

Planning Policy & Transportation Committee – 15 February 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **Planning Policy & Transportation Committee** held on **15 February 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr P A Capon
Acting Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs M J Webster

Cllr C I Black
Cllr J P Cottis
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr A J Humphries
Cllr J R F Mason

Cllr D Merrick
Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr Mrs M J Webster

VISITING MEMBERS

Cllrs Mrs H L A Glynn and Mrs S A Harper.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C A Hungate.

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Scrutton - Head of Planning and Transportation
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

COUNTY COUNCIL OFFICERS PRESENT

L Harvey - District Engineer

32 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr T G Cutmore declared a personal interest in item 11 of the agenda relating to the East of England Plan by virtue of being the Council's representative to the East of England Regional Assembly.

34 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

Rayleigh - Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Minute 124/06)

Officers confirmed that the draft area appraisals for Canewdon, Foulness Churchend, Great Wakering and Shopland Churchyard would be reported to Members in March 2007. The remaining appraisals would be reported to Committee soon after that.

The Formation of Natural England (Minute 408/06)

It was noted that a letter had been received from Natural England in response to concerns raised relating to this new body.

35 HIGHWAYS LOCAL SERVICE AGREEMENT QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2006

The Committee considered the report of the Area Manager, Highways and Transportation Services informing Members of Essex County Council (ECC) highway and transportation issues in the district in the period from October to December 2006.

In response to Member enquiries relating to the traffic regulation orders listed at paragraph 4 of the report, the County officer confirmed that notices of the proposed waiting restrictions had been posted. The traffic regulation orders could not be introduced until such time as the public consultation period had expired, subject to non receipt of public objections.

The County officer advised, in response to a Member query relating to the Rawreth Lane junction with Downhall Park Way, Rayleigh upgrade of existing signals scheme, that a design for this scheme was currently being investigated.

Responding to a Member concern relating to the junction improvements scheme at the Ashingdon Road junction with Brays Lane, the County officer confirmed that an assessment would be made of adjacent roads to determine whether the introduction of waiting restrictions should be considered.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to remedial works in Eastwood Rise and Rayleigh Avenue, Rayleigh the County officer confirmed that the residents' exhibition was due to take place on 18 February.

Responding to a Member concern relating to lighting in Hall Road at the junction with Rectory Road, the County officer advised that an assessment would be conducted as to whether additional lighting was needed.

In response to a Member query about the pre-patching of roads district-wide, the County officer confirmed that this would take place in the next financial year, ie, after 1 April.

The County officer advised that a letter would be sent to landowner in the vicinity of Trinity Wood Lane requesting them to remove or change the signs displayed there. It should, however, be noted that the Highway Authority could not legally enforce this. In the event of the landowner not taking action with respect to the signs, the Highway Authority would erect official signs indicating that Trinity Wood Lane was a public right of way.

The County officer noted a Member request that the trees in Rectory Avenue in the vicinity of the cemetery be cut back and that the lights along this stretch of highway be examined, as some appeared not to be in operation.

Resolved

That the Highways Local Service Agreement update report October to December 2006 be noted. (County Highways)

36 East of England Plan

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation providing details of the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the East of England Plan and the Council's suggested response.

During debate, Members concurred with the comments made in the officer's report, but felt that the overall sentiments needed to be further reinforced. Members felt unanimously that the proposals made the Plan undeliverable and agreed that the East of England Regional Assembly's recent resolution on the proposed changes to the Plan should form the basis of the Council's own response, as it mirrored this Authority's concerns, particularly with respect to infrastructure and minimum, as opposed to maximum housing provision. Members perceived that the proposed changes would result in an erosion of the quality of life for residents within this district.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the possible consequences of failing to enact the East of England Plan, officers advised that, should this Authority not enact the Plan, it would lose any control as to where new housing should be placed within the district, particularly in light of the guidance contained within Planning Policy Statement 3. Members accordingly concurred that it was important that residents should be made aware that this Council strongly opposed the proposals. It was further felt that there would be merit in inviting a policy adviser from the Department of Communities and Local Government to attend a future meeting of the Committee to answer Members' questions on the East of England Plan and its implications for this district.

On a Motion moved by Cllr Mrs M J Webster and seconded by Cllr T G Cutmore it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the comments made by the East of England Regional Assembly relating to the proposed changes to the East of England Plan, together with the concerns outlined in the officer's report and a final statement to the effect that the Plan is not fit for purpose, should form the basis of this Council's response to the consultation on the proposed changes to the East of England Plan.

- (2) That a Policy Adviser from the Department of Communities and Local Government be invited to attend a future meeting of this Committee to answer Members' questions on the East of England Plan.
- (3) That a press release be issued outlining the Council's response to the consultation on the East of England Plan, which should emphasise that the Council decision was a unanimous, cross-party decision. (HPT)

37 **REPORT ON THE REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED DURING THE REGULATION 25 CONSULTATION PROCESS**

(Note: Cllr T G Cutmore declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of employment within the electrical supply industry.)

