

MINUTE of MEETING of the SESplan JOINT COMMITTEE
held in the Diamond Jubilee Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh
on Monday 24th June, 2019 at 2.00 p.m.

- Present:
- Councillor John Beare, Fife Council (Convener)
 - Councillor Russell Imrie (Vice-Convener)
 - Councillor Stuart Bell, Scottish Borders Council
 - Councillor Maureen Child, City of Edinburgh Council
 - Councillor Neil Gardiner, City of Edinburgh Council
 - Councillor Norman Hampshire, East Lothian Council
 - Councillor Jim Goodfellow, East Lothian Council
 - Councillor Dom McGuire, West Lothian Council
- Apologies:
- Councillor Peter Smaill, Midlothian Council
 - Councillor Cathy Muldoon, West Lothian Council
 - Councillor Tom Miers, Scottish Borders Council
- In Attendance:
- Ms Pam Ewen, Chair of the SESplan Project Board
 - Mr Peter Arnsdorf, Acting SESPlan Manager
 - Mr Iain McFarlane, East Lothian Council
 - Ms Fiona McBrierty, West Lothian Council
 - Mr David Leslie, City of Edinburgh Council
 - Mr Brian Frater, Scottish Borders Council
 - Mr Craig McCorrison, West Lothian Council
 - Mr Andrew Ferguson, Fife Council (Clerk)

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS AND ANY URGENT MATTERS

The Convener confirmed that a report, relating to item 6 on the agenda, would be taken as urgent business at the end of the meeting, but that otherwise the order of business was as per the agenda.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25th MARCH, 2019

The Minute of Meeting of 25th March, 2019 had been circulated.

DECISION

The Committee APPROVED the Minute as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None.

5. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN - MINISTER'S DECISION

There had been circulated a report, by Fiona McBrierty, Development Planning & Environment Manager, West Lothian Council, relating to the decision by the Scottish Ministers to reject SESPlan 2. Considerable concern was expressed regarding the potential effect of this decision as regards planning in the South East Scotland City Region.

DECISION

The Committee noted the terms of the report, and that the matter would be discussed further later in the meeting.

6. SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE - CROSS BOUNDARY GREEN NETWORKS

There had been circulated a report by Peter Arnsdorf, Acting SESPlan Manager providing an update on the outcome of the consultation on the draft Cross Boundary Green Networks Supplementary Guidance and to set out the implications of the recent Ministerial decision to reject SESPlan 2 for the Supplementary Guidance.

DECISION

The Committee AGREED to:-

1. Note the outcome of the consultation on the draft Cross Boundary Green Networks Supplementary Guidance;
2. Note the implications of the rejection of SESPlan 2 for the Supplementary Guidance;
3. Confirm that the Supplementary Guidance should be held in abeyance;
4. Recommend that constituent authorities should consider how to integrate the content of the Cross Boundary Green Networks Supplementary Guidance into their policy suite, as appropriate to the individual authority's position; and
5. Instruct officers to write to the 22 consultees who had responded to the Guidance, setting out the current position.

7. 2018 ANNUAL HOUSING UPDATE

There had been circulated a report by Deborah Armstrong, Planning Officer, Scottish Borders Council, the purpose of which was to present the finalised 2018 Annual Housing Update and an Easy Read Guide for consideration and approval.

DECISION

The Committee AGREED to:

1. Approve the finalised 2018 Annual Housing Update attached as Appendix A to the report; and
2. Approved the Easy Read Guide attached as Appendix B.

8. FINANCE

There had been circulated a report by Fiona McBrierty, Development Planning & Environment Manager, West Lothian Council presenting the SESplan unaudited accounts 2018/2019 for SESplan Joint Committee consideration.

DECISION

The Committee AGREED -

1. to note the SESplan unaudited accounts 2018/2019 attached as Appendix A to the report;
2. to note that the accounts were available for public inspection between 28 June and 22nd July, 2019;
3. to delegate authority to the Convener of the Joint Committee, Acting SDP Manager and Chair of the SESplan Project Board to finalise and sign the audited accounts no later than 30 September, 2019; and
4. to note that the audited accounts will be brought to the SESplan Joint Committee for consideration at the November meeting in accordance with statutory timescales.

9. PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2017/2018

There had been circulated a report by Deborah Armstrong, Planning Officer, Scottish Borders Council, presenting the 2018/2019 SESplan Planning Performance Framework (PPF) to the SESplan Joint Committee for information.

DECISION

The Committee AGREED to note the SESplan Planning Performance Framework attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

10. AOCB

None.

11. URGENT ITEM: SESPLAN 2 DECISION: WAY FORWARD

The Committee determined, in terms of paragraph 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public and press during consideration of this item.

There had been circulated a report by Ms Pam Ewen, Chair of the SESplan Project Board, concerning the SESPlan 2 decision and the way forward for SESPlan in the light of that decision.

The Committee agreed:

1. That SESPlan should not proceed with a judicial review of the Minister's decision to reject SESPlan 2 at this time;
2. Noted that the 6 authorities which make up SESPlan would progress discussions on the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the region, following the Planning Bill being passed, and how they might feed into its development;
3. To ask officers to investigate SESPlan's authority to take part in any development of the RSS, including use of existing SESPlan financial reserves to assist that process, and/or the other governance options available to progress the RSS development;
4. To ask the Chair of the Project Board, Convener and Vice Convener to meet with the Minister as soon as possible to seek guidance on the way forward regarding SESPlan 2 and the RSS;
5. To look into organising further extra meetings of the Committee as required, including one in August if possible.

The meeting concluded at 4.10 p.m.
