

**Meeting Minutes – Garden Town Member Board
18 September 2017**

Attendance

Organisation	Councillors	Officers
East Herts DC	Cllr Linda Haysey	Liz Watts Kevin Steptoe
Epping Forest DC	Cllr John Philip Cllr Nigel Bedford	Alison Blom-Cooper Glen Chipp
Essex CC	Cllr Lesley Wagland	David Sprunt Rich Cooke Jamie Carswell
Harlow DC	Cllr Danny Purton Cllr Jon Clempner	Paul MacBride Dianne Cooper
Herts CC	Cllr Derrick Ashley	Roger Flowerday
Uttlesford DC		
Garden Town	N/A	Paul Jarvis (ARUP) Sarah Pullin
Allies and Morrison (Spatial Vision)	N/A	Louise Mansfield

1. Apologies

Cllr Chris Whitbread
Cllr Alan Mills
Cllr Howard Rolfe
Cllr Gary Jones
Derek Macnab
David Coleman
Claire Sime
Jan Hayes-Griffin
Vicky Forgione
Graeme Bloomer

2. Draft notes of meeting of 31 July 2017 – including review of action points

- Item 4 – DC advised that a new contact within the EA is now responsible for this issue (Thomas Campbell), he has advised that a Water Cycle Study will be required. Progress is not being made on this issue and it was agreed this item should be taken to the full Co-op Member Board.
- Item 6 - SHMA MoU – A government consultation on housing numbers was published on 14 September, which shows a significant increase in housing need figures for authorities in the area. It was agreed the item should be discussed at the full Co-op Member Board meeting.
- Item 8 Princess Alexandra Hospital – discussion deferred to full Co-op Member Board meeting
- Item 8 Travellers – discussion deferred to full Co-op Member Board meeting

- Item 8 Highways and Transportation - discussion deferred to full Co-op Member Board meeting

Cllr Haysey requested that the title on the agenda for future Garden Town Member Board meetings is amended to exclude the words 'Co-op for Sustainable Development' to avoid confusion. **ACTION:** SP to amend agenda heading going forward.

3. **Spatial Vision work update**

Presentation was given to the Garden Town Member Board by Louise Mansfield from Allies and Morrison (AMUP) on work undertaken to date for the Spatial Visioning work.

Next steps for the Spatial Vision work:

- a) Community workshops and 'hard to reach' engagement – October 2017
- b) Development of thematic position statements for stage 2 – October 2017
- c) Draft report development – November 2017
- d) Project completion – December 2017

Cllr Ashley highlighted the need to integrate the Sustainable Transport Corridor Study with the Spatial Vision work. Louise Mansfield confirmed this will be the case.

4. **Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Bid update report**

DS outlined background to HIF – a substantial pot of money has been made available by central government to support provision of strategic infrastructure. The deadline for expressions of interest is 28 September 2017. ECC and HCC are in the process of working up the bid.

Funding to the value of £125 million is being sought for a second Stort crossing and for the first part of the Sustainable Transport Corridor, between Harlow Town Centre and Eastwick.

The Bid is only an expression of interest at this stage – it does not commit the authorities to anything.

Agreement is being sought from the Board for agreement to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) and agreement to develop a business case, should the EoI be successful.

RF reported that initially it was felt that there was insufficient information at this stage to make it worthwhile submitting an EoI, but a positive response from HCA, meant that it was subsequently felt to be well worth while.

The EoI needs to be clear how housing growth will be unlocked - the high sustainability aspirations that the authorities have for the Garden Town is felt to put the bid in a strong position.

RF confirmed the bid will not have any negative impact on the ability to seek S106 monies later down the line.

There was strong support from the Board for the Eol and it was highlighted that not to submit it would reflect badly on the project. The Eol will form an important part of giving the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town project visibility and the credibility of the project.

JC advised that the more political and other support that could be gained for the bid, the better. However, the timeline means there is limited time available in which to do this.

It was highlighted that the funding must be spent or committed by end of 2021 – three years. So it will be important that the bid is credible/realistic.

It was agreed that officers should draft letter/s of support for Members and other to sign.

ACTION: DS and RF to draft letters and circulate for signing:

- a) 1 x letter from GT Board
- b) 1 x letter from MPs – **ACTION:** Districts to approach MPs
- c) 1 x letter from LEP

RF noted that county councils are required to rank their bid submissions – this Eol will not necessarily be ranked as Hertfordshire's number 1 Eol.

LW gave her thanks to RF and DS, and others who inputted, for their work on putting together the Eol.

The Board agreed that a bid should be submitted

5. Update on programme and delivery support

PJ presented the paper circulated, which provided an update on programme work undertaken – information on two key recommendations are contained in paragraphs 1.6 & 2.4 of the paper.

- a) Quality Review Panel

The Officer Group have prepared a brief to go out to tender for the establishment of a quality review panel for the Garden Town in order to achieve high quality / exemplar design to be in place by February 2018. This would be an impartial and independent service which, after the initial set-up costs, would be self-funding (it is anticipated that developers would pay for the service).

