

No	Action Point	Allocation	Timeframe	Update
1	<b><u>Introduction and Apologies</u></b>			
2	<b><u>Review of Action Schedule from Last Meeting held on July 13, 2022</u></b>			
3	<b><u>Local Plan Update</u></b>			<p>Gemma Wildman provided an update to the Forum members and advised them that the consultation closed a couple on the 19 October. She explained that the comments are all currently being processed and stated that there has been a very good response with 506 emails having been received and most of the emails contain more than one comment which are taking a considerable time to process. Gemma advised that there have also been additional sites, green spaces and changes to settlement boundaries which have all needed to be reviewed and the hope is to have the process reviewed by the end of November so that the Key Issues Report can be publicised and then if necessary, add it to the SHELA report to show what additional sites have been suggested and reviewed.</p> <p>Gemma Wildman pointed out that the current timetable that it published in the adopted LDS shows that the proposed submission consultation would be held in January, but the comments are still being processed and the extra evidence and it is clear that the timetable deadline will not be met and therefore the timetable is being reviewed.</p>

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				<p>She pointed out that it is likely that the next stage of the process will be in July, which is after the Councils elections in May. Gemma explained that there has been a wide range of comments on many different subjects and on a few of the larger sites that have been objections from different residents' groups.</p> <p>Victoria from Maxey Grounds asked why the East Wisbech allocation has been removed from the proposed Local Plan. She asked what the planning reasons are with regard to its removal. Gemma Wildman explained that it had also been made clear at the start that all existing BCP and strategic sites would not be rolled forward and they were all going to be assessed and reviewed individually and every landowner was going to have to suggest their sites to the council to ensure that they were included in the plan. She stated that the piece of work was undertaken and there were some viability issues identified associated with the site to the east of Wisbech and all of the different options were looked at and the decision was taken at a strategic level to not include the East Wisbech allocation and that there are sufficient sites across other parts of the district that can deliver the councils housing numbers. Gemma Wildman explained that it was felt that the site was not going to be as deliverable and would take a long time to come forward and it was felt that there were other sites available. Councillor Mrs Laws stated that it had been advertised that an existing BCPs from the 2014 had not been deliverable there was now the opportunity for landowners to come forward and then for each site to be assessed on its own merits. Victoria stated that therefore it is only Flood Zone</p>

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				<p>1 land around Wisbech and from a sequential testing point of view in her opinion, it makes no sense as to why it has been removed and with regards to deliverability which has been a issue in the past, now there are two major applications in for parts of that site with a couple more coming forward soon. Gemma Wildman stated that as part of the consultation all of the comments were reviewed, and the housing numbers have had to be revisited again as well as looking again at the comments, objections and planning applications which have been submitted and then use all that information to make a decision as to what sites are to be carried forward.</p> <p>NH stated that we have published reports on how we have arrived at the decisions and if people have not been content with those decisions, then the opportunity was available to submit their views and comments and put forward alternative evidence when they made their representations on the draft plan. He added that with regards to the current situation, the existing Local Plan is still in existence and applications received are primarily determined in accordance with the plan policy.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Laws questioned whether there has been much comment with regard to certain villages being excluded. NH stated that currently we cannot answer that question, as the representations are still being reviewed. He added that he is sure that there will be those settlements who feel that should have been allocated more. Councillor Mrs Laws explained that the comments that have been received will receive responses as it is important to keep the communication lines</p>

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				<p>open. Gemma Wildman explained that acknowledgements are being sent on receipt of the email being received.</p>
4	<p><b><u>Local Validation List Consultation</u></b></p>			<p>NH stated that there is a current consultation which is underway on the revisions of the Local List and he added that all contributions are welcome. The 14 November is the deadline for comments.</p> <p>He added that the process will be once all of the comments have been received then they will be presented to the Planning Committee who will decide whether or not to accept the changes given the comments received.</p> <p>NH explained that the proposed changes are quite niche and only come into play in certain situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road name must be shown on the location plan. He added that this covers the odd situation where the proposed development is actually located away from its street name address and on the submitted site location plan, there is nothing that enables officers to plot the application site in the right place.</li> <li>• Householder Planning Applications – street name issue, new requirement in terms of existing site plan and roof plan. He explained that the vast majority of applications do provide for an existing site plan and that makes sense, however occasionally an existing site plan is not submitted. NH explained that with regards</li> </ul>

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				<p>to the roof plan there are rare occasions where there are going to be significant alterations to the existing roof compared to the proposal so the differences can be gauged. He stated that more often than not the changes can be seen purely via the elevation drawings but sometimes there are complicated schemes which don't always clearly show the detail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline Applications – Road name on location plan. Amendment to existing requirement is that text should be added to make it clearer as to what should be included in the proposed site plan depending on what has been committed. Existing Site Plan -vast majority of agents do provide an existing site plan, however that is a requirement. Roof plan - rarely crops up on outline planning applications but on occasions it does.</li> <li>• Guidance is being updated and links are being provided to agents to help advise as to when a transport assessment is required or a transport statement or travel plan. He added that there used to be some national guidance which has been removed and the County Council has provided some guidance as to when each of these is or is not required.</li> <li>• Housing Layout - Although it rarely crops up on an outline application, other than an indicative application, but if an layout is provided as part of an outline for approval, then a plot schedule would be required.</li> <li>• Requirement for Reserved Matters Applications - existing roof plan needs to be provided. When an outline planning</li> </ul>

