

# Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

**1 December 2014**

Present: Councillor S Graham (Chair)  
Councillors JM Allan, S Day, PG Earley, Janet Hunter,  
John Hunter, NJ Huscroft, Mrs P McIntyre, A McMullen,  
J O'Shea and GC Westwater

School Governor Representatives  
Mrs M Ord

Church Representatives  
Reverend MC Vine

Others in attendance  
Councillor JLL Harrison (Cabinet Member for Housing and  
Environment)

## **OV21/12/14 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Burdis, M Hall, D McGarr, Mrs J McLaughlin, J Pickard, Mrs J Little - School Governor representative and Mr G O'Hanlon – Church representative.

## **OV22/12/14 Substitute Members**

Pursuant to the Council's constitution the appointment of the following substitute Member was reported:-

Councillor J O'Shea for Councillor M Hall

## **OV23/12/14 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

## **OV24/12/14 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

## **OV25/12/14 North Tyneside Local Plan – Further Consultation Draft**

The Committee considered a report and received a presentation which provided an update on the preparation of the North Tyneside Local Plan. Central Government required the Authority to prepare a 15 year plan setting out how much new housing, employment and retailing was required in the borough and where it would go. Once adopted the Local Plan would become the starting point when determining planning applications.

In introducing the report, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environment explained that no final decisions had been made in relation to the Plan and stressed the importance of all Members being actively involved in its development.

A Local Plan Sub-Group had been established in 2012 to review the findings of the Local Plan. A report detailing the review and 16 recommendations had been considered by Council in September 2013, with the Local Plan Consultation Draft being approved by Cabinet in October 2013.

The report detailed the responses to the Local Plan Consultation Draft 2013, together with the range of work undertaken since that time to ensure the Local Plan evidence base was reliable. It also detailed proposals for further public consultation on the draft Local Plan, which in accordance with the published Local Development Scheme, was expected to be undertaken early in 2015. In addition, the report also outlined the options that Cabinet would be asked to consider in selecting and approving a preferred level of growth in employment and housing for the Local Plan.

The presentation provided information on:

- Why a Local Plan was needed
- Determining how much growth was needed
- Developing three realistic growth options for 2011-2032
- Appraisal of the three growth scenarios
- Recommended growth scenario
- Local Plan timetable from pre-scrutiny to adoption (this was the pre-scrutiny stage which was concerned with the process to be followed)

In determining how much growth was needed Government policy expected Local Plans to:

- meet objectively assessed needs
- be aspirational
- be realistic and deliverable

The three growth options detailed in the report and presentation were:

Growth Option A – met the highest aspiration for job growth and homes

Growth Option B – closest to national projections and supports the forecast 'medium' job growth

Growth Option C – lower than the Borough's starting point set out in national population projections

The outcome of the appraisal had identified Growth Option B as the optimal fit as it supported aspirations for growth and affordable housing, without significant impact on the Borough's key heritage and natural assets, Green Belt and employment land stock.

In response to a query, the Legal Advisor explained that the Plan formed part of the Budget and Policy Framework and clarified the procedure which would be followed in approving/adopting the document.

The Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions which were responded to.

Issues raised/discussed included:

- there was a need to work with neighbouring authorities on cross boundary issues/opportunities (i.e. Newcastle City Council and Northumberland County Council). This was already happening and would continue.
- it was important to ensure that data used in drawing up the Plan was as up-to-date as possible. This would help ensure that what the Plan aspired to was achievable.

- concern was raised regarding the impact of on-line shopping on future retail requirements. It was explained that the final report from the consultants working on retail requirements was still awaited. It was not only about shopping requirements, but also what else town centres
- concern was raised regarding building on green field rather than brown field sites and also the possibility of losing greenbelt land. It was important that no greenbelt land was lost to development. The Committee was assured that there was no intention for any greenbelt land to be lost to development and where possible developments would be on brown field sites.
- it was important that as many organisations/groups/bodies in the Borough as possible were consulted and given the opportunity to put forward their views on the proposals.
- it was essential to have an effective infrastructure in place to support what was being proposed in the Local Plan. It was explained that there was an Infrastructure Delivery Plan being produced which would detail infrastructure requirements. It was suggested that this document should be included as part of the Local Plan document or at least referred to in the Plan so that people knew of its existence and could refer to it.
- it was clarified that it would be the preferred option (Option B) and related development sites that would be consulted on. Consultees would be given the opportunity to agree or disagree with the proposals and put forward alternatives.

There was consensus that the proposed consultation process was clear, would be carried out in a timely manner, with the resulting Local Plan putting the Authority in a better position moving forward.

It was **Agreed** that (1) the progress that has been made in the continued preparation of the North Tyneside Local Plan during 2014, be noted; (2) the extent and overall robustness of the process of engagement undertaken to date which has successfully provided residents, businesses and stakeholders with the opportunity to inform the ongoing production of the Local Plan, be acknowledged; and, (3) the range of evidence available in considering the volume of growth necessary to meet the Borough's needs, and the proposed officer recommendation to be presented to Cabinet in January 2015 to pursue Growth Option B as this most closely reflects the Authority's priorities for creating jobs, attracting investment and providing attractive places to live, work and visit, be noted.