Recommendation to the Board is to go out to tender to commission consultants to establishment and project manage a quality review panel for the Garden Town and their constituent districts to use.

Cllr Purton asked if this work could be undertaken by the county councils to avoid appointing additional consultants.

ABC highlighted that the NPPF makes clear that authorities are required to set up a design review panel. The panel could and would cover the wider authority areas. The panel requires a wide range of areas of expertise e.g. landscape and sustainability amongst others. ABC strongly recommends taking the approach set out in the paper. The set up cost would be covered by the Garden Town grant; the HCA indicated this is one of key things that they would seek to fund through the Garden Town funding.

Cllr Philip highlighted the need for the panel to be independent and impartial and to be seen to be so. Independence is a significant benefit. Cllr Philip also noted that there would be a cost associated with the set-up, regardless of who was appointed to do it (including the County Council).

PJ explained that, once set up, the developments going through the panel would cover the costs of it. PJ also noted that it was important in retaining the Garden Town vision.

RC noted that the timescale consideration was important, and that there was a need for consistency in approach between the different authority areas.

Cllr Haysey noted that the Garden Town needs to have its own identity, with a specific Garden Town team/panel.

The Board agreed paragraph 1.6 of the report – to go out to tender.

JC suggested that the GT Board be custodians of the panel

The intention would be for the panel to be established in Q1 of 2018

Cllr Ashley requested that the panel considers build quality, not just design. **ACTION:** GT team to ensure that appointed panel are aware that build quality is something that must be considered as part of the review process.

b) Engagement

ARUP has undertaken a review of case studies in terms of engagement for Garden Towns.

PJ advised that paragraph 2.4 of the paper recommends that a bespoke Garden Town website is established.

With regards to the Garden Town sites, PJ advised that it may be beneficial to provide further information to explain how the sites were chosen and show that the site selection has been undertaken in a proper and transparent way (whilst being careful to avoid consultation fatigue).

It was agreed that it was important to explain how decisions were made on site selection, but there was concern over the use of the word 'consultation' as there would be no opportunity to influence the decision, so it would be an information-giving exercise, rather than a 'consultation'. **ACTION:** once material is prepared, take to GT Board for approval.

Cllr Haysey raised the issue over the way in which stewardship and governance matters are conveyed and dealt with.

Action: SP to circulate a copy of the engagement note recommendations paper to board members

c) Sustainable Transport Corridor Study

PJ reported that following officer interviews with four consultancies, Systra had been selected to undertake the Sustainable Transport Corridor Study (Inception meeting due to take place 19 September). Systra understood importance of placemaking – others firms did not.

The Board agreed the appointment of Systra

d) Future work programme

ABC noted that the future work programme was set out in paragraph 4.1 of the meeting paper.

6. **Report on Garden Town budget, structure of team and proposed appointment of a Project Director**

GC presented the Garden Town budget and resource paper circulated for the meeting.

Cllr Purton expressed a wish to appoint a Project Director very quickly by considering candidates who are available, but Cllr Purton did not consider that it would be necessary for the Director to be a Planner. Cllr Purton also noted that he was opposed to spending significant money on recruiters and to increasing the salary.

Cllr Philip raised concerns about the process, highlighting the need for it to be open and transparent and for the role to be properly advertised.

Cllr Haysey noted opposition to the use of a specialist recruitment agency – considered not to be helpful in achieving the objective; the role could be advertised on council websites. Cllr Haysey keen to get a director in place ASAP.

LW offered use of East Herts' HR services to carry out the work necessary to advertise the post. GC accepted the offer.

ABC highlighted the need to review the job description and generate a person specification prior to re-advertising the role.

CLr Philip asked for officers to look at the job description and circulate by end of this week for Member comments. **ACTION:** key officers to review and then circulate updated job description.

The board agreed to advertise a salary of 'in the region of £100,000'

ACTION: East Herts officers to notify Members of minimum timescale for advertising the role.

Following Officer confirmation of Job Description, the Board agreed to proceed to advertise the post through East Herts DC recruitment procedure with representation from the Board to be on the interview panel(s), with a view to an early appointment.

ACTION: Officers to arrange for the Project Director post to be advertised, following agreement on the updated job description.

LW requested a sense check of some of the figures contained within the budget paper and to circulate for CEOs to address the budget gap. **ACTION:** CEOs to review figures contained within the GT budget and resourcing paper circulated for the meeting, and to agree how the budget gap will be funded.

Board agreed to move forward with the recruitment process, as outlined above.

7. **A.O.B**

Date of next meeting for October – 9th October. **ACTION:** SP to put arrangements in place.

8. **Dates of next meetings**

- a) 9 October 2017, 7.30pm Harlow Council Chamber
- b) 13 November 2017, 7.30pm Harlow Council Chamber
- c) 11 December 2017, 7.30pm Harlow Council Chamber