



Minutes of the Meeting of the Interim Edinburgh and South East of Scotland Strategic Development Plan Joint Committee

Monday 28 January 2008

In the City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh

Committee Members Present:

Councillor J Lowrie (Convener), City of Edinburgh Council.
Councillor J Mowat, City of Edinburgh Council.
Councillor B Turner, East Lothian Council.
Councillor P McLennan, East Lothian Council.
Councillor R Imrie, Midlothian Council.
Councillor O Thompson (substitute for Councillor D Milligan), Midlothian Council.
Councillor R De Bold, West Lothian Council.
Councillor M Day, West Lothian Council.
Councillor W Boyle, West Lothian Council.
Councillor V Davidson, Scottish Borders Council.
Councillor J Beare, Fife Council.

Council Officials Present:

Mr J Inman, City of Edinburgh Council.
Mr K Tippen, City of Edinburgh Council.
Mr D Kennedy, City of Edinburgh Council.
Mr P Collins, East Lothian Council.
Mr I Glen, East Lothian Council.
Ms J Long, Midlothian Council.
Mr I Johnston, Midlothian Council.
Mr C McCorrison, West Lothian Council.
Mr B Frater, Scottish Borders Council.
Mr M Wanless, Scottish Borders Council.
Ms P Ewen, Fife Council.
Mr K Winter, Fife Council.

Apologies:

Councillor C Riddell-Carre, Scottish Borders Council.
Councillor A Martin, Fife Council.
Councillor D Milligan, Midlothian Council.

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1 Welcome and Introductions

Councillor Lowrie (Convener) welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked East Lothian Council for servicing the Interim Joint Committee over the past year and looked forward to further productive joint working during 2008.

2 Minute

Decision

The minute of meeting of the Interim Edinburgh and South East of Scotland Strategic Development Plan Joint Committee of 22 October 2007 was approved as a correct record.

3 Draft Regulations on Development Planning – Consultation Paper: Proposed Response

The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 provided a new statutory basis for development planning in Scotland and introduced Strategic Development Plans and Local Development Plans to replace existing Structure and Local Plans.

The Interim Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of Development and Regulatory Services, West Lothian Council which presented a suggested response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the draft regulations for Development Planning. The draft regulations covered all elements of the development plan. However, the current report focussed on proposed regulations for the preparation of Strategic Development Plans. Responses to the draft regulations were to be lodged with the Scottish Government by 20 February 2008 and individual Councils had, or will be in the process of responding to the consultation.

Craig McCorrison (West Lothian Council) spoke to the report and highlighted the key areas.

Councillor Lowrie felt there was merit in highlighting the key areas in the response document.

In response to a question from Councillor Davidson (Scottish Borders Council) regarding levels of consultation, Craig McCorrison (West Lothian Council) emphasised that consultation would take place at all critical stages.

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Decision

- 1) To welcome the opportunity to contribute to the consultation process.
- 2) To agree to forward the report by the Director of Development and Regulatory Services, West Lothian Council together with appendix one attached to the Director's report to the Scottish Government as the Interim Joint Committee's response to the consultation on the draft regulations, subject to the officials highlighting those parts of the response to the consultation document which addressed the following key areas:
 - lack of links with transportation
 - lack of reference to sustainability and environmental issues
 - concern about the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) being too location specific
 - lack of details on timescales
 - costs associated with implementation

(Reference – report by the Director of Development and Regulatory Services, West Lothian Council, submitted).

4 Update on Structure Plan Progress in Scottish Borders Council and Fife Council

The Interim Joint Committee considered a joint report by the Director of Planning and Economic Development, Scottish Borders Council and the Director of Planning, Fife Council detailing progress on the Structure Plans in Scottish Borders and Fife Councils.

The joint report emphasised that Strategic Development Plans and Local Plans introduced under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 would not be in place before 2010. Accordingly, it was essential to make progress on updating the Structure Plans in the Scottish Borders and Fife where the current approved plans had a limited timeframe, and where there was substantial pressure for development.

Martin Wanless (Scottish Borders Council) indicated that Scottish Borders Council agreed in June 2006 to undertake a Structure Plan Alteration on housing policies. He emphasised that a substantial increase in population of some 15% during the period 2004-2024 was projected. A 23% growth in households in the Scottish Borders was projected from 2004-2024.

The Scottish Borders Council issued a notice of its intention to prepare a Structure Plan Alteration in February 2007. A draft Structure Plan (and Strategic Environmental Assessment) was agreed by the Council for public

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consultation in September 2007. The consultation period closed on 25 January 2008.

Pamela Ewen (Fife Council) indicated that Fife Council began the housing land reappraisal exercise in June 2007 within the context of the finalised Structure Plan strategy and, between August and October 2007, carried out a consultation exercise on the options available for consideration.

