

Minutes of the Economic, Planning and Housing Committee meeting held on Thursday, 1 November 2018 in Committee Rooms 1 & 2 - Deanes, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council at 6.30 pm

Members of the Economic, Planning and Housing Committee in attendance: Councillor T Robinson (Chair), Councillor S Frost (Vice Chair), Councillor O Cubitt, Councillor L James, Councillor S Parker, Councillor K Rhatigan and Councillor G Watts

Also present: Frank Baxter, Strategic Transport Manager, Hampshire County Council, and Kevin Trevers, Head of Transport, EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership

19/18 Apologies for absence and substitutions

Councillor Leeks was replaced by Councillor Sherlock
Councillor Richards was replaced by Councillor Miller
Councillor Harvey was replaced by Councillor M Westbrook
Councillor Phillimore was replaced by Councillor Potter

20/18 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

21/18 Urgent matters

There were no urgent items.

22/18 Minutes of the meeting held on 6th September

Responses were awaited in relation to issue 15/15 (the Democratic Services Officer clarified that a response had been circulated that afternoon).

It was noted that an update to Horizon 2050 had been expected, but removed from the agenda. It was clarified that the Portfolio Holder had requested that Horizon 2050 report to Community Environment Partnerships committee rather than to this committee. The committee were dissatisfied with this decision, particularly as the item had been on the work programme. The Chair agreed to raise the issue with the Portfolio Holder and request a return to this committee.

The Chair agreed to speak to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Regeneration, Arts and Heritage to arrange for a briefing to the committee from the Supporting People member's advisory panel.

It was noted that the AA had been invited to attend the January committee meeting and that a response was awaited.

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th September were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23/18 **Draft Transport Strategy**

The Draft Transport Strategy was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure. It was noted that it had been developed with Hampshire County Council (HCC) to support the Local Plan, and ultimately once adopted would become a key document in supporting funding bids to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Transport for the South East and government.

A consultation period was planned between late November and early January 2019.

The LEP's Head of Transport was in attendance and was invited to provide a brief overview of the LEP's focus and current strategy. He stated that the LEP was looking to focus on key locations eligible for funding that could deliver jobs, productivity and growth. Basingstoke was perceived to be one of the prime towns for strategic growth and as such a key to encouraging this would be providing the necessary infrastructure.

It was noted that transport strategies for the whole area would help provide context when forming the LEP's funding strategy and approach to central government.

It was clarified that the LEP's current funding period was 2015-2021 and that funds could not be committed after that date. Consequently, the LEP was currently developing a long term plan and lobbying central government for continuing commitment.

It was clarified that given the current access routes to Heathrow airport and its plans to expand, the LEP were supporting and lobbying for improved rail access, via Western Rail (via Reading), and Southern Rail (via Basingstoke, Woking).

Highway improvement was also regarded as important, with support for the M25 South West quadrant study.

It was requested that a future document should contain itemised details of past, current and committed LEP investment towards projects mentioned in the draft transport strategy.

It was confirmed that the LEP had not been involved in discussions with any agency in relation to financing for a proposed Western bypass. It was thought that this may be due to the fact that funding was only currently available until 2021 and that the bypass is not specifically allocated in the Adopted Local Plan.

The LEP representative commented that strategic links were of particular importance to the organisation when determining funding projects, and it was suggested that having a defined transport strategy was of particular importance to gain success in funding bids.

Strategy

It was requested that reference to kilometres be amended to miles throughout the

document.

A request was made for the committee to view the Risk Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment.

It was noted that a prediction of journey times within the town becoming 17% longer on average had factored in the Leisure Park and Manydown developments. Clarification and examples were requested to evidence the predicted 17% increase.

It was clarified that during the consultation the entire document would be published on the website for review and would be publicised via flyers and in Basingstoke & Deane Today. Both the railway station and bus depot would be targeted with flyers and questionnaires.

It was clarified that the Strategy aimed to suggest the most appropriate measures to address issues that had been identified and that it would be for residents to determine matters of importance and priority. Once this had been determined feasibility studies would be undertaken on individual projects.

Clarification was sought in relation to Figure 4, Key Transport Facts and Figures, whereby travel percentages of the people living and working in Basingstoke did not equate to 100%.

Page 7: It was requested that the word 'should' be replaced with 'will' in the sentence 'The Transport Strategy should support.....'.

It was queried whether the Strategy had taken into account the developer's predicted 6 million visitors to the Leisure Park, and ensuing additional car journeys. It was clarified that figures relied upon were those that were in the public domain, but that the developer would need to undertake and present a detailed transport analysis and plan at such time that a planning application was submitted.

