

101325247

Revision 02

ACCOMMODATION WORKING GROUP

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Meeting:	Accommodation Working Group
Date:	8 th July 2024
Location:	Teams
Chair:	Rebecca Calder (SZC)
Attendees:	Alexis Corless (ESC), Fern Lincoln (ESC), Teresa Howarth (ESC), Naomi Goold (ESC), Issac Nunn (SCC), Rebecca Calder (SZC), Mike Humphrey (Quod for SZC), James Soloman (SZC), Niki Pieri (SZC)
Apologies:	Bethany Rance (ESC), Kate Watson (SCC)

Meeting Notes:

1 - INTRODUCTIONS

- Noted that the purpose of meeting was for the working group to consider ESC's draft Private Housing Supply Plan (PHSP) and decide whether to approve it, and also to consider Sizewell C's request for the AWG to approve a change in the approach to the delivery of the caravan park element of the Project Accommodation.
- This meeting followed an informal pre-meeting on the 27th June 2024.

2 - PRIVATE HOUSING MARKET SUPPLY PLAN

- Group noted that the Deed of Obligation requires the draft PHSP need to be prepared by ESC within six months of commencement and submitted to the group for approval.
- FL ran through the measures proposed in the plan including:
 - Supporting Rent and Deposit Schemes
 - Sizewell Accommodation Grants
 - Renovation Grants for Landlords
- These align with the purposes of the PHSP stipulated in Schedule 3 of the Deed "*Private Housing Supply Plan*":
 - (a) supporting rent and deposit guarantee schemes, in particular to support people at risk of homelessness;*
 - (d) supporting empty homes back into use*
 - (e) providing loans or grants or guaranteed lets, such as renovation grants or funding for minor improvement works and lodging or rent-a-room schemes*
- FL agreed to add some additional detail on expansion of the East Suffolk Letting Scheme including promotion and liaison with landlords / how many beds could potentially be delivered.
- FL/TH questioned why Schedule 3 includes "*Private Housing Supply Plan*": *(b) providing equity loans to residents in the owner-occupied and private rented sector to enable them to secure suitable accommodation and free up homes or rooms in the private rented sector.*
 - MH set out that this was included as it is an initiative that has proved effective in Somerset for Hinkley Point C (HPC) to support tackling under occupation and maximising efficiency to enable people to move into more appropriate sized accommodation and away from vulnerability to end homelessness. In Somerset, the equity loan is provided by the Council to the renter.

101325247

Revision 02

ACCOMMODATION WORKING GROUP

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- TH advised that this not something that ESC has provided before so any process would need to start from scratch. Therefore it is not ESC's most favourable option but can understand why it is included.
 - FL added that if the aim is to incentivise people to move, even if accommodation is owned by the Council and is under occupied, it will still be a difficult task. If this is offered, the necessary infrastructure to deliver it must be in place, the path to it must be considered and expectations must be decided.
 - RC noted that Schedule 3 provides flexibility – it says that “any or all” or “any other appropriate initiatives” may be proposed in the PHSP so the working group will rely on ESC's expertise in terms of what measures are brought forward.
- It was agreed by the group that this PHSP plan will not cover the full time period for which the Deed provides funding, in order to allow proposals to be added to / refined in response to ongoing monitoring and uptake of measures proposed:
 - RC questioned whether expected spend and duration should be included in the plan as this would be helpful for reviewing whether the plan has delivered what was anticipated.
 - TH suggested a table be included with number of beds, likely cost of renovations, minor work grants etc, with the caveat that it is difficult to predict uptake currently.
- Promotion of the PHSP was discussed and RC noted that SZC can support through the AMS / newsletters etc.
- **The Accommodation Working Group approved the PHSP.**

3 - TOURIST ACCOMMODATION PLAN

- ESC queried why this sits within the Accommodation Working Group's governance rather than the Tourism Working Group. MH read for the benefit of the group the specific wording in the Deed and explained that the focus of the funding is more on planning and licensing, and helping existing providers host workers in a controlled and managed manner, rather than creating new visitor accommodation to support tourism.
- AC questioned whether ESC consider that they have sufficient internal resource / expertise to assist in developing this plan or if it needs to be commissioned. It was agreed this would be discussed offline, including with planning colleagues.

