

**Planning and Development Policy Development Advisory Group**  
**13 JULY 2020**

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

Also Present: Councillors: Jonathan Chowen, Paul Clarke, Mike Croker, John Milne, Mike Morgan and Roger Noel

1 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 18 May were received.

2 **HORSHAM DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

The Head of Strategic Planning gave a presentation on the key issues that had been raised during the Local Plan Review consultation, particularly focussing on responses from statutory consultees and their responses to the nine Strategic Sites identified for consultation. Some of the comments were general in nature while others related to specific sites.

Issues raised by stakeholder consultees included: the need for any development to ensure wastewater could be treated, mitigation of heritage impacts; wastewater management; and the impact of traffic generation on certain junctions and corridors.

In response to the consultation, officers would engage with stakeholders regarding a number of these issues, and further research would be undertaken.

The Director of Place advised that, subject to the receipt of some outstanding consultation responses, a report with recommendations for the next stage of the Local Plan Review would go to Cabinet in November before going before full Council in December 2020.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that all Councillors would engage with the process through a number of briefings in the autumn.

The Planning Policy Team Leader gave an interim update on the transport modelling being undertaken as part of the Local Plan Review. The study will involve understanding the impact on the road network without any additional development being allocated in the Local Plan (known as the baseline or reference case). Different local plan options and possible means of mitigating increases in traffic will then be tested against this baseline. This work is still ongoing, and officers are working with infrastructure providers and the County Council.

In response to questions from the Group, it was agreed that additional work may be needed once the longer term impacts of the pandemic on people's travel behaviours become apparent.

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

The Head of Development updated the Group on key progress on allocated strategic sites since the last PDAG in May.

Land North of Horsham: Work on the school site continues. The Design and Landscape Strategy had been submitted. A reserved matters application for 400 homes would be submitted by September, in accordance with outline permission conditions. The Group were advised that the Cycling Strategy was required at the reserved matters stage and the applicant had been asked to make this a priority.

Southwater: The application for phase 5 (60 units) was progressing and was scheduled to be determined by the Planning Committee in September.

Billingshurst: All but one parcel of land had reserved matters consent and part of the spine road had opened.

Highwood: Development was now progressing south of the river.

Novartis: Procurement works were underway, with pre-commencement works due to commence in the autumn.

4 **UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

The Head of Development gave an update on the number of applications received by the department from 2 March to 29 June. Applications for planning, compliance and land charges had all declined as a result of the pandemic, falling to approximately two thirds of the expected number. The number of planning applications had started to rise since the end of June. Pre-application advice requests had dipped in late March but had already started to recover in April.

The Head of Development advised the Group of new government legislation that was about to be confirmed. This included temporary measures intended to kick-start the economy after the pandemic, and new permanent legislation.

Permanent changes included a number of measures to facilitate the conversion or replacement of certain types of building under permitted development rights. Full details had not yet been submitted.

Temporary measures included: planning permissions to remain extant for an extra year; hours of construction on existing sites can be extended up to 9pm,

subject to a brief consultation period; and the application process for outdoor seating for cafes and restaurants was to be simplified.

5 **ACTIONS FOLLOWING THE COMPLIANCE REVIEW**

The Head of Development summarised the findings of an independent review of the Council's Planning Compliance Service, which was completed by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) earlier this year. The review's findings were positive and showed the Council's approach to be consistent with government advice.

The PAS report made a number of recommendations, which were noted by the Group. These included an additional post within the team to help manage caseloads, improved interactions with Parish and Neighbourhood Councils, the refining of the processes for the discharge of conditions; and amendments to the published Local Enforcement Plan.

Positive steps were being taken in response to the review's recommendations. Members would be provided with a statistical update on the department in October 2020.

With regard to the Local Enforcement Plan, communications strategy and information on the HDC website, officers sought the views of the Group and the Cabinet Member asked for any comments to be sent to her and the Head of Development.

6 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO**

The Forward Plan extract was noted.

*The meeting closed at 11.54 am having commenced at 10.00 am*

CHAIRMAN