

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2015

Present: Councillors Burton (Chairman) and Councillors English, Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, Harwood, Paine, Springett, de Wiggondene and Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Garland, McLoughlin, Munford, Perry, Mrs Ring, Round, J Sams, Sargeant, Mrs Stockell, Willis and J.A. Wilson

6. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies.

7. **URGENT ITEMS**

The Chairman stated that, in his opinion, the update report of the Head of Planning and Development on the changes to decision making arrangements for Neighbourhood Planning (item 14) should be taken as an urgent item as it contained further information relating to the revised process for Neighbourhood Plans.

The Chair stated that, in his opinion, the agenda should be taken in a revised order to the published agenda to include the Amended Agenda item 15, Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update – implications of the 2012-based household projections, before item 14, Neighbourhood Planning Update.

The Committee agreed to have the Committee Work Plan as a regular item on the agenda.

8. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor J Sams was in attendance to address the Committee on item 10 of the agenda, Reference from Planning Committee – A20 Highway Improvement Scheme – Harrietsham.

The following Councillors were in attendance as observers reserving their right to address the Committee on any item:

Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Garland, McLoughlin, Munford, Perry, Mrs Ring, Round, Sargeant, Mrs Stockell, Willis J Wilson.

9. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Garland would substitute for Councillor Burton from Agenda Item 15 - Strategic Housing Market Update – Implications of 2012-based household projections.

10. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Burton, the Chairman, explained he had taken legal advice and would withdraw from the meeting for item 15 Strategic Housing Market Update – Implications of 2012-based household projections, due to having an Other Significant Interest in Site H1 (10) Land South of Sutton Road, Langley. Councillor Garland would substitute in his absence and Councillor Harwood would take the Chair.

Councillor Springett declared an Other Significant Interest in Site H1 (17) Barty Farm, Bearsted.

11. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

All members stated that they had been lobbied on various items on the agenda.

12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 MAY 2015

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed provided the duration of the meeting was inserted.

13. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

It was noted there were no petitions.

14. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

It was noted there were no questions received from members of the public.

15. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

16. REFERENCE FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE - A20 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME - HARRIETSHAM

Councillor J Sams addressed the Committee.

The Head of Planning and Development explained the background to the referral from the Planning Committee.

The Committee agreed, that although it was impossible to stop developments progressing once planning permission had been granted, it was important a face to face meeting with Kent County Council Highways Department and other stakeholders was arranged to agree the delivery methodology and timescales for the highways improvement works on the A20 in Harrietsham.

RESOLVED

That:

- 1) A formal liaison style meeting be arranged with Kent County Highways Officers and Transport Planners to achieve a satisfactory timetable to ensure that the works were delivered to coincide with the implementation of the development comprised in application MA/14/0828 and other developments coming forward along the A20 corridor; and
- 2) In addition to the above, the following be invited to attend and participate in the meeting:
 - Ward Members
 - Parish Councillors
 - Chair and Vice Chair of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee
 - Chair and Vice Chair of the Maidstone Borough Council Planning Committee
 - Maidstone Borough Council Transport and Planning Officers

17. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - LOCAL PLAN SUB COMMITTEE**

The Committee discussed the purpose of the Local Plan Sub Committee.

It was suggested the sub-committee would delay the timetable for the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and would create extra meetings and costs. It was also suggested the sub-committee would aid the work of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee by looking at some of the Local Plan policies in more detail.

RESOLVED

That the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee decided not to have the Local Plan Sub Committee at this point in time.

Voting: For: 5 Against: 4

Councillors Harwood and English requested that their dissent be recorded.

18. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN POSITION STATEMENT

The Spatial Policy Team Leader presented the report which set the scene for the draft Local Plan, for the past and the future, with a proposed programme for the production on the Local Plan going forward.

It was noted that the adoption of Transport Policies by August 2015 was a realistic target as the VISUM transport modelling had been completed by Kent County Council (KCC). The VISUM modelling provided a broad strategic direction for the transport policies and alternatives to car use.

It was confirmed a meeting between the Chair and Vice Chair of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee and the Chair and Vice Chair of the relevant Committee at KCC would be arranged to gain some clarity on the outcome of the VISUM modelling.