Action: AC to arrange internal discussion on how to progress the Tourist Accommodation Plan.

- NG requested MH to share the equivalent Hinkley document. MH emailed this to attendees during the meeting.
- TH raised that she is aware SZC is having separate conversations with tourism accommodation providers and that it would be helpful if ESC were briefed before they approach people who have already been spoken to. TH requested that a summary of who has already been approached and what their views were would be a helpful start.
- TH also noted that there is some disconnection in communications as she has been approached by two different SZC teams on the topic of the old Sizewell B caravan park.

101325247

Revision 02

ACCOMMODATION WORKING GROUP

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Action: JS to provide an initial and ongoing updates to ESC on SZC engagement with tourism accommodation providers.

- NG noted that the Tourist Accommodation Plan should have been produced within 6 months of commencement but the working group agreed that the delay was acceptable and not a cause of concern. This will be reported to the Social Review Group.
- AC questioned what the monitoring will look like. RC highlighted there are two issues here – ensuring that accommodation is complying with planning / licencing (AWG) and how worker use of local accommodation affects tourism (TWG).
 - For the former, RC confirmed some information can be taken from the workforce survey. RC also noted that SZC can use the AMS to remind providers that they should comply with their planning / licencing restrictions and this can also be used to spot check providers
 - For the latter, JS added that the ambition is to push the accommodation which sits at the £30-£50 price point for construction workers. JS added he currently has 2000 beds advertised with 700 workers looking – JS confirmed he is overstocked on the AMS currently but that it is early days and the AMS may be used to direct workers away from any areas of pressure in the future.

4 - LEEIE CARAVAN PARK

- SZC's request for the AWG to approve a change in the approach to the delivery of the caravan park element of the Project Accommodation was discussed.
- RC noted that a track change version of the document setting out the request for approval was circulated the previous week, emphasising SZC's commitment to deliver the alternative capacity while retaining the Housing Contingency Fund payment to ensure consistency with the Deed of Obligation and in recognition of the fact that new touring caravan provision will require planning permission and it cannot be assumed that this will be granted.
- RC confirmed that the "need date" is expected to be December 2025.
- **The Accommodation Working Group approved the change in approach.**

5 - SIZEWELL C UPDATE

- RC gave a quick overview on progress of project accommodation:
 - Archaeological mitigation fieldwork is the focus on the campus site.
 - NP advised that a Statement of Compliance was agreed on a design last year but the project is still going through a review on the layout for the campus. SZC are to revert to ESC with a revised layout and the process of engagement will then begin again and a new statement of compliance will be drafted.
- JS reported to the group that the AMS is working well with a few teething problems e.g. providers trying to register as seekers so they can see what else is being advertised. As reported above, there is a surplus of stock currently. A link was shared and JS is able to provide ESC with logins if desired.
- The workforce survey should be ready to report at the next formal meeting.
- TH questioned if the AMS can advertise the PHSP grant policy – JS / RC confirmed that it can.

6 - SOCIAL REVIEW GROUP

101325247

Revision 02

ACCOMMODATION WORKING GROUP

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- RC summarised reporting to the Social Review Group:
 - What is going well – PHSP approved, change in approach to provision of caravan accommodation approved, AMS well used with plenty of interest from providers, first workforce survey taking place in July.
 - What are we concerned about – note the delay to the Tourism Accommodation Plan and challenges of ensuring that providers are compliant with their planning / licensing restrictions; need to expedite campus plans.
 - What needs to happen next – progress all of the above.

7 - AOB

- IN suggested the TRG be briefed on the change in approach to the caravan park.
- The date of the next meeting was rearranged to 21-10-24. The following meeting will be 4-12-24.

Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
8-7-24	1	AC to arrange internal ESC discussion on how to progress the Tourist Accommodation Plan.	AC	Ahead of next AWG meeting
8-7-24	2	JS to provide an initial and ongoing updates to ESC on SZC engagement with tourism accommodation providers.	JS	Ahead of next AWG meeting

Author: AV (Quod) / Reviewer: RC (SZC) ahead of circulation to TWG