

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Tuesday, 10th September, 2013

Present:- Councillors Marie Longstaff (Chair), Lisa Brett (Vice-Chair), David Martin, Douglas Nicol, Liz Richardson, Les Kew and Will Sandry (In place of Roger Symonds)

Also in attendance: David Trigwell (Divisional Director - Planning and Transport), Adrian Clarke (Transportation Planning Manager), Peter Dawson (Group Manager, Planning Policy & Transport) and Ian Lund (Historic Environment Team Leader)

14 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

15 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Roger Symonds had sent his apologies to the Panel. Councillor Will Sandry was present as a substitute for Councillor Symonds for the duration of the meeting.

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

18 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

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

The Chair announced that several members of the public wished to make a statement to the Panel and that they would do so directly before their specific item was debated.

20 MINUTES - 16TH JULY 2013

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

21 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Homes & Planning, Councillor Tim Ball addressed the Panel. He informed them that a planning application was due before the Development Control Committee in October for a 10 pitch Gypsy & Traveller Site on the Lower Bristol Road. He added that the site would be for 5 transit and 5 permanent pitches.

He said that the Inspector relating to the Core Strategy would be holding a hearing on September 17th to discuss the questions he had recently asked of the Council regarding its housing need. He added that he expected a full hearing to take place in either November or December.

Councillor Les Kew asked what criteria he was going to use to gain permission to use the land on the Lower Bristol Road as it is within the Green Belt.

Councillor Tim Ball replied that he would be citing 'exceptional use' as the land is close to an array of local amenities. He added that no other site had come forward as a possibility and that only one objection had been received for the proposal.

Councillor Will Sandry asked what site management arrangements would be put in place as currently there appeared to be more vehicles on site than equated to 10 pitches.

Councillor Tim Ball replied that there were only two true travelling families on the site and that the others present would not be eligible to remain on the site.

The Divisional Director for Planning and Transport added for clarification that a pitch could contain a number of vehicles / caravans.

Councillor Liz Richardson asked why the number of sites had reduced from 15 to 10.

Councillor Tim Ball replied that a survey of the site had been carried out and to give adequate space for each pitch and room for vehicles to turn it was determined that 10 was a more feasible number. He added that the permanent pitches are larger than the transit ones.

Councillor Douglas Nicol asked if the Council was discriminating against different types of travellers.

Councillor Tim Ball replied that the definitions were defined by law and the Council was working within its agreed allocation policy / criteria. He added that he would send around the criteria to the Panel.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Caroline Roberts addressed the Panel. She informed them that the Dorchester Street TRO had been advertised and that work was expected to start on the project in July 2014.

She said that the bus stops element of the Bath Package was almost complete and that the next phase would involve the provision of shelters.

She announced that a new footway had been provided through Chew Stoke and that the winter maintenance provision was to be increased.

Councillor Liz Richardson thanked her for the work she had done toward the new footway and asked if drain clearance would be carried out in preparation for winter to avoid flooding.

Councillor Caroline Roberts replied that work was on-going to prevent flooding.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked if extra grit bins could be provided to residents within her ward under the proviso that they are the ones responsible to supply the grit.

Councillor Caroline Roberts replied that she felt this should be possible and would discuss the matter further with Councillor Brett after the meeting.

22 BATH TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Group Manager for Planning Policy & Transport introduced this item to the Panel. He informed them that a master plan is being prepared for co-ordinated growth within the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area and will be informed partly by the Bath Transport Strategy. He added that key to supporting this growth agenda was the need for a new, clear, innovative transport strategy to ensure that the City can compete in the 21st Century whilst respecting its World Heritage Status.

He said that in order to help develop a new transport strategy for Bath a tender was currently underway. He highlighted some of the areas of work that would be undertaken.

- Assess the cumulative impact of developments with the Enterprise Area on the City's transport network to 2029.
- Identify key priority cycling routes and other aspects that will benefit the cyclist.
- Identify key priorities for those on foot and any constraints for those who with mobility difficulties using the shop mobility services.
- Review the Council's emerging Parking Strategy and confirming whether or not the principles are sound within the context of the existing transport provision in the city and of the growth now promoted by the Core Strategy. In particular advice on the size of any public car parking that might be retained in Avon Street following its redevelopment.
- Review the previous work which assessed the demand for an east of Bath Park & Ride and review the conclusions of that work in the light of the proposed new development sites referred to above and the current commercial bus network. This work should assess what capacity is required for current and future demand including the need for further expansion of existing P&R sites.

