

**STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY**  
**9 March, 2012**

**Present:-** Councillor Argyle, Chairperson; and Councillor Clark (substituting for Councillor Merson), Cox, Howie (substituting for Councillor Pratt), Jaffrey (substituting for Councillor Corral), Penny (substituting for Councillor Dean), Ross (substituting for Councillor Webster) and Sullivan.

**Apologies:-** Councillors Boulton, Corral, Cormie, Dean, Hunter, Merson, Pratt, Stewart and Webster.

**Officers:-** **Strategic Development Planning Authority:** Strategic Development Plan Manager.  
**Aberdeen City Council:** Head of Planning and Infrastructure Services and Committee Manager.  
**Aberdeenshire Council:** Head of Planning and Building Standards, Principal Accountant and Committee Officer.

## **1 MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Authority had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 15 December, 2011.

### **The Authority resolved:-**

- (i) in relation to article 1 to the minute (resolution i) to note that the seminar on the Aberdeen Airport Masterplan had taken place over lunchtime prior to this meeting;
- (ii) in relation to article 1 to the minute (resolution ii), to note that a report on extraction issues and waste water capacity from the River Dee was on the agenda for this meeting;
- (iii) in relation to article 2 to the minute to note that Aberdeenshire Council's Infrastructure Services Committee was to consider the Supplementary Planning Guidance – Delivering Identified Projects Through a Strategic Transport Fund at its meeting next week; and
- (iv) to otherwise approve the minute.

## **2 MAIN ISSUES REPORT - CONSULTATION REPORT**

With reference to article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Authority of 23 September, 2011, the Authority had before it a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which sought approval from the Authority for the publication of a report summarising the responses to the consultation on the Main Issues Report.

The report explained that a total of 85 responses were received to the Main Issues Report with most of them being submitted during the consultation period which ran from 7 October, 2011 to 6 January, 2012. Appended to the report was a summary of the activity undertaken and it also provided an overview of the responses received. The report explained that the publication of the consultation report marks the end of the Main Issues Report stage in the preparation of the Strategic Development Plan and the summarised responses to the Main Issues Report will be brought back to the Authority later in the year to enable responses to the points made to be agreed in the context of the preparation of the proposed plan.

The Authority then heard the Strategic Development Plan Manager explain that one paragraph in the appendix had been omitted in error but this would be included in the report following the meeting. He further explained that the consultation report would be placed on the Authority's website and all those who responded to the Main Issues Report would be sent notification of its publication.

**The Authority resolved:-**

to agree the publication and circulation of the consultation report as detailed in the report.

### **3 DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME 2012/13**

With reference to article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Authority of 25 March, 2011, the Authority had before it a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which sought approval from the Authority for a replacement Development Plan Scheme.

The report explained that if the Authority agreed the Development Plan Scheme then it would be submitted to the Scottish Ministers by 31 March, 2012 and in line with the commitment to environmental responsibility and resource efficiency, the preferred means of distribution of the Development Plan Scheme will be through the Authority's website, however, there will be a limited circulation of hard copies.

The report also explained that in line with the decision of the Authority all councillors will receive an electronic version rather than a hard copy of the document.

The report explained that the costs associated with the publication and distribution of the Development Plan Scheme were likely to be around £400 and this would be met from the Authority's existing resources.

The Authority then heard the Strategic Development Plan Manager explain that the Plain English Campaign had requested that in order for the Development Plan Scheme to be awarded its Crystal Mark for clarity, four minor changes in the text of the Scheme would be required. The Strategic Development Plan Manager explained that these changes would be made accordingly.

**The Authority resolved:-**

- (i) to agree the content of the Development Plan Scheme 2012/13 (as detailed in the appendix to the report) and its submission to the Scottish Ministers by 31 March, 2012; and
- (ii) to agree the publication and circulation of the Development Plan Scheme as detailed in the report.

### **4 WATER SUPPLY AND WASTE WATER ISSUES**

With reference to article 1(ii) of the minute of the meeting of the Authority of 15 December, 2011, the Authority had before it a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which updated them on the ongoing discussions with key agencies regarding water abstraction from the River Dee and waste water disposal in Aberdeen City and Shire.

The report explained that the current structure plan recognises that the River Dee is the region's main source of drinking water and is protected under European legislation as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and it therefore highlighted that managing the use

of this resource is important with targets set for all new developments to use water-saving technology and to avoid having to increase the amount Scottish Water are licensed to abstract from the River Dee as a result of the new development proposed in the plan. Scottish Natural Heritage is currently of the opinion that it is not possible to say beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the abstraction required to service the development contained in the Main Issues Report would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee SAC.

