

Planning and Development Policy Development Advisory Group
6 JUNE 2017

Present: Councillors: Claire Vickers (Chairman), Toni Bradnum, Karen Burgess, Paul Clarke, Liz Kitchen, Paul Marshall, Christian Mitchell and Godfrey Newman

Apologies: Councillors: Brian O'Connell, Michael Willett and Tricia Youtan

Also Present: Councillor Nigel Jupp

1 **TO APPROVE THE NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The group approved the notes of the meeting held on 6th April.

2 **HORSHAM DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

The Head of Strategic Planning & Sustainability and policy team leader gave a presentation on the development of the Local Plan Review over the next few months. At this stage the review would focus on economic development, in particular Key Employment Areas (KEAs), and rural policies, as outlined at the previous PDAG meeting.

Existing KEAs are being reviewed to identify those that could be expanded or intensified. An analysis by consultants found that 20 to 21 hectares of additional land for industrial and commercial sites would be required, and new sites in sustainable locations would be identified.

Members commented on the need for small and start-up businesses to have the opportunity to expand within their locality, and the Head of Strategic Planning & Sustainability advised that a scheme was being developed to enable start-up and growing businesses to locate premises.

Members noted the designated KEAs which were to be reviewed and amended as appropriate. There were a number of commercial sites that were not designated KEAs and it was requested that these should be considered for designation.

Officers proposed to consult on the definition of strategic sites for local employment, as well as an employment locational strategy looking at potential sites on the edge of settlements, or on main transport networks.

The Head of Strategic Planning & Sustainability outlined the function of Policy 26 in protecting the countryside and environment and Members discussed whether hamlets (secondary settlements) should be identified with a policy boundary. Members were advised that consultation with Parish Councils would be important in ensuring any decision was in line with Neighbourhood Plans, both those in development and those under review.

Members discussed the need to protect the character and integrity of secondary settlements and their rural setting, and that any policy should ensure that such settlements could continue as viable, sustainable communities and benefit the local economy.

An updated policy on barn conversions would be required and Members stressed the importance of a policy that clearly defined what could be considered to be a barn.

A built-up area boundary review would also form part of this stage of the Horsham District Local Plan Review. This would update the boundary to take into account development that has taken place on the edges of settlements. The review would be landscape led, guarding against settlement coalescence and provide clear transition to the countryside. It would take floodplains, listed buildings, and nature conservation into account.

There would be a Members Seminar on 27 June to update all District Councillors on progress on the Horsham District Local Plan review.

Members were advised that the draft Horsham District Local Plan review would be presented to Cabinet in September 2017, after further consideration by the PDAG. There would then be public consultation of the review in the autumn.

3 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE REVIEW

The interim Head of Development advised Members that the pre-application advice currently available was relatively underused by developers and there was scope for providing a more high profile and comprehensive service. The review was taking into account practices at neighbouring local authorities and the views of the Agents Forum. An improved service would result in more engagement with developers and potentially generate additional income for the Council. It was noted that advice on planning policy would also be given as part of the service.

Once the review had been completed, including an appropriate pricing structure, the proposed pre-application service would be presented to the PDAG.

4 RECRUITMENT

The interim Head of Development confirmed that there were nine posts within the Development and Spatial Planning teams being recruited; the closing date for applications was 19 June. This included new posts that it was anticipated would be financed through additional planning fees generated by government legislation. The posts included: a part-time Conservation Officer; a part-time Landscape Architect, a full-time Neighbourhood Planning Officer; a full-time Implementation Officer and a part-time CIL Officer.

5 **CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS & MANAGEMENT PLANS**

A report on Conservation Area Appraisals & Management Plans would be presented to Cabinet on 20 July. Members of the PDAG would be circulated with the draft report before the next PDAG meeting on 13 July to allow Members to comment prior to publication of the report. Any comments on the report arising at the meeting on the 13 July would be reported at the Cabinet meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am having commenced at 10.00 am

CHAIRMAN