

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **PLANNING, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Tuesday, 7th November, 2017

**Present:-** Councillors Will Sandry (Chair), Barry Macrae (Vice-Chair), Rob Appleyard, Colin Blackburn, Lisa O'Brien, Anthony Clarke (in place of David Veale) and Liz Richardson

**Also in attendance:** Graham Sabourn (Head of Housing), Simon De Beer (Group Manager for Policy & Environment), John Cox (Business Support and Development Manager), Richard Daone (Team Manager for Planning Policy), Tim Hewitt (Regeneration Team Manager) and Kaoru Jacques (Senior Planning Officer)

**Cabinet Member for Development and Neighbourhoods:** Councillor Bob Goodman

**Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration:** Councillor Paul Myers

#### **24 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Councillor Liz Richardson as she had now become a permanent member of the Panel. He also wished to thank Councillor Fiona Darey for the work she had carried out in her time on the Panel.

#### **25 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor David Veale had sent his apologies to the Panel, Councillor Anthony Clarke was present for the duration of the meeting as his substitute.

#### **27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

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

There was none.

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

There were none.

## 30 MINUTES - 5TH SEPTEMBER 2017

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

## 31 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

Councillor Paul Myers, Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration addressed the Panel, a summary of his update is set out below.

### **Bath Quays North – Masterplan Consultation**

He explained that drop-in information sessions have been organised between 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> November. At each session there will be an architectural model and display boards outlining the plans and members of the public will be able to put forward their views and comments. He said that outline planning consent for the site would soon be sought, possibly in December.

### **Bath Quays Bridge**

He stated that the bridge will connect the proposed development sites of Bath Quays North and South and enhance the improved connectivity between the riverside and Bath city centre. He said that following planning permission being granted in March 2017 work is expected to begin in 2018 with the bridge completed by 2019.

### **Bath Western Riverside**

A funding bid for Phase 2 has been submitted to the Homes & Communities Agency for £12m.

### **Bath & Somer Valley Enterprise Zone**

The Council has welcomed the West of England Combined Authority's (WECA) proposals to kick start a major transport improvement scheme. £280k has been allocated to develop a business case for improving the route from the Old Mills employment site on the A362 to the A37, which would include removing traffic pinch-points along the road as well as pedestrian and cycling improvements.

### **Heritage Services**

The 'Here Be Dragons' exhibition at the Victoria Art Gallery held from 22nd July - 8th October 2017 attracted over 35,000 visitors.

55,200 visits to The Roman Baths took place after 5.00pm during the summer period.

### **Housing**

540 affordable homes are forecast to be delivered by April 2018, this is above the 3 year target figure of 465.

## **Rough Sleepers - Reconnection Policy**

He said that the Rough Sleeper count for 2017 was due to take place soon. He explained to the Panel that the Reconnection Policy aims to reduce rough sleeping as part of a national strategy. The policy aims to make sure people are helped off the streets quickly, that nobody lives on the streets and that once helped they do not return to the streets. He added that rapid identification and reconnection of rough sleepers with their local community to access housing and support services is an important harm reduction measure, ending homelessness before a person's situation deteriorates further.

## **Tenancy Strategy Update**

All registered providers of social housing with housing stock in the Bath and North East Somerset area have been asked to comment on the proposed minor modifications to the strategic priorities of the Tenancy Strategy. The consultation is open until 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

Councillor Colin Blackburn asked if any update could be given regarding the Newark Works, Bath Quays South and the developers TCN.

Councillor Paul Myers said that he would seek a response and reply to Councillor Blackburn as soon as possible.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien asked if a strategy was in place to try to reduce the numbers of rough sleepers in the area.

Councillor Paul Myers replied that he was due to meet with representatives of Julian House later that day to discuss potential strategies.

The Head of Housing replied that the figures concerned had been similar over the past two counts, 24 in 2015/16 and 25 in 2016/17. He said that of these figures only 3 people were the same across both counts.

Councillor Barry Macrae asked if public safety measures have been considered for the Christmas Market following recent terrorist attacks.

The Regeneration Team Manager replied that planning for the market has been in progress for the past six months alongside Bath Tourism Plus and that he was aware that security and safe access were part of the conditions of the licence of the market.

