

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2016 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Hunter (Chairman)

Cllr. Thornton (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs. Clark, Gaywood, Horwood, McGregor, Mrs. Morris, Parson, Piper and Scholey

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Dr. Canet and Halford

32. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 February 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

33. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs. Horwood and Mrs. Morris declared that they were currently using the Sevenoaks District Council Building Control service.

34. Actions from Previous Meetings

The actions from the previous meeting were noted.

35. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder for Planning advised Members that:

- he had travelled with Officers to some sites which had been identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) process;
- public views on the Swanley Masterplan were being considered before it was sent out for a formal consultation. He explained that it had long been the ambition of the Council to regenerate Swanley;
- 121 Affordable Dwellings had been constructed in the last year to March 2016, whereas fewer than 30 had been built in the previous 3 years;
- in response to consultations, the Council had supported the proposal for a Lower Thames crossing at Shorne and flexibility in planning fees; and
- over the year Planning Services had dealt with 91% of major applications, 87% of minor and 91% of other applications on time against targets of 80%, 80% and

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90% respectively. In all 75.34% of planning refusals which were appealed were dismissed, against a target of 75%.

36. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

37. Building Control Services - Update

The Head of Parking and Surveying presented a report which provided an overview of the Building Control Services, background and performance since the formation of the Partnership with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council on 1 October 2014, together with future considerations. He advised that the low supply of surveyors made recruitment difficult.

The Committee congratulated the Building Control Team for their work on dangerous structures, particularly during Storm Katie, recent flooding and the fatal accident at the Costa Coffee, Westerham.

In response to questions, the Head of Parking and Surveying confirmed the Partnership was investigating the recruitment of an apprentice. Officers intended to review fees which had not been revised since the Partnership formed.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

38. Local Land Charges - Update

The Head of Parking and Surveying presented a report which provided an overview of the Local Land Charges Service, background, performance and future considerations.

Members asked about the financial implications of Local Land Charges searches moving to the Land Registry. The Head of Parking and Surveying advised it would mean the loss of £190,000 income each year but it was expected that the Land Registry would pay for the digitisation of information currently held. The Council could consider whether it was able to use the trading company to set up a service in competition to the Land Registry, which intended to provide information only going back 25 years.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

39. Planning Enforcement Update

The Development Manager presented a report which provided an update with regard to the planning enforcement function of the Development Management Service. He highlighted that of the 1012 complaints received in 2015/16, the Council was only time-barred from taking enforcement action in 2% of cases and 47% demonstrated no breach. In only 3% of cases was it not considered expedient to take action, in each case with Ward Member approval. The Council had issued an injunction, two Article 4 Directions and four section 215 notices, which was more active than most other Kent authorities in 2015.

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The Development Manager responded to Members' questions. Further training was being considered for Members and Officers to ensure that appropriate cases were reported. He was aware of software which could allow Members to track enforcement matters online, however there were question about how much of the information would be sensitive and whether Officers' notes would be sufficiently clear.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

40. Local Plan Work Programme

The Strategic Planning Manager presented a report which provided an update on the Local Plan work programme agreed by the Planning Advisory Committee on 7 July 2015. The work plan was concerned with the initial stages of plan making until late 2016, focussing on preparation of a proportionate and robust evidence base and effective co-operation with other authorities.

He updated Members that Bilfinger GVA had recently been commissioned to carry out the Council's Retail Study, to include a telephone survey in Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge. Officers were asked to notify Local Members and the relevant Parish and Town Councils. Members raised the issue of retail preference at New Ash Green.

Officers agreed that Members from neighbouring wards would also be invited to meetings concerning the Swanley and Hextable Masterplan.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

41. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) And Economic Land Availability Assessment (ELAA) - Progress Report

Members considered progress made on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Economic Land Availability Assessment (ELAA). It was noted that bus tour of the key sites was being arranged for Members of the Planning Advisory Committee on 13 May 2016 and evening sessions had been arranged for all ward Members on 16 May 2016 and 18 May 2016. The list of sites and their accompanying assessments would be brought to the Committee on 21 June 2016 for consideration.

Officers advised that an assessment of the District's Green Belt was also required against the five Green Belt purposes to identify parcels which did not meet them or alternatively to provide stronger evidence for their protection. This assessment was required before neighbouring authorities could be asked for assistance in meeting any shortfall.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

42. Work Plan

It was agreed that the additional items concerning the Gypsy and Traveller Plan DPD, the presentation given to the previous Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee and the Housing Strategy all be removed from the work plan.

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It was agreed that the Swanley and Hextable Masterplan be considered at the meeting on 21 June 2016, while the additional meeting on 20 July 2016 would be available as an overspill but would also consider Viability and a presentation on the Local List. It was agreed the work plan would be updated to reflect the provisional forward plan for the Local Plan.

The amended work plan was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.46 PM

CHAIRMAN