

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

6 June 2024 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Yeates (Chair), Lury (Vice-Chair), Elkins, Goodheart, Huntley, Long, McDougall and Wallsgrove (substitute for McAuliffe)

Apologies: Councillors Tandy, McAuliffe and Bower

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Goodheart declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item, as a Trustee of the Friends of Hotham Park.

31. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Planning Policy Committee held on 6 March 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair.

32. 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 for this meeting.

33. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

34. START TIMES

It was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Lury that the start time for the remaining meetings of Planning Policy Committee for 2024/25 be 6pm.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the start time of all remaining meetings of the Committee for 2024/25 would be 6pm.

35. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-2026 - QUARTER 4 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 31 MARCH 2024

The Group Head of Planning was invited by the Chair to present the report to the Committee which sought to update the Committee on the Quarter 4 and end of year Performance Outturn for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which made up the

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Corporate Plan, for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Referring to the Committee's Indicator CP36 Number of New Homes Completed, the Council's final figure for 2024-25, of 995 dwellings represented an improvement compared to recent years.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members. In response to a question about what the quantum of dwellings would be required to assist the Council to catch up. The Group Head of Planning replied that the Council's standard housing methodology figure was between 1,200 and 1,700 per year. The Authority Monitoring Report currently demonstrated a 4.2 year housing land supply and therefore the Council was falling further behind on its target, currently by approximately 1,000. Responding to a member comment that the Council should be realistic when setting targets that were not deliverable, the Chair said that the Indicator was historically a challenging target and that the Committee will be watchful during the review of the Local Plan that the situation did not worsen.

Concern was expressed that the Council was not achieving its target due to developers not having the capacity to build the required housing and land banking, which resulted in artificially raised house prices. and due to the number of physical constraints in the District. Reference was made to the Local Plan evidence base, the possibility that the results of the studies may indicate that the Council would not be able to meet the Government targets set. The Group Head of Planning advised that the Council's Market Absorption study had assessed Arun's housing delivery rates, although it was not conclusive, due to there not being enough years of evidence at that time. He did not necessarily agree that land banking was occurring and in terms of the speed of delivery this was outside the Council's control, as it was the developers who influenced supply and demand. Further evidence will become available during the review of the Local Plan and was likely to demonstrate that whatever housing figure the Council has, the development industry will only deliver a maximum number annually, which was unlikely to meet the Council's housing requirement. The housing figure set by the Council should be robust and 100% deliverable. However, the Council will need to convince a Planning Inspector that, based on the evidence, the Council is unable to meet a higher target.

The Vice-Chair advised that he had twice written to the Government raising the Council's concerns about the constraints experienced in the District, due to its position by the sea, the location of coastal flood plains and the South Downs National Park to the north. Concerns were raised about the number of developers advising their development was no longer viable with an affordable housing element. Under the Duty to Co-operate, both Worthing Borough and Chichester District councils have asked Arun to take some of their housing requirement.

Discussion took place on the affordable element of the housing target, which members asked officers to consider adding as a new KPI. The Group Head of Planning advised that the numbers of affordable houses that are delivered as a proportion of the overall number were currently reported through the Council's Annual Monitoring report.

The Committee then noted the report.

36. COUNCIL VISION PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023 - 2024

The Group Head of Organisational Excellence was invited by the Chair to present the report which sought to update the Committee on the end of year performance of the Vision indicators for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The outcomes were being reported to all Service committees to give members a full overview of the Council's performance and included areas members may be less familiar with. Any questions from members that cannot be answered will be responded to outside of the meeting.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members. Councillor Elkins referred to the questions he had submitted before the meeting, which he understood he would be provided with responses outside of the meeting.

However, he wished his questions to be noted by the Committee, as follows:

- CV1(Wellbeing clients satisfaction rating): Details of the actual figure for the number of Wellbeing clients seen each year were requested?
- CV2 (Wellbeing clients reporting that one or more of their lifestyle goals has been achieved (3 months after the conclusion of the intervention): The number of clients that attended follow up appointments?
- CV11 (Average length of stay in temporary accommodation – 3 months/12 weeks): The cost of providing emergency accommodation and is the expenditure within the Council's financial budget?
- CV21 (Number of Council homes that meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing): What were the actions being taken to address the delivery of minimum standards and was there a timetable?

The Group Head of Organisational Excellence confirmed that responses to the questions would be provided in due course.