The Chairman asked if enough facilities were available within Julian House and DHI (Developing Health and Independence) for people who do not have alcohol or drug problems.

The Head of Housing replied that both were good organisations that deal with a range of issues.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Myers for his update on behalf of the Panel.

Councillor Bob Goodman, Cabinet Member for Development and Neighbourhoods addressed the Panel, a summary of his update is set out below.

### **Foxhill Estate**

He informed the Panel that the planning decision relating to the Foxhill estate will not be called in by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

### **Joint Spatial Plan**

He stated that at his request all parties should have received briefings on this matter and that it was due for decision later in the week at Council. He said that he was committed to this process and thanked the officers involved, in particular the Group Manager for Policy & Environment and the Strategic Director for Place.

### **Local Plan Options**

He explained that this process would give the Council a range of opportunities to receive and take into account the views of local residents.

### **Pre Application Advice – Charging Schedule Changes**

He informed the Panel that the Development Management Service can now implement a revised pre application advice charging schedule.

### **HMOs – Revised Supplementary Planning Document**

He said that this matter would be discussed further at the Cabinet meeting on 8th November and that he wished to thank Councillor Liz Richardson for involving him in this process 18 months ago.

Councillor Colin Blackburn asked if the Government had given an opinion yet on the differing statuses of HMOs, professional / student.

Councillor Goodman said that a response had not yet been received.

Councillor Rob Appleyard commented that he felt that the Council should be achieving the affordable housing figures quoted. He said that he had concerns over applications that have been granted and then subsequently reduced their offer. He asked to be provided with figures relating to any shortfall in affordable housing for the last three years.

Councillor Goodman said that he would seek a response and reply to Councillor Appleyard as soon as possible.

Councillor Barry Macrae asked in the context of the Joint Spatial Plan and the Local Plan Options why B&NES should be forced to collaborate to meet the needs of Bristol.

Councillor Goodman replied that he was happy with the work that Bristol has carried out and that he was aware that they are looking to utilise numerous brownfield sites. He added that any shortfall in this respect would be spread across all the other Local Authorities.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Goodman for his update on behalf of the Panel.

## **32 B&NES LOCAL PLAN OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

The Group Manager for Policy & Environment introduced this report to the Panel. He explained that in order to facilitate delivery of the West of England Joint Spatial Plan, and to ensure an up-to-date planning policy framework for B&NES, the Council needs to prepare a new Local Plan.

He stated that the Local Plan is therefore being prepared:

- in the context of and to deliver the Joint Spatial Plan; and
- to respond to changed local circumstances and new national policy and legislation.
- to encompass a development strategy to guide site allocations to meet development requirements, identify and facilitate delivery of associated infrastructure requirements; and
- to include district-wide Development Management policies for determining planning applications.

He said that the options document marks the start of the consultation and that the purpose of the options stage is to facilitate and encourage discussion and comment around the key issues facing B&NES and to test possible solutions to address these issues. He added that the consultation is being divided into phases, the first phase (comprising two periods of consultation) will be a discussion around options and the second phase will be consultation on the preferred approach. He stated that the options document covers four main areas:

- Vision & Priorities – outlining the key challenges facing B&NES and spatial priorities that the Local Plan should address
- Strategy – within the context of the Joint Spatial Plan starting the conversation about possible alternative approaches to providing additional homes to be provided in strategic development locations
- Strategic Development Locations – presenting the emerging proposed approach to development at the strategic locations at North Keynsham and Whitchurch and raising key questions & issues for discussion
- Student accommodation – as a key element of housing need initial consideration of University expansion and possible approaches to providing student accommodation that will need to be considered within the context of the other development pressures and the strategy for Bath

He informed the Panel that consultation on these issues will take place over a seven week period in parallel with that on the Joint Spatial Plan, commencing on 22nd

November 2017 and ending on 10th January 2018. He said that the consultation will be supported by publication of the options document, a range of publicity and staffed exhibitions/drop-in events at key locations.

He said that a second options consultation will be undertaken in the spring of next year. This will be supported by the publication of an options document which will be brought to Members for consideration prior to consultation.

The Chairman said that comments from the Panel would be fed into the Council debate on November 9<sup>th</sup> and he asked that they consider not only the options document but the proposed consultation arrangements.

