

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Housing, Planning
and Economic Growth
held on Thursday, 18th July, 2019
from 7.00 - 7.47 pm**

Present: N Walker (Chair)
C Laband (Vice-Chair)

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|-------------|------------|------------|
| R Bates | S Hatton | C Phillips |
| M Belsey | S Hicks | R Webb |
| R Cromie | J Mockford | S Smith |
| R Eggleston | A Peacock | |

Absent: Councillors P Brown, E Coe-Gunnell White and G Marsh

Also Present: Councillors

**1 TO NOTE SUBSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE
RULE 4 - SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES ETC.**

Councillor Smith substituted for Councillor Coe-Gunnell White.

2 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillors Coe-Gunnell White and Marsh.

**3 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT
OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.**

None.

**4 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY, HOUSING AND PLANNING HELD ON 6 MARCH
2019 AND THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE FOR HOUSING, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC GROWTH HELD ON
22 MAY 2019.**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committees held on 6 March 2019 and 22 May 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**5 TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS
URGENT BUSINESS.**

None.

**6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: ANNUAL PROGRESS REVIEW
2018/19.**

Sally Blomfield, Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy introduced the report. She reminded the Committee that the Economic Development Strategy (EDS), which had been approved by the Council last year, is a delivery tool of the Mid Sussex Corporate Plan objective to deliver sustainable economic growth and of the Mid Sussex District Plan. The EDS sets out a vision and delivery strategy until 2031. The Strategy contains 65 actions with key measures to monitor progress framed around four key themes: Place, Premises, People and Promotion. In line with best practice it had been agreed at Scrutiny Committee last year that an Annual Progress Report would be prepared: this is the first report.

The officer highlighted that there was a word missing in paragraph 10, "Significant progress has been made in the delivery of the project, and the six week public engagement exercise has **now** been completed".

A Member asked about the District Plan requirement regarding delivery of jobs and how this was monitored and about the success of town centres. The officer noted that the District Plan Policy DP1 set out the requirement for 543 new jobs a year and that this would be achieved through a number of different mechanisms including allocating 25 hectares of employment land at Burgess Hill; allocating further employment sites through the Sites DPD; and ensuring effective use of existing employment land by allowing proposals for intensification and expansion.. She highlighted a number of recent permissions which indicated the successful delivery of this Policy including the allocation of 15 hectares, for The Hub, Burgess Hill, Handcross and the employment at Copthorne. The officer advised that the vitality and viability of town and village centres is measured by a range of indicators such as retail performance, vacancy rates and footfall. She noted that there is a profile on the Council's website which provides base line data for the three town centres. Judy Holmes, Assistant Chief Executive informed the Committee that the Government provided a formula to calculate the anticipated yield of jobs per square metre of commercial land.

In response to a Member's question on freehold employment space and the predicted trend for online shopping, the Assistant Chief Executive noted that the Council could not require landowners to sell the freehold of their land for employment. However, the Council could influence land owners and is currently working with Homes England regarding the future of their employment space at Burgess Hill. She noted that the vitality of town centres was a national issue, and the Council needed to balance supporting businesses within the planning environment. The Divisional Leader stated that town centres are not just retail centres, they also play an important role for social and recreational purposes.

A Member asked how the new hotel in Burgess Hill would tie into tourism within the District and if the Council had a dedicated Tourism Officer. The Divisional Leader noted that although the Council did not have a Tourism Officer, the Regeneration and Economy Team have been tasked to deliver a tourism agenda. The new hotel will complement the high end hotels within the District by providing accommodation for shorter term visitors such as people on business visits.

In response to a Member's question the Assistant Chief Executive confirmed that a number of projects were planned to improve connectivity of the cycle network and pedestrian access to employment sites including The Hub, the town centre and railway station.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the progress made in delivering the Economic Development Strategy set out in the report.

7 MID SUSSEX DESIGN GUIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - CONSULTATION DRAFT.

Sally Blomfield, Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy introduced the report which asked the Committee to consider the draft Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Document (SPD). The officer noted that Mid Sussex District Council was passionate to ensure good quality design, and creating high quality buildings and spaces is fundamental to ensuring good place making. She reminded the Committee of District Plan Policy 26: Character and Design, which sets out the principles for design and explained that the Design Guide will supplement this Policy by providing much more detailed guidance. Once approved the Design Guide will become a Supplementary Planning Document and be a material planning consideration. The Design Guide will be used by the Council to advise developers of the Council's aspirations for design and will inform the planning committees what the Council wants to deliver.

The topic of the consultation process and use of the guide was discussed. It was noted that the consultation is anticipated to start in September and would last for six weeks. The Divisional Leader confirmed that key stakeholders, town and parish councils and residents would be invited to make representations. The officers will note and consider all representations received and come to a balanced view. The revised annotated Design Guide would then be re-considered by this Scrutiny Committee.

In response to a Member question the Assistant Chief Executive confirmed that the draft Design Guide would have limited weight in decision making until it has been adopted by the Council. However, planning officers could suggest that developers refer to the draft Guide.

The topics of sustainability design and site layout were discussed. The Divisional Leader confirmed that the Mid Sussex Design Guide promoted the use of photovoltaic panels. The Planning Officer highlighted that the issue of sustainability was woven throughout the Design Guide to optimise the potential for key sites. The Divisional Leader confirmed that section three covered sustainable transport and section four covered site layout which includes the street scene with spaces for cyclists.

In response to questions on awards for design Will Dorman noted that the design awards were held bi-annually and anyone could put a scheme forward for consideration. The design awards have their own web page and are also advertised through press releases.

The Chairman invited the Cabinet Members present to comment.

Andrew MacNaughton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning noted that the development at Rocky Lane, Haywards Heath was a good example of sustainable housing design. The Council encourages the use of renewable energy and this development has solar tiles incorporated in the roofs. He also noted the energy

provided by the Rampion Wind Farm is transferred to the substation at Twineham and can supply power for many homes.

Several Members congratulated the officers on the comprehensive document and asked whether the Design Guide would be an informative for planning applications or act as conditions for applications once adopted. The Divisional Leader confirmed that it would be guidance to help inform negotiations to get better schemes brought forward and it would be a material consideration. Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council noted that the Design Guide would assist the Council upholding their decision to reject a planning application on design grounds when developers appealed to the Secretary of State.

A Member commented on the illustrations on page 135 and Will Dorman, Urban Designer noted that these would be revised.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Committee:

- (i) Considered the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD;
- (ii) Delegated authority to Divisional Lead for Planning and Economy, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to make typographical, grammatical and photographic editorial changes before consultation; and
- (iii) Recommended that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning approves the document for public consultation.

8 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR HOUSING, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20.

Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council, introduced the report which presented the Committee's Work Programme for the forthcoming year. He noted that there were two items on the agendas for the 11 September and 23 October 2019 and these were lengthy reports. Items for the agenda for 22 January 2020 would be advised at a later date.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the Committee's Work Programme as set out at paragraph 5 of the report.

9 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10, DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.

None.

The meeting finished at 7.47 pm

Chairman