

Appendix 2

Record of minutes of Scrutiny Meetings - Reg 18 Consultation Sept to Dec 2020

26th Oct 2020	Adult Social Care & Health and Wellbeing (Joint)
30 Nov 2020	Children, young people and education

1. Adult Social Care & Health and Wellbeing – 26th Oct 2020

Responses in blue

The Chair, in noting all that was discussed in the meeting, summarised the points raised as follows:

1. The Local Plan did not have a lot of specificity in that it was quite broad in that it could give a general direction for a land use but could not address things such as whether some things should be socially rented to cater for older people, and that it was quite hard beyond general residential use to find specificity.

Although, the policies in the plan can seem quite broad they are flexible enough to consider the local area and also specific issues when assessing planning applications.

The Local Plan is also supported by detailed evidence such as on housing mix that has been taken into account when drafting policies. The evidence base will also be used when assessing applications. Policies in the Reg 19 draft of the Local Plan are more detailed than the last Reg 18 consultation version.

2. In terms of the General Hospital site, further specific information about the provision of health facilities under the Community Facilities heading was needed. There was real concern over the disposal of such a large site at General Hospital, and possible site around Glenfield Hospital (though could not be confirmed at the meeting) that disposal of land based on a plan to 2023 would not be seen through to 2035, and once disposed of it might be able to be bought back but at great cost to the taxpayer.

On top of looking at the feasibility of the site as residential accommodation, evidence that where the county caters for some of the city’s needs in terms of housing, that the city will need to cater for the county’s needs in terms of health services and particularly acute health services. The Chair pressed the need to see more evidence and ask those who were promoting the disposal of the General Hospital and potentially other University Hospital Leicester sites to other uses to have an answer for where it would stand in 2035.

The Leicester General Hospital site is no longer formally allocated for housing in the Local Plan as the UHL Trust is not in a position to confirm the site availability at this time. This does not mean the site won’t be coming forward for development at some point in the future, once UHL’s plans are firmed up and the council will work closely with the Trust on their plans in the future.

3. In terms of open space standards, it was considered the St Mary's allotment site provided a blueprint of something that could be achieved with the disposal of a site, with a good mix in terms of the use of the space to provide much needed housing, and high-quality provision of green open space and facilities for both the houses and surrounding community and was a good way to bring back in sites. However, it was noted that it was relatively easy to achieve the development as it was within the Council's ownership and would need to look for ways to embed that into the Local Plan and compel the City Council and private developers to achieve developments across the same standard.

The local plan policies when read together will support high quality development across the city. The council has selected the sites for development based on availability and robust assessment.

4. In terms of internal space standards, the Members noted the encouraging signs from government, in terms of offices being changed to residential without any need for a planning application, that they would achieve minimum space standards, and that those minimum space standards should be adopted.

We have a city wide Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) policy in the new local plan.

5. The open space standards and the private space standards clearly had a mental and physical health remit.

Open space Standards

The Local Plan sets open space standards for the city. The importance of green spaces and access to green spaces for physical and mental well-being is recognised in several chapters of the plan including Health & Wellbeing (Chapter 7), Open Space, Sport & Recreation (Chapter 14) and the Natural Environment (Chapter 15).

Private Space standards

The Local Plan contains a new policy on Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS), which proposals for new dwellings must meet as a minimum.

6. It was noted under use class orders the ability to change one property use into another but was also noted that takeaways would still require permission. The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission would specifically within its physical health remit be interested in what controls the Local Plan would seek to put particularly over takeaway food outlets.

The Local Plan does include a policy on hot food takeaways. It seeks to locate these uses within shopping centres in the first instance and take account of the number, distribution and proximity of other hot food takeaway and drink uses within the centre. This is to maintain a balance of uses in the centre and reduce the impact on the vitality and viability of the centre.

