MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning, Transport and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24 JUNE 2014

Present: **Councillor Springett (Chairman), and Councillors Chittenden, Cuming, English, Munford, Powell, Round and Willis**

Also Present: **Councillors Burton**

14. THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER WHETHER ALL ITEMS ON THE AGENDA SHOULD BE WEBCAST

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be webcast.

15. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor de Wiggondene.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Willis who arrived at 18:40hrs.

16. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Cuming was present as substitute for Councillor de Wiggondene.

17. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS/WITNESSES

Councillor Burton was present as a visiting member.

Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development and Tim Hapgood, Transport Consultant, JMB Consultants/Spatial Policy Team were in attendance for item 9, Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy.

18. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures.

19. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED: that all items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

20. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 JUNE 2014

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June be approved and duly signed by the Chairman subject to the following alterations:

Page 3 – bullet point 4 – which read "Mr Jarman confirmed brownfield sites within village boundaries had precedence for development over green field sites."

Be changed to read "*Mr Jarman confirmed brownfield sites in villages took precedence for development over green field sites where they did not cause damage to the open countryside and are sustainable".*

Page 4 – bullet point 1 – first sentence the word "many" be changed to "*sufficient*".

Page 4 – that an additional bullet point be added as follows:

"The point was made that inward migration influenced population growth in the borough along with birth and death rates. However inward migration was difficult to assess".

21. MAIDSTONE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Tim Hapgood gave an overview of his report and added that stage one of the traffic modelling was underway and would include input from Kent County Highways. It was due for completion by the end of June 2014.

Mr Hapgood went on to explain a background growth (such as changes to national demographics, Gross Domestic Product (GDP), fuel price trends and national transport networks) of 1.5%X impact on the highway network, had shown in the past, drastic changes were needed without any planned population growth.

Mr Hapgood reported that bi-weekly meetings were taking place with Kent County Council (KCC) and a progress meeting was planned for 1 July 2014.

Mr Jarman explained the transport modelling was the most fundamental piece of the Local Plan as it effected where new housing and employment would go in the Borough. He went on to say once it was agreed what models to run, timescales for the process would be agreed from the end of June 2014 and Committee would receive this information in due course.

Mr Jarman estimated a realistic timeframe for the outcomes of the modelling would be October 2014. After which costings would be established. Then KCCs and Maidstone Borough Council's versions of the modelling would be 'married up'.

During lengthy discussion the following points were raised:

- The availability of the land at Eclipse Park for the development of the proposed park and ride site at junction 7 of the M20. Mr Jarman confirmed the land was in the draft Local Plan and was a saved policy

in the current local plan. Mr Jarman went on to say there was room on the site for a hotel and park and ride. Negotiations had continued with the owners who had said the site may not be available. Mr Jarman also stated that previous modelling work demonstrated the need for a park and ride site at junction 7 and no other site had been put forward.

- Concern was raised regarding the congestion on Sittingbourne Road and other areas in the town and how air quality measures were being built into the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS). Mr Hapgood explained air quality modelling would be carried out once the outcomes of the transport modelling work had been completed.

- Mr Jarman went on to explain there would possibly be new streams of work coming from the highway modelling which may make it necessary for bespoke modelling work for specific junctions using different software packages. However, this would depend on the outcomes of the modelling work carried out using the VISUM software package first.

- Mr Jarman confirmed the Committee would be able to see the impact of Local Plan growth on transport once the modelling work had been completed.

- Mr Jarman confirmed KCC had made representations as part of the consultation on the draft Local Plan. KCC had been asked for more detail but Mr Jarman was unaware of any agreed programme of works from Leeds Castle to the A274 area.

- The Committee questioned bus services in the report and how they would be increased to run every seven minutes when bus services were being reduced. Mr Jarman confirmed discussions had taken place at the Quality Bus Partnership meetings. Arriva needed certain numbers of service users to provide services of this frequency. The Committee had agreed to invite Arriva as a witness at the 'Transport in Maidstone Borough – Alternatives to using a car' review on bus services. All Councillors would be emailed to ask for details of any bus service issues they knew of to feed into the review.

- Mr Jarman explained how increased bus services could to be paid for. By promoting increased use and through the use of section 106 agreements developers could be asked to develop in a way that made bus transport more attractive. Developers could also be asked to part fund bus services but other measures needed to be in place to encourage more bus use.

- Mr Hapgood confirmed resident representations to the consultation for the draft Local Plan demonstrated concern for resident parking in Maidstone. Mr Jarman explained there were plans to produce a supplementary parking standards policy. This could only be developed once the ITS and Local Plan were agreed. Mr Jarman agreed a parking standards policy needed to be signposted in the ITS and the Local Plan going forward.

- Mr Jarman agreed parts of Maidstone needed radical transport measures to reduce congestion. He went on the explain transport measures would be more radical if finances were available to provide them. However, there would be no impact on reducing the time scales for the Local Plan as background growth in traffic happened even without increased housing provision.

- Concern was raised over the investment made in consultants and modelling work in 2007 to change peoples' travelling habits which resulted in no apparent increase in the use of park and ride and public transport.

- It was agreed alternative transport requirements for residents in villages differed to those in urban areas. Small changes would be needed to improve public perception of local public transport. Mechanisms are needed where local requirements are fed into discussions with local public transport providers.

RESOLVED: The Planning, Transport and Development Committee noted the report and made the following recommendations:

1. That air quality modelling be undertaken and recommendations included in the Maidstone transport modelling process. Information on the effect of the transport model on air quality be brought to the Committee after the transport modelling is completed.

2. That with regard to a parking standards policy for Maidstone, officers ensure:

   i. Any planned parking standards policy is cross referenced in the Integrated Transport Strategy; and
   ii. The Local Plan and the Integrated Transport Strategy appropriately facilitate a Spatial Policy on parking standards in Maidstone.

3. That mechanisms be put in place for councillors to be included in discussions with transport providers. This will to be included as an objective for the 'Transport in Maidstone Borough – Alternatives to using a car' review.

22. DRAFT FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME AND SCRAIP UPDATE REPORT

The Committee agreed the following changes to the FWP:

- That the meeting on 22 July 2014 be used to invite witnesses for stage one of the Cycling and Walking part of the 'Transport in Maidstone Borough – alternatives to using the car' review.

- That Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, Open Space Standards and a verbal update on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan be put on the agenda for the meeting of 16 September 2014.

RESOLVED: The Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the revised Future Work Programme and made the following recommendations:

1. That the proposal to hold a joint meeting with the Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to look at the Qualitative Employment data, be referred to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee at their meeting of 10 July 2014 for a decision.

2. That planning policy officers meet with Ward Members, Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums to go through the proposed site allocations in the draft Local Plan in addition to the multi-agency event.

3. That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development promotes appropriate progress going forward with neighbourhood plans by including the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee to appropriately scrutinise and comment on the Borough's response to the consultation stage of Neighbourhood plans.

4. That the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of the review of the Parish Charter, scrutinise the planning policy processes to be included in the Parish Charter.

23. DURATION OF THE MEETING

18:10 to 20:43