

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL**

### **HOUSING AND MAJOR PROJECTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Tuesday 22nd January, 2013

**Present:-** Councillors Eleanor Jackson (Chair), Steve Hedges (Vice-Chair), Brian Simmons, Will Sandry, Gerry Curran and June Player

**Cabinet Member for Homes & Planning:** Councillor Tim Ball

**Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development:** Councillor Cherry Beath

**Also in attendance:** Derek Quilter (Divisional Director, Project Management), Graham Sabourn (Associate Director for Housing), Cleo Newcombe-Jones (Planning Policy Officer), David Trigwell (Divisional Director for Planning and Transport), Donna Vercoe (Policy Development & Scrutiny Manager), Richard Daone (Planning Policy Team Leader) and Jeremy Manners (Environmental Health Officer)

#### **53 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **54 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **55 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Les Kew sent his apologies to the Panel.

#### **56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **57 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

#### **58 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

The Chair announced that a member of the public, Mr Ransom would make a statement to the Panel relating to the Boat Dwellers & River Travellers Task and Finish Group report.

## 59 MINUTES - 20TH NOVEMBER 2012

The Chair informed the Democratic Services Officer that the word 'do' was missing from the fourth paragraph of Minute 50.

The Democratic Services Officer thanked her for this observation and said that he would make the amendment to the minutes.

With this amendment the Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

## 60 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Homes & Planning, Councillor Tim Ball addressed the Panel. He announced that Curo were forming a Strategic Partnership which he would be a member of. He invited the Chair to become a member and said that nominations were being sought from the Conservative and Independent groups.

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development addressed the Panel. She informed them that the Heads of Terms Agreement had been signed in relation to the Guildhall Tech Hub and that completion of the project would be by the end of March 2013.

She said that there had recently been a proposal to market the South Road Car Park at Midsomer Norton and stated that the Ministry of Defence had selected their preferred bidders for their three sites in Bath.

The Chair commented that she believed an offer for the South Road Car Park was on the table. She added that a major retailer would be a good way of beefing up the offer that Midsomer Norton High Street already has.

Councillor Will Sandry asked if there was any risk of losing housing land on the Somerdale site following the detailed archaeological investigation.

Councillor Cherry Beath replied that the area currently being investigated had not been highlighted for housing development.

The Chair on behalf of the Panel thanked them both for their update.

## 61 MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

The Divisional Director for Project Management introduced this item to the Panel. He highlighted some of the key elements from within the report.

### Southgate:

- The freehold title was granted to Aviva 21st December 2012
- The retail square has now been fully let

## **Children's Services:**

### **Ralph Allen School Applied Learning Centre and all weather pitch**

- Project programme on schedule and on budget
- All weather pitch to be completed February 2013 – Weather dependent
- Construction aim to complete Summer 2013

### **St Gregory's & St Mark's Joint 6th Form Centre**

- Project remains on budget and to programme
- The Environment Agency has approved the piling designs
- Foundations and drainage works are well underway
- All pre-start planning conditions have been submitted
- Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment discussions have started with the school

## **Keynsham Regeneration Project:**

- Project remains on budget and to programme
- Asbestos removal is complete
- Demolition of the retail units (to ground level) is complete
- Temporary highway works are complete, including relocation of Temple Street bus stop
- Works to the multi-story car park are scheduled to start on 14th January 2013
- Awaiting formal discharge of the archaeology, contamination and drainage planning conditions, which will then enable ground works to start.

## **Bath Western Riverside:**

### **Residential occupations**

- First 30 private residential units now occupied or sold.
- First 100 affordable units now occupied

### **Phase 2**

- Occupation due 2013
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase infrastructure for replacement Destructor Bridge commenced November 2012

### **BWR Main scheme**

- Crest are progressing terms with Wales and West (WWU) to decommission the gas holders subject to funding.
- Council Report to be drafted for February 2013
- Decommissioning is expected to take up to 2 years from the point WWU contract with Crest.

## **Former Railway Land, Radstock:**

- In early December the cabinet announced plans to progress with an updated outline planning application.
- It is anticipated that this will be submitted in late Spring.

- Linden are progressing plans for the development which will form part of the updated outline planning application

### **Keynsham K2:**

- The Council is currently considering bids received for the sale of the K2 site in South West Keynsham.

Councillor Gerry Curran asked if he could explain why it would take two years to decommission the gas holders.

The Divisional Director for Project Management replied that there were three stages to the process. The units first of all have to be isolated, the tanks then need to be emptied and finally the site must be decontaminated.

Councillor Will Sandry asked if the Council were likely to face a financial risk if a campaign were launched to save the Destructor Bridge.

The Divisional Director for Project Management replied that any planning obligation with regard to the bridge lies with Crest and not the Council.

Councillor Will Sandry asked if any indication could be given as to how long the Victoria Bridge would be closed for during phase 3.

The Divisional Director for Project Management replied that it would be for a number of months. He added that a design team had been appointed and that listed building consent was being sought. He said that the intention was to retain as much of the existing structure as possible.

