

DEVELOPMENT & CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2020 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Hunter (Chairman)

Cllr. Thornton (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Cheeseman, Clayton, Penny Cole, P. Darrington, Pett, Reay and Roy

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Barnett, Fothergill and McGregor

Cllr. Perry Cole was also present.

31. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Development and Conservation Advisory Committee held on 17 December 2019, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

32. Declarations of interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

33. Actions from previous meeting

The actions were noted.

34. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Development & Conservation Portfolio Holder reported that the Building Control Partnership update had been deferred to the next meeting. The Partnership agreement was currently under review, mainly to check that the vision and objectives remained relevant and to provide assurances that the partnership was structured and resources properly to meet current and future demand. The timetable for this was heavily influenced by the decision making processes at Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. In the meantime performance remained good with the partnership having over 70% of the market share and was achieving all other performance and financial targets.

She also updated Members on staffing within Development Management and Strategic Planning: Steve Whitehead was in the newly created role of Planning Enforcement Manager - a position recommended as a growth item by the committee during the budget process; Evelyn Gilder would now oversee all office management, procurement, compliance and performance matters as the

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Improvement & Standards Manager; Claire Pamberi was rejoining Strategic Planning focussing on Infrastructure and the Community infrastructure Levy; Rebecca Lamb was now full time in the role of Design & Conservation Officer; the Urban Designer's contract had been extended another year - another growth item requested by the committee; and Emma Coffin who had been on a fixed term contract was now permanent.

She also reported that the members training programme was ongoing and of great benefit.

In response to questions Members were advised that over 100 representatives from Parish & Town Councils had recently attended training.

The Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory Services undertook to ensure any Parish & Town council representatives who had not attended the recent training had access to the presentation. Should there be an appetite there was scope to offer bespoke training to parishes for which there would be a charge in order to recover costs.

35. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

36. Update on the Design and Conservation Team

The Design & Conservation Team Leader presented the report which updated Members on the activities of the Design and Conservation Team. Further to the publication of the agenda she reported that the Assistant Conservation Officer was now just Conservation officer.

A Member advised that he had emailed to query what was considered the original core with reference to the Twentieth Century recommendations and the proposal to designate New Ash Green as a conservation area, which also contained an error in referring to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the report be noted.

37. Use of Article 4 to restrict permitted development rights for a change of use from office to residential

The Planning Policy Team Leader presented the report which outlined the proposal to serve Article 4 directions, to restrict permitted development rights for a change of use from office to residential, to protect office accommodation in three key areas. In response to questions she advised that to avoid risk of compensation the Council had to give at least one, but no more than two, year's notice ahead of the Directions coming into force. During that year's notice, the sites could go through the prior approval process.

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Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet to serve Article 4 directions, to restrict permitted development rights for a change of use from office to residential, as outlined in the report.

38. Local Plan Update

The Planning Policy Team Leader presented the report which updated Members on the Local Plan examination process.

Since the publication of the agenda the Planning Inspector's final report had been received dated 2 March 2020. It concluded that the draft Local Plan was not legally compliant due to the failure to meet the duty to cooperate, and should not be adopted. The report only covered failure to meet the duty to cooperate and did not refer to any other failings. The hearings had taken place over two weeks before this failure had been raised as an issue and Officers had requested detailed feedback on the areas already covered. No other issues were raised in the report, and the accompanying letter only referred to questions that may have been asked if the hearings had proceeded.

Next steps were now being considered. In the meantime the Green Belt was still protected by the existing local plan and framework.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the report be noted.

39. Work plan

The work plan was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.07 PM

CHAIRMAN