

CABINET

1 October 2018

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held at the Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea on Monday 1 October 2018 at 11:00am.

Cabinet Members present: Councillors C.R. Maynard (Leader), J.J. Carroll, A.E. Ganly, I.R. Hollidge, Mrs J.M. Hughes, G.P. Johnson, M.J. Kenward (Deputy Leader) and Mrs E.M. Kirby-Green.

Other Members present: Councillors J. Barnes, G.C. Curtis, J.M. Johnson, B. Kentfield, M. Mooney, P.N. Osborne (in part), J. Potts, Mrs S.M. Prochak, C.J. Saint and M.R. Watson.

Advisory Officers present: Executive Director (MJ), Executive Director (AL), Assistant Director Resources, Head of Service Strategy and Planning, Head of Service Acquisitions, Transformation and Regeneration, Head of Service Housing and Community, Planning Policy Manager, Property Investment & Regeneration Manager, Programme Office and Policy Manager, Development Management and Strategy Principal Planning Officer and Democratic Services Manager.

Also present: 12 members of the public and 1 member of the local press.

Publication Date: 3 October 2018

The decisions made under PART II will come into force on 11 October 2018 unless they have been subject to the call-in procedure.

CB18/23. MINUTES

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2018 as a correct record of the proceedings.

CB18/24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Executive Members Councillors Lord Ampthill and Mrs S. Hart, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group Councillor K.P. Dixon and Councillor K.M. Field.

CB18/25. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded whilst matters containing exempt information, as prescribed by Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended and relating to Minute CB18/29 was under consideration. Appendix 1 submitted in connection with this item and which contains information exempt from publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act shall remain confidential if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the

public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL – not subject to call-in procedure under Rule 16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

**CB18/26. DEVELOPMENT AND SITE ALLOCATIONS LOCAL PLAN –
(7.1) PROPOSED SUBMISSION**

Cabinet received and considered the report of the Executive Director on the revised Development and Site Allocations (DaSA) Local Plan. The DaSA had been prepared in general conformity with the strategic policies for the district as set out in the Rother Core Strategy Local Plan (RCSLP), which had been adopted in September 2014. The Core Strategy (CS) was effectively “Part 1” of the RCSLP, with a recognised need to be supplemented by the DaSA, as “Part 2” which identified the sites required to meet the development provisions of the CS, as well as set out more detailed development management policies up to 2028.

The aim of the DaSA was to identify sufficient sites to meet the CS’s housing targets and to update development boundaries accordingly. The responsibility of identifying sites was now shared between the DaSA Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) that had been or were being prepared across the district. Two NPs were made (Salehurst & Robertsbridge and Sedlescombe) and three (Crowhurst, Rye and Ticehurst) were expected to be submitted later this year. Three were currently under preparation which were not covered by the draft DaSA regarding identified housing sites. The DaSA continued to include allocations at Hurst Green and Peasmarch; Hurst Green had been designated as a ‘neighbourhood area’ and it was noted Peasmarch also intended to apply for this status. There was insufficient time to prepare a new NP against current housing targets, while the DaSA had already carefully considered and consulted upon options in these areas. A significant contextual change was the recent publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2018. The NPPF stated that Local Plans submitted before 24 January 2019 would be examined on the basis of the previous version.

The DaSA had firstly been prepared as an ‘Options and Preferred Options’ version and was subject to a 10-week consultation period in late 2016/early 2017 enabling local residents, businesses and other stakeholders the opportunity to comment before the current Plan, as appended at Appendix 2 to the report, was finalised. There were two substantive parts set out as Part A ‘Development Policies’ and Part B ‘Site Allocations’ respectively. With the exception of access standards for new dwellings, the form of policies within the final Plan was not significantly different from ‘Preferred Options’ previously indicated, although in other cases policy options had been refined into proposed policies. Members noted that a number of draft site allocations had not been carried forward, as a result of planning permission being granted during the intervening period.