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				<p>consent is given and it lists the reserved matters, further clarity is being provided as a reminder that those details will be required at the reserved matters stage and cannot be left to a further application at a later stage.</p> <p>Tim Slater stated that he is of the understanding that there is no obligation to submit all of the reserved matters detail in one go and a separate submission can be done for each of the reserved matters if you want to. He added that he does not see how a reserve matters can be rejected just because it did not include something that was expected.</p> <p>Nick Harding stated that where there is an action to be satisfied which is embedded in a particular reserved matter rather than a separate list. He added that an application could be submitted which deals with a reserved matter of layout and then submit a subsequent application to detail what the dwellings will look like but sometimes there are single lines of a reserved matters which have things which are linked to that particular reserved matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications for full planning permission – road name item, existing site plan is a new requirement and roof plan. Provision of links to as and when transport assessments are required as well as plot schedules which is a new requirement for full applications as appropriate.</li> <li>• Applications for listed buildings – road name and roof plan.</li> </ul>

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demolitions in conservation areas -road name and the requirement for the justification statement to be provided has been removed as this is required within the application form.</li> <li>• Extension of existing certificate of lawfulness – There is a new/amended requirement in relation to location plans and an amended requirement in relation to the provision of evidence to support the application.</li> <li>• Proposed certificate of Lawfulness - there is a new requirement for a road name which must be shown on the location plan.</li> <li>• Application for proposed listed building certificate of lawfulness -a road name must be shown on the location plan.</li> <li>• Application to Discharge conditions: New requirement: Plans annotated with 'Do not scale' will not be accepted.</li> <li>• Application to vary/remove condition</li> <li>• Amended requirement: Text added to the 'schedule of changes' to make clearer what is required</li> <li>• Application for non material amendment Amended requirement: Text added to the 'schedule of changes' to make clearer what is required</li> <li>• Application for Tree works/felling tree</li> </ul>

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				<p>covered by TPO's: Amended requirement: Clarity that the application form must be fully completed, all questions answered, and information provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application for modification of discharge of planning obligation (S106) Removed requirement: A map and completed application form are now 'preferable' rather than required.</li> </ul> <p>Nick Harding stated that there maybe concerns that what is being proposed is adding to the burden for Agents but the Council is simply comparing what we ask for as a Local Authority against what our Cambridgeshire partners are looking for including Peterborough.</p>
5	<b><u>Transformation Project Introduction</u></b>			<p>Nick Harding explained that the Transformation Project is running for the planning service. He stated that stage 1 of the process has been reached which is being run by a team within the Council and the Planning Team are working with that team.</p> <p>He stated tat at the end of stage 1 there are a series of recommendations which have been tabled by the Transformation Team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>He stated that we are commissioning an overview on how we use the existing software system which will identify which parts of the system are not being used effectively or at all and then to be able to bring a greater degree of automation to the process which will then create spare</li> </ul>



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				<p>capacity which can be redirected within the service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NH stated that the second recommendation is to improve the management of the workflow within the team which may involve the purchase of an add on tool to the existing software system and that will enable tasks to be created rather than passing files and email to officers.</li> <li>• NH stated that the third recommendation is to buy a connector between the planning portal and the back office system which will enable planning portal applications to have the information imported directly into the back off system which will reduce the amount of manual inputting that is required by the Technical Team, so that there is some additional time which ca be redirected to other activities.</li> <li>• To train a wider number of people across the team so that they are more capable and proficient in keeping the template documents up to date which will reduce the amount of adhoc short term template updating that is currently going on.</li> <li>• NH explained that the fourth recommendation is to redirect some of the printing that is done to the essential service rather than the Technical Team Officers, as it has been identified that there is a substantial amount of time which can be saved by the central admin team fulfilling that part of the process.</li> </ul>

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				<p>Nick Harding stated that stage 1 of the transformation project will be considered by members before it is finally agreed, and the Transformation Team will look to make the changes and implemented and commence stage 2 of the project.</p> <p>Marcel Cooper stated that there have been issues previously when uploading information to the planning portal due to the limitation of size and he asked whether the proposed connection would allow for the upload of larger files than the planning portal will currently not accept. Nick Harding stated that will not be permissible because the planning portal connector simply scrapes the information off of the application form and places it on the back office system. Nick Harding agreed to find out what the FDC file size limitation is compared to the planning portal and if there is a significant discrepancy then it can be raised at the next planning portal session. Marcel Copper stated that if that could be an action it would be appreciated as some of the reports are huge.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Laws stated that she appreciates all of the work tat is being undertaken with the project and added that the point that Marcel Cooper has made is valid. She added that whilst there is a cost implication, there is the need to move forward and take into account the file size.</p> <p>Nick Harding stated that the number and type of applications are monitored that are received into</p>