Councillor Will Sandry asked if the rail electrification works in the Brougham Hayes area would coincide with the works on the Victoria Bridge to avoid an extended disruption to the public.

The Divisional Director for Project Management replied that they would look to link any works where possible.

Councillor Steve Hedges asked if any information could be provided on the status of the proposed movement of Sainsbury's to the Homebase site.

Councillor Gerry Curran commented that as far as he was aware in his role as Chairman of the Development Control Committee, Homebase have eight years remaining on their lease and have no intention of moving.

The Chair suggested that at their next meeting the Panel receives a report on project work within Midsomer Norton and Westfield similar to the one they received on Keynsham in November 2012.

The Divisional Director for Project Management replied that he would be happy to provide this to the Panel.

## 62 BOAT DWELLERS & RIVER TRAVELLERS TASK AND FINISH GROUP - TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair invited Mr Ransom to address the Panel.

Mr Ransom informed them that he had lived on the river for seven years and was proud of the community in which he lived in. He explained that a co-operative had been set up for the community which now had 17 members. He added that the site is now home to several families, including two new babies over the Christmas period.

He said that the site was adjacent to Somerdale and that they considered themselves to be very much a part of the Keynsham community. He offered the Panel the opportunity to visit the site as part of the review.

The Policy Development & Scrutiny Manager introduced the report to the Panel. She explained that at the November meeting of the Panel they received an update on Boat and Mobile Home Dwellers from the Cabinet Member for Homes & Planning, which included a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Council and the Canals and River Trust.

She added that the Panel were asked to consider if they wished to undertake any policy review work on this matter and if they would support the MOU. It was agreed at the meeting that there were a number of issues that still needed further investigation and that the Panel should undertake some Task and Finish Group work to explore some of these issues further and report back to the Panel in May 2013.

Councillor Will Sandry commented that he was delighted to see this piece of work being progressed. He asked if the area of river for review had been decided upon. He suggested that it could be carried out between Bradford on Avon and Bristol.

The Chair replied that the review area had not been decided upon yet.

Councillor Charles Gerrish addressed the Panel. He spoke of the vibrant boating communities within Keynsham East and Saltford and that he was keen for their voices to be heard. He added that he felt there was a natural boundary for the review at the Hanham Gorge.

The Chair invited Councillor Dave Laming to address the Panel. He stated that vibrant communities existed along the whole length of the river. He informed them that the Portavon Marina had substantial moorings but no facilities on site. He added that many more vessels were moored between here and the site at Newbridge and that safe moorings were required for all.

The Chair proposed that the area for review should be between Hanham Lock and Dundas Aqueduct.

The Panel agreed with this proposal.

The Chair invited members of the Panel to join her as part of the Task & Finish Group.

Councillor Brian Simmons (Conservative) and Councillor Gerry Curran (Liberal Democrat) agreed to take part on behalf of their groups.

Councillor June Player nominated Councillor Dave Laming to be co-opted onto the Task & Finish Group as the representative for the Independent Group.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to;

- i) Approve the draft terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group work
- ii) Agree to undertake the review within the timescales set out in the terms of reference.
- iii) Agree a Cross Party Membership Task and Finish Group who will lead on co-ordinating the Task and Finish group's activities

Task & Finish Group Members:

Councillor Eleanor Jackson (Lead Member)  
Councillor Brian Simmons  
Councillor Gerry Curran  
Councillor Dave Laming

## **63 CORE STRATEGY UPDATE**

At this point in the meeting the Chair was advised of the worsening weather conditions in the area.

She asked if the next two agenda items could be dealt with as swiftly as possible.

The Divisional Director for Planning and Transport informed the Panel that the Core Strategy examination had been suspended in response to concerns raised by the Inspector, primarily about the sufficiency of the District's housing land supply. He explained that a review of the District's housing need was on-going and that the review would lead to changes to the Core Strategy which will be considered by Council in February or March 2013.

He added that the representatives on the Local Development Framework (LDF) Steering Group should be passing information onto their respective political groups.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the update.

## **64 GYPSIES & TRAVELLERS UPDATE**

The Divisional Director for Planning and Transport gave an update to the Panel on this item. He informed them that most of the current work had been suspended in light of the need to focus on the Core Strategy.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the update.

**65 ADDITIONAL LICENSING OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

The Chair asked the Associate Director for Housing if there was any scope in moving this report to the March meeting of the Panel.

He replied that as the related Cabinet decision had moved to April the Panel could receive this report at their March meeting.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to defer this report until March.

**66 UPDATE ON PROPOSED PLANNING CONTROLS FOR HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION IN BATH (ARTICLE 4)**

The Chair, having regard to the decision taken on the previous item suggested that this report also be deferred until March.

The Panel agreed with this proposal.

**67 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Panel **RESOLVED** to amend the workplan so that the following reports would be listed under March 2013.

*Update on Proposed Planning Controls for Houses in Multiple Occupation in Bath (Article 4)*

*Additional HMO Licensing*

The meeting ended at 6.10 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**