Part A consisted of a range of topic-based policies including renewable energy developments, affordable housing, access standards, custom and self-build housing.

Part B was structured by settlement and identified the housing requirements for every town and village where further allocations were required; these provided the basis of proposals being made in the DaSA and the NPs. The site allocations identified by the DaSA indicated that 1,632 homes would be delivered over a 10-year period from 2018-2028. NPs were expected to bring forward at least a further 784 new home dwellings over the same period. The largest allocation in the Plan related to 530 dwellings on land at North Bexhill, which included green space areas. Additional sites / provisions identified in the Plan included the redundant Northeye Training Camp, a medium-sized retail provision at the southern end of Beeching Road, Bexhill, several village allocations and Gypsy and Traveller housing.

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the non-technical summary of which was appended to the report as Appendix 1 had been updated. The SA assessed all policies and site allocations against agreed sustainability objectives which were also subject to public consultation. It was noted that the following tasks had also been undertaken as follows: a Habitats Regulations Assessment, a Sustainable Access and Recreation Management Strategy for the Dungeness Complex of sites, and individual assessments of the impact on Pevensey Levels, Lewes Down and Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation. Members were advised that no adverse effects had been found.

Subject to Cabinet and full Council approval at the additional meeting called on 15 October 2018, the DaSA and supporting documents would be published for a six week consultation period from 26 October to 7 December 2018. Representations received would be collated and forwarded to the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate, followed by a public examination by an independent Planning Inspector which would test the DaSA against national tests of 'soundness', and determine whether the Council could proceed to adopt the Local Plan.

Cabinet recommended approval of the Proposed Submission version of the DaSA with related Policies Map and were pleased that the document was well written and easy to digest. It was also agreed that the SA and other supporting documents be published for a six week period for representations and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State with delegated authority granted to the Executive Director to make non-substantive, including presentational alterations, if required.

The Leader of the Council thanked officers for all their hard work in progressing the DaSA thus far. Members were reminded that a Members' briefing session had been arranged to take place on Friday 5 October for individual consultations from 9am together with a group discussion at 11am. This session would inform Members' consideration at full Council.

RECOMMENDED: That:

- 1) the Proposed Submission version of the Development and Site Allocations Local Plan and the related Policies Map, as presented at Appendix 2 to the report, be approved; and
- 2) the Proposed Submission Development and Site Allocations Local Plan, the Sustainability Appraisal and other supporting documents

be published alongside the Local Plan for a six week period for representations and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State, with the Executive Director having delegated authority to make non-substantive, including presentational, alterations.

CB18/27.
(7.2)

ACCELERATING DELIVERY OF HOUSING AT BLACKFRIARS, BATTLE

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director concerning the delivery of housing at Blackfriars, Battle. The Blackfriars site in Battle had been identified in the Council's local planning documents and Corporate Plan as a site for residential development. A map of the 40 acre site was appended to the report at Appendix 1 which highlighted the parcels of land owned by the Council as well as other private owners. Development of the site had proved problematic over the years due to valuation issues, complex ground conditions and the requirement for expensive infrastructure modifications.

In February 2018, the Council was provisionally awarded £3.25m of Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) towards development. In order to access funding, Homes England (HE) requested that the scheme be progressed to ensure delivery. Therefore the Council was now required to lead on facilitating pre-development work, including the delivery of the road infrastructure.

A Memorandum of Understanding had been mutually agreed with the landowners to progress the site and a range of ecology surveys completed including an Environmental Impact and Transport Assessment. To release the HIF funding it was important to demonstrate to HE sufficient progress and therefore a full planning application would need to be submitted and it was anticipated that this would be in early 2019. A number of tasks would need to be undertaken including a master planning exercise, surveys, acquisitions, infrastructure etc. which required an anticipated budget of approximately £1m, which required full Council approval. This expenditure would be offset against the HIF funding or developer contributions, if there was a shortfall in HIF funding. Cabinet was pleased to support the recommendations to progress likely development of this site, which had been in the pipeline for some considerable time.

RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) the Executive Director be granted delegated authority with a budget of up to £1m to complete the necessary Masterplan, surveys, acquisitions, works, and applications where necessary, for facilitating the delivery of the site, inclusive of neighbourhood road and the Capital Programme be amended accordingly;

AND

***RESOLVED:** That:

- 2) the Council leads on the creation of a masterplan for the whole site for Blackfriars, including the submission of relevant planning applications; and
- 3) the approach outlined in the report to progress the Blackfriars Housing Site be approved.

*The **RESOLVED** parts of this minute are subject to the call-in procedure under Rule 16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

PART II – EXECUTIVE DECISIONS – subject to the call-in procedure under Rule 16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules by no later than 4:00pm on 10 October 2018.

CB18/28. **HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY – CONSULTATION**
(6.1)

Members received and considered Minute OSC18/22 arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) meeting held on the 10 September 2018 that had considered a report on Housing and Homelessness Strategy Consultation. The OSC had supported the consultation approach and had also requested that the consultation be user friendly and subject to pilot testing before being launched.

A six week public consultation period would commence on 15 October 2018 and run until 26 November, together with a consultation event with stakeholders planned for November. Whilst the majority of the consultation would be on line, as the most cost effective mechanism, paper copies would also be accepted. The outcome of the consultation would be used to formulate the final Strategy, which in turn would be used to steer the direction of the Council's Housing Services, including the homelessness and housing options from 2019-2024. The draft strategy would be presented to Cabinet and full Council for approval and final adoption by April 2019.

Following discussion, Cabinet was supportive of the approach and approved both documents for the consultation process. Members were urged to work with local Parish and Town Councils and other stakeholders within their communities to disseminate the consultation.

RESOLVED: That the draft Consultation Plan and Consultation Document in respect of a Housing and Homelessness Strategy be approved to allow a six week consultation on the priorities for the development of a final Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

(When it first became apparent, Councillor A.E. Ganly declared a personal interest in this matter in so far as he is a landlord and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the room during the consideration thereof).

THE COLONNADE, BEXHILL

Consideration was given to the report and confidential appendix of the Executive Director on the Colonnade, Bexhill.

In January 2018, Cabinet approved the establishment of an in-house café/restaurant subject to a future review of operations. The Colonnade opened for business on 21 July 2018 after an extensive fit-out and establishment of a limited company to manage operations. The premises operated on a 7-day basis until mid-September, when it was subsequently reduced to 5 days. Gas supply / connection issues were still ongoing and it was hoped that these would be resolved shortly.

Members were advised that three experienced restaurant sector operators had independently approached the Council regarding renting the premises. Details of the rental offers were listed in the confidential appendix to the report. It was noted that the financial offers were well in excess of the previous rent received (£2,000 per annum) which would contribute towards the Council's 2020 income target.

Cabinet was asked to give a steer as to whether the Colonnade should open during the winter season and if so, whether there should be a rent-free period. After deliberation, Cabinet agreed that the Executive Director be authorised to enter into a lease of the Colonnade café/restaurant with an operator who was willing to open during the winter months for a term of not less than 10 years on appropriate terms, with the option to include a rent-free period for the 2018/19 winter period only.

It was considered that keeping the building occupied during the winter would help preserve the fabric of the building, as well as improve the economy of Bexhill and further encourage increased visitor footfall. It was noted that there would be flexibility with regard to opening the Colonnade in extreme weather conditions.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the Colonnade be let with a contractual obligation to open during the winter season with an option for a rent-free period; and
- 2) the Executive Director be authorised to enter into a lease with the preferred operator for the Colonnade café/restaurant for a term of not less than 10 years on such other terms as deemed appropriate.

(The Confidential Appendix in relation to this matter, as set out at Agenda Item 9.1 was considered exempt from publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 Cabinet did not consider it necessary to exclude the press and public whilst considering this matter).

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 11:50am

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