

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY 2016

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

Also Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore,
Chittenden, Ells, Garland, B Mortimer,
Munford, Perry, Mrs Ring, Round,
Sargeant, Mrs Stockell, Willis and
J.A. Wilson

178. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted Councillor Springett was running late but would be attending the meeting.

Councillor Springett arrived at 18:35.

179. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Ring was substituting for Councillor Springett until she arrived.

180. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

The following visiting members were in attendance reserving their right to speak on the items identified:

Councillor Blackmore – items 12, 13 and 14
Councillor Chittenden – items 12, 13 and 14
Councillor Ells – reserving rights on all items
Councillor Garland (from 18:56) – item 14
Councillor B Mortimer – item 14
Councillor Munford – item 11 and 14
Councillor Perry – reserving rights on all items
Councillor Ring – reserving rights on all items
Councillor Round – reserving rights on all items
Councillor Sargeant – reserving rights on all items
Councillor Stockell – reserving rights on all items
Councillor Willis – items 11 and 12
Councillor Wilson – item 14

181. LEGAL STATEMENT

The Chairman asked the Legal Representative to make a statement regarding Members' interests.

The Legal Representative stated:

"Tonight, you are making a decision on the progress of the Local Plan as a whole. For that reason, any site or specific Other Significant Interests that have been previously declared are not relevant as there are no decisions to be made this evening on individual sites, areas or broad locations; the decision relates to the Maidstone Borough-wide Local Plan. If, however, the debate and discussion moves into the realms of individual sites and continues in such a vein, then those Members who have previously declared or registered a Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Significant Interest must make their interest known at that point and leave the chamber."

182. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members of Officers.

183. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

It was noted that all members had been lobbied on all items on the agenda.

184. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED:

That items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

185. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Head of Planning and Development referred to the sites H1 (71) Lyewood Farm, Green Lane, Boughton Monchelsea and H1 (77) Bentletts Yard, Laddingford and reiterated that the yields for all sites were indicative and the final dwelling numbers would be decided at the planning application stage.

186. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman stated that, in his opinion, the update reports of the Head of Planning and Development for item 12 – Integrated Transport Strategy and item 14 – Maidstone Borough Local Plan – Publication (Regulation 19)

should be taken as urgent items as they contained further information relating to these agenda items.

187. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

188. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

189. REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL - MOTION - 20 MPH SPEED LIMITS

The Committee considered the reference from Council to review all the available evidence; consider the implementation of 20 mph speed limits within the Borough of Maidstone, and refer the findings to the Cabinet Member at Kent County Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee noted the reference from Council regarding a Motion for 20 mph speed limits and requested that officers present a report to the Committee at a later meeting showing the scope and costs required to implement 20 mph speed limits within the Borough of Maidstone.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions – 0

190. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY PROGRESS

The Committee considered the report outlining the progress of the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) which provided further information to Members on the progress towards a completed draft ITS made since the meetings of the Committee held on 1 and 14 December 2015.

Councillors Chittenden and Ring addressed the meeting as visiting members.

The Committee was informed that the document was still in draft form and was a strategic document, and as such did not contain the detail, only the need and intention. The detail would be dealt with through the planning process using Section 106 agreements etc. The ITS and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan provided supporting evidence for the Local Plan.

The Committee was informed that reference to Cranbourne Avenue would still be made in the ITS (despite the Committee agreeing its closure being removed from the ITS at the last meeting of the Committee) because it was an area that needed improving.

The Committee heard that there was still reference to Park and Ride in the document as the borough still had services running from Willington Street and London Road with the intention these services would prosper.

The Committee was advised to respond to the consultation on the ITS and feed in suggestions such as links with the Medway Valley Community Partnership.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

1. Agrees the Walking and Cycling Strategy for consultation;

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

2. Agrees the measures outlined in the draft ITS dated 13 January 2016 relating to parking;

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

3. Agrees the measure outline in the draft ITS dated 13 January 2016 relating to Ultra-low/zero emission vehicles;

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

4. Agrees the revised draft ITS for consultation;

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

5. Supports the continuation of work by Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council officers following consultation and further cooperation.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions – 0

191. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN: INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN

The Committee considered a report seeking approval to:

1. Publish the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) as supporting evidence alongside the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (Regulation 19 version), recognising that it was a 'living document' and may require further updating prior to publication;
2. Submit the IDP to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to support the Local Plan at examination, with any necessary amendments, to be further agreed by the Committee, required to take account of consultation responses, factual updates and/or further evidence being made available by infrastructure providers;

The Committee heard that the IDP was a key evidence document for the production of the Local Plan and was a snap shot as of January 2016. The document was a 'living document' and would be regularly updated prior to submission with the Local Plan to the inspector.

Councillors Chittenden and Perry addressed the Committee as visiting members.

