

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

PLANNING, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Tuesday, 1st March, 2016

Present:- Councillors Rob Appleyard (Chair), Barry Macrae (Vice-Chair), Colin Blackburn, Fiona Darey, Cherry Beath, David Veale and Matthew Davies (In place of Lisa O'Brien)

48 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

49 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Lisa O'Brien sent her apologies and was substituted by Councillor Matthew Davies.

51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rob Appleyard declared an interest in Item 9 'Foxhill Regeneration Charter – Draft for Consultation' as a non-executive Director of Curo and stated that he will withdraw from the Chair for this item and that Councillor Barry Macrae (Vice Chair) will Chair this item.

Councillor Bob Goodman declared an interest in Item 9 'Foxhill Regeneration Charter – Draft for Consultation' as ward Councillor.

52 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

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

Mr Chris Head made a statement on item 11 'Digital BANES'. Members noted that they would debate this issue at item 11 on the agenda.

54 MINUTES - 5TH JANUARY 2016

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

55 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development: Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones was available for Panel members to ask questions.

The Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning: Councillor Liz Richardson updated the Panel on current issues within her portfolio. She made reference to consultation on the Regional Joint Spatial Strategy and Joint Transport Plan. She reported that the Placemaking plan consultation is now closed. She further reported that a new pre-application system will be in place from 1st April in the planning department with four price points. Following a query from Councillor Appleyard, the Cabinet member explained that officer time will not be limited and prices are based on average officer time spent on a specific type of development, she stated that the system will be reviewed after one year. Councillor Macrae stated that the price points on the pre application system is a good thing and reminded the Cabinet member of the importance of the community comment on applications. Councillor Appleyard asked if the Panel could have more information on the recent property company set up by the authority.

Councillor Appleyard asked that the Panel be briefed on the plans for affordable housing. The Cabinet Member explained that this was in the portfolio of Councillor Gerrish but she was happy to find out and report back to this Panel.

Louise Davidson – Team Manager Enabling and Development answered questions on the written statement provided (*this is attached to the agenda papers for this item*). Councillor Blackburn stated that he was glad to hear of the turn-out at the second home-search event. The officer explained that there will be a continued programme of engagement regarding housing.

Regarding the Gypsy and Travellers site, Councillor Matthew Davies asked what the return on the investment is, the officer explained that it is not a money making project but the authority will receive council tax from long term residents. She explained that more information can be brought back to the Panel on this.

56 FOXHILL REGENERATION CHARTER - DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Councillor Appleyard withdrew from the Chair for this item having declared an interest (detailed at item 4). Councillor Barry Macrae took the Chair for this item.

Paul Brockway and Ian Collinson (ATLAS) gave a presentation which covered the following:

- Draft Foxhill Regeneration and Development Charter
- Who we are – ATLAS (Advisory Team for large applications)
- Explaining the draft Charter
- What is it?
- Where has it come from?

- When and how is it proposed to be used?
- Further refinement and Public Consultation

(a copy of this presentation is available with the agenda papers for this item)

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Macrae stated that he felt this is very positive that people with experience are dealing with this but stated that 'partnership' is key.

Councillor Goodman explained that he was part of the process and that the Charter is a very high level document with not a great deal to dispute. He stated that residents want to feel heard and their views, particularly homeowners, must be noted. He stated that there is no real detail as to how the aims will be met without disrupting people. He stressed the need for partnership and that residents' comments be taken on board. Paul Brockway (ATLAS) explained that the document says 'listen' and that while the high level aspirations are being set at the moment, discussion is needed around delivery of the ambitions. Louise Davidson, Team Manager Enabling and Development stated that this gives officers a remit to talk to members, officers and planning developers. Mike Grist (Curo) stated that this is the start of the process and gives a structure, he also stressed the need for partnership working.

In response to a query from Councillor Darey, Paul Brockway explained that the Charter is a live document and has a purpose through the lifetime of the scheme.

Councillor Goodman (ward Councillor) explained that the new Foxhill Residents Association have transformed the way the discussion has taken place. He explained that ATLAS has arranged three workshops which have been superb so far. He commends the Charter to the Scrutiny Panel.

Cabinet Member for Economic Development – Councillor Anketell-Jones explained that he has attended a workshop with ATLAS. He explained some reasons suggested as to why estates have failed in the past and the main reason is that community and environment were overlooked.

David Belham (Foxhill Resident Association) stated that a community cannot just be grown. He explained that Curo are not listening to them and there is a lot of damage to make good. He stated that the home-search event is ill timed as there are not yet plans for which houses are being demolished which has worried residents.

In response to a query on the timeline, it was explained that the consultation time is short, outcomes will be reported to informal Cabinet in March and the final report should be available in the Summer.

It was RESOLVED that the Panel note the report and that an update report will come back to the Panel at a later date.

57 BATH ENTERPRISE AREAS (INC. SOMER VALLEY)

Councillor Rob Appleyard resumed his place as Chairman at this point in the meeting.