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				<p>the service in comparison to staffing resources. He added that from a financial point of view and in the context of the transformation project, corporately the Council is cautious about committing to a long term staffing increase whilst the transformation project is ongoing as it may identify an amount of time which would create additional capacity within the team would normally try and satisfy by sourcing more workers into the team. He added that authority has been given for short term additional staffing, there will be no agreement for long term staffing until such a time as the transformation project is completed and its know where we are truly are wit the new system before any decision will be made with regard to long term staffing within the team.</p>
6	<p><b><u>Emerging Local Plan Strategic viability - Approach in the area North of A47</u></b></p>			<p>Nick Harding stated that the Draft Plan has been published and has gone out to consultation. He added that at previous meetings there have been discussions on the topic of development viability and the emerging local plan has had a strategic viability assessment undertaken. Nick explained that in terms of the area north of the A47, the report identifies that viability is very challenging and it states that viability is marginal even if no affordable dwellings are provided, however the NPPF states that we should be looking at a minimum of 10% of affordable homes no matter what, and therefore the council is taking a pragmatic approach and if in the area north of the A47 there is not the ability of providing the 10% affordable home ownership then a light touch viability will need to be submitted. Nick Harding explained that a light touch viability would mean that the assumptions made need to be looked at</p>

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				<p>in the Councils strategic viability document and identify where your site performs differently in relation to the various bench marks that are used in that document and that will then form the basis of the viability assessment which will then be considered in the determination of the application.</p> <p>Nick Harding stated that currently there is an application which has been submitted at Nene Waterfront by the Councils Development Team and they are going through the process currently.</p> <p>Nick agreed to update the slides with that particular planning reference number in order that agents can keep track on the progress and see how the proposed system would work.</p> <p>Victoria asked whether the position of the boundary between north and south as it goes along the A47, appears to separate Elm and Friday Bridge into the southern section when they have very similar markets to the Wisbech market and she asked how that decision has been achieved because the viability in Elm and Friday Bridge are not going to be viable in the same way as Wisbech will be.</p> <p>Nick Harding asked whether that was a point that has been raised in their representations and Victoria confirmed that it was. Nick Harding stated a response will be received as part of the Local Plan process and when a report is brought before members it will set out how the decision was made.</p>
7	<b><u>Staffing and Performance Update</u></b>			Nick Harding gave an overview on performance and explained that in terms of validation there is a

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				<p>7 day backlog and there that has reduced significantly throughout the year.</p> <p>He added that a weekly update is now being provided on the website and agents will be able to see an indication as to when they should be receiving communication from the Technical Team as to whether their applications are valid or not.</p> <p>Tim Slater stated that the timeframe for validation is excellent and he congratulated the team for all their hard work.</p> <p>Nick Harding stated that the validation process is being reviewed and if the backlog grows there are short term staff who can be called upon to assist and pick up any increase in workload that comes through.</p> <p>Planning Applications: Major and other applications are all on track performance wise. He added that with regard to minor applications the team are being pushed to improve on the performance with that class of application. He explained that it is difficult with the staffing changes that are continually taking place.to get that consistency and as staff come and go cases are being passed from one officer to another which is not an ideal situation.</p> <p>Nick stated that Clive Theobald has left the authority and Jen Seaman has returned till Christmas along with Rob Davis.</p> <p>Zoe Blake is a junior planner who starts at the end of November and a Conservation Officer called Christopher Patrick has joined FDC on loan.</p>

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				<p>There have been no applicants for the Principal Planning Post, one for the Senior Post, but they dropped out prior to interview and for the Conservation Officer post it was offered to two people but they both declined, and we were unable to appoint into the post of the Tree Officer from the candidates that were short listed.</p> <p>All vacancies will be going back out to advert.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Laws asked how many days FDC has Christopher Patrick for. Nick Harding explained that he is Ad Hoc only and is only assisting when there is an application that is felt is too complex for planners to deal with.</p> <p>.</p>
8	<b><u>Any other Business</u></b>			<p>Nick Harding updated on the Wisbech from Energy Waste proposal.</p> <p>The Inspectorate have accepted the application and it is now going through the examination process. Currently there is the period for relevant representations and the NSIP website is where comments should be placed by the 15 11 22. The Council will be making a joint representation with the County Council and FDC maybe making their own representations too.</p> <p>Proposed changes to the planning system.</p> <p>Nick Harding stated that he will not update the</p>

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				<p>forum at this time as due to the political in stability currently in Government.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Laws stated that she would like to extend her personal thanks to the planning team, due to the challenges that they are overcoming, due to the number of applications and also the staffing challenges that the team are facing.</p>

Finish: 3.52 pm