

CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the SERVICES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE held on 3 FEBRUARY 2015

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs J A Burton - Chairman
" - Vice Chairman

Councillors: S P Berry
R Burns-Green
P M Jones
S A Patel
D W Phillips
J J Rush
Mrs L M Smith
C J Wertheim

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors A S Hardie, D J Lacey, Mrs A Pirouet, M Prince, N M Rose and P N Shepherd

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Mrs I A Darby

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor Mrs L Smith, seconded by Councillor C J Wertheim and

RESOLVED -

That Councillor Mrs J Burton be elected Chairman of the Services Overview Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was agreed to continue without a Vice Chairman for the present time.

RESOLVED -

That a Vice Chairman would not be appointed to the Services Overview Committee.

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED –

That the Terms of Reference for the Services Overview Committee agreed at the meeting of Full Council held on 22 July 2014 be noted.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S Berry declared a prejudicial interest in item 9, Sustainable Construction & Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document. Nature of interest – Councillor Berry worked for a solar power company.

Councillor P Jones declared a prejudicial interest in item 9. Nature of interests – Councillor Jones was a member of the Sustainable Development Policy Advisory Group.

5 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered potential topics for review from the 28 Day Notice Forward Plan. It was queried whether an interim report was due on the Local Plan but advised that the next key stage, Issues and Options consultation, would be in October / November 2015. The committee considered that the next meeting on 10 March 2015 might be too soon unless the Amersham Car Parking report would be ready at that time.

RESOLVED –

That the Work Programme be noted and no further topics be added at this time.

6 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

There was a request for more reports on infrastructure needs in the district. At present, only Thames Water were on the list to give a presentation. It was advised that infrastructure linked to new development such as education, utilities and health infrastructure provision would be assessed as part of the new local plan process. Members decided that infrastructure should be considered as an item on its own however and requested that it be added to the provisional list.

RESOLVED

That Infrastructure provision be added to the list of potential topics for the future work programme.

7 SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION & RENEWABLE ENERGY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Following the consultation in July to September 2014, 24 detailed responses have been received which are summarised in the appendix to the report. It was recommended that the flow chart and supporting text on Pages 40 – 43 of the main document be amended where it refers to “carbon dioxide” to read “energy” instead so as to accord more closely with the wording of Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy. The Committee agreed to support this change.

The policy approach with regard to wind farms was discussed and in particular whether proposals for single standalone wind turbines could be permitted. It was advised that there were a number of factors to consider for applications of this kind, including the AONB and the impact on the landscape. It was also advised that planning applications would be unlikely to be turned down on the basis of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), as the SPD provides potential solutions to meet the Core Strategy requirements.

It was noted that there would be more government amendments to policy expected shortly that could have implications for the SPD and also the energy strategy from Bucks County Council was nearing completion. The SPD would therefore need to be updated accordingly or viewed in the context of changing advice/guidance.

The requirement for Zero Carbon Homes in 2016 was discussed, alongside the current popularity of open fires and log burners.

There was a request to see the Waste Local Plan report from Bucks County Council. It was advised that the timing of the consultation had slipped and Chiltern District Council would still be a consultee to the plan.

RESOLVED –

That the recommendations contained in the draft Cabinet report be endorsed by the Services Overview Committee with the change to pages 40-43 set out above and that the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Cabinet.

8 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY UPDATE

The report gave an overview of the provision of affordable housing made during the last five years. Item 4.4 lists the locations allocated in the Core Strategy for new development which will include affordable homes. The financial allocations are listed on page 64 and represent the position at 31/12/14. Some 51 additional affordable units are due to be delivered in 2014/15. The Government changes announced on 28 November 2014 may reduce the potential in the future for receiving financial contributions towards affordable housing.

There were further proposals for allocations to be made (i) to Paradigm to support more property acquisitions as the previous schemes had been successful and (ii) to encourage Registered Providers to bring forward more affordable housing opportunities.

The Committee expressed the view that it was important to commit affordable housing contributions to support new and additional provision and were pleased with the proposed allocations. They noted that it was getting more difficult to find suitable properties because of rising costs and competition. It was asked whether the money was being used to replace housing previously sold by Paradigm under their programme of disposals. It was advised that when properties were sold under these circumstances, the income raised was

always recycled back into purchasing more properties. However, this would not be a replacement on a one to one basis. It allowed a change in the balance of properties and the chance to deliver 3 bedroom houses to replace the 1 or 2 bedroom flats that were sold

It was advised that it was now one year since Bucks Home Choice had been adopted and there would now be a review across the districts to discover what impacts it had had and how to manage those. This would feed into the review of housing and homelessness strategies across Chiltern and South Bucks that will be reported to Members later in the year.

The Committee requested more information on the numbers of properties achieved by the funding and for a list of Registered Provider partners (even though some were small and not currently located in the district).

RESOLVED –

That the recommendations contained in the draft Cabinet report be endorsed by the Services Overview Committee and that the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Cabinet.

9 SOUTH CENTRAL AMBULANCE SERVICE ANNUAL HEALTH SCRUTINY REPORT

The report showed that whilst the ambulance service was meeting its targets in the Thames Valley area as a whole, the performance times were not being met in the Chiltern District. The Committee discussed whether it may be due to the roads in the area or the more elderly population. It was decided that it would be helpful to invite the Ambulance Service to give a presentation to a future meeting to explain what the problems were.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and the SCAS (South Central Ambulance Service) be invited to present to a future meeting.

Note: Councillor P Jones left the meeting at 7.40 pm.

10 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The quarterly performance report for community, health and housing was considered but it was noted that in future there would be performance indicators for the other areas within Services as well.

The Green Deal national initiative was discussed and it was noted that it was difficult to get feedback for the Chiltern District alone. As this programme had been largely unsuccessful, it was discussed how other ways could be found to

support properties in the district, particularly in rural areas off the gas grid, or with improvements to homes.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

Note: Councillor Mrs L Smith left the meeting at 7.46 pm

11 FOOD AND HEALTH AND SAFETY BUSINESS PLANS

This report had been previously considered by Cabinet on 21 October 2014. There had been an increase in the percentage of higher rated food premises from 71.6% to 75.4%. There was still some reluctance observed for food premises to advertise their high scores. It was suggested that a press release be prepared annually for the local press and perhaps use Twitter and other media to encourage premises to improve their scores. It was advised that approximately 300 inspections had been made in the Chiltern District in the past year.

Regarding Health and Safety at work enforcement it was noted that the government wanted to reduce the inspection burden on businesses and so the emphasis was now on targeted campaigns.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

12 THE CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT PREVENT (PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM) GUIDANCE

Guidance had been given to local authorities previously under the previous Government strategy for Prevent. The new Home Office guidance will apply to District and County Councils but also to schools, the NHS, police, prisons and other public services. Chiltern and South Bucks were currently rated low for the risk of radicalisation.

The Community Team had forged good links with different community groups across the District. A local action plan was being developed which would then be used to provide training to staff and possibly to Members.

A consultation period was due to end on 30 January 2015 and the joint response from the Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils which mirrored the response from Buckinghamshire County Council was attached to the report.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

13 BCSB IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The report on Buckinghamshire Children's Services was attached with the Ofsted Recommendations for improvement in appendix C. It was noted that the new Chair of the Children's safeguarding Board would be Frances Gosling-Thomas. It was hoped that there would be more focus on Children's Services in the light of Ofsted's findings. The change to give more help to under 18 homeless young people was also welcomed.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.16 pm