- Assess the implications and opportunities that may arise from the electrification of GWR mainline.

David Redgewell, South West Transport Network addressed the Panel. He stated clearly his belief that the rural connectivity of public transport must not be cut and called for some areas of the Council to have access to public transport 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

He also called for extra security regarding public transport, especially in the evenings, including CCTV cameras at smaller train stations.

He said that more low floor buses were required across the Council and that also there was not enough bus lane provision.

He asked for the Council to look further into the use of Hybrid / Electric buses and questioned whether the management of the Bath Bus Station could be streamlined.

Henry Brown, Chairman of the Federation of Bath Residents Association addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book.

The Chair asked if the Panel would be able to see the draft detail of the strategy prior to publication and consultation.

The Group Manager for Planning Policy & Transport replied that he would welcome that.

Councillor David Martin commented that he felt the brief within the report was not explanatory enough regarding the work the consultants will have to carry out. He also said that it would be difficult to determine transport movements into 2029 and asked how the intermediate steps would be handled.

The Divisional Director for Planning and Transport replied that the consultants will be asked to take into account our current work and to elaborate on the vision as set out within the Core Strategy when producing the draft strategy. He added that none of the consultants that have been approached have registered a concern over the workload set out.

Councillor Les Kew asked why it had taken 2.5 years of this current Council to only reach this point in the process. He also asked how many consultants were on the shortlist.

The Group Manager for Planning Policy & Transport replied that four consultants have been asked to tender for the work, all of whom are familiar to the area.

Councillor Les Kew asked if any details could be announced with regard to the proposed East of Bath Park & Ride.

The Group Manager for Planning Policy & Transport replied that no announcement could be made at the current time and that the Cabinet would have to decide upon that matter in due course.

Councillor Liz Richardson asked for pinch points to be identified during the survey and called for parking safety in the City to be examined.

The Group Manager for Planning Policy & Transport replied that he would ask the consultants to take those points on board.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Caroline Roberts commented that this should be seen as the beginning of the process which brings together a whole range of elements that have been talked about over a number of years such as the East of Bath Park & Ride and coach parking facilities.

Councillor Will Sandry commented that he believed the consultants should be given more of a scope and that he feared the outcomes would not be innovative enough and constrained by the boundaries of being a World Heritage Site.

Councillor Les Kew commented that he was concerned the public consultation planned for Spring 2014 was near to the end of the life of this current Council.

The Divisional Director for Planning and Transport replied that this work to some extent is dictated by the future of the Core Strategy. He added that one consultation is planned to encompass the Economic, Placemaking & Transport strategies. He stated that work on these matters will still be required even if the Core Strategy is not approved by the Inspector.

Councillor Anthony Clarke commented that he welcomed the over-arching nature of the strategy and hoped it would receive full political support when it was complete to benefit the City and its residents.

The Chair thanked everyone for contributing to the debate and commented that she looked forward to receiving details of the draft strategy when they become available.

23 PARKING STRATEGY

The Transportation Planning Manager introduced this item to the Panel. He explained that the report was an update of the paper submitted to the Panel in September 2011 and sets out the Council's approach to parking issues in Bath, providing a framework for managing car parking spaces for the period 2013 to 2026. He added that the plan will be developed as part of the Bath Transport Strategy and covers all aspects of car parking including:

- On and off-street parking;
- Park and Ride;
- Future parking demand;
- Residential parking standards and enforcement;
- Management issues.

He spoke of how the aim of the strategy is to help improve the quality of life of the people of Bath by establishing a balance between the social, economic, cultural and environmental needs of the whole community.

He stated that a central objective was to reduce the need for drivers to travel to and from the city centre reflecting concerns about the impact of traffic congestion and carbon emissions on the environment and the historic fabric of the World Heritage city, while providing parking provisions that meet a sustainable demand.

He said that the strategy would complement policies to reduce traffic in the central area of Bath by controlling the availability of parking spaces, both on and off street, and by managing the overall supply to meet priority uses.

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Manage travel demand by introducing restraint-based car parking standards to avoid the over provision of car parking spaces and provide disabled 'blue badge' parking spaces
- Sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of Bath by the introduction of transport policies which support the prosperity of the city and provide a balance of good public transport and short stay parking;
- Effectively manage the total parking supply which include all types of parking and consider short stay priorities, regulation, charges and enforcement.

Sally Rothwell, Circus Area Residents' Association and Vineyards Residents' Association addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked if it would be possible to link the North Central Zone with areas 7 & 16.

