

Meeting: Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 3 June 2013

Title: Overview and Scrutiny Sub-groups

Author: Scrutiny Team Tel: 0191 643 5313

Service: Democratic Services

Directorate: Law and Governance

Wards affected: All wards

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- Review the membership of the Core Strategy Sub-group; and
- Consider how to take forward a action arising from a recent Council Motion in relation to the processing of the planning application for Scaffold Hill Farm.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the committee consider the following recommendations:

1. Core Strategy Sub-group

2.2 In the light of recent Cabinet appointments, that the Committee agree a new chair of the Core Strategy Sub-group and agree any additional members to be appointed to the group.

2. Council Motion: planning application

2.3 That a sub-group of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to undertake a short review of this matter and report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and thereafter to Council.

It is recommended that either:

- A new sub-group be established to undertake this review to include two members from the Labour Group and one member each representing the Conservative and Liberal Democrat groups; or
- That the already established Core Strategy sub-group be asked to undertake a review of this issue in addition to the work on the Core Strategy.

3. Details

Core Strategy Sub-group

The Core Strategy Sub-group was established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the last municipal year to review the Core Strategy and report findings back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The sub-group has begun this review. It has met on two occasions and has reviewed information in relation to the themes of Housing and Population, and Employment Land. Further work is required to complete this review.

The following members had been appointed to this group: Cllrs B Pickard (chair), J Allan, B Burdis, R Glindon, M Huscroft and D McGarr.

Two members of this sub-group, including the chair, are now members of the Cabinet and are therefore unable to continue as members of this group. It is therefore necessary to allocate a new chair of this group and to consider whether any additional members should be appointed to the group for the remainder of this review.

Council Motion: Scaffold Hill Farm Planning Application

3.1 At the Council meeting on 14 March 2013 the following motion was agreed:

'The very recent planning appeal that caused the Council to withdraw from the appeal altogether as a consequence of information coming to light at a very late stage, in fact the evening before the appeal was to be held, so placing the Council in a very difficult position both financially and also the risk of the appeal process.

Council therefore resolves that an urgent review be taken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee into how the planning application was processed, the information that was submitted and considered by officers and planning committee members. Including the analysis of evidence and preparation for the planning inspectors appeal hearing. A report should be produced by Overview and Scrutiny and presented to the full council for consideration and discussion.'

- 3.2 This motion is referring to the planning application in relation to Scaffold Hill Farm, planning reference number : 11/01600FUL.
- 3.3 In considering this motion the Committee should note that any review undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could only cover the administrative processes involved in dealing with this planning application and that Overview and Scrutiny does not have a role in reviewing individual planning decisions.
- 3.4 It is recommended that this review is undertaken by a small group of members from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee rather than the Committee as a whole. One option

would be for the Committee to request the Core Strategy Group to consider this matter, in addition to their work to review the Core Strategy.

- 3.5 It is anticipated that one or two meetings of the sub-group would be required to review this matter and that a report on the findings of the review could be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the near future and then referred to full Council for consideration.

4. Background Information

The following documents have been used in the compilation of this report and may be inspected at the offices of the author.

Council Minutes – 14 March 2013