# MINUTES OF THE CORE STRATEGY WORKING GROUP HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 JANUARY 2013

PRESENT: Cllr R Sherras (Chairman) Marshal Scott

Cllr S Bibby
Cllr G Mirfin
Cllr R Thompson
John Heap
John Heap
John Macholc
Olwen Heap

#### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Rogerson and Allan Knox and Jane Pearson.

#### MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

These were circulated and approved as a correct record. They would now be forwarded to P & D committee for information.

## **CURRENT PROGRAMME**

Colin had reported that a letter had been received from the Inspector agreeing to the request to suspend the examination to enable the preparation of the information he requires. He had also included a guidance note specifically for RVBC.

The examination would formally recommence on 1 July 2013. In the meantime the Inspector expects regular progress reports. He has also requested that the Council's request letter and his response be posted on the Council's website and that a detailed project/work plan be provided.

CH/OH <u>ACTION</u>: A copy of the Council's letter and Inspector's response be circulated at P & D on 17 January for information and Colin to provide an update.

CH <u>ACTION</u>: E-mail the working group with the task milestones.

It was suggested that as pieces of work are completed there is a checking process with the Inspector to ensure it is what he expects. There needs to be a 'stress test' done on the data to find the 'disconnects' and how it will affect the Core Strategy so there are no surprises. Colin indicated that this was in the programme of work to ensure we can identify issues as early as possible.

The terms of reference/remits given to consultants must be specific and ensure the Inspector's concerns are reflected. It is important to ensure that our response is proportionate as stressed by the Inspector and focuses on delivering the updates rather than generating new pieces of work.

#### **GTAA**

This piece of works needs updating as it was considered out of date (2008). Three firms had been approached to provide the necessary update. Colin reported that the 2 consultants that had responded could provide a suitable GTAA to meet the needs of the EIP. However Opinion Research were currently working with neighbouring

authorities and he considered were able to reflect the shared collection of information in their pricing.

CH <u>ACTION</u>: The group agreed that Colin should commission Opinion Research to provide a GTAA at a cost of £3950.

## STANDEN SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL – response to Natural England

Natural England had responded to the Sustainability Appraisal with an issue that needs to be addressed. Although this had not been raised by the Inspector, Natural England were a statutory consultee which means we need to be able to demonstate how the issue has been resolved and be in a position to present to the EIP that there are no outstanding issues.

HYDER had originally carried out the Sustainability Appraisal and it was felt therefore that they were best placed to deal with the issue in clarifying the concerns of Natural England with regard to a landscape appraisal.

HYDER had also been asked to cost for carrying out an audit of the landscape assessment that can be used in evidence for the EIP and can also inform the consideration of the planning application received for the Standen site.

CH <u>ACTION</u>: The group agreed that Colin should commission HYDER to deal with the Natural England response and provide an audit of the Landscape Assessment.

## APPROACH TO HOUSING EVIDENCE

The Inspector has identified a requirement to update the core housing evidence that comprises the elements

- GTAA considered under previous agenda item
- SHLAA work to update this evidence and review has commenced in-house.
  The sites within the existing report have been reviewed to establish what has
  come forward approximately a third what hasn't come forward that was
  anticipated in the model and as a consequence the impact upon the
  availability assumptions for identified sites. Following the collation of the new
  potential sites and the update an assessment will be undertaken of the
  deliverability of sites, including viability modelling. The call for sites is
  programmed to be promoted from 28 January.
- CH <u>ACTION</u>: An update report will be presented at the meeting on 23 January.
  - SHMA the Council's housing consultants (Lichfields) have been contacted to provide a cost for updating and refreshing the SHMA. They have been asked to include for some scenario testing using the recently published Census data to provide a check and reference using the most up-to-date info. A proposal to establish the levels of affordable housing requirement to enable the Council to reassess affordable housing targets in line with the Inspector's concern has also been requested as well as an up-to-date position statement on the housing market, including the types of housing and tenures required to meet the likely housing needs of the borough. A refresh of the Employment Land review of our economic evidence is also requested as it links with housing forecasts.
- CH <u>ACTION</u>: Two alternative quotes to be sought for this work and reported to the meeting on 23 January so that work can be commissioned by the end of January.

 Viability Assessment – this is a new piece of work that PAS will help with in defining what work is required (meeting 15 January). There is a need for a range of viability testing to ensure the proposals in the Core Strategy have a realistic chance of deliverability. The Inspector has asked for evidence to demonstrate viability in relation to housing proposals, affordability targets and other policy requirements to reflect NPPF expectations.

CH <u>ACTION</u>: An update report be presented to the meeting on 23 January.

## **PAS**

Discussions have taken place with PAS for consultancy support on programming and viability assessments. Two days of support have been set up – first on programming/project management to be held on 10.1.13 and second on viability on 15.1.13 Consultants have agreed to work in a tailored advisory role rather than delivering generic PAS training day approach.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 23 January 2013 @ 2.30pm