

CRAVEN SPATIAL PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

(Online)

10 November 2020

Present – The Chairman (Councillor Staveley) and Councillors, Brockbank, Myers, Pringle, Rose Shuttleworth and Sutcliffe.

Officers – Interim Legal Services Manager, Strategic Manager for Planning and Regeneration, Interim Spatial Planning Manager, Planning Consultant, Planning Officer (Planning Policy Team) x 2, Planning Assistant (Planning Policy Team) x 2, Senior Democratic Services Officer and Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer.

Start: 6.38pm

Finish: 8.35pm

Minutes – The minutes of the Sub-Committee's meeting held on 22nd September 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

Minutes for Report

CSP.185

**MONITORING DISCUSSION PAPER No.1 : CARBON
NEUTRAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Strategic Manager for Planning and Regeneration presented a report which provided to Members the first of a series of monitoring discussion papers (MDPs). This particular MDP related specifically to the Climate Change Emergency Strategic Plan theme of carbon neutral development, appended to the report now submitted.

The Craven Climate Emergency Strategic Plan (CCESP) impacted on the Craven Local Plan and would need to be taken into account in the monitoring and review of the Plan. The CCESP themes that related to the Craven Local Plan were:

1. Carbon neutral development
2. Travel and transportation
3. Land and nature
4. Carbon neutral energy and low carbon waste.

It was hoped that the Sub-Committee would give officers an early steer how the Local Plan polices could achieve a carbon neutral District and whilst there were limitations on the scope of the Local Plan, it was only one method, and it was anticipated that the ongoing review over a five year period since the Local Plan's adoption would assist in building a picture of the changing circumstances in Craven. The review of the policies within the Local Plan would be underpinned by an evidence base gathered over the next few years and this together with any changes introduced resulting from the recent White Paper or any amendments to Building Regulations would all form part of the review.

The discussion paper before Members set out some points for consideration, namely

- Existing policies – how existing Local Plan policies support carbon neutral development and how they could be implemented to achieve optimum results now.
- Future policies – how existing policies could be improved (through a review and update of the Local Plan) to achieve better results for carbon neutral developments in the future.
- Requirements and limitations -

Members raised several issues including the BREEAM 'very good' standard, how these were applied to planning applications and if that standard could not be met, developers could pull out of Craven and build elsewhere leaving the Authority in a position of not meeting its housing targets. The Interim Spatial Planning Manager stated that the monitoring of data was an ongoing process and this would build up a picture over a 12 months' period showing whether the targets were being met. The key issue was how to optimise the policies that were in place now as it was not possible to introduce anything new until going through the process of updating the plan or introducing a new one in 2024. Members suggested that it could be useful if case officer's reports regarding planning applications being presented to Planning Committee, could indicate what BREEAM standards were being required.

The Strategic Manager for Planning and Regeneration informed Members that it was important to note that, whilst a vital tool, the Craven Local Plan alone would not deliver zero carbon by 2030 and he stated that he was in the process of arranging for an expert from Leeds Beckett University to attend a meeting of the Sub-Committee to provide challenge and offer a view on what a future Local Plan could look like and the options available to the Council if it wanted to achieve zero carbon by 2030.

In terms of Building Regulations, Members were keen to see how they could be used to better achieve the Council's aim and whilst national standards were in place, these were a minimum and it could be possible to set higher energy level performance standards, further increasing Craven's desire to become carbon neutral.

In discussing residential housing, Members felt that though carbon neutral homes would be more expensive to build initially, householders would benefit from lower energy bills. Members did not want to make housebuilding in Craven unviable but felt it was a cost that developers and landowners might have to absorb.

Members raised several questions in relation to housing and employment land which included suggestions such as conducting a review of land owned by Craven District Council and the potential of releasing it for employment which were addressed by the Strategic Manager. In relation to Policy H1 regarding affordable housing for elderly disabled people, a Member made the point that not all disabled people were elderly and asked that this be noted by officers. In relation to public transport and cycle routes, which was the responsibility of North Yorkshire County Council, a Member asked if more pressure could be put on the County to improve public transport as this would help to reduce car use.

In terms of working with the polices Craven had, particularly relevant was Policy ENV3 Criterion T and officers were looking at the elements in practically achieving carbon reduction techniques in residential, employment and commercial buildings, including the reduction of energy use and carbon emissions, reduction and minimisation of waste when buildings were constructed and pre-construction plans and finally the reduction of water use. All of these reductions contributed greatly to the reduction of carbon emissions. The Spatial Planning Team would be working with Development Manager over the next few weeks to talk through practical techniques in each of those areas so that carbon emissions could be reduced in new buildings throughout Craven.

Members commented that when the Local Plan was updated and/or a new one introduced, the Council would have to be bolder, demanding higher standards from developers and be more prescriptive and specific in the polices without ending up with too much high end housing that low earners would not be able to afford. It was therefore important to building all housing, including social as well as affordable housing, to a decent standard with renewable energy solutions. It was pointed out that there was a distinct difference between affordable and social housing and there many people in Craven who would never be in a position to afford their own homes and would also need to rent.

As investment from the private sector developers progressed new technology, both social housing and general housing stock could all be built to decent affordable standards. Using renewable

energies did not have to be a battle between cost and implementation. If Government took the lead in the future of decent home standards and provided incentives for industry to get on board with renewable energy, costs would start to come down very quickly.

The Strategic Manager for Planning and Economic Development also highlighted the importance of local communities embracing the challenge of reducing carbon emissions. Wider issues to consider included public transport for getting to work and shopping, improve the provision for home working i.e. better communications would all reduce the use of cars and atmospheric pollution. The type of materials used in housebuilding was mentioned because timber framed housing reduced the need for a lot of cement which produced an enormous amount of pollution during production. Alternatively, lime based mortar could be used as the drying out process absorbed CO₂. Where possible locally sourced materials should be used resulting in a lower carbon footprint.

Members also considered brownfield sites and felt that this was a good thing to be encouraged although it was acknowledged that some sites could be financially unviable due to the removal of contaminants that could be discovered. It was pointed out that most of all Skipton's mills had been developed and an example had been set as to the worth of bringing forward and developing such sites in Craven.

In discussing new methods of house construction it was suggested that Appendix C to the Strategic Manger's report should be sent to the Council's Climate Change Officer as it explained how policies of the Craven Local Plan could influence actions of the Climate Emergency Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan was a living document and could be amended and improved as necessary.

Resolved – That, subsequent monitoring discussion papers will be presented to this Sub-Committee in line with the approach and format agreed by Members on 18th April 2023.

CSP.186

AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The Interim Spatial Planning Manager referred to the draft affordable housing SPD (supplementary planning documents) that had been presented to this Sub-Committee in August 2020. It was subsequently approved for public consultation and in that report it stated that the final SPD, the consultation statement and associated documents would be reported to this Sub-Committee for information. Regarding the preparation of SPDs, the Term of Reference for this Sub-Committee allowed it to approve the draft up to and including a draft for public consultation which is what had been done so far. Policy Committee was the parent Committee required to formally adopt the SPD.

The Interim Spatial Planning Manager suggested that rather than a being presented to an actual meeting of this Sub-Committee, the final SPD, consultation statement and the adoption statement be circulated for information at the same time the Policy Committee agenda and reports were published. Any individual Member of the Sub-Committee would be welcome to make their views known to Members of the Policy Committee.

Resolved – That, the final Affordable Housing SPD is presented to Policy Committee for approval and adoption.

CSP.187

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

December, to be confirmed.

Chairman.