The report explained that Scottish Natural Heritage's response to the consultation suggested four possible remedies to this position:-

- Reducing the housing and employment allowances
- Identify alternative sources for water supply
- Caveat the allowances until more information is available
- Being in a position by the time the plan is approved to say that the plan will not adversely effect the integrity of the River Dee SAC.

The report explained that work is ongoing primarily between Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency which is focussed on improving the information base required to make more definitive conclusions about the ability of the River Dee to accommodate the development for the later phases of the development plan and it is hoped that the outcome of this work will be to conclude that the plan will not adversely effect the integrity of the River Dee SAC. However, it is recognised that the information base available may not be adequate to make conclusions beyond reasonable scientific doubt in the required timescales.

In relation to waste water issues, the report explained that Scottish Water is responsible for the transport, treatment and disposal of waste water. Whereas historic developments discharged to combined sewers (taking both surface water as well as sewage), new development separates these to limit the amount of water requiring treatment at sewage works. The report explained that the surface water from the development proposed by the structure plan and the two development plans would primarily be dealt with by way of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and only waste water from new buildings will enter the mains system. It was noted that the purpose of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) is to release extremely dilute sewage, primarily surface water, into water bodies in times of heavy rainfall when the sewers are unable to cope. New developments will not have an adverse impact on the sewer network as new development is required to mitigate its impact where it would take the network over capacity. Scottish Water are working to rectify existing network deficiencies where these have an unacceptable impact on water quality.

The report explained that issues around water abstraction from the River Dee are strategic in nature and that resolution over the coming months is critical to the progress of the Strategic Development Plan. It was explained that a short-life working group is looking at these issues and will arrive at interim conclusions around the information base over the next few months and this will feed into work on the preparation of the Strategic Development Plan and will be reported to the Authority at its meeting in June, 2012.

The report explained that issues relating to the capacity of the mains sewer network at times of heavy rainfall are not a strategic planning issue and the Strategic Development Plan does not have a role in the resolution of any current problems. Developers will be required by Scottish Water to mitigate the impact of any additional development to ensure that it does not exceed the capacity of existing infrastructure and lead to environmental discharges.

**The Authority resolved:-**

to note the report and the ongoing work taking place in the context of the preparation of the Strategic Development Plan and associated assessments and to thank the Strategic Development Plan Manager and his team for producing such a detailed report.

**5 SDPA BUDGET MONITORING 2011/12 AND BUDGET 2012/15**

With reference to article 6 of the minute of the meeting of the Authority of 15 December, 2011, the Authority had before them a report by the Treasurer on the Authority's budget monitoring and forecast position outturn for 2011/12 and requested that the Authority agree a budget for 2012/13 and to note the draft budgets for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

**The Authority resolved:-**

- (i) to note the budget monitoring position and the forecast outturn for 2011/12;
- (ii) to agree the budget for the Authority for 2012/13 as detailed in the report and its appendix; and
- (iii) to note the indicative budgets for 2013/14 and 2014/15 as detailed in the report and its appendix.

**6 SDPA BULLETIN**

With reference to article 8 of the minute of meeting of the Authority of 15 December, 2011, the Authority had before them an information bulletin prepared by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which was designed to keep members up to date on issues relating to the work of the Authority where no decisions were currently required.

Details contained in the information bulletin included:-

- Local Development Plans update
- Cities Outlook 2012
- Cities Agenda
- Infrastructure Investment Plan 2011
- A Land Use Strategy for Scotland – Action Plan
- Scotland's Digital Future: Infrastructure Action Plan
- Structure Plan Proposals

The Authority then discussed a number of the issues contained in the bulletin in further detail including the adoption of Aberdeen City's Local Development Plan and the imminent adoption of Aberdeenshire's Local Development Plan. The Authority also discussed the problem some rural areas have in receiving broadband and the importance of ensuring that top quality agricultural land is protected from development.

**The Authority resolved:-**

to note the report.

**7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Authority were informed that its next meeting would be on 22 June, 2012 at 2.00pm in Woodhill House, Aberdeen.

**The Authority resolved:-**

to note the details.

## **8 VALEDICTORY**

On the occasion of the last meeting of the Authority prior to the Local Government elections in May, 2012, the Chair expressed his thanks to the Authority for their work in the last few years. He explained that it was a pleasure and a privilege to have been the Chair of the Authority during the last two and a half years and wished to thank all officers involved with the Authority, specifically David Jennings, Strategic Development Plan Manager and his team. He then thanked all members of the Authority who had worked hard to take forward various pieces of work and expressed the view that the Authority was a good example of joint working between the two local authorities.

David Jennings, Strategic Development Plan Manager responded by thanking the Chair for his Chairing of the Authority over the last few years.

### **The Authority resolved:-**

To concur with the remarks of the Strategic Development Plan Manager and to note the valedictory remarks from the Chairperson.

**- Peter Argyle, Chairperson.**