



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

**Planning Policy Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Policy Committee held at Jeffery Room, the Guildhall on Thursday 16 December 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present

Councillor Rebecca Breese  
Councillor Adam Brown  
Councillor Matt Golby  
Councillor Phil Bignell  
Councillor Stephen Clarke  
Councillor Jonathan Harris  
Councillor Jamie Lane  
Councillor Wendy Randall

Apologies for  
Absence: Councillor Kevin Parker  
Councillor Cathrine Russell

Officers Richard Wood, Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy  
Jim Newton, Assistant Director - Growth, Climate and Regeneration  
Theresa Boyd, Solicitor

**1. Appointment of Chair and Vice-chair**

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That Councillor Rebecca Breese be appointed Chair of the Planning Policy Committee.
- ii) That Councillor Matt Golby be appointed Vice-Chair of the Planning Policy Committee.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

None advised.

**3. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed members to the inaugural meeting of the Planning Policy Committee.

**4. Deanshanger Village Design Statement**

Consideration was given to the report of the Planning Policy & Conservation Manager regarding the Deanshanger Village Design Statement. The report was outlined to the Committee and the process explained. The draft design statement was submitted to

South Northants Council Planning Policy Committee in November 2020 where a six week consultation exercise was agreed. Concerns had been raised through the consultation regarding zone 1, and the objectors' comments had been appended to the committee report.

John Hodder of Opus Partnership LLP addressed the Committee, and asked that the recommendations were not approved.

The Planning Policy & Conservation Manager explained that following the consultation exercise, some amendments had been made to the proposals, including in response to some of Mr Hodder's concerns. Some development would be permitted in the 'character areas' and there was a degree of flexibility in this area.

In response to a question from Councillor Johnathan Harris, the Planning Policy & Conservation Manager explained that good practice regarding sustainability would be encouraged in any new developments. The Design Statement could not be prescriptive but general reference was included.

Councillor Matt Golby noted the considerable achievement for the community to carry out such a comprehensive piece of work.

Councillor Stephen Clarke proposed that the recommendations in the report be accepted. The proposition was seconded by Councillor Phil Bignell.

The recommendations submitted in the report were agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Planning Policy Committee:

- a) Notes and welcomes the significant progress in making the DVDS by the Deanshanger community,
- b) Note the response to the public consultation on the Deanshanger VDS,
- c) Accepts the recommended modifications in respect of the Deanshanger VDS,
- d) Approves the adoption of the Deanshanger VDS, modified in accordance with recommendation (c) above, as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD),
- e) Agrees that delegated authority be given to the Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy to make further minor editorial changes to the VDS to address any factual and typographical errors and to reflect the fact that the document will be in its intended final form.

**5. Homes in Multiple Occupation (HiMO) Policy Review**

The Assistant Director Economic Growth and Regeneration outlined the report. The review of the HiMo policy position had been requested at Council. Carrying out a review via a Task and Finish Panel would allow flexibility to bring in expertise from inside and outside of the Council and to engage with other agencies.

Enforcement with regards to HiMOs came under two different remits - Planning and Licensing.

The review would be structured to initially gather evidence, understand the current policy, consider options and then make recommendations going forward.

Councillor Adam Brown would Chair the Task Panel and advised that the Group would be cross party and would report back to the Planning Policy Committee. Discussions would be held with Group Leaders as to the best composition of membership, and whether a larger Northampton based membership would be beneficial due to the larger number of HiMOs in the town.

Councillor Wendy Randall queried whether the review would cover what happened to people once moved on from HiMOs where modern slavery issues and the Police were involved. Councillor Brown considered that would be outside the remit of the Panel.

Councillor Jonathan Harris nominated Councillor Sally Beardsworth to join the Panel. The Chair noted that Councillor Cathrine Russell had also expressed an interest.

Councillor Adam Brown would approach members for names to join the Panel, the meetings of which would be held remotely.

The recommendation submitted in the report were agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Planning Policy Committee

1. establishes a Member working group, to:

- a) investigate the current rules concerning HiMO;
- b) consider good practice from other similar local authority areas;
- c) consider expert advice, to evaluate options for a way forward;
- d) review the current rules, in light of evidence gathered, and suggest any amendments to the Planning Policy Committee for its formal consideration; and
- e) endorses the relevant portfolio holder, Councillor Adam Brown, as Chairman of the Member working group

6. **Urgent Business**

The Committee received a presentation from the Assistant Director Economic Growth and Regeneration regarding the aggregation of the Planning Teams.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_