

Minutes

Meeting of: Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Meeting held in: Personnel Training Room, The Council House, Bourne Hill, Salisbury.

Date: 30 August 2005

Commencing at: 6.00pm

Present:

District Councillors

Councillor P D Edge – Chairman

Councillors Mrs J A Green, A Peach, L Randall, J Rodell and Mrs C A Spencer

Apologies: Councillors Mrs E A Chettleburgh and I Tomes.

Officers

J Meeker (Forward Planning and Transportation), S Hughes (Forward Planning and Transportation), M Wells (Forward Planning and Transportation) and S Draper (Democratic Services).

136. Public Questions/Statement Time:

There were none.

137. Councillor Questions/Statement Time:

There were none.

138. Minutes:

Resolved – that the minutes of the special meeting held on 16th May 2005 and the last ordinary meeting held on 1st June 2005 (both previously circulated) be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

139. Declarations of Interest:

There were none

140. Chairman's Announcements:

The Chairman informed members that the work of the review group examining CCTV in the District was progressing and would be calling its first witnesses shortly.

Councillor Peach also informed members that the work of the hotel review group was progressing and that the next meeting was scheduled for 15th September with local hoteliers.

141. Statement of Community Involvement – Part of the Local Development Framework

The Panel considered the previously circulated draft Statement of Community Involvement together with the report of the Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning).

Members asked the following questions and made the following points:

The document needed to be free of jargon to be as inclusive as possible.

That existing parish and community plans should be fed into the document. The officer also informed members that when new parish plans were approved relevant policies could be updated to reflect the priorities of particular parishes.

Many of the methods of consultation listed were only possibilities and officers could not guarantee that they would all be undertaken because they were so resource intensive. This was particularly true of the methods that involved having officers meet with people to discuss particular issues. Therefore it was felt that care must be taken not to raise the public's expectations unduly and it should be made clear which methods of consultation would be used and which would only be used in exceptional circumstances.

Resolved –

1. That the content of section 4 of the draft Statement of Community Involvement, which sets out the measures which will be employed to involve the community, be noted.
2. That when officers send a leaflet to the public detailing section 4, that it be made clear which methods of consultation will be primarily used and those that will only be used in exceptional circumstances.
3. That it be recommended to Cabinet that the draft Statement of Community Involvement be approved for formal public consultation.

142. Update on Policy R2

The Panel considered the report of the Planning Officer, Forward Planning (previously circulated).

The officer explained that the policy R2 did have some in-built flexibility but that when the Local Development Framework was created a new policy relating to community facilities will be drawn up. This policy will be underpinned by detailed survey work which will provide the basis upon which planning obligations could be spent on community facilities generally and not only on recreational open space.

A concern was expressed that another policy justifying additional contributions from developers would place an even greater burden on the developers who already had to pay substantial sums. Therefore the suggestion was made that if the scope of the R2 policy was widened then any monies not spent on recreational space could be spent on other village priorities rather than necessitating a new policy.

However, it was noted that the R2 policy was very successful and that widening the scope of it may in fact weaken it as it could potentially become more open to challenge from developers who wish to avoid paying the charge. The officer also explained that the total amount collected from developers may not in fact be a greater sum of money, but the additional policies would allow it to be put to a range of uses rather than simply to provide recreational open space.

It was noted that parishes receive a statement every six months detailing the amount of R2 money they have to spend and when this money will expire. Members asked that the local ward member/s also receive a copy of this statement.

The members noted that this issue would be further investigated through the Sustainable Rural Communities Scrutiny Review Group when the review got underway later in the Autumn.

Resolved - That the update report be noted.

143. Cabinet Monitoring

The Panel considered the Cabinet work-programme items relating to the Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Members felt that it would be interesting to see how the Tourism Strategy for Salisbury would fit with that for the New Forest National Park as the national park was already oversubscribed with visitors.

Resolved – That the work programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