Concerns were raised regarding the ability of the infrastructure providers to provide sufficient fresh water supplies, to deal with flooding issues and increased waste water. The Committee asked Officers to consider how the infrastructure providers could be held to account if their services were insufficient for the level of development outlined in the Local Plan.

The Committee also considered concerns regarding National Health Service provision and on site Open Space provision. It was agreed the Committee would consider these matters at future meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

1. Approves the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for publication as supporting evidence to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (Regulation 19 version), recognising that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is a "living document" and may require further updating prior to its publication.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

2. Approves the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as supporting evidence to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, with any necessary amendments required to take account of the consultation responses, factual updates and/or further evidence being made available by infrastructure providers subject to prior approval from the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 0 Abstentions – 1

192. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN - PUBLICATION (REGULATION 19)

The Committee considered the report seeking approval to commence consultation on the "Publication" Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2016 (Regulation 19) and thereafter submit the plan to the Secretary of State for examination (Regulation 22) under Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The Committee was reminded of the process the Local Plan document had been through to date and the detailed process that each site that came forward for inclusion had been through in order to ensure consistency, to direct growth to where it was most appropriate and to stop growth where it was inappropriate. The Plan had been verified through regular legal advice, advice from the Planning Advisory Service and from an independent Government inspector.

The Committee heard that the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan should be considered for its legal compliance with the duty to co-operate and the four tests of soundness (positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance). Should the Plan be agreed, it would go out to public consultation during February and March 2016 with representations made brought back to this Committee in April 2016.

The report also sought the re-classification of Coxheath as a Rural Service Centre in the Local Plan. Officers considered, because of its size, its transport provisions, of the services it provided and its proximity to Maidstone, Coxheath should be reclassified as a Rural Service Centre.

The Committee also considered an urgent update requesting approval for the insertion of the Indicative Housing Trajectory as Appendix A of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (Publication) 2016 document.

The Committee was informed by Officers that the Borough could meet its full objectively assessed housing need and this figure should be agreed as the housing target for the Local Plan.

Councillors B Mortimer and J Wilson addressed the Committee as visiting members regarding the re-classification of Coxheath as a Rural Service Centre.

Councillors Garland, Blackmore, Munford, Round, J Wilson, Perry, Stockell and Chittenden addressed the Committee regarding the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2016 (Regulation 19).

The Committee heard that the criteria on individual site policies that was generic, had been moved to a new cover-all policy, H1 (page 362 of the agenda/page 78 of the Local Plan). It was explained that Local Plan policies should provide the broad parameters. Site specific detail was provided when developers put forward planning applications and the decision-making process was invoked.

Concern was raised that some site specific criteria was missing from the policies in the Local Plan attached at Appendix A when compared with the agreed Regulation 18 version of the Plan. Previous decisions to accept sites for inclusion in the Local Plan had been made based on very specific criteria for several sites and no decision by the Committee had been made to remove those criteria.

Concern was also raised that Policy H1 made no mention of contributions towards community infrastructure, it only mentioned strategic infrastructure. Members were concerned that there would be no mechanism in place to ensure developers made contributions toward specific "community" infrastructures.

The Committee agreed that Officers should be asked to go through the Local Plan on a site by site basis to ensure that any missing site specific criteria was re-instated and that the improvements that had been made to the Plan were not lost.

The Committee adjourned for a short break between 21:22 and 21:39

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

1. Does not approve the re-classification of Coxheath as a Rural Service Centre and that it remain classified as a Larger Village in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan settlement hierarchy.

Voting: For – 7 Against – 2 Abstention - 0

2. Notes the Officer responses to the balance of representations on the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2014, attached at Appendix B.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 0 Abstention – 0
Note: Councillor English had temporarily left the meeting at the time of the vote.

3. Approves the insertion of the Indicative Housing Trajectory, presented to the Committee as an urgent update, into Appendix A of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (Publication) 2016 document (agenda dated 13 January 2016 page 567).

Voting: For – 7 Against – 0 Abstentions - 2

4. Recommends that Council approves the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2016 (attached as Appendix A of the report to Committee dated 13 January 2016, revised to reflect (i) the insertion of the words 'community and' at line 1 of Policy H1 paragraph 2 on page 78, before the word 'strategic' and (ii) any previously agreed site-specific infrastructure criteria not covered by (i) which were agreed by this Committee or its decision making predecessor) for Publication (Regulation 19) and submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Regulation 22) for examination under section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Voting: For – 7 Against – 2 Abstentions - 0

5. Recommends that Council grants delegated powers to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to submit a schedule of proposed changes/main modifications to the pre-submission Publication version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2016, arising from representations made (Regulation 20), to the Secretary of State.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions - 0

6. Recommends that Council confirms the Borough’s full objectively assessed housing need of 18,560 dwellings as the Council’s Local Plan housing target.

Voting: For – 7 Against – 0 Abstentions - 2

193. DURATION OF MEETING

18:30 to 22:04