

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting - 14 March 2016

Present: Mr Hollis (Chairman)
Mr Bastiman, Mr Sangster and Mr Walters MBE

Apologies for absence: Mr Harding, Mrs Lowen-Cooper and Mr Read

40. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 February 2016 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

41. JOINT LOCAL PLAN AND HS UPDATES

The Committee received an update on the progress being made on (1) producing a Joint Local Plan with Chiltern District Council and (2) HS2.

(1) Joint Local Plan

Presentations had been made to District Councillors at both Councils, parish councils, MPs and Stakeholders. Public consultation had ended today 14 March 2016 and over 5000 responses had been received.

Other authorities were being engaged in the process in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate. A work programme would be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Planning Policy Member Reference Group on 19 April setting out key dates including the intention to consult with the O and S Committee at each Council sometime in late September/early October 2016.

During the discussion the Chairman expressed regret that the Green Belt assessment had not been completed and made available before the consultation as without this the HELAA and HEDNA did not make sense exposing the consultation to criticism and complaint.

In addition he expressed the view that the HEDNA and HEELA, though considered benchmark documents, lacked scientific rigour since both rely upon gross extrapolation of crude statistics that do not reflect local sensitivities and, in the case of the latter, interpret heresay as fact with regard to the needs of local businesses.

In response, the Committee was advised of the process that had been followed by ARUP to produce the Green Belt assessment which had subsequently been used to create a range of options and scenarios upon which to consult. Although Arup's final report had not been completed prior to the start of the consultation, the assessments of individual Green Belt parcels and Arup's main conclusions had been available at an early stage. It was also emphasised that housing need and housing demand figures were estimates only at this stage and would be refined as the Joint Local Plan was developed.

The Chairman, in summing up the views of members, felt that the outcome the Committee would like to see is a considerable reduction in the number of houses 'needed' once the impact of green belt and infrastructural surveys are factored in as is allowed for in the production of a Local Plan. If this outcome is not achieved then consideration should be given to the use of an independent consultant to review the

calculations as was the case with the previous Local Plan wherein considerably fewer houses were determined to be 'needed'.

(2) HS2

The Committee received a summary of The Select Committee Final report published on 22nd February. The Final report covered many of the issues affecting South Bucks as summarised below.

- **Heathrow Spur** – In view of the risk of blight that continues the Select Committee (SC) **directs** the Promoter (HS2) not to use the Bill powers to implement passive provision for a Heathrow Spur. The Promoter should take immediate steps to ensure that relevant landowners and communities are fully informed of the change.
- **Heathrow Express Depot relocation** – the report summarises the main concerns including alternative regeneration uses for the site; effects of construction traffic including on air quality; and the visual and other impacts of the depot on canal boat residents. The canal boat residents were aggrieved that they had not been recognised earlier as affected parties which was an unfortunate failing on the part of the Promoter. They may need to be rehoused during construction and they have a legitimate expectation that such rehousing should be convenient, comfortable and suitable to accommodate what may be unusual practical needs. The effect on the community of boat owners should be recognised and addressed. In addition to the £1.4m contribution towards the relief road they expect the local highway authority to address the construction traffic HGV's using Bangors Road south through Traffic Management Orders or weight limits on non- HS2 vehicles. The promoter stated that it would endeavour not to use the road at all unless it became really necessary.
- The issue of indemnity against the liability for the contaminated land at **Thorney Business Park** is expected to be resolved between the parties if not by the House of Lords.
- **Colne Valley CIC** was concerned about the future of Green Belt land in the area. The SC recognised that a solution is needed taking account of ultimate land ownership to address cumulative impacts of construction and to provide some certainty in relation to the GB for those who enjoy its benefits. The promoter has agreed to provide substantial (£6.25m) funding for public realm and highways improvements in this locality.
- The promoter should work with **Western Rail Access** to better coordinate the two projects.
- **Colne Valley**
- It is recognised that train noise will have an adverse effect on the tranquillity of the area. The aquifers should be protected with the promoter taking precautions. The SC recognised that the residents will be adversely affected by the viaduct including canal boat owners and other residents along the GUC. Their needs should be accommodated. Further baseline noise assessments are required and there should be proper monitoring of noise during construction and on operation. Visual screening may also be appropriate. Construction sites should be properly secured.
- **Viaduct design** – the most significant visible engineering feature on the HS2 Phase 1 route. International significance and its design should reflect that.

