

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

20 July 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Bower (Chair), Hughes (Vice-Chair), Chapman, Charles, Coster, Elkins, Jones, Lury, Thurston and Yeates

147. WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members of the Committee, the Public and Press, other Members and Officers participating in the evening's second meeting of the Planning Policy Committee under the newly adopted Committee structure and the first in person since the easing of restrictions.

148. APOLOGIES

An Apology for Absence had been received from Councillor Goodheart.

149. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Charles declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 6 [A259 Corridor Improvements Consultation] as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Elkins declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Items 6 [A259 Corridor Improvements Consultation] and 7 [Arun Infrastructure Investment Plan - Timetable Amendment] as a Member of West Sussex County Council.

150. MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 June 2021 were approved by the Committee.

151. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items.

152. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that there had been no questions from the public submitted for this meeting.

153. A259 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS CONSULTATION

*[Councillors Charles and Elkins re-declared their Personal Interest made at the start of the meeting].*

The Chair welcomed Paul Eagle, Principal Transport Planner at West Sussex County Council, to the meeting. The Planning Policy and Conservation Team Leader then presented his report and explained the importance of the A259 corridor to Arun (to address growth, and relationships between key settlements and identified development sites in the District) and how it was recognised by the Department for Transport as part of the major road network.

Members then took part in a full debate on the item where a number of points were raised including:

- the crucial need for mitigation measures
- issues around land take, for example around roundabouts and bus lanes
- support for better cycling and walking lanes
- disappointment with the proposed speed limit of 60mph and impacts on safety to cyclists and pedestrians
- the number of roundabouts and the disruption caused to the flow of cycle ways even with priority given to cyclists
- concerns over time added to journey times
- support for roundabouts, even if they do slow journeys, due to their impact on reducing road traffic collisions
- whether the A259 should become dual carriageway
- concerns with the Wick roundabout, particularly the petrol station junction and supermarket filter lane
- concerns with the Church Lane roundabout currently (northbound traffic holding up eastbound traffic) and whether the proposals would make any difference to these issues, and potentially create new issues with the proposed closing of the southern arm which leads to a primary school
- data missing from the proposal - development north of the A259 between the Oystercatcher and Church Lane roundabouts
- positive response that it would allow more time for the consultation stage and for more comment to be fed into it

The Planning Policy and Conservation Team Leader, with the support of the Principal Transport Planner, provided Members with answers to all points raised during the debate. It was confirmed that the consultation would be extended to 15 August with a report published in October. This would be followed up by further data collection over the autumn/winter delayed by Covid 19 restrictions, with an outline business case then going to the Department for Transport. If this was approved, then a detailed design would be submitted to Government in October 2024 with a view to construction in 2025

The recommendations were then proposed and seconded.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Planning Policy Committee agree the consultation response to the A259 Corridor Enhancement Study as set out in strategic comments in section 1.6 and detailed comments in section 1.7 and Appendix 2.

154. ARUN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN - TIMETABLE AMENDMENT

*[Councillor Elkins re-declared his Personal Interest made at the start of the meeting.]*

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Planning Policy and Conservation Team Leader explained the impact of changes to the Council's structure and the Constitution on timescales for the project and how the proposed amended timetable would be in place for the next financial year which would also allow for more information to be sought from infrastructure providers.

Members then took part in a full debate on the item where a number of points were raised including:

- the need for more information before the investment plan could be taken forward, including liaising with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for infrastructure at West Sussex County Council
- the possibility of a CIL forecast so Members could have some sense of what level of infrastructure project might be achievable and an idea of the schemes most likely to come forward
- the lack of other options available
- the need for more information from Parish Councils and an understanding of the frameworks they work within
- the need for Member liaison meetings where needs could be identified

The Planning Policy and Conservation Team Leader provided Members with answers to all points raised during the debate. The recommendations were then proposed and seconded.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Planning Policy Committee agree the updated timetable for the preparation, consultation and approval of the Arun Infrastructure Investment Plan 2022-2023.

155. ARUN HOUSING DELIVERY ACTION PLAN - UPDATE

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Planning Policy and Conservation Team Leader presented his report, explaining the impact of the Government's Housing Delivery Test and how this triggered the need for an Action Plan to identify ways to improve housing delivery. This Action Plan had proactively sought to establish what issues were preventing or delaying landowners and developers from bringing forward planning applications, as well as attempted to improve the quality of applications that did come forward. He confirmed that the key finding from the low level of response was a call for greater flexibility for developers to allow proposals to come forward on their own merits and therefore more quickly. He also confirmed that if the recommendations were approved this would be renamed the Housing Delivery Action Plan to clarify its contents.

Members then took part in a full debate on the item where a of points were raised including:

- which developers were asking for this flexibility and would this report lead to suggestions to move things forward
- the Council's ongoing communication with developers and whether responses had been chased to improve the response rate
- whether flexibility meant sacrificing standards
- the need for new development to be climate resilient
- the design guide being a positive thing and the Council seeing better developments as a result
- the dichotomy of pushing for new sites without undermining existing developments

The Planning Policy and Conservation Team Leader provided Members with answers to all points raised during the debate. The recommendations were then proposed and seconded.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

1. The updated Housing Delivery Action Plan be published on the website;
2. The Committee considers the limited results of the consultation and barriers identified and notes that Officers will continue to work proactively on feasible measures to boost housing supply.

156. DUTY TO COOPERATE (STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND) BETWEEN CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL AND ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Chair introduced this report and explained that the Council's change to a Committee structure had necessitated this action.

Members then took part in a full debate on the item where a number of points were raised including:

- the consequences if the Committee did not approve this item
- the location of Crawley to Arun
- sympathy for Crawley's issues but recognition that Arun also had issues
- Arun taking housing demand from Chichester and Crawley
- Horsham being closer to Crawley and should be bearing more of the need
- development needs in Brighton and Worthing/Adur, and the lack of green spaces
- water supply and waste water treatment sites

The Planning Policy and Conservation Team Leader provided Members with answers to all points raised during the debate. The recommendations were then proposed and seconded.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Chair of Planning Policy Committee be authorised to sign the joint Statement of Common Ground with Crawley Brough Council.

157. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Work Programme.

(The meeting concluded at 7.35 pm)