The proposed changes arising from the reappraisal were approved by Fife Council in December 2007 and have been submitted to the Scottish Government in the form of proposed modifications to the finalised Fife Structure Plan (2006). The Scottish Government will provide an opportunity for objections or representations to be submitted to them over a six week period commencing in January 2008.

Councillor Imrie (Midlothian Council) raised the question of possible duplication of effort between updating existing Structure Plans while, at the same time, focussing resources on the preparation of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan.

Decision

To note progress on the Scottish Borders and Fife Councils Structure Plans.

(Reference – joint report by the Director of Planning and Economic Development, Scottish Borders Council and the Director of Planning, Fife Council).

5 Strategic Development Plan Project Manager Post – Update

The Head of Development Services, Fife Council reported on progress made in making an appointment to the post of Strategic Development Plan Project Manager.

The recently published draft National Planning Framework 2 set out an early priority, one of only two, for the delivery of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan. Given the timetable envisaged by Ministers this would result in submission of the Development Plan in 2010.

The recruitment to the post of Strategic Development Plan Project Manager in November/December 2007 had been unsuccessful and this was likely to be attributed to the nature of the post being diverse ie the early stage being focussed on establishing project management, then followed by managing the project itself.

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The Steering Group felt that given the immediate need to establish the project management, either a suitable employee would be seconded or a Project Management Consultancy contracted to undertake this initial stage of work, reporting to the Steering Group, who in turn would report to the Interim Joint Committee. This arrangement would be for a period of one year. The budget for this had been agreed by all six authorities.

Decision

- 1) To approve the recruitment of a secondee or consultant for a period of one year to take forward the initial project management work.
- 2) To agree that the officials report to the next Interim Joint Committee setting out details for the recruitment of a Strategic Development Plan Manager.
- 3) That members of the Interim Joint Committee be updated on (a) progress made on the appointment to the post of Strategic Development Plan Manager and (b) funding from the Scottish Government in the financial year 2008/09 to assist with the setting up and early stages of the Strategic Development Plan preparation and partnership.

(Reference – report by the Head of Development Services, Fife Council, submitted).

6 Housing Supply Task Force

The Interim Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of City Development, City of Edinburgh Council on the work of the Housing Supply Task Force set up by the Scottish Government in June 2007 to tackle blockages in the supply of new housing. The Task Force is chaired by the Minister for Communities and Sport, whose ministerial responsibilities included housing but not planning. Its core membership included representatives of COSLA, Homes for Scotland, Shelter, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Council of Mortgage Lenders.

John Inman (City of Edinburgh Council) highlighted the key elements of the report. In particular, he indicated that:

- One of the starting points for the discussion document “Firm Foundations” was the Scottish Housing Market Review (June 2007).
- The Task Force held a workshop focussing on Edinburgh’s Waterfront and the South East Wedge in November 2007 which was attended by a wide range of stakeholders and representatives of the Lothian local authorities.

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- The Task Force was due to meet soon to agree on priorities for future activities.
- The Taskforces' work did not have a defined end date, however it was understood that it would run until May 2008.
- Although to date the Task Force had focussed primarily on Edinburgh and the Lothians, work on housing delivery and links between housing and planning processes had implications for the wider region which required to be tackled.

Decision

To note the remit of and recent contacts to date with the Housing Supply Taskforce and agree to be kept updated regarding the Taskforce's areas of activity.

(Reference – report by the Director of City Development, City of Edinburgh Council, submitted).

7 Draft National Planning Framework (NPF 2) - Consultation

John Inman (City of Edinburgh Council) advised the Joint Committee that the Scottish Government has published the National Planning Framework (NPF 2) as a consultative draft. The consultation period runs from 8 January to 15 April 2008.

The Framework will guide Scotland's spatial developments to 2030 and set out strategic development priorities. The draft consultative framework document can be viewed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2008/01/07093039/0>

In view of the timescales for consultation, the Interim Joint Committee were invited to authorise the appropriate officials from the respective Councils to co-ordinate a response to the draft Framework on behalf of the Interim Joint Committee.

Decision

- 1) The Head of Planning and Strategy (City of Edinburgh Council) ask the Scottish Government to extend the consultation deadline to allow the Interim Joint Committee to consider a detailed response to the draft National Planning Framework (NPF2) at their next meeting on 28 April 2008.

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- 2) In the event of an extension not being given, the appropriate officials from the respective Councils be authorised to co-ordinate a response to the draft Framework on behalf of the Interim Joint Committee, in consultation with Councillor Lowrie (Convener).

7 Date of Future Meetings and Secretariat Arrangements

Decision

- 1) To agree that the Interim Joint Committee meet in the City Chambers, Edinburgh at 2.00 pm on Monday 28 April, Monday 25 August and Monday 24 November 2008.
- 2) To note that the secretariat of the Interim Joint Committee would be held by the City of Edinburgh Council for the calendar year 2008.