Sally Rothwell replied that she felt residents were prepared to be flexible on this matter.

The Chair asked if that proposal could be taken on board.

The Transportation Planning Manager replied that he would consult with the Cabinet Member for Transport on that matter through the review process.

The Chair asked if the consultants will be asked to review residents parking.

The Transportation Planning Manager replied that they would and added that the results of that would not necessarily have to wait for the draft strategy work to be completed. He said he would again consult the Cabinet Member for Transport for her view.

Henry Brown, Chairman of the Federation of Bath Residents Association addressed the Panel. A copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book.

Councillor Les Kew commented that he felt the report was disappointing and showed no vision.

Councillor Will Sandry commented that he felt there was a risk to services and a loss of revenue if car parks situated in the centre of Bath closed before further Park & Ride provision was put in place.

Councillor Liz Richardson commented that the use of the Park & Ride needs to become a more attractive offer to the public and suggested charging per vehicle as opposed to per person and introducing an off-peak charge.

The Transportation Planning Manager replied that current Park & Ride services were working well and that usage of the service was increasing. He added that the service was under the control of First so it would be them that set the charging levels.

He said that the Residents Parking Guidance documents had been devised by the Head of Parking Services and should be shared with the Panel.

The Chair summed up the debate and stated that collectively the Panel felt frustrated that it had taken so long to reach this position. She added that the Panel would like to see work progressing on the issue of residents parking outside the collective work of the strategy.

24 ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY GUIDANCE FOR LISTED BUILDINGS AND UNDESIGNATED HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The Cabinet Member for Homes & Planning, Councillor Tim Ball introduced the item to the Panel. He explained that he was seeking their advice on the matter prior to the Cabinet making a decision on 11th September. He also placed before them two additional recommendations;

- (i) To test the balance between sustainability and the conservation agenda by looking at pilot projects especially in the Council's property portfolio and in association with Curo and other partnerships to prove the capacity of Bath and North East Somerset to demonstrate exemplar projects in a World Heritage Site.
- (ii) A further report to come to the Cabinet and this Panel in one years' time to report on progress.

The Historic Environment Team Leader added that conservation lies at the heart of sustainability and that he felt that the additional recommendations were very positive. He also said that significant discussions had been held in the past with Curo and that he would be happy to work with them on future projects.

Councillor Will Sandry commented that he did not think it was too far-fetched to suggest that Listed Buildings should be allowed to have double glazing.

Councillor David Martin, the Member Champion for Climate Change asked the Cabinet to look carefully at the measures that can be implemented and called for them to be as wide reaching as possible. He added that he would like to seek a

change in national guidance through work with the National Trust and English Heritage. He stated that he welcomed both of the additional recommendations.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked if anybody could confirm if York had given permission for its Listed Buildings with timber framed windows to be replaced with double glazing.

The Historic Environment Team Leader replied that he would find it difficult to believe that they would have made a block decision on such a matter. He added that historic buildings needed to breathe. He also reminded the Panel of the work carried out at St. John's Hospital which involved the replacing of around 147 windows following incorrect mouldings and proportions from work carried out in the 1980s.

Councillor Douglas Nicol commented that he had met with Curo recently and was confident that they would like to be involved in this work area.

Councillor Liz Richardson suggested that if the guidance was to be modified in the future then conservation areas should become included.

Peter Andrews, Transition Bath addressed the Panel. He said that he had been asked to be part of a similar project several years ago and had thought that an SPD had been agreed but when the documentation was finally produced it had been heavily edited. He stated that felt around 400 – 500 jobs could be created through retro-fitting.

He said that he applauded the existence of the current document as the buildings concerned should be considered as places to live and work, not museums.

He agreed strongly with the part of the Cabinet recommendation that states to 'Progress the work through the Sustainability Team and engagement with the key Stakeholders and other Authorities'.

The Chair summed up the debate and stated clearly that the Panel supports the report that is going to Cabinet including the two additional recommendations.

25 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chair introduced this item to the Panel.

Councillor Lisa Brett suggested that the Panel at some stage looked at the outcomes of the upcoming Alcohol Harm Scrutiny Inquiry Day.

The Chair reminded the Panel of their wish to see the draft detail of the Transport Strategy and suggested that was placed on the workplan for November.

Councillor Liz Richardson asked if the Flood & Drainage Management item scheduled for November could contain details of the current flood reports.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to agree with all of the above proposals.

The meeting ended at 12.05 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services