

Luton & South Beds Joint Committee

**Notes of the Meeting of the Member Steering Group held at
South Bedfordshire District Council offices on 11th January 2008**

Present:

Members:

Cllr Roy Davis (Chair) (LBC)
Cllr Tom Nicols (SBDC)
Cllr Peter Rawcliffe (SBDC)
Cllr John Scott (BedsCC)

Officers:

Ian Slater (LBC)
David Hussle (LBC)
David Atkinson (LBC)
Keith Dove (LBC)
Richard Watts (BedsCC)
Anne Brereton (SBDC)
Tony Pierce (SBDC)
Bijon Bhowmick (Project Co-ordinator)

Apologies Rec'd:

Alan Storah (LBC)

		<u>ACTION</u>
1.	<p><u>Matters arising from meeting held on 7th December 2007</u></p> <p>None. However, Chairman indicated that all the matters are on the Agenda.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Accommodation for the JTU</u></p> <p>TP had circulated a paper entitled "Accommodation for the Joint Technical Unit" and a Schedule which listed all the suitable and available office premises in the search area (incorporating other details) prior to this meeting.</p> <p>The paper set out the criteria for an office location for the JTU as endorsed by the MSG. It concluded that Tudor House was the only accommodation to exceed the criteria for value, space and location. TP confirmed that the improvement needed to the premises can be arranged within the budget.</p> <p>Members had visited Tudor House prior to this meeting and were satisfied that it met the requirements and that the location was also acceptable. Members also agreed in favour of the occupation of the ground floor.</p>	

		<u>ACTION</u>
	<p>Members' outstanding concerns related to the issues of security and safety.</p> <p>The meeting agreed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outstanding matters would be dealt with as part of our negotiations with the landlord; • Tim Chaple would prepare a report covering these issues for the MSG's consideration; • Consultation with relevant members of staff would need to take place for which a reasonable duration (7-10 days) should be allowed. 	TC
3.	<p><u>LDF Way Forward - Updates</u></p> <p>i) Business Plan - JTU appointments</p> <p>Pending the outcome of a meeting between officers next Monday, Members agreed that they would be prepared to meet soon afterwards if necessary and take a view on this issue.</p> <p>ii) Core Strategy - Getting to Preferred Option</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A paper on this subject (which included details of a number of stakeholder events) had been circulated prior to this meeting. • Chairman was concerned whether it was practical and necessary to hold all the proposed meetings given the slippage on the overall work programme and tight timescale to complete the evidence base. Both RW/IS echoed Chairman's concerns and emphasised the need to avoid 'distractions' wherever possible and focus instead on the delivery of 'Essentials'. • Discussion then focused on the issue of the GA Enquiry - the schedule proposed the need to hold three Enquiry days. Chairman was sceptical about the need and capacity to hold all these Enquiries since he felt that the focus should be on the preparation of the evidence base. DH indicated that his preference would be to devote just a day to this Enquiry. 	MSG

		<u>ACTION</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Nicols thought these meetings were important since they would afford an opportunity for members of the public to engage in an open and unambiguous debate on the CS. AB emphasised the need for these meetings to be targeted. • Following a lengthy discussion on this issue, it was agreed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) a meeting should be organised at the end of May to receive feedback from all delivery partners and members of the public in order to influence the finalisation of the preferred options. ii) all the information gathered at workshops/seminars should be pulled together and if necessary a special meeting of the MSG - Members to investigate the feasibility of holding this meeting in early June (the date of 9th June was floated but not agreed); iii) following the meeting on 9th June, MSG would review the preferred options draft report - this would enable early warnings to be given to officers in respect of any outstanding issues etc. iv) there might be a need for a Special meeting of the JC to sign off the preferred options. 	MSG
4.	<p><u>Employment Land Study Report - Report on its Findings</u></p> <p>A report on the finalised Employment Land Study had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report referred to its key findings and identified the next stages which included a focused workshop event on the subject to be held on 5th February.</p> <p>DA reported that Halcrow had been asked to provide some additional information which would be incorporated in due course but that was unlikely to have any bearing on the basic thrust of this study.</p> <p>Following a brief discussion, Members agreed the report's recommendation and approved the study for dissemination as part of the evidence base. However, Members were not happy with receiving key documents such as this on CD. DA promised to let Members have a hard copy of the final report in due course and indicated that it would also be placed on the website (excluding the supporting maps).</p>	DA

		<u>ACTION</u>
5.	<p>i) <u>Work Programme Monitoring</u></p> <p>In the absence of AS, there was no discussion under this heading.</p> <p>ii) <u>Halcrow Task List Update</u></p> <p>An updated Halcrow Task List (dated 7.12.07) had been circulated prior to the meeting. The principal comments made in respect of various studies included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Assessment Framework - Work progressing as per agreed programme. Model is expected to be available by early April which would facilitate the testing of options. • Water Cycle Study - the importance of getting the study off the ground was acknowledged. RW was to probe the matter further at next Monday's meeting with Halcrow - in particular their ability to deliver the study as per our TOR. AB pointed out that a source for funding this study had yet to be agreed, although this is one of the technical studies included in the GAF3 priorities. • Resource Efficiency Study - the meeting noted that the study had not yet been commissioned but we were awaiting feedback from Halcrow in respect of the TOR. • Green Space Strategy - JV had briefed the Chairman about the current state of play in respect of this study prior to the meeting. She reported that the report was totally inadequate, well behind programme and had a problem with quality control and hence was not considered to be suitable to put out to consultation. RW agreed to attend the Steering Group meeting with Halcrow next Monday and would try to secure their commitment to get the study back on track. 	RW
6.	<p><u>Major Transport Schemes - Update</u></p> <p>KD reported that there was not much to update but drew attention to the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dunstable Busway - business case to the DfT went in December. • M1 Widening - Inquiry to start in early June - the issue had gone fairly quiet at present. 	

		<u>ACTION</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A5/M1 link - HA had recently issued a Scoping Report on Environmental Assessment - they were working to publish the Orders in the Spring. 	
7.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>The following matters were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Nicols referred to the issue raised by Toddington Parish Council as they had been advised that any developments over 500-700 dwellings would be covered by the PPA Charter. AB advised that a Press Release had been issued to clarify the position. In addition, she confirmed that the matter would be clarified further at the next meeting of the Town & Parish Councils. • Strategic Developments - Reference was made to the following strategic developments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) East of Luton - Consultation had started in respect of this development . The Chairman advised that Luton representatives were meeting Henry Cleary in the near future to discuss this proposal; ii) Eastern Leighton-Linslade - AB confirmed that a Scoping Report had been received concerning this development from Eastern Leighton-Linslade Partnership. • Agenda for the JC meeting on 29th February 2008 - The meeting endorsed the Agenda. 	