Page 9: it was suggested that wording should be changed from 'ensuring good standards of air quality are maintained' to '.....achieved and maintained'.

Strategy Theme 1

It was requested that officers look at Winton Square when scoping for improvements to the town centre.

It was suggested that every car park in the town centre have an electric vehicle charging point, particularly given that the town centre will be catering not just for residents, but also for visitors.

It was queried where a Park and Ride would be situated, if not at the leisure park. Further, comparison was made with Winchester which has four Park and Ride facilities. However it was noted that the two towns were very different both in terms of infrastructure and size.

It was clarified that there was no intention to reduce town centre parking.

Page 14. It was suggested that under the final bullet point, the sentence 'increasing the cost of long stay parking.....', be deleted and replaced with 'consider options to support.....'. The Head of Planning and Infrastructure clarified that long stay equated to all day and that the Strategy was aiming to free up car parking spaces for those wishing to access the town on the basis of shorter stays.

The committee agreed that there was no desire to dissuade long term parking within the town centre.

Concern was raised that the leisure park developers made no reference to a Park and Ride facility.

It was requested that within the final bullet point the third bullet point remove the term 'mixed-use development'.

Strategy Theme 2

It was requested that the sentence '..along the A30 corridor and to the east of the town', be re-worded to 'along the A30 corridor to the west and the A33 to the east'.

It was agreed that in order to manage expectations the first bullet point promising 'to mitigate any impact', should be re-worded to remove the word 'any'.

It was suggested that the phrasing of 'appropriate levels of well-designed parking' was too vague and should be more specific.

A request was made for officers at a planning level to try to obtain relevant, workable and competent Travel Plans as the current quality for some developments was felt to be poor.

Whilst there were mixed views, there was a consensus that mention of a potential Western bypass, or at least the principle of investigating one, should be included earlier within the document either within Strategy 2 and/or 5.

It was suggested that school parking and travel arrangements were generally inadequate, and that the issue should be addressed within the Strategy, particularly in relation to any new developments.

Strategy Theme 3

Disappointment was expressed that rail travel was not mentioned under this strategy theme.

It was suggested that scope for a new Basingstoke Parkway station to serve Manydown be explored.

It was queried how far the transportation route extended towards Tadley in Figure 10. It was clarified that the map was indicative, but would likely extend to the next urban settlement, which in this case was Tadley.

Strategy Theme 4

It was suggested that it was difficult to access the town with a pushchair or if disabled from the north due to subways and tunnels. It was agreed that the Strategy should be fully inclusive.

It was commented that the first bullet point appeared to suggest an intended priority of allowing cyclists full access to the town centre. It was clarified that the focus was intended to be on improving cycling routes at the edge of the town rather through the pedestrianised town centre itself. It was agreed that further consideration would be given to making this intention clearer.

There was an appeal not to include any more shared pedestrian and cycle routes due to the potential dangers to both sets of users.

It was suggested that whilst looking at new transport solutions, some provision should be made for ongoing maintenance of existing footpaths.

Strategy Theme 5

Mention of a Western bypass was requested in this section. The Head of Planning and Infrastructure clarified that it had been omitted from this section as the current local plan did not make provision for it. Committee members commented that it was policy that major strategic issues could be included, even if not contained within the local plan, and that inclusion in strategies 2 and 5 would be desirable when using the document to bid for LEP funding.

It was requested that key journey times be published and accessible.

Strategy Theme 6

It was queried whether A33 improvements could lead to more people travelling to Reading and to the risk of Basingstoke becoming a dormitory town.

The HCC Strategic Transport Manager commented that care would need to be taken when reviewing the multiple available options to ensure that the outcome is multimodal and to ensure that the relevant local economies continue to thrive. It was noted that briefing discussions had commenced with Reading LEP, Thames Valley LEP, M3 LEP, Wokingham and West Berkshire Council.

It was queried whether work had been undertaken to estimate the future demands on the rail station and car park, should an additional station not be prioritised. It was clarified that statistics had been provided by National Rail in relation to parking requirements, but that the transport strategy's main focus was to investigate alternative methods to the car for transporting residents to the station. The focus would be on establishing rapid transport corridors throughout the centre and then looking at vehicle alternatives involved.

It was queried how projects were prioritised and funded.

It was suggested that past performance was usually indicative and that BDBC transport infrastructure had received £100 million LEP funding in the past year. Prioritisation and allocation would be based upon the number of projects put forward for approval.

It was stated that passenger statistics and demand could easily be changed and influenced given the creation of an alternative station and should be considered sooner rather than later when modelling for the future.

It was clarified that Network Rail's proposed flyover constituted a freight train bypass.

