

Luton & South Beds Joint Committee

**Notes of the Meeting of the Member Steering Group held at
South Bedfordshire District Council offices on 19th October 2007**

Present:

Members:

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

Officers:

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

Apologies Rec'd:

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| Laura Church | (LBC) |
| Richard Watts | (BedsCC) |

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| 1. | <p><u>Matters arising from meeting held on 7th September 2007</u></p> <p>None</p> <p>However, a specific matter was raised by the Chairman which related to Leighton Linlade Town Council's request to the JC to forward their comments to the AVDC. AS confirmed that the minutes of the JC had still not been finalised. Nevertheless, the meeting agreed that the JC's response to AVDC must not include or refer to any representations from Leighton Linlade Town Council.</p> | |
| 2. | <p><u>LDF Way Forward</u></p> <p>Electronic copies of draft papers relating the following had been circulated by TP prior to the meeting:</p> <p>i) <u>JTU Business Plan</u></p> <p>In elaboration of the issues raised by the Business Plan, TP confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The relevant adverts for the appointments of the JTU Manager & Project Coordinator were to be published in late November alongside the adverts for SBDC; | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The JTU had to move incrementally from a Virtual Team (as present), to a Small Core Team and then to a Core Team and culminating in the establishment of a Full Team; ▪ On the planning side, the Full Team was envisaged to comprise a member of staff from BedsCC (plus funding), 6 posts from SBDC Core Team whilst posts from Luton BC had yet to be identified. However, the Full Team will also embrace wider resources (Transport/Economic Development, eg.) and may include a total of about 20 staff in due course; ▪ The JTU would be a Plan Production Unit. Other corporate pressures would have to be managed by the Councils elsewhere; ▪ The meeting endorsed this broad approach – in particular the need to set up the Basic Core Team and then to build on it; ▪ Chairman accepted the role of increased member involvement and confirmed in principle that officer/member contacts could be strengthened if needed; ▪ Meetings of the MSG could also be held where the JTU would eventually be based; ▪ With regard to the issue of co-location, the report will focus at three locations, i.e. Kingsland School, Butterfield Park and Houghton Regis; ▪ Cllr Nicols would like to see the co-location criteria first – TP promised to bring details at the next meeting; ▪ Members emphasised the need for the co-location criteria to embrace requirements for a Reception Area and an Exhibition Area and to bring forward the date for the establishment of the Full Team (from March 2008 as advised by TP); ▪ Halcrow Task List - An electronic copy of the Halcrow Task List dated 8th October had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were raised in respect of the work items in the List: ▪ <u>Employment Land Study</u> – the final draft report circulated recently by Halcrow needed considerable amount of work before it might be considered acceptable. Detailed comments had been submitted by officers to Halcrow to progress the matter; | TP |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Green Space Strategy</u> – AS was unable to report progress in respect of this study, but promised to report back at the next meeting; ▪ <u>Leighton Linlade Shopping Survey</u> – completed on time – information emanating from the survey would be used as needed; ▪ <u>Houghton Regis Town Centre Master Plan</u> – completed on time; ▪ <u>SA Scoping Report</u> – completed on time; ▪ <u>SA of Core Strategy Issues & Options Paper</u> – not yet commissioned. ▪ <u>Core Strategy Health Assessment</u> – not yet commissioned. ▪ <u>Transport</u> – KD confirmed that Halcrow were due to be commissioned to develop the Traffic Model soon. They had identified the need to carry out two surveys in the Leighton Linlade area viz. Public Transport & Roadside interviews. KD was unsure whether the Police would permit the roadside interviews to be undertaken in November but confirmed that their decision would be known next week. ▪ <u>Water Cycle Strategy/Resource Efficiency Study</u> – TP reported that references had been sought before Halcrow were entrusted with the task for the preparation of these studies. Chairman thanked TP for taking the cautious approach. ▪ The meeting agreed that the future submissions of the Halcrow Task List must include an additional column which included officers' commentary on the progress of the tasks. | |
| | <p>ii) <u>Scoping the Core Strategy Issues, Generating Options and Getting to the Core Strategy Preferred Option</u></p> <p>TP explained that the main purpose of the above draft was to seek the JC's endorsement to the broad methods for progressing to a Preferred Strategy as set out in the report. The paper identified three methods (including advantages/disadvantages of each of these methods) as follows:</p> | BB |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Method A - Stakeholder Forums Method B - Growth Area Enquiry Method C - Stakeholder Forums & Growth Area Enquiry <p>Following a discussion of alternative methods, Members agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was important to get the balance right; The principle of teasing out ideas through stakeholder involvement and drawing together thoughts at the end was considered to be a good idea; The report would need to include a definition of stakeholders and the list of stakeholders should be both geographically and subject based; More work needed to be done in providing further clarification/ elaboration to the methods and the evaluation of any other methods available in order to avoid being challenged for the 'method' eventually decided; The need to devote a week to the Growth Area Enquiry was questioned and the feasibility for a shorter duration 'Enquiry' to be explored; TP to update this report in the context of the above incorporating a draft work programme and present it for the JC's consideration at their meeting in November. | TP |
| 3. | <p><u>Landowners/Developers – How We Work Together</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) -</u> <p>TP explained that the Government had published a Consultation Paper in May 2007 relating to PPAs which essentially proposed a new way to manage large-scale major planning applications. The PPA process is a Project Plan framework through which the local planning authority and applicant manage suitable planning proposals. For a PPA to be successful, it is essential that the LPA and the applicant establish a collaborative relationship based on trust, with good communication and regular exchanges of information. The paper emphasises, however, that a PPA is not</p> | |

