

Planning and Development Policy Development Advisory Group
14 SEPTEMBER 2020

Present: Councillors: Claire Vickers (Chairman), Brian Donnelly, Ruth Fletcher, Nigel Jupp, Liz Kitchen, Lynn Lambert, Godfrey Newman, Louise Potter and Diana van der Klugt

Apologies: Councillors: Karen Burgess and Tim Lloyd

Also Present: Councillors: Toni Bradnum and John Milne

7 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 13 July were received by the group.

8 REVIEW OF BUILDING CONTROL CHARGES SCHEME

The Head of Building Control provided the group with a summary of the Building Control Charges scheme review.

The previous scheme had been published in 2017 setting the charge at £55 per hour. The results of the latest review of the scheme showed a decrease in income and raise in costs so it was proposed that the fees be increased. This increase was to be implemented in April but had been delayed due to pandemic. The change would now be implemented for 2020/21 with the proposed charge to be £59 per hour.

A report regarding this review would go to Cabinet on 24 September.

The group were in support of these changes.

9 WARNHAM AND SLINFOLD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

The Conservation Officer presented an update on the progress of the conservation area appraisals for Warnham and Slinfold.

There were 37 designated conservation areas across Horsham District. HDC had undertaken a rolling programme of reviewing and adopting appraisals and management plans.

A draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Slinfold and Warnham had been produced and published for public consultation between 6 February 2020 and 5 March 2020. Public comments for Slinfold had been reviewed and where appropriate, changes were proposed to the text of the documents. There had been an addition of a positive and negative buildings map within the conservation area, an extension of views into the conservation area from Stane Street and a change to the presentation of the landscape fringe indicating that the fringe does not have a hard boundary.

It was proposed that the Slinfold conservation area be altered to include: Old Stables including its garden and Barn Cottage.

Comments received for the Warnham public consultation relayed the importance of the Cricket Field and an objection to its removal from the conservation area had been noted. The officers reported that while the cricket field, village hall and play area were important community features the conservation area related only to areas of architectural or historic interest.

It was proposed that the Warnham conservation area be extended to include Warnham Court Farm buildings, the cricket ground and village hall be removed from the conservation area and buildings of local interest be included.

A report regarding these conservation areas would be presented to Cabinet on 24 September. The Group were in support of these changes

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REGULAR UPDATE ON PROGRESS OF KEY STRATEGIC SITES ALLOCATED IN THE HDPF

The Director of Place provided the group with updates on the progress of key strategic sites allocated in the HDPF.

Land north of Horsham

The Ground-breaking had been postponed due to current Government guidance regarding the pandemic. The School had opened, planned works would start in early 2021 on 400 homes, the cycle strategy was still in development, a draft landscaping scheme had been received and public consultation for the site would start in November 2020.

Southwater

All development phases for this site had been granted planning permission and development had begun.

Land East of Billingshurst

There were no changes since the previous update.

Kilnwood Vale

A reserved matters application for a further 790 homes had been approved. Amended reserved matters for phase 6 were expected to be submitted in due course.

Highwood

Several phases were being worked on and works on the southern site had begun.

Novartis

There was no substantive update regarding this site, however, works were expected to start in 2021. Enabling works had been appointed and would start in October 2020.

Wickhurst Green

The Neighbourhood Centre had been completed, The Parish office transfer was being arranged and new road surfacing and construction of an allotment had begun.

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GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER CONSULTATION

The Head of Strategic Planning Reported that the Government had published two consultations: Changes to the Current Planning System and Planning for the Future (Government white paper). The two papers covered similar issues but had been prepared separately from one another.

Changes to the Current Planning System

The Government recognises that the content of the White Paper would take time to implement. This consultation set out shorter term measures to boost housing delivery by changing the standard methodology calculation, increasing support for small to medium sized developers and extending permissions in principle.

The Head of Strategic Planning raised concerns with this consultation, and outlined that whilst HDC could demonstrate a good track record of housing delivery, the changed formula would raise the target to a level that our evidence demonstrates could not be met. The Council's final response will be published on the HDC website.

Planning for the future (Government white paper)

This consultation was comprised of three key areas that it is understood would be delivered through new primary legislation:

1. Planning For Development

This section proposes the simplification of Local Plans. New local plans will identify three areas - areas for growth, renewal and land which is protected. The number of houses needed would be set through a standard method for establishing housing requirements.

This area would also introduce 'permission in principle' for areas identified as 'growth' areas, increased digitisation of the planning process, a statutory timescale for plan preparation with an initial stage to include significant community involvement, and the retention of neighbourhood plans.

2. Planning for beautiful and sustainable places

This section of the proposals recognised that recent developments have not always been constructed to high design standards. This was proposed to be addressed through National & Local design guides, a requirement for local design guidance to be prepared with community input, a requirement for every local authority to have chief officer for design and place making and an enhanced role for Homes England, the use of pattern books, the simplification of the environmental assessment processes, and continued protection of environmental and historic designations and commitment to zero carbon by 2050.

3. Planning for infrastructure and connected places

S106 and CIL would be replaced with a single 'Infrastructure Levy' with charges to be set nationally at a single or area specific rate. Properties would be levied at the point of occupation with the expectation that Local Authorities borrow against the Levy to forward fund infrastructure.

The Head of Strategic Development presented their initial concerns and feedback regarding these changes to the group. The Council's final response will be published on the HDC website.

12 HORSHAM DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

The Head of Strategic Planning provided a brief update regarding the HDLP review.

The Statement of Community Involvement would need to be updated to include minor changes to consultation procedures during a pandemic.

The Covid -19 pandemic has also affected the Local Plan timetable. The Local Development Scheme has been revised to reflect these changes.

A report on these items would go to Cabinet on 24 September.

13 FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

The relevant items on the forward plan were noted by the group.

The meeting closed at 11.50 having commenced at 10.00 am