

Seminar/Briefing Record



Appendix B

Seminar – Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday 30 August 2016	15:00	Council Chambers, Midlothian House

Present:

Provost Wallace	Depute Provost Coventry
Councillor Bennett	Councillor Bryant
Councillor de Vink	Councillor Imrie
Councillor Johnstone	Councillor Milligan
Councillor Parry	Councillor Rosie
Councillor Russell	Councillor Young

Apologies:

Councillor Baxter	Councillor Beattie
Councillor Constable	Councillor Montgomery
Councillor Muirhead	Councillor Pottinger
Mr V Bourne	Rev R Halley
Mrs M Harkness	

1 Chair

Provost Wallace chaired the Seminar

2 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

3 Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland

(a) Background

By way of background reference was made to the report by the Head of Communities and Economy entitled 'Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland – Proposed Plan', which had been considered by the Council at its meeting on Tuesday 16 August 2016 (paragraph 8.4 refers). The Council having agreed:- (a) Not to take a decision on the ratification of the proposed Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland at this time; and (b) To arrange a seminar in order to allow Elected Members to consider the matter further.

(b) Purpose of the Seminar

The Head of Communities and Economy explained that the purpose of the Seminar was to provide Members with the following:

- Background on the development of the Proposed Plan
- Details on the contents of the Proposed Plan
- Links to the City Deal
- Implications for Midlothian in terms of Housing
- Infrastructure issues in Midlothian
- Consequences of Non-ratification

(c) Presentation

Thereafter the Seminar received a presentation from Ian Johnson, Head of Communities and Economy, supported by Jamie Megaw, Midlothian Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Programme Manager, who addressed particular concerns regarding pressures on GP services in Midlothian, and Mary Smith, Director, Education, Communities and Economy, who addressed concerns regarding pressures on schools/teacher numbers.

Some of the other points raised as part of the presentation included:

- City Deal bid on behalf of the 6 SESplan Councils would be strongly enhanced by a fully ratified Strategic Development Plan.
- The Strategic Development Plan did not require any new housing allocation in Midlothian for the period to 2029.

- Many infrastructure issues would be most effectively addressed through adopting a strategic approach.
- Investment that had already taken place in the Council's school estate meant that it was relatively well placed to face the prospective growth that lay ahead.

In conclusion, the Head of Communities and Economy reminded the Seminar of the recommendation made to the Council which was to ratify the proposed Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland.

Provost Wallace thanked Mr Johnson, Mr Megaw and Dr Smith for their respective contributions and invited questions and comments from Members.

(d) Question and answer session

Arising from Members questions and comments, the following issues were discussed at the Seminar:-

- With regards to protection from fracking, notwithstanding the current moratorium, the proposed Strategic Development Plan contained provision that was in line with Government policy.
- The importance of Planning, and Health and Social Care continuing to work together to ensure that adequate provision was made to meet future health care needs. Although it was acknowledged that it wasn't just about ensuring that there were sufficient facilities it was also about making sure they were adequately staffed.
- The need for reassurance that pressures on infrastructure, in particular transport, would be addressed. This was considered by some Members to be critical in view of the current challenges being faced in Midlothian, and the ongoing growth that was being experienced, and was expected, within the area.

4 Conclusion

The Seminar noted that a further report would be brought forward to Council seeking to address the concerns raised, in particular the issues relating to infrastructure, namely:-

- Pressure on GP Services
- Pressure on Schools
- Sites to meet affordable housing needs
- Transport
 - Peak time congestion on local roads
 - A720 (especially Sheriffhall)
 - Capacity of Borders Rail line
 - Bus Services
 - Potential Rail link to Penicuik

with a recommendation that the proposed Strategic Development Plan be ratified.

The Seminar concluded at 16:15