

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 APRIL 2017

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

Also Present: Councillor Perry

172. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies were received from Councillor de Wiggondene for his late arrival to the meeting.

173. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that Councillor Garten acted as a substitute member until Councillor de Wiggondene's arrival.

174. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

175. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor Perry indicated that he wished to speak on items 14 and 19. Councillor Garten indicated that he wished to speak on items 14 and 17.

176. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

177. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

It was noted that all members had been lobbied on items 14 and 19. Councillor Munford disclosed that he had been lobbied on item 13. Councillor D Mortimer disclosed that he had been lobbied on item 17.

178. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2017**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the removal of reference to the Planning Committee on Page 2, Resolution 4.

179. **PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)**

There were no petitions.

180. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

181. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

182. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

183. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman proposed that item 19: Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan – Examiner’s Report be taken after the Committee Work Programme.

RESOLVED: That the change to the order of business be noted.

184. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: HEADCORN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - EXAMINER'S REPORT

Due to the correspondence received on the day of the meeting from Headcorn Parish Council on this item, the Committee decided to defer this item in order to seek legal advice.

RESOLVED: That the item be deferred to the next meeting.

185. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2017-18

The Head of Policy and Communications and the Policy and Information Manager presented the report on the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee’s – Key Performance Indicators for 2017-18.

It was noted that the suggested indicators (paragraph 3.3) were made following workshops with members and suggestions from officers.

The Committee suggested that instead of KPIs under the heading: Securing Improvements to the Transport Infrastructure of our Borough, regular updates on the progress of the Integrated Transport Strategy would be brought to this Committee.

RESOLVED:

1. That the KPIs for this Committee for 2017-18 will be:

- Processing of major planning applications in 13 weeks
- Processing of minor applications in 8 weeks

- Processing of other applications in 8 weeks
- Net additional homes provided (NI 154)
- Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)

2. That updates on the progress of the Integrated Transport Strategy are brought to this Committee.

186. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA AND LINTON CONSERVATION AREAS

The Team Leader for Heritage, Landscape and Design presented a report on Boughton Monchelsea and Linton Conservation Areas.

It was noted that the Council had previously engaged with external consultants to produce two separate pieces of work: a Management Plan for three Conservation Areas in Boughton Monchelsea and a detailed examination of the areas identified in the approved Management Plan for Linton Conservation Area for inclusion in an extended boundary, where changes would be justified.

The Committee was informed that if the recommendations for extending the Linton Conservation Area were agreed, the next stage was to carry out an extensive public consultation exercise within those areas proposed for inclusion, together with other interested bodies such as Historic England. Responses to these consultations would then be reported back to the Head of Planning and Development with a recommendation to designate or not. If the recommendation was agreed then the designation would be advertised in the local press and the London Gazette.

RESOLVED:

1. That a Conservation Area Management Plan for the three conservation areas in Boughton Monchelsea be approved
2. That the Head of Planning and Development be given delegated authority to make the decision to effect proposed boundary alterations to Linton Conservation Area following consultation with affected bodies and landowners

187. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: E-PLANNING - PARISH COPIES OF APPLICATIONS

The Mid Kent Planning Support Manager presented a report on E-Planning – Parish Copies of Applications.

The Mid Kent Planning Support Manager informed the Committee that there should be amended wording in the first paragraph of the recommendation, which should have read: that the Committee note the decision to remove hardcopies to parishes will be implemented with effect from 1 April 2018. With parishes provided with hardcopies of plans only, from June 2017 to 31 March 2018.

The Committee was asked to note that there had been previous consultation with Parish Councils on this issue in 2014 and that Maidstone Borough Council proposed to work with Parish Councils over the next 11 months in order to understand any issues that they may have and work together to find solutions. It was proposed that thin file paper copies of planning applications could be provided to Parish Councils in order to reduce costs, but also provide parishes with paper copies of plans for planning applications.

The Director of Regeneration and Place confirmed to the Committee that thin file format copies of planning applications would not be withdrawn without notifying the Committee.