Councillor Liz Richardson questioned the ratio of exhibition dates, three in North East Somerset and one in Bath, and suggested that one further date be added for Bath.

The Group Manager for Policy & Environment replied that they have attempted to arrange a cross section of events and would review the possibility of one additional date.

Councillor Barry Macrae asked if the residents of Keynsham and Whitchurch would be able to comment on Plans associated with Bristol or would there be a joint consultation.

The Group Manager for Policy & Environment replied that two consultations will take place, one in relation to the B&NES Local Plan and one regarding the West of England JSP where interested parties can comment on the whole plan. He said that officers would be as clear as possible in relation to the two consultations.

Councillor Macrae urged officers to make the message as clear as possible.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien agreed with the comment made by Councillor Macrae that the difference between the two Plans must be explained to the members of the public.

Councillor Barry Macrae said that he wanted officers to think carefully about how to encourage feedback from the public on the types of housing that were required in the future replacing the report's present focus upon only total B&NES houses/unit numbers.

The Group Manager for Policy & Environment replied that officers hope the phased approach will aid in the number of public responses. He added that officers do recognise that some areas of B&NES will not agree with the Plans, but wished to assure them that officers will continue to work with local communities.

The Chairman asked how many stakeholders were on their current database and how the two mail-outs proposed would be distributed.

The Team Manager for Planning Policy replied that around 3,800 organisations, groups or individuals were on their database and that they would be contacted by either e-mail or letter. He added that information would also be supplied via press

releases, the Council's website and other media outlets, including the Together magazine that is circulated to all households.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien wished to encourage the use of local papers to also raise awareness.

Councillor Barry Macrae asked how the potential shortfall of student accommodation would be addressed. He added that he welcomed the further work in this area.

The Senior Planning Officer replied that the Options consultation document asks views on potential options to facilitate further growth if the Universities do expand. She said that discussions were ongoing and that it was important to support development whilst also finding a balance to their growth and meeting the needs for wider Council objectives.

The Chairman asked why there is currently no consideration of student accommodation required across the whole Local Plan period to 2036.

The Senior Planning Officer replied that the Universities work within five year plans which is why the current figures are considered more realistic and reasonable at this stage. She added that for the past three years the intake figures for the University of Bath undergraduate courses have been at the same level, therefore the lower growth figures will be considered too.

The Team Manager for Planning Policy added that the Council will review the Local Plan around every 5 years and at that time would discuss any aspirations the Universities have and how / if they can be accommodated in order to ensure implications on the City and the rest of the District are properly considered.

The Chairman commented that if there was an increase in the number of students we would also need to bear in mind the effect this would also have on their staff levels, including cleaning and security, and the effect on our transport system.

He thanked the officers on behalf of the Panel for their report and the Members for their comments made during the debate.

### **33 SOMER VALLEY ENTERPRISE ZONE**

The Business Support & Development Manager and the Regeneration Team Manager gave a presentation to the Panel to introduce the item. A copy of the presentation can be found on their Minute Book and as an online appendix to these minutes, a summary of the presentation is set out below.

#### Economic Policy Context

By 2030 we want to increase the value of the local economy by £3bn and create 11,500 net additional local jobs.

The recovery in the Somer Valley is largely as a result of the availability and development of employment land at Westfield Industrial Estate and the Bath

Business Park at Peasedown St John. Both these employment sites are now almost fully built out and.....there is an urgent need to bring forward new strategic employment locations in the market towns to enable future local economic growth.

### Core Strategy

The southern part of the District will become more self-reliant, facilitated by economic-led revitalisation.....building on its industrial expertise and improving skill levels. Transport connections to other centres, as well as connections between settlements within the Somer Valley area will continue to be improved.

### Place Making Plan

The Somer Valley element of the Bristol, Bath & Somer Valley Enterprise Zone (EZ) will prioritize the establishment of a new strategic employment location for the area and.....will promote the delivery of new business investment and employment growth and address the Core Strategy Vision & Spatial Strategy for the area.

