

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Decisions

ROGER REED

Cabinet Member - Sustainable Development

Having considered the reports contained in the agenda of a meeting of the Policy Advisory Group (PAG) held on 27 November 2008 and the views of the PAG expressed at the meeting, the Cabinet Member has made the following decisions:

1. JOINING UP PLANNING AND PLACE SHAPING IN SOUTH BUCKS

The Cabinet Member has considered a report of the Chief Executive reviewing the various aspects of planning in South Bucks with particular reference to the contribution it makes to the Council's role in shaping the District.

The report put forward two issues in planning where there was an opportunity for the Council to take the initiative on a wider range of matters including a more proactive approach to setting out its vision for the nature of development in the District and managing the inevitable changes taking place in the built environment. Firstly "Place Shaping" was now a duty on the Council as well as a key local aim and this needed to be furthered in ways other than simply through the Local Development Framework process. Secondly, managing the built environment needed to be taken forward on a broader front than just the re-active task of dealing with planning applications.

The Cabinet Member has agreed in principle to look further at a number of possible initiatives, having first sought views from the Planning Committee and the Local Development Framework Panel, which would provide a means of going forward with this new approach:

- (a) greater use of planning briefs for key sites;
- (b) consider opportunities for Councillors to look at major or sensitive development proposals at an early stage;
- (c) increased use of supplementary planning documents to update planning policies;
- (d) officers to seek out best practice from elsewhere and carry out regular benchmarking;
- (e) greater use of Conservation Area designations;
- (f) explore potential for local listing of buildings of character/historic interest;
- (g) Tree Preservation Orders - more targeted plus review of area orders;
- (h) Review delegation/criteria for planning applications reported to Committee to bring forward for consideration applications involving a precedent or challenge to policies;
- (i) (similar to (b) above), look at introducing arrangements whereby councillors, including ward councillors, can look at potential applications likely to test policies;
- (j) Site visits to sites where permissions look poor in retrospect or where development refused but lost on appeal - in order to learn lessons; and
- (k) A mechanism for reviewing appeal decisions to see what positive lessons could be learned.

The Cabinet Member has indicated that the way each possible initiative might be taken forward would need to be carefully considered, would need to be the subject of further report(s), and would need to be phased according to available resources.

2. **PLANNING ENFORCEMENT AND CONDITION MONITORING POLICY AND PRACTICE NOTE**

The Cabinet Member has considered a report of the Director of Services on a proposed update of the Planning Enforcement and Condition Monitoring Policy and Practice Note. The Policy was similar to the existing which had been in effect since December 2006 but contained more emphasis on pro-active enforcement monitoring.

The Cabinet Member has decided to endorse the Policy and Practice Note for adoption by the Planning Committee, subject to revised targets for making an initial site visit to 10 working days for medium priority and 20 working days for low priority, with a review of the Policy to take place in six months.

3. **PORTFOLIO BUDGETS 2009/10**

The Cabinet Member has considered a report seeking approval for the draft revenue budget and fees and charges schedule for 2009/10 for the Sustainable Development portfolio.

A revenue growth bid had been put forward for £10k for Development Control consultancy to assist in dealing with the potential major Pinewood Studios planning application.

He has approved for submission to the Cabinet:

- (1) the draft revenue budget for 2009/10 of £1,018,130;
- (2) the 2009/10 fees & charges;

and deferred putting forward the growth bid pending the timing of any application and other options which may be available.

Date Published: 2 December 2008 **Date to be Implemented:** 10 December 2008.