- CV29 (Other climate related strategies and milestones for 2022/23): An update was requested on the Sussex Bay project.
- CV37 (Commission and carry out tourism campaign): It appeared that this indicator suggested that the tourism market needed to be stimulated. How will this be done?
- CV39 (Number of new hotel and new holiday accommodation beds provided): How will projects for new hotels come forward and was there a willingness to support these projects? Councillor Lury informed members that he and Councillor Wallsgrove would be attending the Sussex Bay launch on 13 June 2024 and will bring a report back to the Committee.

The Committee noted the report.

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37. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISALS FOR BOGNOR REGIS HOTHAM PARK AND BOGNOR REGIS RAILWAY STATION

Councillor Goodheart declared a personal interest as a Trustee of the Friends of Hotham Park.

The Planning Policy and Conservation Manager was invited by the Chair to present the report that related to draft conservation area character appraisals for the Bognor Regis Hotham Park and Bognor Regis Railway Station conservation areas. The Council has a Statutory duty to update and review the evidence concerning the District's special historic and architectural interest areas. Character appraisals formed part of the evidence base supporting the designation and management of conservation areas. They were used to inform decision making when considering planning applications and fed into the preparation of the Council's Local Plan policies. The character appraisals provided an opportunity to make adjustments. These included an opportunity to extend the Hotham Park CA boundary following an extensive restoration scheme and to remove some anomalies. It was proposed to add the Railway Goods Yard to the Railway Station CA. The next steps were for the two conservations areas to go out for public consultation, which would run from 20 June to 18 July 2024. If only minor comments were received it was intended to adopt the conservation appraisals on 9 August 2024. Any significant comments would be considered by the Planning Policy Committee on 26 September 2024.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Lury and seconded by Councillor Huntley.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members who welcomed the proposals and thanked officers for their work. It was questioned why Church Path, the walls surrounding Mead Lane, greenspace north of the boundary at Chichester University Bognor Regis Campus and the Playing field north of Brooks Lane were not included in the Hotham Park CA, as it was considered that these areas should also be protected. The inclusion of the original Railway Station boundary wall in the Railway Station CA was also suggested. The Planning Policy and Conservation Manager advised that during the public consultation period, respondents could suggest the inclusion of additional areas for review by the Council's Conservation Officer. Subject to them having evidence concerning their architectural and historic interest and whether they contribute to the character of the conservation area. The inclusion of areas provided additional protections, bringing them into the planning regime, placing additional planning restrictions to protect their character. He would ask the Conservation Officer to respond directly to the question raised. The Group Head of Planning asked members to approach officers in advance of the meeting if they had specific questions about the inclusion of certain areas, it would enable officers to prepare responses in advance of the meeting.

The Planning Policy and Conservation Manager undertook to clarify with the Conservation Officer, if the shop fronts shown within the Railway Station CA included in

the photograph - Figure 14, Page 118, Station Road had been omitted from the map -, Figure 19, Page 122 of the Railway Station Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

The Group Head of Planning added that clarification of the boundaries could delay the public consultation if adjustments were required. He suggested an amendment to the recommendation that to delegate authority to the Group Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Policy Committee to clarify the boundary shown at Figure 19, Page 122 and to ensure the documents are aligned. These documents will be re-circulated to members with any amendments made.

Councillor Elkins proposed the suggested amendment to the recommendation and was seconded by Councillor McDougall.

He advised that if members wished for the shop fronts to be included, the Conservation Officer may provide good reasons why their inclusion was not appropriate. Clarification was sought from members as to whether the decision on their inclusion should be delegated to the Chair and Vice-Chair or whether they wanted these shop fronts to be included in any case. Members confirmed they wished to include the shop fronts shown at Figure 19, Page 122 to be included within the Railway Station CA as part of the consultation. The Group Head of Planning confirmed that offices would work on the basis that the shop fronts would be included and the decision reported back to the Committee.

The Group Head of Planning responded to a suggestion that the Signal Box, Railway Crossing Gates and Goods Yard should also be included within the Railway Station CA. The difficulty with including detached specific structures was that they would not necessarily be related to the rest of the Conservation Area, which itself formed one heritage asset. The Chair informed the Committee that, as these areas had not formed part of the current appraisal, their consideration could be given to a future conservation area appraisal instead.