Councillor Perry, attending as a visiting member, spoke in objection to the proposed changes in the update.

Councillor de Wiggondene arrived during discussion of this item at 19:14.

RESOLVED:

1. That the move towards a thin file format be supported

Voting: For – 6 Against – 3 Abstentions – 0

2. That thin file format copies of planning applications not be withdrawn until further notice

3. That Officers consult on and trial the thin file approach with Parish Councils

Voting: For – 8 Against – 1 Abstentions – 0

188. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: HOUSING WHITE PAPER**

Councillor de Wiggondene replaced Councillor Garten on the Committee at the beginning of this item.

The Principal Planning Officer presented a report on the Housing White Paper.

The Committee had previously asked for a report outlining the main themes in the Housing White Paper. It was noted that the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee would be considering the report at their next meeting. The Council's formal response would need to be submitted by 2 May 2017 and the Committee noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would receive a copy of the final response before submission.

The Committee noted that there were a number of issues which had not been addressed:

- Encouraging the subdivision of development sites

- The further enhanced protection of the natural environment
- The improved ability for Councils to serve completion notices
- The improved ability for Councils to use of compulsory purchase and land aggregation powers for regeneration
- Sliding scales of discounts over time for discounted property sales

RESOLVED:

1. That the responses set out in the body of the report be agreed as a basis for the Council's consultation response to the planning aspects of the Housing White Paper
2. That the report also includes:
 - a. Added concern about encouraging the subdivision of development sites
 - b. Support for enhanced powers for serving completion notices
 - c. Support for land amalgamation powers
 - d. Additional comment on the sliding scale of discounts over time for discounted property scales
3. That the Chairman and Vice Chairman have sight of the final response before submission

189. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: SOUTH EASTERN RAIL FRANCHISE PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Principal Planning Officer presented a report on the South Eastern Rail Franchise Public Consultation: Shaping the Future – March 2017.

The Committee were asked to note that the franchise expired in December 2018 and therefore the Department for Transport were consulting with stakeholders and current service users. The Department for Transport intended to improve capacity and improve customer experience primarily through longer, more efficient trains and improved access and facilities.

The Committee strongly opposed measures to reduce the number of services from rural stations such as Headcorn, Staplehurst and Marden.

The Committee also requested that the need for early morning commuter services was highlighted in the consultation response, as well as a comment in favour of the prioritisation of re-signalling work to increase the speed of services in between Ashford and Victoria.

RESOLVED:

That the draft response (Appendix B) is approved for submission to the consultation, subject to the addition of a comment highlighting the need for early morning commuter services and the incorporation of a comment in favour of the prioritisation of re-signalling work to increase the speed of services in between Ashford and Victoria.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions – 0

190. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: 20 MPH SPEED LIMITS IN MAIDSTONE BOROUGH - UPDATE

The Principal Planning Officer presented a report on 20 mph speed limits in Maidstone Borough – Update.

Councillor Garten spoke as a visiting member on the item.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted.

191. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: AIR QUALITY TECHNICAL GUIDANCE

The Principal Planning Officer presented a report on Air Quality Technical Guidance.

The Committee was asked to note that planning can play a significant role in addressing air quality issues by delivering growth in a sustainable manner, securing appropriate measures to mitigate air quality impacts and contributing to the wider strategy to improve air quality.

In response to a question from a member of the Committee, the Principal Planning Officer explained that the Air Quality Impact Assessment approach had been replaced in many parts of the country, in line with the approach set out by the Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership. Air quality impacts would still be thoroughly assessed through the new approach, but increased emphasis would be placed on the effectiveness of measures to address the identified impacts

RESOLVED:

That officers prepare draft Air Quality Technical Guidance for Maidstone Borough, adapted from the Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership guidance, with the intention of this Committee adopting the Guidance for development management purposes.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions – 0

192. DURATION OF MEETING

6.32 p.m. to 8.18 p.m.