

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for
Community, Housing and Planning held on 25 September 2018
from 7:00 p.m. to 7:47 p.m.**

Present: Councillors: Neville Walker (Chairman)
Margaret Hersey (Vice-Chairman)

Andrew Barrett-Miles*
Edward Belsey*
Richard Cherry
Phillip Coote
Sandy Ellis

Sue Hatton
Chris Hersey
Colin Holden
Anne Jones*
Edward Matthews

Anthony Watts Williams
John Wilkinson
Peter Wyan

*Absent

Also Present: Councillor Moore, Councillor Stockwell, Councillor Clarke, Councillor Maples, Councillor and Councillor Wall.

Also Present (Cabinet Members): Councillor Andrew MacNaughton.

1. SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE - COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 4.

None.

2. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors Barrett-Miles, Jones, E. Belsey and Webster.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None.

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

None.

5. SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT – ASSESMENT OF HOUSING SITES AGAINST DISTRICT PLAN STRATEGY.

Alice Henstock, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the report which provided Members with an update on the preparation and publication of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), which includes the further assessment of housing and employment sites, and outlines the work which has been carried out to assess the 'palette' of housing sites against the District Plan Strategy and the ongoing work programme. She drew Member's attention to Appendix 5 of the Site Selection Paper 1 which set out the 91 sites which were assessed as not being compliant with the District Plan Strategy.

A Member raised concerns over the allocation of sites in East Grinstead as it has been recognized that the town suffers seriously from congestion. He enquired whether West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) Highways had been consulted as he could find no mention of a consultation being carried out in the report.

Sally Blomfield, Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy, confirmed that Policy DP4 sets out the Spatial Distribution of Housing Requirement which concentrates development within the main settlements of the District such as East Grinstead. The later stages of the Site Allocation DPD work will carry out further site and highway assessment work.

Lois Partridge, Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy & Economy, informed the committee that the 2 sites considered in East Grinstead are subject to the same assessment process as other sites in the District. There is no presumption that both sites will come forward. The work to date has only assessed sites against the DP Strategy i.e. sites priority to the Built Area and relationship with Policy D6 hierarchy settlement. She noted that a formal consultation will be carried out by the Council next year once further assessment has been carried out.

A Member expressed his appreciation of the Officers and the Site Allocations Working Group for all the work they have done to bring the report to the committee. He highlighted that the 'Broad location to the West of Burgess Hill', SHELAA ID 740, has been recorded as being part of the settlement of Burgess Hill when in fact the land falls under the parish of Hurstpierpoint. The Member also questioned whether the developers of the sites had been informed that their site was not being considered for development.

The Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy thanked the Member for highlighting the potential inaccuracy and confirmed that it would be checked.

Judy Holmes, Assistant Chief Executive, confirmed that as part of the consultation work the developers are being consulted with throughout this work at appropriate stages. A Member raised his concerns over the lack of infrastructure provision being planned within the document and over the erosion of the strategic gap between East Grinstead and Crawley Down. He felt there has been a lack of forward thinking as planning for infrastructure should be carried out at an early stage.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy & Economy informed the Member that the document is at the first stage which focuses only whether a site conforms or does not conform with the District Plan. Further, detailed assessments would consider the issue of a buffer between settlements. She explained that the cumulative impact of developments on highways is identified through a Transport Assessment which is a model applied at the next stage of this work.

The Member sought clarification over what is considered to be a strategic gap.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy & Economy confirmed that there is no defined distance for what could be considered to be a gap.

A Member queried whether the statutory stakeholders have been consulted.

The Assistant Chief Executive confirmed that at this stage of the process they are only applying the District Plan Strategy to potential sites. The Council will look later in the current year to provide more detail about what sites will be taken forward during the next stage. Through the Site Allocations Working Group (SAWG), further work will be carried out with consultants and statutory stakeholders.

A Member referenced the existing settlements mentioned on P.6 of the report and questioned the definition of what would be a settlement in relation to the 150 metre degree of separation rule.

Alice Henstock, Senior Planning Officer, confirmed that the 150-metre rule is to assess whether a site is or is not connected to a built-up boundary of an existing settlement. The District Plan strategy requires that a site must be connected to a built up area.

The Chairman noted that no Member wished to speak so moved to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That the Committee;

- i. Considered and commented on the work to date and;
- ii. Noted the further work to be undertaken on the residual housing and employment sites.

6. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI).

Lois Partridge, Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy & Economy, introduced the report which asked the committee to consider the revised draft version of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which was adopted in 2011. The statement has been updated to comply with national legislation, the adoption of the District Plan and evolving best practice on community and stakeholder engagement.

A Member noted the references made on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on P.54 and sought reassurances from officers that the Council will adopt CIL in the future.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy & Economy confirmed that the Council is waiting for the final guidance from Central Government on CIL before starting work on this, and noted that the Council's commitment to adoption of CIL in due course is set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2017.

The Member sought clarification on whether Town and Parish Councils will be entitled to 25% of the CIL funding. It was confirmed that this was indeed the case.

Sally Blomfield, Divisional Leader for Planning and Economy, explained that the LDS which indicates a timetable for the implementation of CIL was revised and approved last year however , it would be updated again in June 2019, when the Regulation 18 Issues and Options draft Site Allocations DPD is published.

A Member noted that Neighbourhood Plans have to be updated every 5 years and enquired which is the first Town or Parish Council that needs to update their Plan. He raised his concerns that the Plans are costly to prepare and sought further clarification on whether there will be any financial support for the Town and Parish Councils.

The Business Unit Leader for Planning Policy & Economy noted that the Government had recently issued updated guidance which confirmed that funding would continue to be provided to support Town and Parish Councils if they wished to review their Plans.

Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council, confirmed that Cuckfield Parish Council would be the first to update their Plan if they wish.

Judy Holmes, Assistant Chief Executive, informed the committee that the Council is working closely with the Town and Parish Councils to bring forward any reviews of Plans but iterated that it is up to the individual Town and Parish Councils to review or update their Plans..

The Chairman noted that no Member wished to speak so moved to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That the Committee:

- i) Noted the contents of the report;
- ii) Noted the extent of work required to assess sites and implications of this on the timeline originally proposed for the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD.

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

None.

Chairman.