

**REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY MEETING
27 June 2008**

PRESENT:

Bournemouth Borough Council:

Councillors: Beryl Baxter, John Beesley, Nick King, Robert Lawton, Pat Lewis, Ron Whittaker

Officers: Phil Robinson, Planning Conservation and Design Manager.

Bournemouth 2026:

Angela Pooley - Sustainable Environment Forum

Steve Shuck - Safer and Stronger Communities Forum

Bournemouth Civic Society:

Ken Mantock

MPs

Annette Brooke - Mid Dorset and North Poole Constituency

Dorset County Council:

Councillor: Hilary Cox

Officers: Don Gobbett

Borough of Poole:

Councillor: Ron Parker

Officers: Nigel Jacobs

East Dorset District Council:

Councillors: Spencer Flower and Mike Dyer

Christchurch Borough Council:

Councillor: Alan Griffiths

Purbeck District Council and Lytchett Minster Town Council:

Councillor: Paul Johns

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Corfe Mullen Parish Council:

Peter Haward

Lytchett Matravers Parish Council and Purbeck District Council:

Martyn Colvey

Keep Wimborne Green:

Shelia Bourton

Dorset Council for the Protection of Rural England:

Terry Stewart and Janet Healy

West Parley Residents Association:

Richard Heaslip

Community Action Lytchett Matravers:

Andrew Carmichael

Lytchett Minster Action Group:

Michael Tomlinson

Upton

Francesca Moore

1. Introduction

Councillor Robert Lawton set out the aims of the meeting in working together to respond to the Secretary of State's report on the Regional Spatial Strategy. He reported that it was expected that the report would be published in late July followed by a 12 week consultation period. He suggested that Councillor King chaired the meeting.

Councillor King reported that the objectives of the meeting were as follows:

- To consider the opportunities to co-ordinate responses on the proposals of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

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- To consider the options for co-ordination of local opposition and associated media events.

Councillor King informed the Group that, subject to agreement, a reporter from the Echo would be attending at about 3.15 pm.

2. Regional Spatial Strategy - Confirmation of current position

Councillor Ron Parker explained his role on the Regional Assembly and commented on the regional plan guidance. He referred to the need for sustainable levels of development and felt that the Examination in Public - EIP - had not recognised the value of assessing what was sustainable. The expectation from the EIP was that the infrastructure would be paid for from developer contributions. Councillor Parker stated that 77% of planning applications in Poole were for flats which were not selling.

3. Key Issues

Councillor John Beesley reported that over the past two/three years, Members from across all Dorset Local Authorities had worked hard to form the evidence based submission to Government for the Regional Spatial Strategy. He outlined the key issues for Bournemouth and other representatives commented on the implications for their area:

Bournemouth:

- The EIP process was fundamentally flawed.
- 16,100 new dwellings recommended by the EIP Panel.
- Fighting to prevent the encroachment of 1,500 new homes in the green belt. Evidence based master plan for the green belt was expected to take in excess of 2 years to deliver.
- Concerns about the green belt - 2 areas of land owned by developers who may use law to force development.
- Financial penalties if the recommended levels were not delivered.
- The Government Office for the South West has been pressurising the Council to increase the housing targets through the Local Area Agreement and Multi Area Agreement by offering reward grants. This was not acceptable to the residents of Bournemouth and therefore the Council had refused. This approach was considered to be a 'pincer movement' in respect of the higher housing targets that were expected when the Secretary of State published her document in late July.
- Following the public consultation period the final decision issued by the Secretary of State will be binding.
- Important to resist the housing targets over the longer term.

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East Dorset District Council - Councillor Mike Dyer and Spencer Flower:

- Traffic congestion.
- Pressure on the natural and human environment.
- Serious issues concerning the potential loss of green belt.
- Impact of the Dorset Heathlands Mitigation which restricts development within 400 m.
- Important to work together and consider the implications of the recommended level of growth.

Christchurch Borough Council - Councillor Alan Griffiths:

- Had not suffered in the same way as other areas in South East Dorset.
- Appropriate infrastructure needed.
- Wanted to support neighbouring authorities in making representations on the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Borough of Poole - Councillor Ron Parker:

- 10,000 had been recommended for Poole.
- Significant number of brownfield sites in the regeneration area for houses.
- The EIP Panel was using flawed base figures.
- £2m transport model exercise had started.
- Important to work together.

Purbeck District Council - Councillor Paul Johns:

- 145% increase in housing targets.
- Implications of the western extension.

Dorset County Council - Councillor Hilary Cox and Don Gobbett:

- Thriving economy with an adequate infrastructure to achieve a sustainable future was vital.
- Need affordable housing.
- The level of growth by the Regional Development Agency was 3.2%. The Regional Spatial Strategy expected 2.8%. Important how Local Authorities address affordable housing.

Council for the Protection of Rural England - Terry Stewart and Janet Healy:

- Fighting nationally for the protection of the green belt.
- Recommended level of new dwellings will led to a significant increase in the number of cars and commercial vehicles in the conurbation.

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- Extend of the conurbation which considered to be Wareham to Verwood.

Corfe Mullen Parish Council - Peter Haward:

- Scale of increase in the level of housing was absolutely crazy.
- Concerns regarding the facilities required to sustain such levels of development.

Lytchet Matravers Parish Council - Martyn Colvey:

- Implications of the housing targets and in particular the Terence O'Rourke report.

West Parley Residents Association - Richard Heaslip:

- Loss of heritage and identity.

Community Action Lytchett Matravers - Andrew Carmichael

- What employment opportunities will there be for the occupiers of the new dwellings.

MP for Mid Dorset and North Poole - Annette Brook:

- Concerns regarding identity - to main identity of dwellings should not build for edge to edge.
- Second homes would be of limited benefit to the residents.

Lytchett Minster Action Group - Michael Tomlinson:

- Lytchett Minster was a very small area the implications of the housing targets needed to be considered.

The representatives then discussed the options for seeking support from each of the Local Authorities for a co-ordinated approach taking into account the timetable.

4. Develop Campaign

Councillor Nick King highlighted the need to raise the profile and consider ways that all Councils and action groups can campaign together on a national level. The following approach was suggested:

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- Posters, Leaflets
- Action Day
- Human chain from Throop to Upton.
- Battle bus to London to make representations direct.
- Promotion of local petition.

The above suggestions were generally supported. Ken Mantock, Civic Society stressed the need to ensure that local people were aware of what was happening and how it would affect them. 5 Bullet points should be used to publicise the issue with local residents.

Councillor Whittaker highlighted the importance of producing appropriate evidence and in particular the economic viability of building the suggested level of dwellings. He explained the difficulties in his Ward and the implications/cost of providing the necessary infrastructure.

The Group discussed the timetable for the next meeting it was suggested that this be done in week 1 of the consultation period following the publication of the document by the Secretary of State.

Councillor Ron Parker referred to the document produced by Don Gobbett on employment land which it was agreed could be circulated.

Martyn Colvey reported on the proposed demonstration during the Local Government Association Conference next week.

5. Action Plan

- **Hold next meeting in week 1 of the consultation period.**
- **All representatives to agree a common approach to making representations.**
- **Develop 5 bullet points in plain English.**
- **Common theme for posters, leaflets and placards.**
- **At the end of the process 'battle bus' to London**
- **Circulate document produced by Don Gobbett, Dorset County Council**
- **All Parties to contact Karen Tompkins with details of email addresses and one contact for each organisation.**
- **Appropriate media coverage locally and nationally.**

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