

Minutes of Special Planning and Development Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 30 September 2020 at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor A Brown (Chair)

Councillors:

T Austin	A Humphreys
I Brown	S Knox
S Carefoot	S O'Rourke
J Clark	J Rogerson
L Edge	R Sherras
M French	R Thompson
B Holden	

In attendance: Director of Economic Development and Planning, Director of Community Services, Head of Planning Services, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Head of Regeneration and Housing.

Also in attendance: Councillors Alcock, Bibby, Birtwhistle, Brunskill, Fletcher, Hill, Hindle, Hilton, Hore, A Knox, Mirfin, Newmark, D O'Rourke, Peat, Rainford, Schumann, Scott.

742 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor B Buller.

743 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.

744 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs Pat Young spoke in relation to the White Paper and expressed her concerns that influence from the Parishes and local people would be reduced. She also asked a question regarding CIL and who would be the recipient of this levy.

All non-members of Planning and Development Committee were given permission to speak at this meeting.

745 WHITE PAPER – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

A report was submitted by the Director of Economic Development and Planning outlining a proposed response to the consultation on the Planning White Paper – Planning for the Future. This had come at an opportune time for us as we are due to review our Local Plan and this has an impact on the Local Plan process.

The report outlined The White Paper on a single page. It proposes a radical change to the planning system based on a pro-development approach and speeding up decisions. A lot of factors would be outside Local Authority control.

It is based on 3 pillars:

- Planning for development
- Planning for beautiful and sustainable places
- Planning for infrastructure and connected places

Under these 3 pillars sits 24 key proposals that were outlined in the report.

The Head of Regeneration and Housing highlighted the positive points to the proposed plan making process which included clarifying the test for soundness; more focused evidence, and promoting digital based work (presentation and accessible).

He informed Committee that core areas for development to take place would need to be identified, along with design codes for each area. However, he did point out that one size does not fit all, especially in smaller rural districts. The outcome would mean being engulfed in national standards. With regard to local infrastructure, there would be a nationally set levy on schemes which would take away the local negotiations on affordable housing contributions and may therefore affect the success of provision that we currently have. He also stated that the underlying concern was the intention to try to standardize things and remove the local opportunity to influence things.

The Head of Regeneration and Housing reminded Members they could all submit a personal response if they wished.

Expressions of concern were given with regard to the lack of localism, taking power away from the Local Authority, centralising decisions, and access to CIL monies. It was considered that the response should be strengthened and where possible 'not sure' answers should be 'no'. Supporting the economy was paramount and enforcement should be made stronger.

RESOLVED: That

1. Members instruct the Director of Economic Development and Planning to submit a response to the consultation;
2. delegated authority is given to the Director of Economic Development and Planning in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, plus the Leader of the opposition, to provide a consultation response which incorporates the draft response tabled at the meeting and reflects subsequent comments received in writing from Members;
3. a letter be written from the Leader/CEO/Mayor to the Secretary of State setting out the strong concerns of Members with the proposals; and
4. a letter be written from the Leader/CEO/Mayor to the MP, Nigel Evans setting out the strong concerns of Members with the proposals.

746

CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE CURRENT PLANNING SYSTEM

A report was submitted by the Director of Economic Development and Planning outlining a proposed response to the consultation paper on Changes to the Current

Planning System. The main concern about this paper was that it could be introduced very quickly without any primary legislation following the completion of the consultation.

The most important issues highlighted were the proposed standard methodology on housing numbers that would immediately impact on our housing requirement with an increase from 143 to 293 overnight; and implications of measure on affordable housing which would be critical in terms of operations in losing delivery and influence at a local level.

This consultation needed to be submitted by 1 October 2020 so it was imperative that any comments from members be received immediately.

Members felt that if the methodology was to be changed that it should be made more rigid so that there could be less challenges made from developers and on appeal. It was agreed that the baseline figure should be the level of 0.5% of housing stock in each local authority as opposed to using whichever is the higher. Also, that a summary of our achievements of development and affordable housing should be included in the response.

RESOLVED: That Committee endorse the consultation response as set out in the report taking on board suggestions from members and instruct the Director of Economic Development and Planning to submit the comments to the Government's consultation.

747 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2019/20

A monitoring report was submitted for Members' information covering the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. It included information on the environment, housing, the economy, delivery mechanisms and infrastructure, the strategic site and development policies.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Nicola Hopkins (414532).