

Proposed Statement to Council on 9th September

Colleagues will recall that in June I reported on the progress of the Local Plan at the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel. Over two months have passed since then and I believe it is appropriate that I bring you up to date with current situation this evening.

Officers continue to work on the Sustainability Appraisals covering social, economic and environmental assessments of the individual sites which have been put forward by landowners and developers along with reviewing their viability and deliverability. All of this work is required to develop an appropriate Spatial Strategy as laid out in the Government's Planning Policy Guidance .

The two larger sites, SGB and Woolfox, which have been put forward, are in the process of having a more detailed assessment in particular for their viability and the ability of the developer to deliver new homes over the Plan period. This is because when the Examiner comes to consider these sites he will need to be provided with evidence to this effect.

SGB has almost been completely assessed based on the November 2018 Evolving Masterplan. This has confirmed that SGB is viable but does require the Housing Infrastructure Fund funding of £30m. To date that bid, submitted in February 2019, has been fully scrutinised by Homes England, both of their external their consultants, MHCLG and against the Treasury's Green Book. Over 200 questions that have been asked and the answers provided seem to have been satisfactory however the bid still lies in the "to be decided" pile.

We continue to lobby government to make a decision, either way, so that we can decide whether SGB can be considered as part of the Local Plan or not. This lobbying has included contact with MOD, Homes England, MHCLG and via the Mayor of the Combined Authority, Cambridge and Peterborough as well as the Chair of the

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LGA who meets with the Secretary of State on a weekly basis. I am also in the process of arranging to meet the MHCLG Secretary of State in his constituency in Newark, Notts in the next couple of weeks. To date no news has been forthcoming. Six bids have been announced as successful but these were on average for about £100m. No bids have been rejected since our bid was submitted in February of this year.

Woolfox also continues to be assessed based on the information provided by the Agent, most recently a traffic assessment. This information has been on a drip feed basis from their consultants since last September.

The Planning Policy Team will continue to assess all of the evidence and come to a conclusion on an appropriate strategy which will be recommended to Cabinet in due course with time being provided for the GIR Scrutiny Panel to consider the Spatial Strategy and provide input to Cabinet ahead of their meeting. This will probably involve additional meetings for both.

It is still our intention to commence the Pre-submission consultation on all the elements of the Plan including the Spatial Strategy, proposed policies and allocated sites in early 2020 subject of course to input from the Scrutiny Panel and then the approval of the Pre-submission by Cabinet and Council again all probably involving additional specific meetings.

GRSB

September 2019