In order to provide clarity for the Committee, officers agreed to provide regular reports, to this Committee, from the Task and Finish Groups looking at infrastructure provision.

RESOLVED

That the draft programme be approved for publication on the Council's local plan web page.

19. STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET UPDATE - IMPLICATIONS OF 2012-BASED HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS

The Principal Housing Officer, Spatial Planning presented the report outlining the implications of the latest projections and latest practice for the borough's objectively assessed housing need and care home needs figures.

During discussion it was agreed the Council had done all that was possible to reduce the objectively assessed housing need figure. The Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee had asked communities to come forward with alternative ideas to reduce the figure. Some ideas had been put forward but they would not stand up to scrutiny by a planning inspector.

RESOLVED

That the:

- 1) Updated objectively assessed need for housing (2011-31) of 18,560 dwellings, equating to 928 dwellings/annum be agreed;
- 2) Updated assessed need for 980 care home places (2011-31), equating to 49 places/annum be agreed; and

- 3) SHMAA update report, part of the evidence base of the emerging Local Plan, be noted.

20. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN: HOUSING SITES UPDATE

Councillor Burton left the meeting at 8.20pm and Councillor Harwood took the Chair. Councillor Garland substituted for Councillor Burton.

Councillor Grigg left the meeting at 9.00pm.

The Head of Planning and Development presented the report and explained, with a revised objectively assessed housing need figure of 18,560, the shortfall in housing provision in the draft Local Plan was 2161.

The Committee heard that the objectively assessed housing need figure would need to be met in full, according to the National Planning Policy Framework, unless robust constraints could be demonstrated.

The Head of Planning and Development outlined the challenges going forward:

- Robust constraints to justify the shortfall – the task and finish groups (focussed on infrastructure) were working on this;
- The risk of the local plan being found unsound would result in the evidence base having to be revised resulting in increased costs to the Council and leaving the borough open to speculative development;
- If the local plan was adopted in 2017 the life of the plan would be 14 years. An inspector may insist the period is increased from 2031 to 2036 as local plans are required to have a 15 year life;
- London migration – an uplift in the objectively assessed housing need is likely to be required in the future;
- Without an adopted local plan there would be no five year land supply, leading to planning by appeal, where appeals are lost on sites where development is not wanted.

Councillors Blackmore, Munford and Wilson addressed the Committee.

The Committee discussed the various options outlined in the report and other options put forward by Committee members.

RESOLVED

That the:

- 1) Additional sites considered and excluded from the Local Plan during the January/February/March 2015 cycle of Cabinet meetings be re-

considered (the sites deleted from the Regulation 18 version of the Plan (7 sites and 1 part site) and the allocation of more of the additional sites (15) resulting from the 2014 call for sites). Sites put forward by Ward Members with community support in Neighbourhood Plans during the further call for sites process and were borderline rejections from the SHLAA to also be re-considered.

2) Following sites are not to be re-considered:

H1 (25) Tongs Meadow, West Street, Harrietsham
H1 (60) Fant Farm, Maidstone
H1 (48) Heath Road, Boughton Monchelsea

Voting: For 4 Against 3 Abstain 1

Arising from the discussion the Vice Chair (in the Chair) suggested that a report come to the Committee on areas of local landscape value.

The Head of Planning and Development stated the National Planning Policy Framework was unclear on this issue and suggested the Council could come up with broad locations of landscape protection areas. Vice Chair (in the Chair) suggested these locations should be in the Local Plan and not supplementary documents.

21. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT -
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING UPDATE

The Principal Planning Officer, Spatial Policy, presented the report and outlined the process being proposed given the Council's new governance structure.

The Committee agreed that stage three of the revised framework should be amended to state the Head of Planning and Development had delegated responsibility for this stage of the process.

RESOLVED

That the revised framework for decision making arrangements for Neighbourhood Planning presented in the report and the urgent update be agreed provided stage three, column 4 of the framework is amended to state "Delegated responsibility of the Head of Planning and Development to advise and respond".

22. MEETING DURATION

18:30 to 21:40