In preparing this Plan, Planning and Public Health have thoroughly explored and debated the possibility of widening the policy to address health issues related to hot food takeaways and the consumption of high calorific food. Through the Local Plan the policy would only apply to applications for new HFTs. Therefore, we could not address any impact from existing hot food takeaways.

In, addition, food delivery is radically changing the way people can access takeaways (e.g. uber, Deliveroo). The physical location of the business is less of a factor in accessing high calorific food than in the past. No longer have to leave home to get a takeaway. A restrictive policy around secondary schools would only have a negligible impact on health & wellbeing.

7. It was noted with interest there would be a 10-year plan in terms of the provision of social care that would be shared with the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission at a future meeting. It was asked that as far as practical to ensure that future care home demand is taken into account in the Local Plan, which would interact with the strategy. This was seconded by Councillor Joshi.

The infrastructure assessment under pinning the Local Plan has been revised for this consultation. It takes into account future requirements for extra care accommodation as per the council's adopted strategy on this matter.

AGREED:

1. the points summarised above to be provided to officers as consultation feedback from the Joint Adult Social Care / Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission.
2. The 10-year plan in terms of the provision of social care be taken to a future meeting of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission.
3. The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission to look at what controls the Local Plan would seek to put over takeaway food outlets.

2. Children, young people and education – 30th Nov 2020

Responses in blue

The Commission scrutinised the Draft Local Plan, commenting as follows

1. There was some concern amongst a few Members of the Commission in relation to play spaces/ areas for children which had been identified for housing site developments. It was further expressed that the loss of these play sites impacted the health and wellbeing of children. The Assistant City Mayor for Education and Housing noted that the commission could have a broader umbrella that also looked at places which impact children such as play spaces/ areas rather than just school sites.

The importance of green spaces and access to green spaces for physical and mental well-being is recognised in several chapters of the plan including Health & Wellbeing (Chapter 7), Open Space, Sport & Recreation (Chapter 14) and the Natural Environment (Chapter 15).

Unfortunately, given the constraints of the city and the level of need for new housing it is not possible to avoid development on greenfield sites and play spaces altogether. Sites that have been allocated for development have been assessed against the provision of open space within each ward and area and opportunities for access to alternative spaces.

As part of new development and particularly the strategic sites in the Local Plan provision will be made for appropriate green spaces and play areas. Policies in the Local Plan also allow sites to benefit from planning contributions where appropriate

2. Due to several factors and fluctuation of patterns over time, it would be difficult to know the demand for the number of children going to schools in 20-30 years' time. The Assistant City Mayor for Education and Housing agreed to bring back to the commission details about Pupil Place Planning, which was carried out every 5-10 years and allowed for an estimation of these numbers to be achieved as well as a whole range of factors that would also need to be monitored going forward.

The Infrastructure Assessment considers likely pupil provision. However, it is entirely dependent on the quantum and location of development that comes forward. We will continue to monitor this over time.

3. In regard to the Metropolitan Academy, dialogue with Education colleagues would need to take place to see if there was a justification to safeguard/ retain that site or if it could be allocated residential redevelopment. Feedback was being awaited and the site would be kept under review.

There is ongoing dialogue in respect of this site and our education colleagues are aware of this issue.

4. Concerns of replacement oversupply and undersupply of open sites would more be included in the next consultation.

We have considered the oversupply and under supply of open space sites when undertaking thorough assessments of sites for development. For instance, sites that have been allocated for development have been assessed against the provision of open space within each ward and area and opportunities for access to alternative spaces have been considered.

As part of new development and particularly the strategic sites in the Local Plan provision will be made for appropriate green spaces and play areas. Policies in the Local Plan also allow sites to benefit from planning contributions where appropriate

5. It was confirmed that all schools with potential site allocation had received correspondence.

Noted

AGREED:

1. That the presentation be noted.
2. To be updated on the schools playing sites selection process and in addition be informed of the measures that the Council put in place to address the loss of playing fields, playing spaces as well as the monitoring of developer contributions.
3. To return at the next point of public consultation with the local plan in full.