

LOCAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Hunter (Chairman)

Cllr. Searles (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Ball, Dickins, Horwood, Piper, Mrs. Purves, Mrs. Sargeant, Scholey and Williamson

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Butler and Gaywood

43. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 January 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

44. Declarations of interest

No additional declarations were made.

45. Actions from Previous Meeting

The action was noted.

46. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder reported that he had attended a 'Wider South East Summit' on 19 March 2015, which had been a meeting coordinated to initiate political dialogue around the wider South East. About 150 people were in attendance from as far as Norfolk, Dover and Portsmouth. There would be a further Summit in November 2015.

On 12 March 2015 he had attended the Kent Resource Partnership annual conference in Canterbury the theme of which had been 'What does it mean for customers to be at the heart of the resource agenda.' The Kent County Council administrative officers who coordinated the the partnership had now been located to the Sevenoaks District Council Argyle Road offices.

He had met with the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) team who had secured funding to make Darent Valley more accessible. He had understood from them that Bradbourne Lakes was the wrong side of the demarcation line.

After the elections Members would be asked to nominate 'grot spots', there would be further work on the Gypsy & Traveller Plan and Core Strategy. With regards to affordable housing and viability rules he was holding a meeting with the Principal Planning Officer on 1 April 2015, and if interested in attending to let the Chief Planning Officers secretary know. He also alerted Members to agenda item 11 and the consultations that had been responded to.

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Finally he reported that he and the Chief Planning Officer had attended the Audit Committee to answer questions concerning the governance of CIL, and that the Council had issued its first CIL demand notice as the first chargeable development had commenced.

47. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

48. Affordable Housing Policy

The Planning Manager presented the report which reviewed the implementation of Core Strategy Policy SP3 on affordable housing, considered the outcomes in terms of delivery of affordable housing and financial contributions received, looked at the prospects for future delivery taking account of potential developments in the pipeline and changes to Government policy, including new thresholds for provision and the introduction of the Vacant Building Credit and noted that policy would be reviewed as part of the forthcoming review of the Core Strategy. The report also suggested that the target for delivery be reviewed in the next Authority Monitoring Report and recommended that the Affordable Housing SPD be updated to take account of current government policy guidance.

The Planning Manager advised that there needed to be a consultation exercise on the amendments, therefore the report's recommendation should be amended accordingly.

The Chairman moved the reports recommendation subject to recommended amendment.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- a) the report be noted; and
- b) subject to a public consultation exercise the Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the amendments to the Affordable Housing SPD, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

49. Fly tipping

The Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services presented an information report on Fly-tipping. It advised that Kent County Council had recently undertaken a review of all fly-tipping clearance and with effect from 1 April 2015 would no longer accept responsibility for removing any fly-tipped waste on highway land, unless it was obstructing the carriageway. District Councils would therefore be responsible for the removal of any fly-tipped waste on the highway where it was not obstructing the

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carriageway (footpaths, verges and lay-by's) and public rights of way (PROW). KCC would still be responsible for the disposal costs of material.

From 1 April the Council would be the single point of contact for the public to report fly-tipping in the District and if not the District's responsibility it would be referred to Kent Highways by the District. The District Council would also lose the investigative and enforcement work previously carried out by the County's Clean Kent enforcement team and have to undertake its own enforcement action. However, other than using existing Direct Services and Environmental Health staff, the Council did not currently have any enforcement resource, therefore discussions were currently underway with Dartford Borough Council to see if they could provide any assistance with their enforcement team. These arrangements would be reviewed during the 2015/16 financial year to assess the operational and expenditure impacts with a future report to Committee if there were any cost implications.

The Chairman commented on the improvement to the average removal time especially in light of the increase in incidents, and hoped this would not be adversely affected by the changes but it was something the Committee may need to consider as a growth item for future budgeting.

In response to Members' concerns, the Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services explained that absolute evidence had to be available to be able to prosecute, and that was very often, difficult to obtain. However cautionary letters could be issued which may be a deterrent, and it was promoted to the public that they should always ask to see a waste carriers licence and waste transfer notice from anyone they were paying to remove their waste. CCTV surveillance was not readily available and covert surveillance was not allowed for fly tipping.

50. Local List Update

The report advised that the Sevenoaks Society was currently undertaking the survey work for the creation of Sevenoaks District Council's Local List for part of the Sevenoaks town area. This was a list of undesignated heritage assets that had been identified within Sevenoaks town as being of special local importance. They have been assessed against a devised criteria and the project has been managed and carried out by a team of local volunteers. The choice of buildings is subject to a scrutiny panel, which includes the Sevenoaks Conservation Officer. This project is being led by the Sevenoaks Society under the guidance and input by Sevenoaks District Council and English Heritage and would be carried out in two tranches with the first round of surveys and moderation (of St John's, Town and Kippington wards) to be completed by December 2015. The formal public consultation on the first tranche would be carried out in March 2016 and it was the intention to have the first local list SPD for the Sevenoaks town area is to be adopted by the end of 2016.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

51. Update on climate change matters

The Housing Policy Manager presented the report advising Members that in February 2015 the District Council had produced its first progress report against Climate Local

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Sevenoaks (CLS). In 2012, Climate Local Kent (CLK) was introduced and this had set out Kent's commitment to drive, inspire and support action to tackle climate change. The District Council had subsequently agreed to support CLK through action at District level and in 2013 had adopted Climate Local Sevenoaks (CLS) which set out scaled-down targets and commitments at District level which corresponded with wider county-wide objectives.

A Member asked whether any work was being carried out with West Kent Housing on installing solar panels, the Housing Policy Manager advised that it was being looked at but only on new builds but there was a reluctance to do anything more other than on pilot schemes.

The Chief Planning Officer advised that the retrofit scheme had many planning implications and praised the Housing Policy Manager and his team for doing an excellent job of managing expectation whilst maintaining good relations. The report did not do enough justice to the amount of work carried out.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

52. Verbal update on the implementation of the Enforcement Plan

The Chief Planning Officer reported that the Enforcement Plan had been adopted at Cabinet on 5 March 2015 and was up and running. The Planning Manager had attended the Town & Parish Clerks event where it had been well received. He had put it to those present to consider areas they believed suitable for a s.215 notice which could be made better use of.

53. Recent Government Consultations on Planning Issues

The report advised that the Council had responded to 8 government consultations on Planning related issues since November 2014.

The Chief Planning Officer provided an update on the Sustainable Urban Drainage system (SUDs), advising that from 6 April 2015 the lead authority (in this case Kent County Council) would have to be consulted on any major developments on the management of surface water and be satisfied that mitigation measures were adequate. There was not enough time to formally consult on necessary changes to the Validation checklist. Information for applicants was in the Kent design guide and enforcement was the responsibility of the District Council.

He further reported that he had attended a seminar with commentary from the market leaders in trees in landscaped areas who were branching out into surface water run off through filtration systems which could then be used to irrigate the urban green environment. He would circulate further information for Members who were interested, when available. A Member was concerned as to how maintenance of drainage systems could be enforced, the Chief Planning Officer advised that this could be looked at during the consultation process, but he would expect to see a maintenance regime as part of any application.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

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54. Work Plan

The Chairman advised the following to the work plan:

- Summer 2015
Pest Control to be moved to a later meeting in order to have the figures on wasp removal
Gypsy & Traveller update
CIL infrastructure delivery plan - update
- Autumn 2015
CIL charging update
SHMA
- Winter 2016
Farningham conservation area
Flytipping.

Other items to be added at some point would be an update on Gatwick and Hartley conservation area.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.19 PM

CHAIRMAN