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| | <p>a guarantee, nor an indication of likelihood that the application will be approved. It relates to the process of considering development proposals and not to the decision itself.</p> <p>A brief discussion ensued on the subject – Members generally agreed to move towards the PPAs but with no firm commitment since they did not believe that there was any need to look into agreements with developers at this stage.</p> <p>The Chairman suggested that a one page report was needed for the JC which made the public aware that we were minded to move in the direction of these Agreements. Members were advised that in the event of the LDV (be it a shadow or a full LDV) being set up next year, they would need to take a view on this issue as well.</p> <p>▪ <u>Landowners/Developers Forum</u> – Draft Agenda 31st October</p> <p>The Draft Agenda for the Forum was agreed. It was agreed further that the analysis of developers' responses to the I&O document would be circulated purely for information – some of the responses raised issues which needed to be tackled in future.</p> <p>With regard to attendance by Members, AB proposed that all the JC Members should be invited and that 'substitutes' would be acceptable. She also encouraged the Chairman to emphasise that we wanted to work with the developers but this engagement had to be on a structured basis.</p> <p>▪ <u>Work Programme</u></p> <p>AS referred to the Work Programme contained in the LDS and drew Members' attention to a response received from the Planning Inspectorate (copies circulated) which had a direct bearing on the Programme. The Inspectorate's response raised certain issues but the most critical issue entailed in their proposed timing for the adoption of the LDHR-LL Allocations DPD & Urban Extension AAP (both at July 2010). The proposed timings for these DPDs/AAPs differ from the timetable proposed in the LDS which could raise issues of concern to developers. Members generally thought that the proposed delay provided us with a basis for asking the government for additional resources in order to enable us to bring forward the delivery of the work programme.</p> | <p>TP</p> <p>TP</p> |

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| 4. | <p><u>Major Transport Schemes – Update</u></p> <p>KD updated the meeting in relation to the following schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>M1 Widening</u> – A Pre-Inquiry meeting is to be held on the 29th November which would be followed by a Public Inquiry in January 2008 (scheduled to commence on 27th January). KD advised the meeting that a formal notification about the timetable was still awaited. ▪ <u>A5/M1 Link/Junction 11A</u> – An exhibition was held at the Chalton Village Hall last Friday/Saturday. The issue of local access still remained unresolved but it was envisaged that the technical work on this issue should be available in the next couple of weeks. ▪ <u>Junction 10A</u> – The Business Case is currently being updated and expected to be ready by January 2008. Funding for this scheme is being sought as part of GAF3. ▪ <u>Luton Dunstable Busway</u> - The Business Case is expected to be submitted on 5th November and generally things are on track in relation to this scheme. ▪ <u>Luton Town Centre Scheme</u> – An exhibition is due to be held during the middle of November in respect of this scheme. <p>Cllr Nicols suggested that once the JTU had co-located, he would like to see the relevant exhibition material from the above schemes displayed at their offices.</p> | KD |
| 5. | <p><u>Delegated Authority for Consultations from Adjoining Authorities</u></p> <p>IS reported that we had received reports relating to the Core Strategy Consultations) from Mid Beds and North Herts DC respectively, Affordable Housing SPD from the Aylesbury Vale DC etc) from the neighbouring authorities on which JC's comments had been sought. In view of the quarterly cycle of JC meetings, it was difficult to offer the Committee's comments within the deadlines stipulated. IS therefore advised the need to seek a Delegated Authority for such consultations to the MSG (in consultation with officers). The Group endorsed IS's suggestion and agreed that a report on this subject be drafted for the JC's consideration on 29th November.</p> | AS |

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| 6 | <p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>The following matters were discussed under this heading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Prize Draw</u> – AS reported that the Draw had not yet been undertaken – one of the main reasons for this had been the difficulty of amalgamating responses from hard copies with those received through electronic mail. Cllr. Nicols was anxious to ensure that the Prize did not go to any developer, but IS advised him that it would only go to a resident of LBC and SBDC respectively. <p>The Chairman emphasised the need to keep the procedure simple and ‘legal’ and confirmed that he would make the ‘Draw’. The Group decided to hold the Draw on the afternoon of 25th October and advised the need to have sufficient ‘reserves’ in case there were difficulties in tracing the winner(s) or deemed ineligible for any reason.</p> <p>It was also decided to have the Electoral Registration Officers there, together with a photographer to record the occasion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AS reported that there were probably some variations in the format of reports to the Executive Committees of the three authorities. With regard to the reports to the Executive Committee of LBC, it usually entailed in an examination of impacts relating to Legal, Equalities, Staffing, Financial and Community Safety Risks issues. Chairman advised that ‘Legal & Financial’ should always be included as ‘standard’ but that we should seek a legal view as to what else ought to be included. | AS |
| 7. | <p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Group agreed to have their next meeting on 16th November 2007 commencing at 9am (rather than at 2pm) at South Bedfordshire District Council Offices. ▪ The Chairman also asked the dates for other meetings of the MSG checked as one of them apparently had been scheduled on a Bank Holiday. | BB |