Local people deserve that its design be respectful and respectable. The Promoter should be open to that challenge.

- **Traffic** –Denham is recognised as having its own set of traffic issues which HS2 will exacerbate particularly congestion on A412, Old Rectory Lane, Cheapside Lane and Tilehouse Lane. The promoter is funding assessments to look at sensitive junctions on the A412. Any damage caused by temporary diversions will be repaired by the promoter. The Promoter should be open to the idea of a shuttle bus from Denham to important locations such as hospitals.
- **Martin Baker** – existing congestion locally means that assistance with provision of alternative or improved access may well become a matter for decision by the Secretary of State. The SC do not believe that it is a matter for the Promoter but benefits would clearly flow from a new access road were the relevant authorities to pursue it.
- **Amenities** – the project will have a heavy environmental footprint in this area. Steps can be taken to leave a legacy of environmental improvement. There should be an aspiration of **no net biodiversity loss** in this area. Better than satisfactory restoration of the West Hyde compound would be another way for the project to address local concerns for the long term.
- **Colne Valley Park Regional Panel** – through this body the project should work to bequeath positive environmental legacies to Hillingdon and its environs. The Panel may also want to consider projects such as improved user access, better visitor facilities and sensible footpath reconfigurations following HS2 construction. The Promoter should consider funding these aspirations.
- **HOAC** – An alternative location has been identified at another gravel extraction site in Denham. Planning consents are still required. The promoter has given assurances of support for taking this forward and for funding. (tens of millions of pounds). The SC hopes it comes to fruition.
- **Denham Water Ski Club – the clubhouse is located under the NW end of the viaduct.** The SC commends the owner who has developed a successful undertaking in a SSSI. The owner should expect cooperation from the promoter in pursuing a planning application for an alternative clubhouse.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted.

42. **BUDGET AND SAVINGS UPDATE**

At the meeting on 11 November 2015 the Committee had submitted comments to the Cabinet on savings options and the Committee now received an oral update on the progress being made on those options categorised as green or yellow.

The Committee was pleased to note that a majority of the options were on track. There was some slippage in respect of Capswood Offices and the proposals for the Evreham Centre would need to be revisited in the light of BCC's decision to withdraw from the dual use agreement from 2017. Whilst the proposed way forward for Beaconsfield Car Park had been supported by the Resources PAG, the proposal in respect of Gerrards Cross Car Park was felt to need more work in looking at options.

43. **BUCKS HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE**

The Committee noted the minutes of the Select Committee held on 2 February 2016

44. **FRIMLEY HEALTH NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

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Sir Andrew Morris, Chief Executive, Frimley NHS Trust, attended for this item to provide a presentation on the progress made by the Trust since his last presentation on 23 March 2015 during which time the Trust had received top marks from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) following their inspection of the hospitals including Wexham Park.

The Trust had taken over responsibility for the hospitals in October 2014 at a time when the results of a CQC inspection showed a number of areas being inadequate or requiring improvement as indicated in a slide. A further slide on the results of the CQC inspections in February 2016 showed all areas being graded either good or outstanding. Sir Andrew's presentation focussed on how the improvements had been achieved and recognised by the CQC.

Sir Andrew emphasised that the change process had not started with addressing the financial deficit – the process had been driven by changing values and patterns of behaviour of staff by concentrating on the following objectives:

- Getting the culture right by concentrating on customer care, treating patients with respect and meeting their needs as individuals
- Improving governance, quality and safety
- Raising and sustaining performance
- Improving the infrastructure
- Recovering financially

With regard to improving the infrastructure, Sir Andrew referred to the following projects:

- Redevelopment of maternity
- New emergency department
- Ambulatory care assessment unit
- Re-development of car park to provide 500 spaces
- Expanding IT provision

During the discussion a number of issues were discussed/clarified including the following:

- Vacancy rate
- Bed blocking
- Emergency Cover
- Progress being made to create better coordination by developing Multi-Disciplinary Teams
- Proposals for Heatherwood including the provision of a 50 bed Elective Unit.
- Proposals for bridging the budget deficit

Sir Andrew concluded his presentation by emphasising that the change process had been driven not by concentrating on financial recovery but by focussing on changing values and behaviours.

The Committee thanked Sir Andrew for his presentation and congratulated the Trust for the progress and improvements they had achieved in such a short period of time.

45. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received the work programme.

The meeting terminated at 8.20 pm