### Somer Valley Challenges

- Reliance on manufacturing – 20% of total employment (B&NES 5%)
- Poor broadband connectivity

### Somer Valley Priorities

- 2,000 new jobs
- Identify new strategic employment location
- Address ownership / infrastructure / viability constraints

### Somer Valley Enterprise Zone

- Potential new strategic development location
- Direct jobs 1,700
- Annual GVA uplift £122m

### Somer Valley Enterprise Zone – Site Constraints

- Fragmented ownership – Previously a barrier to development
- The need for off-site infrastructure works – A362 to A37
- Access and infrastructure to site – Localised road improvements, on-site roads & utilities
- Viability and developer appetite – Need for a phased approach

### Land Ownership Plan

ST190038 – This part of the site could become Phase 1 and a possible pre-application could be submitted early next year.



## Transport Improvement Study

This study aims to investigate options to improve transport links along the A362 between the EZ and A37 at Farrington Gurney and the cycle and pedestrian links to Midsomer Norton.

The project identifies the following highway improvements & upgrades:

- Pinch points associated with residential parking & lack of footways
- Improvements at the A37/A362 signalised junction
- Pedestrian and cycle linkages
- Potential realignment of the A362 to facilitate access into the Enterprise Zone.

## Enterprise Zone Deliverables

EZ SITES	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT FLOOR AREA BY 2020	TOTAL NET ADDITIONAL JOBS BY 2020	TOTAL NET GVA UPLIFT BY 2020
<b>Old Mills</b>	<b>7,000sqm</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>£18m</b>

## Enterprise Zone Interventions

- Potential “Gainshare” Early Intervention – A362 strategic corridor improvement & upgrading : £2.8m bid
- Local Growth Fund (LGF) “pipeline” – Site access & road realignment : circa £800K
- Potential Council interventions :
  - On site road improvements & access roads
  - On and off-site public utility provision / service reinforcements / service diversions
  - Land acquisition to facilitate a phased development approach

## Next Steps

- Appoint Project Manager
- Commission Commercial Delivery Plan
- Progress landowner engagement
- Set up key stakeholder communication group
- Submit Outline Business Case for Local Growth Fund pipeline funds

## Enterprise Zone Programme

Submission of enabling infrastructure bids – Quarter 1, 2018/19

Submission of planning application for whole site – Quarter 2, 2018/19

Delivery of Phase 1 development commences – Quarter 3, 2018/19

Councillor Rob Appleyard commented that he felt that the Enterprise Zone should look to focus on the digital and creative industries as well as retaining manufacturing employment within the local area. He added that the site could be ideal for businesses that are expanding from their embryonic state.

Councillor Anthony Clarke said that the site had huge potential for the Somer Valley and that it was wonderful to hear that not all development would be taking place along the A4 corridor.

Councillor Liz Richardson stated that she was excited at the potential of the site and hoped that the local history of good manufacturing could continue.

Councillor Colin Blackburn asked how much interest in the Enterprise Zone had been shown by local companies.

The Regeneration Team Manager replied that two of the landowners on the site both have interested parties.

The Business Support & Development Manager added that he was aware of two B&NES companies that were looking to expand.

Councillor Barry Macrae said this was very welcome progress and that he was confident in its future with the support of the Council and WECA. He added that the Enterprise Zone had the potential to improve the quality of life for local residents and reducing the amount of time it takes to commute out of the area currently.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the latest position in relation to the Somer Valley element of the Bath & Somer Valley Enterprise Zone.

#### **34 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Chairman introduced this item to the Panel, he explained that at their January meeting they would be debating their relevant Directorate Plan prior to the budget being set in February.

He added that he would seek a briefing note for the Panel regarding a number of Broadband initiatives so that they could become familiar with them prior to any future report being submitted.

Councillor Liz Richardson commented that she would like the Panel to be involved in the consultation process on the Draft Master Plan for Bristol Airport and suggested that a representative be invited to a public meeting of the Panel.

The Chairman asked the Panel if they were aware of the Waters of Bath project. He explained that a local group were considering the potential to apply to install around 20 fountains across the City.

Following a brief discussion the Panel decided that this idea would be more appropriately discussed by the Bath City Forum. Councillor Colin Blackburn, as Chair

of the Forum said that he would speak further with Councillor Sandry for further information on the project.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to approve the other matters raised.

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**