the A511 to take account of the Council's proposed Swadlincote Regeneration Route.

The Atkins study looked at a potential road corridor with indicative alignment. It did not include detailed road layouts. It concluded that it would be worthwhile preparing a more detailed business case and that work should be taken forward by the two regional development agencies, as a regeneration led project.

In considering the summary report, a Member felt there was not much emphasis on the rail service and particularly the re-opening of a route between Burton and Swadlincote. It was questioned whether the response to the document could reflect this and considered that a public transport solution might ease congestion problems.

Councillor Tilley welcomed the inward investment potential and the creation of jobs for local residents. He considered that one of the report recommendations should be changed, to seek more options and to widen the discussion about the potential route. It was natural to look at the detail of such reports and there were concerns about the traffic impact for the urban core.

The Leader of the Council pursued the discussion about providing a rail link, and expressed the Council's commitment to secure the National Forest rail line, particularly the section between Burton and Swadlincote. With regard to the final report recommendation, he proposed that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, together with Councillor Lane meet with Derbyshire

County Council, to discuss the implications for the District and the Local Transport Plan. Councillor Ford questioned whether the Council could discuss this issue further and he was reminded of a proposed presentation.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Committee welcomes the report of the consultant's study into the Burton – Swadlincote (A38-A444-A511) Regeneration Corridor.***
- (2) That the Committee supports undertaking investigation into further options by appropriate bodies.***
- (3) That a presentation on the study findings be arranged through Derbyshire County Council.***
- (4) That a Member meeting be sought with Derbyshire County Council, to discuss the implications for the District and the Local Transport Plan.***

EDS/73. **REPTON AND MILTON VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT**

The Committee received a report on the Repton and Milton Village Design Statement. In June 2001, a formal group was established and the report explained the process undertaken to produce this Village Design Statement. Such statements described a settlement and the surrounding area, highlighting the individual and collective characteristics that made it distinctive. In this way, such characteristics could be reflected as appropriate in the design of new developments.

The group gathered considerable information about the two settlements and many of the responses through questionnaires contained issues that were more pertinent to a parish plan or community strategy. Prior to the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, it would have been relatively easy to adopt such a document as Supplementary Planning Guidance. However, the requirements of the 2004 Act, which were reported, meant that the Council could not formally adopt the statement as a planning document. It would be a material consideration in determining planning applications, although the weight ascribed to it by an Inspector at appeal was unlikely to be as great as that for Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The Leader congratulated the communities of Repton and Milton. He sought clarification on the amount of consultation undertaken, noted that the document could not be binding, but applauded its aspirational endeavours. Officers confirmed that a series of consultation processes was undertaken. Councillor Ford spoke about the consultative efforts and felt this document should be linked to the Local Development Framework. It could be used by other local areas as an exemplar.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Council congratulates the Village Design Group on the publication of the Repton & Milton Village Design Statement.***

(2) That whenever appropriate, the document be taken into account by the Council.

EDS/74. **WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY – PHASE TWO REVISION - SPATIAL OPTIONS**

It was reported that the West Midlands Regional Assembly had published for consultation its “Spatial Options”, for a partial review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The revised RSS would set out the amount and distribution of growth in the West Midlands for the next 20 years, as well as establishing priorities for transport and development restraint.

Whilst the core objectives of the existing RSS remained unchanged, certain issues were being reviewed on the recommendation of the Secretary of State. The current ‘Phase 2’ revision concentrated on housing, employment, transport and waste issues. This was at the initial ‘Issues and Options’ stage, and as such presented a number of open-ended questions regarding key strategic issues. Comments on the consultation were required by 5th March 2007.

The bulk of the planning strategy was of limited interest to South Derbyshire, but the treatment of Burton-on-Trent was clearly a key issue, given its proximity to the Swadlincote area. Members were reminded of the recent consideration of the East Midlands RSS. In its response to that document, the Council concluded a key failing was the scant acknowledgement of the relationship between Swadlincote and Burton. Furthermore, the draft plan was silent on the feasibility work undertaken into a third river crossing, linking the A38 to the A511. The Plan also failed to acknowledge potential major brownfield redevelopment, with one site adjacent to the new river crossing.

The report examined the content of the draft West Midlands RSS and specific comment was made with regard to housing provision. The document presented three growth options for Burton for the period up to 2026, ranging from 308 to 600 extra dwellings per annum. The draft RSS advised that the higher growth rate might imply development in South Derbyshire. It did not, however, refer to any infrastructure implications arising from the major growth in the Burton area and crucially avoided any mention of the feasibility work being undertaken into the provision of a new strategic road linkage.

