

Minutes of a meeting of the LOCAL PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE held on Wednesday, 8th June, 2016 in the Civic Community Hall, Vicarage Lane, HAILSHAM (10.00 a.m. to 11.10 a.m.)

PRESENT: Councillors A Newton (Chairman), N Collinson, J Howell, R Standley, S Stedman and S Shing.

In attendance were the Director of Planning Policy & Economic Development (N Hannam), Strategic Planning Manager (M Briggingshaw) and Democratic Services Officer (S Lawrence).

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Galley.

16/4 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th April 2016 were confirmed and signed as a correct record

16/5 WEALDEN LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

Marina Briggingshaw (Strategic Planning Manager) presented a report providing an update on the work being undertaken to progress the production of the Wealden Local Plan, including information on the studies being carried out as the evidence base for the Plan, and information on the land that had been submitted for consideration for development in growth areas, as part of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.

The Strategic Planning Manager explained the studies being undertaken and answered Members' questions. It was noted that many of the questions from residents related to provision of health facilities and schools in growth areas, and this was covered through the work on the infrastructure delivery plan (IDP). It was agreed it would be helpful if a list of the organisations and matters being covered in the IDP was published alongside the minutes and in the Councillors Bulletin for Members' information.

The studies in relation to shopping, leisure and open spaces and sports were discussed, and it was suggested that this was the opportunity for the Council to shape the quality of life for future communities.

Some concern was expressed as to whether there was sufficient road capacity being developed. It was confirmed that a multi-modal study had been commissioned to be carried out with East Sussex County Council, and the Council should continue to push for investment in local roads.

It was noted the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments could be collected on smaller developments, but not in relation to affordable housing, which included starter homes. It was noted that the assessment in relation to

Affordable Housing requirements in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was now being carried out in relation to settlements, rather than parish areas, and was an assessment of current need not projected into the future.

The Sub-Committee then proceeded to discuss the maps showing the land which had been submitted by landowners for the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in and around the settlements of: Wadhurst, Mayfield, Stone Cross, Westham, Polegate and Willingdon, Hailsham (and surrounds), Herstmonceux, Ninfield, East Hoathly, Heathfield, Horam and Frant on the edge of Tunbridge Wells.

The Strategic Planning Manager explained that it was very unusual for the Council to make available any such information mid-study, but had chosen to do so due to the number of Freedom of Information requests received on this information. She advised that the parcels of land had not yet been assessed for suitability and were not a policy statement for future growth, and it was anticipated that the maps would change significantly as part of the process, with additional sites being submitted, and others withdrawn.

The Strategic Planning Manager highlighted, as an example, that there was an area on the map relating to Herstmonceux which had been put forward by the previous landowner but was now owned by the Parish Council, who had now advised it should be withdrawn. A later version of the map would exclude this site.

Councillor Shing asked that a correction be made to the future map titled Polegate to clarify that it covered land in both Polegate and Willingdon, and this was agreed.

A question was asked about one of the portions of land which included a major roundabout, and in other areas the submissions were piecemeal. The Strategic Planning Manager confirmed that sites were accepted for the SHELAA as submitted and then assessed for suitability as part of the process. Councillor Newton (Portfolio Holder) advised that in many ways it would be better if large areas were submitted, so that a better strategic solution for development could be developed.

A question was asked as to whether this excluded areas of land previously dismissed in earlier assessments. The Strategic Policy Manager advised that it should include all land submitted, unless already built out or withdrawn by the landowner, as this would be subject to a new suitability assessment.

It was noted that the Planning Policy Team was still accepting sites for consideration under the SHELAA, and would continue to do so up to submission. However, it would be preferable to receive information on sites or potential sites as early as possible, in order that the land could be included in the ecological, landscape and flood risk studies currently being commissioned and in allocations.

The Leader suggested that the Councillors Bulletin article explaining the IDP, should also clarify the status of the maps published with this agenda, and

advise Members of the need to encourage landowners to look at submitting additional land for the SHELAA, and this was endorsed.

RESOLVED to request that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development:

- A. To note the studies being undertaken and the resulting stakeholder involvement; and
- B. To note the sites that have been submitted for assessment as part of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and recognise the important caveats placed against this information and the on-going work required to complete this evidence base.

16/6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was intended that the next meeting would be held on a date to be identified in September and was likely to be a further update on progress in the preparation of the Wealden Local Plan.

Councillor A Newton
Chairman