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation summarising the representations received during the Regulation 25 consultation process and seeking approval for the Planning Policy Sub-Committee to consider the representations further and to use these to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy Regulation 26 draft.

Officers advised that Core Strategy Regulation 26 was still a consultation stage of the Core Strategy process and, as such, would be broad in scope, rather than dealing with issues in great detail.

Members observed that the most common representation received from residents to the Regulation 25 Consultation was that the Green Belt should be retained in its current form.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to affordable housing, officers advised that the Council's own housing list and those of Registered Social Landlords would determine who was most in need of affordable housing. Planning Policy Statement 3 made it clear that low cost, market housing was not affordable housing.

Responding to a further Member question relating to the range of residents consulted, officers confirmed that the Authority had sought to ensure that representatives from all parts of the community were engaged in the consultation process and had, for example, visited secondary schools within the district and spoken to students there with respect to Regulation 25.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That the Planning Policy Sub-Committee considers the representations and draft Regulation 26 Core Strategy document and makes appropriate recommendations to the Planning Policy and Transportation Committee in March 2007. (HPT)

38 JOINT ACTION AREA PLAN – LAND WEST OF ROCHFORD

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation providing details of a proposal for the preparation of a Joint Action Area Plan (JAAP) in conjunction with Southend on Sea Borough Council for an area of land to the west of Rochford, which incorporates London Southend Airport and Aviation Way.

Members concurred that the JAAP for that area was to be welcomed, particularly given that it comprised one of the most significant employment areas in the locale; co-operation between the two Authorities was vital.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the practicalities of the JAAP, it was confirmed that officers would work jointly with officers from Southend Council and that this Authority would maintain control over those areas that fell within its boundaries.

Members stressed, with respect to paragraph 4.1 of the report, that the Rochford and Southend Action Area Plan Committee would not be a decision-making Committee, but would make recommendations to each of the 2 Councils relating to the JAAP.

Resolved

- (1) That the Rochford Local Development Scheme be amended to include the timetable for the preparation of a Joint Action Area Plan with Southend on Sea Borough Council to cover the area shown in Appendix One to the report.
- (2) That the preparation of a shared economic strategy for the airport and Aviation Way Industrial Estate be agreed.
- (3) That the governance arrangements for the preparation of the Joint Action Area Plan and Economic Strategy be agreed, as outlined in the report. (HPT)

39 UNADOPTED ROADS IN HULLBRIDGE

(Note: Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of living in a property sited on an unadopted road.)

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation seeking Members' support for a Hullbridge Parish Council initiative to achieve the improvement of unmade and unadopted roads in Hullbridge.

Members felt that the Parish Council could not be supported in their proposal until such time as it consulted its residents with respect to unadopted roads. It was further perceived that there would be merit in including, in the event of

the person not supporting the proposal, a question within the consultation relating to the reasons for not supporting it, one of the options to include costs. In conclusion, Members all concurred that the District Council should not bear any of the costs associated with this consultation.

On a Motion moved by Cllr T G Cutmore and seconded by Cllr C G Seagers, it was:-

Resolved

That support be given to Hullbridge Parish Council to conduct a survey of residents, at no cost to the District Council, on whether or not to bring unadopted roads in Hullbridge up to an adoptable standard and to advise the District Council of the results. (HPT)

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

40 UPDATE ON GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES

The Committee considered the exempt report of the Head of Planning and Transportation providing an update on progress in dealing with a number of unauthorised caravans on various sites in the district, as requested by Council on 31 October 2006.

The following updates/amendments to the report were noted:-

- Page 16.4, second bullet point

The date of the public inquiry was 20 February.

- Page 16.7, third bullet point

This had not yet been served; it was anticipated that this would happen in late February/early March.

- Page 16.9, sixth bullet point

Action would be taken late February/early March.

- Page 16.11

The site visit had uncovered 1 caravan on site; removal of this from the site would be sought.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to site 5, officers confirmed that an injunction would be sought.

Members concurred that there would be merit, once site 3 was cleared, in the Council issuing a press release, to deter other illegal occupants of Council land.

Members thanked officers for the comprehensive report and asked that an update report be made in 3 months.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to a successful prosecution, direct action be taken in respect of site 3.
- (2) That, subject to a successful prosecution and the site not being vacated, details of the circumstances of the occupants be reported to Members to enable proper consideration to be given to the most appropriate form of action to resolve the breach in respect of site 7.
- (3) That a press release be issued when a site is successfully cleared.
- (4) That progress on dealing with the other sites be noted. (HPT)

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Chairman

Date

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