Officers highlighted the concerns about potential housing development in South Derbyshire. The Leader of the Council stated the need for consistency in responding to the two Regional Plans. He spoke about the housing allocations identified in the East Midlands Plan and reminded that the document was silent on transport and social infrastructure requirements. With Burton-on-Trent’s likely growth point status, there would be significant additional housing. However, it could not be accommodated in Burton and there was a clear implication that it would be located in South Derbyshire. There was a need to be clear on how this would be dealt with, so it was beneficial for South Derbyshire and did not cause residual problems. He spoke about the various impacts for the area, the current reliance on the voluntary and community sector and how population growth would put further pressure on these services. The Council would need to see how this issue developed and how the impacts would be addressed. Councillor Ford

added that the Council now had two regional bodies influencing housing allocations in South Derbyshire.

RESOLVED:-

That the West Midlands Regional Assembly be advised of the District Council's views on the Phase 2 Spatial Strategy, as set out within the report.

EDS/75. **TOURISM UPDATE**

The Committee received a report on the substantial recent changes to public sector delivery of tourism services and marketing. It outlined the recent performance of the tourism sector in South Derbyshire and proposed amendments to the arrangements for future tourism policy.

Many of the changes to public sector delivery of tourism had a significant impact during 2006 and were expected to further impact in 2007 and beyond. The Destination Management Partnership (DMP), known as "Visit Peak District & Derbyshire", was now largely operational. Most services delivered previously by the Regional Tourist Boards were expected to be delivered at this sub-regional level. It would not be possible to evaluate the full impact of the DMP until the first year's campaign could be quantified. A number of projects funded by East Midlands Tourism and delivered through the DMP, had already benefited South Derbyshire and The National Forest.

The importance of The National Forest, as an iconic sub-regional tourism brand had been accepted. The National Forest and Beyond visitor guide was the only such guide being produced for 2007. The 2007 campaign had been adapted to maximise potential benefits from the work of the county-based DMPs. However, it was a concern that the substantial increase in funding from East Midlands Tourism was not directly benefiting the National Forest and Beyond campaign.

The Council had changed its tourism services substantially, with the opening of the first Tourist Information Centre (TIC) in Swadlincote. This had now achieved full accreditation and was part of the English TIC Network. In future, District Council staff could concentrate on more strategic matters, such as business support and product development proposals. To this end, a series of meetings with individual businesses had been commenced. Recent tourism economic impact research indicated that the growth of tourism was much stronger in South Derbyshire than in Derbyshire or the East Midlands.

Councillor Carroll referred to the "STEAM" research for assessing the economic impact of tourism. Officers explained this acronym, which provided an economic model used by all East Midlands local authorities, to compare performance on tourism.

The Leader referred to the difficulties experienced by the Sharpe's Pottery Trust. Through its TIC role, it promoted and benefited the local economy, generating a total spend of some £116.41million. He wondered how a proportion of this profit could be redirected to the TIC as tourism's core supporter. Councillor Bale was delighted with the tourism update and the progress being made. Previously, the area had not been as successful. He spoke about future development, referring to the Shardlow Marina facility in

particular. Officers explained that the Council did promote the Shardlow Marina as a destination and there had been significant investment in that area. This was an emerging market and there was the likelihood of support from emda for destinations such as South Derbyshire, because of the potential growth in tourism.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Committee notes the work undertaken to ensure the sustained growth of The National Forest, as a major new visitor destination and brand.***
- (2) That future tourism policy for the District be integrated into the new Economic Regeneration Strategy.***

EDS/76. **LDf MEMBER WORKING PANEL**

Further to Minute No. EDS/68 above, the Committee's approval was sought to establish a Working Panel. This would consider aspects relating to documents, that would make up the Local Development Framework. The Government had set a requirement that revised Local Development Schemes must be submitted by 31st March 2007. Given this tight deadline, committee scheduling and the forthcoming elections, it was considered prudent to establish a Working Panel to consider this range of documents for approval by the Council. In particular, meetings of the Working Panel would be necessary to ensure initial consideration of the Revised Local Development Scheme and a preferred option for the Woodville – Swadlincote Town Centre Area Action Plan.

RESOLVED:-

That a Local Development Framework Working Panel be established, comprising 7 Members, as follows:-

Labour Group

Councillors Lane, Southerd, Taylor and Whyman M.B.E.

Conservative Group

Councillors Bale, Bladen and Ford

Substitutes

Labour Group

Councillor Mrs. Lane (3 vacancies).

Conservative Group

Councillor Mrs. Hood (2 vacancies).

EDS/77. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:-

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there

would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

MINUTES

The Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th November 2006 were received.

PROCUREMENT OF VEHICLES AND PLANT 2007/08 (Paragraph 3)

The Committee approved the arrangements for procurement of the Council's vehicles and plant for 2007/08.

W. DUNN

CHAIR