

Luton & South Beds JP&TC**Notes of the Meeting of the Member Steering Group held at the
South Bedfordshire District Council offices on 27th April 2007****Present:****Members:**

Cllr Roy Davis (Chair)	(LBC)
Cllr Tom Nicols	(SBDC) Joined the meeting from Item 2 onwards
Cllr John Scott	(Beds CC)
Cllr Peter Rawcliffe	(SBDC)

Officers:

Ian Slater	(LBC)
Alan Storah	(LBC)
Anne Brereton	(SBDC)
Keith Dove	(LBC)
Bijon Bhowmick	(Project Co-ordinator)

Apologies Rec'd:

John Hoad	(SBDC)
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		<u>ACTION</u>
1.	<p><u>Committee Working Arrangements (Section 29 Progress) Update</u></p> <p>IS reported that the Government Office had now sought the approval of Baroness Andrews to proceed with the making of the Order. Amongst the key changes introduced to the Order, he indicated that reference to the provision of a casting vote for the Chair and the LBC as a "District Council" had now been deleted from the accompanying schedule and the Explanatory Memorandum respectively. In addition, the meeting noted that the Order was now expected to come into force on the 27th June (instead of 27th May as envisaged earlier) although the GO had been requested to alter this date to 15th June. Cllr Davis thanked all those involved in steering the work on this issue so far.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Core Strategy Issues & Options (I&O) Report</u></p> <p>AS reported that a detailed ten page submission had been received from the neighbouring authorities in response to the I&O document considered by the Joint Committee on 30th March. Some of the changes incorporated in the revised version were aimed primarily to address the concerns of the neighbouring authorities. A schedule entitled "Major Changes to Core Strategy Issues & Options Paper" and a note entitled "Notes on Response from Adjoining Authorities" were circulated to Members at this meeting. The note also explained the reasons for our inability to accede to some other suggestions put forward in the detailed submission. Members supported the stance taken by officers in responding to the comments received from the neighbouring authorities.</p>	

ACTION

There was uncertainty in respect of one specific issue which related to the treatment of proposals in the neighbouring authority areas. IS explained that it still remained a “Grey Area” and we needed advice from the Government office to effectively deal with this issue.

The detailed textual changes agreed by Members included the following:

- Penultimate line of para 2 under the heading “Meeting Housing Needs” in the Schedule, the word “provide” would be replaced by “facilitate the provision of”;
- Page 4 in the Schedule - 2nd paragraph - delete proposed “new” paragraph and revert back to the “old” paragraph
- Page 5 in the Schedule - delete the first part of the sentence in the penultimate paragraph “Following the current consultation with stakeholders”.

The changes to maps agreed included the following:

- the potential areas of development in NHDC and AVDC should revert to that as shown in the March version (i.e. yellow blobs with the site areas shown);
- maps should be checked to avoid confusion (e.g. showing the villages as employment sites);
- the need to ensure consistency in the presentation of road schemes (e.g. the East Luton Circular Road is shown as a pink solid line (Map 1), thin blue broken line (Options 1-10) and as a thick broken line (Map 3);
- the line of the East Luton Circular Road would be shown as a “dashed wider line”; which stopped short of being shown as joining with A505 and the East Luton Corridor.
- to amend the local authority boundary to differentiate Luton from Herts (as on revised Map 1).

S Beds LSP Vision and their Comments on the I&O Paper

- Members acknowledged that there were now separate LSP visions for S Beds, Luton and Beds respectively. As a general principle, members agreed that the eventual vision for the GA would need to draw on the separate visions of the three LSPs.
- AS then referred to the comments received from the South Beds LSP on the I&O document and the Draft SA Scoping Report. Amongst the various comments made by the LSP, the main points agreed included the following:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Infrastructure - the shared vision for the GA would need to find appropriate words to accommodate this issue; • Local transport networks and accessibility - AS was asked to suggest a revised wording to reflect this point which should be e-mailed to Members for their concurrence; • Instead of adding a third question as suggested by the LSP to cover the issue of employment development, members agreed to delete the word “all” after the word “safeguard” in the first question (P25 of the I&O document) and substitute with the word “most”. • Issue of Shift Patterns - the issue was covered by Travel Plans and hence it was agreed to leave the text unaltered. • Scoping Report - AS reported that the Scoping Report was subject to consultation with the 3 statutory consultation bodies listed in the SEA Regs but LSPs did not form part of this statutory list. Nevertheless, AS suggested that the LSP’s response could be communicated to Halcrow but it was unlikely to have a bearing on the Scoping Report. Members were advised that the Scoping Report was unlikely to be changed in the light of comments received during the consultation but the information received during this process would be included in the Final Sustainability Report. <p>Public Consultation on the I&O Document - Councillor Davis thought that it was feasible to start the consultation on the above document in late June. However, he believed that the best way forward would be to co-ordinate the consultation on this document with that of the LSP which would probably entail the commencement of the consultation process being delayed by about a month (i.e. July). MSG asked that the period of consultation should extend to 3 months (July to October 2007). The initial weeks of July/August could be used primarily to raise awareness and the latter part of the process could be used for stakeholder workshops/exhibitions etc. In the context of raising awareness, members were particularly anxious to ensure that the Town/Parish Councils in the South Bedfordshire area and the Area Committees in the Luton area were made aware of the existence of this document as soon as possible. Members agreed to consider a detailed work programme for Public Consultation on the above document at their next meeting of the MSG on 25th May.</p>	<p><u>ACTION</u></p> <p>AS</p>
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3.	<p><u>Shared Vision</u></p> <p>Councillor Davis referred to the three separate visions prepared by the LSPs for Luton, S Beds and Beds respectively and suggested that some of the information could be applicable to the entire GA. Councillor Nicols expressed disappointment since S Beds had chosen to produce a vision statement without incorporating the vision for Luton. Both Councillors Davis/Nicols stressed the importance of having a Joint Vision which encapsulated the planning issues for the entire conurbation and drew largely on the three LSP visions.</p> <p>Councillor Nicols volunteered to prepare this Joint Vision and members agreed that it should be considered first at the next meeting of the MSG on 25th May. The amended version (following the MSG meeting and assuming that it could be prepared on time) would then need to be considered by members as a separate item at the next meeting of the Joint Committee on 15th June. The receipt of formal approval of the Joint Committee on such an important issue like the Shared Joint Vision was considered to be vitally important at this stage of the GA work.</p>	<p><u>ACTION</u></p> <p>Cllr Nicols</p>
4.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>The following matters were discussed under this heading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Work Programme - Both Councillors Nicols and Davis stressed the importance of having a Gantt Chart produced relating to the key items of work listed in the LDS which would enable Members to review/monitor progress of work relating to the GA on a regular basis. It was agreed that the revised LDS (incorporating a Gantt Chart) would be made available at the next meeting of the MSG on the 25th May. ii) A5/M1 Link - Councillor Scott indicated that the estimated cost for the provision of the above link in February this year was £124M and asked for an update in this regard. Following a brief discussion on this subject, the Group emphasised the importance of this link for the timely delivery of the proposed housing growth in South Bedfordshire but concluded that it remained a LDV issue. 	