Richard Marsh, Senior Development Officer Regeneration Team gave a presentation on Bath Enterprise Areas and Proposed Enterprise Zone which covered the following:

- Bath Enterprise Area
- Continued delivery across the Enterprise Area
- Bath Quays Sites
- The Cattlemarket
- Other Enterprise Area Sites
- Bath Enterprise Area – funding
- Proposed Enterprise Zone
- EZ Incentives
- Site Analysis
- Timeline and next steps

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Bath Enterprise Area

Councillor Macrae welcomed the ambitious programme and reminded officers to communicate with residents regarding disruption. John Wilkinson – Divisional Director Community Regeneration explained that a live map and database is being created (using GIS). He also confirmed that utilities and highways works will be included. Councillor Macrae added Bath Tourism Plus. The Cabinet Member Councillor Anketell Jones stated the service this database offers is only as good as the data put in and also residents should be able to access the information.

Councillor Blackburn asked about the proportion of residential and work space in the new Bath Quays area. The officer explained that the target is 200,000 square feet. He explained that he was mindful of the need for office space but also that residential elements add activity and vibrancy. The balance has to be struck.

In response to a query from Councillor Blackburn, the officer explained that there was no plan for student accommodation on the site. The plan is to encourage graduate jobs.

Councillor Appleyard asked about key dates for Western Riverside, the officer explained that there are ongoing discussions with Crest on phase 2 and the details will emerge over the following year. Regarding a query about a new waterside park, the officer explained that any such park would come under public realm and would be managed by a management company.

Somer Valley Enterprise Area

Councillor Macrae stated that there had been a positive meeting in Somer Valley, he explained that the presentation had indicated that the area might be useful for

companies who need more space than is available in the city. He added that broadband in the area would encourage companies to move there. The officer explained that the basis of the bid was to link both areas as Bath does not have lots of space and the Somer Valley gives the benefits of Bath with space. He added that transport links must be considered.

There was some discussion around business rates and the formula used. The officer said that he would seek clarification from Tim Richens and circulate a note to the Panel.

Councillor Macrae stated that it has become apparent that there is likely to be more joint working between City and North East Somerset, he congratulated the Cabinet on giving officers the resources to make this happen.

It was RESOLVED that a progress report, timeline and firmer figures be reported to a future meeting.

58 DIGITAL B&NES

Thys Van Tonder, Principle Enterprise Development Officer, gave a presentation to the Panel on 'Digital BANES' which covered the following:

- Agenda
- Drivers and objectives
- Economic Growth
- Data Traffic – smartphone
- Map of BANES Broadband coverage
- Future Proof
- Bath progress
- North East Somerset progress
- Environment
- Implementation Priorities
- Smart City Framework
- Key Success indicators

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

There was some discussion around the issues around broadband in the centre of Bath. The officer explained that it is about investment from the supplier.

Councillor Darey asked if data space can be rented out. The officer explained he is looking at this but there is limited scope due to state aid.

Councillor Appleyard asked how far we are in being able to supply the right bandwidth to businesses who want to move here. The officer explained that this is a difficult question to answer as the Council cannot invest in areas (dark areas on the map) where BT are delivering. It has to be done within State Aid rules.

Councillor Blackburn asked about a timeline on this as it is potentially keeping businesses out of Bath. The officer stated that BT say they are going to make further investments in the city.

Councillor Macrae asked for reassurance on the questions posed in the statement (item 6) from Chris Head. The officer stated that most of the points raised are regarding Devon and Somerset and most concerns raised are not being addressed.

It was RESOLVED that the Panel be updated on progress at a future meeting (possible that BT could be invited).

59 SKILLS & APPRENTICESHIPS PROGRAMME

Kate Starks, Principle Enterprise Development Officer, gave a presentation to the Panel on 'Skills and Apprenticeships Programme' which covered the following:

(note Barney Willis from Bath College was also present to answer questions)

- Delivering the BANES Economic Strategy – Priorities
- Evidence based strategy: social mobility
- Evidence based strategy: business growth
- Our opportunities
- Bath Enterprise Area Masterplan
- Employment Hub

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

In response to a question from Councillor Blackburn, the officer reported that the city of Bath has 462 apprenticeships at present.

Barney Willis reported that retention into employment this year is 82% against a national average of 67%. The success is down to thoroughly vetting the companies beforehand and through communication and monitoring. The officer added that there is liaison over timescales with developers and apprenticeships.

Councillor Blackburn stated that his company engages with the scheme but there are a lot of hoops for companies to jump through.

The Panel RESOLVED to note the report.

60 PANEL WORKPLAN

Councillor Appleyard explained that he would be meeting with Directors and Cabinet Members to see what is coming forward and come back to the Panel with this information.

Councillor Darey asked about having an item on flood risk. Councillor Appleyard explained that he would take some advice regarding Panel remits as he thought this may overlap with the Communities, Transport and Environment Panel remit.

Other items for consideration that were suggested are: Housing and Planning Bill; Broadband and Digital and Retail shopping.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting ended at 5.20 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services