

Planning Policy Sub-Committee – 24 September 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the **Planning Policy Sub-Committee** held on **24 September 2018** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr D J Sperring

Cllr G J Ioannou
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley

Cllr Mrs C A Weston

VISITING MEMBERS

Cllrs C M Stanley and I H Ward.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J R F Mason.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr M Hoy - for Cllr J R F Mason

OFFICERS PRESENT

M Thomas - Assistant Director, Planning and Regeneration Services
N Hayward - Team Leader, Strategic Planning & Economic Regeneration
D Goodman - Planner
S Worthington - Democratic Services Officer

8 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr G J Ioannou declared a non-pecuniary interest in all items as Portfolio Holder for Enterprise.

10 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT 2016: ADDENDUM

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Planning and Regeneration Services proposing amendments to the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

In response to a Member question relating to the number of consultees removed from the planning policy mailing list, officers advised that, with the introduction of the new GDPR regulations only those individuals who had originally asked to be included on the list but had never responded to any planning policy consultations were asked if they wished to be removed from the mailing list. Officers confirmed, in response to a supplementary question

as to the current number on the list, that there were still approximately 8000 people on the mailing list.

In response to a question relating to whether the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) would contribute to the costs of consultation in respect of the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP), or whether the consultation costs would be borne solely by the Council, officers advised that this was still a matter for discussion. The Issues and Options document would not be issued until next year for public consultation and there were still meetings to be held relating to the format of public consultation. Grant funding awarded to date related primarily to evidence based documents.

Recommended to Council

That the draft addendums to the adopted Statement of Community Involvement, at appendices A, B and C, be consulted on for 4 weeks. (ADP&RS)

11 CONSIDERATION OF PLAN-MAKING PRIORITIES

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Planning and Regeneration Services providing details of the various implications of the current plan-making timetable on important issues in relation to meeting the needs of local communities in the short and longer term.

In response to a Member question relating to the Michelins Farm site being the Council's preferred option in respect of a gypsy/traveller site, officers advised that under the previously adopted Local Plan there was a requirement to deliver 15 gypsy/traveller plots and this provision had been identified in the Local Plan at the Michelins Farm site. New guidance had subsequently come out in 2015 stating that there should be a multi-faceted approach to gypsy/traveller sites, with a range of public and private sites put forward, rather than the single site at Michelins Farm that was originally proposed by this Authority. Changing legislation and guidance has meant that this Council must look at other potential sites; it was, in addition, proving difficult to deliver the Michelins Farm site.

Responding to a further Member question relating to road improvements and changes, officers confirmed that the County Council was aware of land allocations, such as that relating to Michelins Farm, when planning road improvements, including those in respect of the A127/A130.

Officers confirmed, in response to a Member query around recent temporary planning permissions for gypsy/traveller sites granted on appeal for family reasons, that until such time as a further Plan was adopted with sufficient deliverable gypsy/traveller sites allocated within it, there was a risk of further gypsy/traveller sites being granted on appeal. Responding to a supplementary question as to whether such sites granted on appeal would be considered as

windfall sites, officers advised that the most recent assessment of gypsy/traveller need was in January 2018 and accordingly the two recent sites granted on appeal were in addition to the number of sites identified in the January 2018 assessment; the Council's baseline would thus need to be further updated. In reviewing the Council's existing gypsy and traveller policies, not only would the Council seek to allocate sites based on evidence at a point in time, but also would seek to develop a criteria-based policy to try to capture any sites that would fall outside the Council's identified sites.

In response to a Member question relating to the gypsy/traveller site at Rawreth Lane/A1245 that had been refused planning permission repeatedly, officers advised that unauthorised sites such as this could be assessed in terms of meeting overall need and could be allocated in future if deemed appropriate and deliverable; this would in turn mean that the Council would not have to identify sites elsewhere.

Members concurred that option 3 was the best option to progress local plan-making in the short to medium term. However, Members expressed concern about resources within Strategic Planning and emphasised that resources should be sufficient to maintain progress with the Local Plan to ensure that the Council did not come under close scrutiny by Central Government, as was currently the case with other neighbouring South Essex Authorities.

Recommended to Council

That option 3, as detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the officer report, be adopted to progress local plan-making in the short to medium term, subject to sufficient resources being made available to facilitate this. (ADP&RS)

12 STRATEGIC PLANNING WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE: SEPTEMBER 2018

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Planning and Regeneration Services providing a brief update on how key pieces of work, including the development of policy documents and supporting evidence were currently progressing.

It was noted that the Local Development Scheme would need to be updated if Council was to decide to progress a separate Issues Paper on Gypsy and Traveller policy in advance of the Preferred Options Document.

In response to a Member question about an article in the Evening Echo relating to the possibility of a new access road to Southend, officers confirmed that any such proposals would have to be considered as part of the overarching consultation process, given that it would constitute a major piece of infrastructure.

Members expressed concern about resources within the Strategic Planning team with the imminent departure of the Assistant Director and officer time being diverted to work on the Joint Strategic Plan.

Resolved

That the Strategic Planning Team’s responsibilities and delivery of work streams be noted, subject to Member concern about the capacity of the team being over-stretched. (ADP&RS)

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and closed at 10.15 am.

Chairman

Date

If you would like these minutes in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.