

## **PLANNING POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE – 5 September 2001**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Planning Policy Sub-Committee** held on **5 September 2001** when there were present:

Cllr Mrs J M Giles (Chairman)

Cllr T G Cutmore  
Cllr A Hosking  
Cllr C C Langlands  
Cllr R A Pearson

Cllr Mrs M J Webster  
Cllr D A Weir  
Cllr Mrs M A Weir

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

S Scrutton – Head of Planning Services  
P Whitehead – Senior Planner Local Plans  
A Wyatt – Committee Administrator

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs K A Gibbs, Mrs S J Lemon, C R Morgan and R E Vingoe.

### **SUBSTITUTES**

Cllrs R S Allen and P F A Webster.

### **115 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs J M Giles declared a non-pecuniary interest on the item Minutes (116) by virtue of her son's involvement in the telecommunications industry.

### **116 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2001 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Members received updates from the Head of Planning Services on the following items.

#### **Minute 111**

Members were advised that the planning application in respect of the business park along Cherry Orchard Way had been re-launched and the application would be before Members in the not too distant future.

### Minute 114 – Telecommunications

Members noted that Central Government had recently issued updated planning guidance relating to telecommunication masts, which advised the following:-

“It is the Government’s firm view that the planning system is not the place for determining health safeguards....In the Government’s view, local planning authorities should not implement their own precautionary policies...”

Noting this, it was agreed that the Head of Planning Services would look at the new guidance and bring a report back to this Sub-Committee in due course.

## 117 ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

### Presentation

Members welcomed Mr John Sharp, Conservation Manager from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), who had been invited to attend the meeting to provide a brief presentation on coastal issues affecting East Anglia. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Sharp advised Members of the following points:

- the effect coastal erosion was having on wildlife habitat along the East Anglian coast lining estuaries
- the value of these coastal habitats in terms of wildlife habitat and also sea defences
- the impact of sea level rises/land sinking on these habitats and the subsequent loss of salt marsh/mud flats
- possible solutions to the problems including restoration of inter-tidal habitat, consideration of improved planning guidance on the matter.
- the issues surrounding maintenance of existing sea defences.

In conclusion, Members noted the RSPB aims to restore inter-tidal habitat as follows:-

- (1) Greater recognition of the value of coastal habitats.
- (2) To undertake hydrodynamic studies to inform action.
- (3) To provide effective mechanisms to create inter-tidal habitat.
- (4) To show what inter-tidal habitat creation means in practice.

- (5) To adopt supportive land use planning policies.

In response to the presentation, Members advised that the RSPB aims were shared by the Council. It was also recognised that the current planning system would need change to enable the aims to come to fruition.

It was noted that the RSPB, as a large non-political body, could do more to lobby Parliament and use their “political power” to bring about change to the current planning system.

Members thanked Mr Sharp for his presentation and then he left the meeting.

### **118 URBAN CAPACITY STUDY UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services, which sought Members’ views on the publication of the full version of the Urban Capacity Study following the issue of an Executive Summary.

Noting that the Urban Capacity Study was at this stage no more than an information document that would be used to inform the preparation of the Local Plan, Members considered that the document should be published at the same time with the Replacement Local Plan.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

That the Sub-Committee considers that the publication of the Urban Capacity Study should await the issue of the first deposit draft of the Replacement Local Plan. (HPS)

### **119 HOME ZONES AND QUIET LANES – CONSULTATION**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services, which sought Members’ views of the Government’s ideas for the introduction of Home Zones and Quiet Lanes.

Noting and endorsing Officers comments to the Consultation Paper, Members considered that the reply to question 14 should read “If there are many objections to a proposal, a public inquiry will be the only way of providing a fair hearing.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

That subject to the above amendment, the report forms the basis of the Council’s response to the DTLR Consultation Paper on “Home Zones and Quiet Lanes”. (HPS)

**119 ROCHFORD DISTRICT REPLACEMENT LOCAL PLAN DRAFT  
POLICIES – RURAL ISSUES CHAPTER**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services which sought Members' approval for a number of policies to be included in the first deposit draft of the Replacement Local Plan. The policies all dealt with Green Belt and Rural Conservation Issues and were to be contained within the Rural Issues chapter of the plan.

During consideration of the item, the following points were clarified:-

**Policy R4**

It was noted that the 175 square metre total floor space for new farm dwellings took into account the 140 square metres as stated in the preceding paragraph of the plan with the additional 35 square metres to take into account the allowable extension. It was further noted that such dwellings would lose permitted development rights on extensions. It was further considered that the term "agricultural workers dwelling" should be brought more up to date.

Whilst considering this point, it was further noted that current policy on agricultural workers dwellings looked into suitable alternative accommodation in close proximity being used as an alternative to new build applications.

**Policy R21**

It was considered that this policy was well worded safeguarding European and international sites, however, Members wished for policies R15, 22 and 23 to be strengthened and brought into line with this policy where possible.

**RECOMMENDED**

That the policies in the report appendix (attached to the signed copy of these minutes) as amended by Members, be approved for inclusion in the replacement Rochford District Local Plan first deposit draft. (HPS)

The meeting closed at 9.55pm

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_