

**Councillors present:** Councillors Dady, Goult, Reay, Butcher, McNab and Addison

**25. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beeby. Councillor Addison substituted.

**26. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any interest they might have in the business to be discussed and/or indicate whether these were prejudicial or non-prejudicial, the nature of the interest and whether they intend to participate in the relevant agenda item. No declarations were made.

**27. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Members were asked to approve the minutes of the Local Plan meeting held on 7 March 2018 copies of which had been circulated.

A brief discussion regarding the Corby Walk was had and officers said they would be happy to look at this with regard to progressing in the future.

**RESOLVED that:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2018, copies of which had been circulated to Members, be agreed as a correct record.

**28. Draft Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

A report was presented to Committee providing an update on the progress of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and giving Members the opportunity for feedback and input.

The SFRA had been carried out in four stages with the latest update being carried out by NCC, this involved updating the content to reflect the advice and requirements of the NPPF, updates to legislation and a number of flood and water data sets, modelling and mapping layers.

The SFRA set out a brief history of flooding events in the Borough, the Borough had been relatively unscathed regarding severe flooding, since 1982 there had been 118 flooding incidents.

The SFRA provided Flood Risk Assessments for a number of potential development areas it concluded that the majority of sites were rated as RAG 'Amber', either at risk of surface water, fluvial and/or groundwater flooding, had experienced flooding on site or in close proximity of the site in the past or capacity issues within existing drainage systems.

The document set out guidance on flood management, resilience and resistance including an emphasis on site layout and design, moderation of ground levels, buffer strips and developer contributions.

It was also recommended a piecemeal flood mitigation measure should be avoided by implementing strategic flood risk management infrastructure projects through partnership schemes.

So in conclusion the officer stated that the SFRA was a key element of the evidence base to underpin the preparation of planning policy.

Members asked about Gainsborough Road and were told that there had been new grills fitted to the system which should improve water flow. Oakley Vale had caused flooding around Exeter Estate but this had now been solved.

Officers explained that Land West of Corby was upstream and that officers and the developers were looking at how best to manage this.

**RESOLVED that:**

the report be received and progress noted on the SFRA and that Members feedback and comments be noted.

## **29. Rural Housing Need Survey results**

In August 2017 Midlands Rural Housing were appointed to carry out an independent Housing Needs Survey in each of the rural communities within Corby Borough. This was the first time that such a survey had been carried out anywhere simultaneously giving a unique cross reference.

The study provided a robust assessment of housing need and demand across all tenures in each of the rural communities and offered invaluable evidence for housing and planning to address local needs.

The Council had a key role in delivering affordable housing to address local housing needs in collaboration with rural communities and Midlands Rural Housing or other Registered Social Landlords.

The most appropriate approach would depend on local circumstances taking account of local appetite for growth and an assessment of any residential development already in the pipeline.

### **RESOLVED that:**

Members endorse the Housing Need Surveys as evidence base from which policies and strategies would be developed and the Council would continue to build relationships with rural communities and Midlands Rural Housing or other Registered Social Landlords to promote affordable housing and encourage rural exception sites to meet locally identified needs.

## **30. Draft Employment Land Review**

The report provided an update on the progress of the Employment Land Review and gave Members an opportunity to input.

The report summarised the main findings of the draft ELR and highlighted the most significant conclusions (Full report available on request).

The ELR needed to advise the Council on three main questions:

- How much land in total would be required for employment over the period of the new Part 2 Local Plan for Corby
- What sites the Plan should identify for employment development
- How it should deal with established employment areas

It was estimated that the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) job target implied a requirement for 448,635m<sup>2</sup> of net additional employment floorspace over the plan period.

Quantitatively, the existing and JCS-allocated supply was roughly double the need for additional employment land over the plan period, estimated at 448,635 sq m. This was more than enough to cover that need and allow a generous margin for flexibility, competition and choice. Qualitatively the existing and JCS-allocated supply was well-matched to market requirements. However, most of the land identified was subject to constraints, including contamination from Corby's industrial legacy in the steel works, which required land remediation works before any development could take place.

Despite the generous supply that was already identified for employment, it was recommended that five further sites be allocated for employment in the Part 2 Local Plan. Those sites totalled 9.6 hectares, which would provide an estimated 38,400m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace. In terms of overall quantity, these recommended allocations did not make a material difference to Corby's oversupply of employment land. In qualitative terms, the rationale for allocating the sites was that some of them were well on the way to delivery (live proposals, sites on the market or currently being prepared); while others might have market potential beyond the plan period as part of a long-term land reserve, and were not suitable for alternative uses anyway. The recommendation to allocate these sites in the Part 2 Local Plan

was based on the principle that planning should do all it can to maximise take-up of employment land, because Corby was pursuing a highly ambitious and challenging job target.

As well as identified and potential development sites, Aspinall Verdi / PBA had produced a market facing assessment of the Borough's eight employment areas. In summary, the assessment found that the areas were generally well occupied and viable to maintain in their existing use. But two types of industrial units were at risk:

- Larger bespoke industrial units, designed to suit specific businesses, as when they were vacated by their original occupiers they might not be suitable for new ones. These buildings were unlikely to be viable to refurbish or redevelop, and therefore could be suitable for redevelopment for alternative uses. But whether this applied to any specific building could only be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Smaller units, up to 5,000 sq ft, were more often in poor condition and nearing the end of their economic life. In the short to medium term they should be protected, because they already have the lowest vacancy of any unit sizes, but were not viable to redevelop. Therefore, if such units are lost there would be no alternatives for occupiers.

A brief discussion was had regarding the consultation and Members asked about how the small units could be maintained and kept in use.

**RESOLVED that:**

the draft ELR as agreed by Committee be approved for consultation with user groups and developed through the Part 2 Local Plan.

**31. Consultations on Government Reforms to the Planning System**

The purpose of the report was to inform Members that the Government was consulting on reforms to the Planning System which were significant to the preparation of Local Plans and the determination of planning applications.

The consultation was significant and would have important implications for both the preparation of planning policy documents and development control decision making in the future. Responses had to be in by 10 May 2018 and had to be made in the form of an online survey, the report included officer's responses to set questions.

The consultations on the revised NPPF and the developer contributions were summarised in the officer's report along with officer comments arising from consideration of the implications for the Council and its planning function.

The revised NPPF stated that as a minimum, authorities must ensure there were strategic priorities for the area. This included homes and workplaces needed, appropriate retail, leisure and commercial development, physical infrastructure, community facilities, climate change, conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment.

Members said that the Local Plan Committee had a vital role to play in the future and particularly wanted accommodation for older people, Officers said there was retention in the plan regarding providing for older people which could be strengthened, Members asked for this to be done and quality homes should be provided for everybody.

**RESOLVED that:**

Members consider the issues raised in the report; discuss any additional comments to be included within the consultation response; and agree that the final consultation response be delegated to the Planning Manager and Chair of this Committee.

**32. Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.