It was agreed that a separate vote would take place on the amended recommendation (amendment indicated in **bold**). Upon a vote amended recommendation i) was CARRIED, as follows:

The Committee:

RESOLVED

- i) to agree the draft conservation area character appraisals for Bognor Regis Hotham Park and Bognor Regis Railway Station, which include proposed boundary changes, for the purpose of public consultation between 20 June - 18 July (4 weeks). **Authority will be delegated to the Group Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, to include the shop fronts, Station Road, set out in figure 14, page 118;**

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The Committee then voted on recommendations ii) and iii), which were CARRIED as follows:

The Committee:

RESOLVED

ii) that the Group Head of Planning, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee, be given delegated authority to agree minor editorial changes prior to publication;

iii) that following public consultation, should only minor changes be necessary, the two appraisals be adopted on 9 August 2024. In the event that comments are received that require significant changes, these be reported back to the next Committee on 26 September 2024 for a decision.

38. REGULATION 19 PUBLICATION ARUN GYPSY & TRAVELLER & TRAVELLER SHOWPEOPLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

The Planning Policy & Conservation Manager was invited by the Chair to present the report on the draft Regulation 19 Publication Gypsy & Traveller Development Plan (G&TDPD) document, which had been subject to a publication consultation period from 13 December 2023 to 7 February 2024. The G&TDPD document identified the need for 9 permanent Gypsy & Traveller Pitches and 14 permanent Travelling Showpeople plots. These would be provided through intensification on existing sites and one new pitch at little Meadow, Yapton. During the consultation 16 material objections for soundness reasons were received, not 17 as stated at paragraph 3.2 of the report, three supporting representations and 12 general representations. Officers considered that the majority of objections could be resolved by modifications to policies at the examination stage.

He drew attention to the Government announcement, during the consultation period, of changes to the definition of Gypsy and Traveller Households. This change was a material consideration that potentially doubled the Council's need and legal advice had been sought. The Planning Inspectorate for England had carried out an advisory visit to explore the options available and has advised the Council that the Local Plan should not be submitted for examination, on the basis that the G&TDPD did not address the significant additional need, due to the risk it would be found unsound. In view of the advice received, officers recommended the withdrawal of the G&TDPD, so that it could be banked and the evidence base updated, and treated as part of the Council's local Plan update, which under the new Local Plan system expected them to be single plans to include all the relevant policy revisions.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Lury and seconded by Councillor Huntley.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members. The Planning Policy & Conservation Manager clarified that the expected need was expected to

double, as the change to the definition now included Gypsy & Traveller (G&T) households that had ceased to travel permanently (previously excluded for the purposes of identifying pitch requirements). However, as it was not known if these households would want a pitch, the evidence database required updating and the need re-based in the Local Plan through the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation assessment. The new regulations were due to come into effect following the introduction of the new planning system during November 2024.

RESOLVED

The Committee is asked to agree:

- i. To note the Regulation 19 Publication G&T DPD Representations Statement together with the supporting evidence base, and that these shall be retained to be considered and updated as work to inform Gypsy & Traveller policy, including pitch and plot provision, within the Local Plan Update 2023-2041;
- ii. That the G&T DPD is withdrawn by making available a statement of that fact via notice (to consultees and at deposit points) including on the Council's web site. The G&T DPD document will cease to be made available after 6 weeks, in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 27 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and section 22 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

39. SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

The Committee received a report from Councillor McAuliffe giving an update on the South Downs National Park Authority.

40. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Work Programme for 2024-25.

41. FAREWELL TO THE PLANNING POLICY & CONSERVATION MANAGER

The Chair informed the Committee that Kevin Owen, Planning Policy & Conservation Manager was leaving Arun District Council and that his last day was tomorrow. Kevin had worked at Arun District Council for six years and the Chair wished him all the very best in his new role. She thanked him for his helpfulness and patience and asked him to keep in touch and that he would be missed. The Vice-Chair wished to add that Kevin had been very generous with his time and had gone above and beyond. He was sad to see him leave as it had been great working with Kevin and thanked him. Other members also wished him well, adding they had always found Kevin to be very helpful and had found the time to clearly explain difficult policies and proposals.

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Kevin Owen thanked members for their comments and said that he had enjoyed his time at Arun District Council. He provided details of his new role. He referred to the challenges this District faced.

(The meeting concluded at 7.28 pm)