It was suggested that a bullet point about Basingstoke Parkway Station be included within the section.

Strategy Theme 7

It was suggested that the strategy should be car friendly, given the prevalence of car drivers.

Section 6

A range of views were expressed in relation to either the removal or retention of the two sentences following '...re-routing of strategic traffic', within the second bullet point.

The HCC Officer commented that if there was a link from the top of the A33 to the M3, the alternative route would take 7,000 cars away from Basingstoke's ring road system. It was suggested that a preferred route would potentially join at junction 5 of the M3.

It was agreed that the option of relieving traffic to the town centre, either to the east or west, should be included within the strategy.

Section 7

A request was made to amend the second bullet point to 'Transport infrastructure to support Manydown', and to include a reference to the Western bypass.

Resolved: The Committee

- Note the Draft Transport Strategy;
- Request that the above comments be actioned and suggested amendments incorporated into the document.

Planning Officer. The draft SPD explains the key design and conservation issues that relate to the historic environment, and will be applicable to planning applications which concern or are relevant to heritage assets.

The committee thanked the author of the document and commended the high standard and comprehensive nature of the SPD.

The committee made a range of comments.

Page 20, 3.7.3 it was clarified that it is a nationally accepted principle espoused by a number of national heritage organisations that a listed building should as a first preference be retained in its original or historic use or returned to such. The SPD aims to reinforce this principle, whilst also recognising that it may not be always possible to achieve.

It was clarified that 7.3 provided guidance in assessing the impact to a listed building by proposed new developments.

Disappointment was voiced that the local heritage society was not more heavily involved in development of the SPD.

It was noted that the main approach to listed buildings by BDBC should be to ensure that they were looked after and maintained, the best way of which is to allow them to be used. Consequently, small changes should be permitted following a pragmatic approach to allow buildings to function as modern homes or business premises but without undermining the significance of the heritage asset.

It was clarified that the interior of a listed building was protected just as much as the exterior.

It was queried whether the final bullet point of page 23, 4.2.3 in relation to the creation of parking areas was too restrictive. It was clarified that this referred to the specific issue of demolishing front boundary walls and parking in front gardens. Wording to be clarified by officers.

It was queried whether page 24, 4.4.1 in relation to the restriction of permitted development rights should be broadened to include developments 'adjacent to' conservation areas. It was clarified that this originated from government planning rules and regulations and consequently would prove difficult for BDBC to remove or limit permitted development rights on adjacent areas.

It was queried whether Principle CA01, (d), page 27 was robust enough. It was agreed that wherever possible enhancement should be encouraged however it was noted that legislation under s72 of Planning, Listed Buildings and Conservation Act imposes a requirement 'to preserve or enhance'. Preserve is defined as 'doing no harm', and in the past this had often satisfied the requirement for planning permission. It was suggested that the mechanism of adding an informative when granting planning permission could encourage these enhancements. It was agreed that whilst an informative would not impose a strict obligation, it may be worth exploring.

Concern was raised in relation to proliferation of street furniture in some conservation areas. It was explained that every conservation area had a conservation area appraisal for which management plans were produced when re-appraised. It was suggested that such documents could be an important way of broaching the issue with the Highways Authority.

It was queried whether the council tax department, when notified of a change of house owner for a listed building, could send relevant information to that householder to inform of the restrictions related to the property. It was commented that this was outside the scope of the SPD but could be investigated.

It was requested that wording for Principle RPG01, parts (a) and (b) be changed from 'should' to 'will'. It was noted that for consistency this may need to be applied to all Principles throughout the SPD.

In relation to 6.2.1, it was queried who would determine that a building be removed from the 'local list'. It was clarified that the list was managed by BDBC and that a building would be added dependent on an assessment by an officer, including consultation with owners and arbitration for any contentious matters. No building had been removed so far, but some have been demolished. The removal process entails a relevant Portfolio Holder report to the Portfolio Holder for Planning who will then make a decision under delegated authority.

It was suggested and agreed that the committee review the 'local list' at a future date.

Resolved: The Committee

- Note the Heritage Supplementary Planning Document;
- Request that the above comments be noted and amendments incorporated into the document.

25/18 **Review of work programme**

The Committee reviewed its work programme and made the following comments:

- Horizon 2050 to be re-instated on the work programme;
- It was suggested that the committee undertake a review on the LEP's various economic strategies. It was noted that Scrutiny Committee were also undertaking a review of the LEP in relation to its democratic accountability and decision making process. Chair to discuss with the Leader and with the Chair of Scrutiny to ascertain the best forum for reviewing the issue;
- A request for an update from the Management Companies Task and Finish group.

The meeting ended at 10.45 pm.

Chairman

