

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 14 MARCH 2017

Present: Councillors D Burton (Chairman), English, Mrs Grigg, D Mortimer, Munford, Prendergast, Springett, de Wiggondene and Wilby

156. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

157. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members.

158. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

159. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

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

Resolved: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

161. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

162. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

All members had been lobbied on item 12. Maidstone Borough Local Plan: Proposed Main Modifications and Minor Changes.

163. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2017

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

164. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

165. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

166. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman provided the following updates on the Committee's Work Programme:

- 5 Year Housing Land Supply would no longer be ready for the April meeting
- Boughton Monchelsea and Linton Conservation Areas will be ready for the April meeting

The Chairman updated the committee that there was an open consultation on the Housing White Paper. The consultation covered the terms of reference of both the Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transport Committee and Communities, Housing and Environment Committee. The questions were very technical in detail and officers had suggested that they could provide a response for the committee's approval.

It was noted by the committee that there was an open consultation on the new Southeastern Railway franchise that was due to close on 20 May.

A member of the Committee reminded the Committee that the principle of 20mph speed limit pilots had been agreed by the council previously, but no further report had been brought forward.

The Committee noted that there was a section in the constitution (Part 4.4, page 65 'Regular Review of Decisions') that allowed for a regular review of planning decisions by members, and that as far as members were aware these had not been occurring.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) An early draft of the Housing White Paper consultation response covering areas relevant to this Committee be brought to the next Committee meeting on 11 April
- 2) The response to the SouthEastern Railway franchise consultation be considered by the Committee at the next meeting on 11 April
- 3) The Chairman and Vice Chairman will review the minutes of previous meetings and ensure that the actions agreed in the report on 20 mph Speed Limits are taken
- 4) The Head of Planning and Development works with the Planning Committee to ensure regular reviews of planning committee decisions are carried out, as set out in the constitution

167. MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN: PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS AND MINOR CHANGES

The Principal Planning Officer gave a presentation to the Committee which covered the following points:

- The proposed modifications to the Local Plan had been made by the Inspector to ensure the plan was, in his view, 'sound' in Planning terms
- The minor changes that had been made either provided an update to the plan since it was last published, or reflected consequential changes as a result of the main modifications
- At this point the decision being made by the committee was whether to take this document to consultation or not. If the Committee chose not to accept these changes then the plan needed to be withdrawn
- If the Committee agreed to take the suggested amendments to consultation, the scope and length of time allowed for the consultation needed to reflect the Regulation 19 Consultation.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the publication of the schedule of proposed Main Modifications to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan in Appendix I for public consultation be approved
- 2) That the publication of the schedule of proposed Minor Changes to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan in Appendix III for public consultation be approved

Voting: For - 6 Against - 0 Abstentions - 2

Note: Councillor Wilby left the meeting at 19:15 and returned at 19:17, and was therefore absent during the vote on this item.

168. MAIDSTONE PARK AND RIDE PROVISION AND TOWN CENTRE PARKING STRATEGY

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Committee had previously requested a report proposing a study which included park and ride, a new bus interchange and a town centre parking strategy. This approach would allow consideration of multi-modal journey planning at a borough wide level and an integrated approach to parking provision for the future. The report on the agenda provided further information on this study, including:

- That the first step of this process was a short term operational review of Park and Ride, as the contract comes to an end in May 2018

- A strategic review of Park and Ride provision would take place at the same time, with information from the operational report informing the strategic report
- The development of a Maidstone Town Centre Parking Strategy which would align with the Integrated Transport Strategy and would consider how to encourage long stay parking in the larger edge-of-centre car parks and whether there was any scope for rationalisation of car parking provision
- The council already had a lot of the information required to carry out these studies and draft the strategy, but there may be other information required for which additional survey work may be needed

The Committee considered the report and requested that the following elements be included in the study:

- Expansion of car parks should also be considered, where appropriate, rather than a focus on rationalisation
- An expansion of electric vehicle charging points
- Consideration of the introduction of charging for polluting vehicles
- The report needed to consider borough wide bus and rail interchanges
- Information on the impact of the closure of the Sittingbourne Road Park and Ride Service needed to be part of the review
- Removal of any reference of considering car parks as development sites
- The review needed to acknowledge that the Council didn't control all of the car parks in the town centre, and this meant that the council's policies could be undermined by others
- The Committee requested a current survey of car park usage to form an evidence base for the report

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Officers are instructed to take forward the park and ride study and the Maidstone Town Centre Parking Strategy concurrently with the agreed bus interchange study, taking into account the following areas requested by the Committee:
 - Consideration of the expansion as well as consolidation of car parks

- An expansion of electric vehicle charging points
- The introduction of charging for polluting vehicles
- Bus and rail interchanges
- The impact of the closure of the Sittingbourne Road Park and Ride Site
- Removal of any reference of considering car parks as development sites
- The review needs to acknowledge that not all car parks are under the Council's control
- An up to date survey of car park usage

2) An all member workshop be held to review the evidence gathered and the initial findings of the strategies before a final report is taken to this Committee

Voting: For - 9 Against - 0 Abstentions - 0

169. PLANNING PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS (PPA'S)

The Major Developments Officer presented his report to the Committee which explained:

- PPA's were an agreement signed between a planning authority and developer which provided a clear project management approach to submitting a planning application
- The cost of a PPA was in addition to the fee charged for submitting a planning application
- However a local planning authority is prohibited from making profit from a PPA fee
- PPA's had already been piloted in Maidstone and had been broadly successful

In response to a question from the Committee, the Major Developments Officer confirmed that there was no refund arrangement if a planning application was not eventually submitted by a developer after signing a PPA.

Members of the committee raised concerns that approving use of PPAs would create a two tier system for planning applications, where those who had signed a PPA would receive preferential treatment compared to those who had not signed a PPA. The Committee were also concerned that they had not been kept informed of the progress of the PPA pilots.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The Committee approves the further investigation of PPAs, up to a maximum of 8 PPAs including the current 4 pilots using the fee structure proposed in section 2.3 of the Officer Report. The final fee structure will need to be considered at a later date.
- 2) An update on the pilot scheme must be provided to this Committee in the form of a workshop before a final decision is taken on the adoption of PPAs

Voting: For - 8 Against - 1 Abstentions - 0

170. **PLANNING SERVICE REVIEW UPDATE**

The Director of Regeneration and Place presented this item to the Committee.

In response to a question from a member of the Committee, the Director of Regeneration and Place explained that the term 'customer' included all stakeholders in the planning process and not just developers.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

171. **DURATION OF MEETING**

6.30 p.m. to 8.31 p.m.