

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

5 November 2013

4.30 - 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors Reid (Chair), Saunders (Vice-Chair), Blencowe and Price

Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change: Councillor Ward

Officers:

Head of Planning Services: Patsy Dell

Planning Policy Officer: Frances Schulz

Committee Manager: James Goddard

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

13/45/DPSSC Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Marchant-Daisley.

13/46/DPSSC Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

13/47/DPSSC Minutes

The minutes of the 10 September 2013 meetings were approved and signed as a correct record.

13/48/DPSSC Public Questions

No public questions were asked.

13/49/DPSSC Statement of Community Involvement

Matter for Decision

It is a statutory requirement (Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)) for the Council to set out how it will consult the public on planning matters. This is normally set out in a document entitled

'Statement of Community Involvement'. The Council adopted its first Statement of Community Involvement in April 2007. Whilst there are no fixed legal deadlines for refreshing a Statement of Community Involvement, it is important the Council reviews this document from time to time in order to confirm its approach and commitment to community involvement in planning.

Officers considered a review useful at this point as a result of recent changes to the planning system due to legislative changes and because of the stage reached in the preparation of the new Local Plan.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change

Adopted the content of the Statement of Community Involvement 2013 and agreed to bring it into immediate effect; subject to inclusion of amendments from 5 November DPSSC; text to be approved by Executive Councillor, Chair and Spokes. No public consultation was deemed necessary.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Planning Policy Officer.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

Section 2 What is Involved in the Planning Process?

- i. Text in section 2 should refer to joint working going on including to South Cambridgeshire District Council and the County Council on transport, and the Joint Development Control Committee.

Section 4 Planning for the Future – Introduction

- ii. Text should set out how Cambridge is affected/covered by 2 spatial strategies, 1 for the City Council and 1 for South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Section 4 Planning for the Future – How can I Respond to Consultations?

- iii. Text should set out how residents can engage with the process such as speaking at committee. Text should also set out when residents are consulted directly house to house eg on SHLAA. Queried how people could onto the database in paragraph 4.10.

Section 4 Planning for the Future – What Happens After the Consultation?

- iv. Paragraph 4.21 text should set out committee and council process details regarding decision making.

Section 5 Development Management – Introduction

- v. Asked for 'Planning Expert System' details to be moved to the front of the section so that the public are aware they can access planning application details on-line.

Section 5 Development Management – How will we Consult?

- vi. Asked for inclusion of further details regarding the site notice process ie when were notices required or not and who was responsible for them.
- vii. Asked for clarification of details in Figure 1 table setting out publicity for planning applications. Specifically regarding areas where Planning Officers had discretion and what notices were statutory requirements. Also neighbour notifications, when does this happen and what are the guidelines.

Section 5 Development Management – What Happens after the Consultation?

- viii. The term "local" was superfluous in paragraph 5.25, and should be removed. Specific guidance should be added about what goes to what committee. Asked for Joint Development Control Committee to be added to the list of committees who consider planning applications.
- ix. Requested separate points in paragraph 5.24 about decisions and calling in as they are separate actions. Suggested calling in needs a full explanation.

Section 5 Development Management – Planning Appeals

- x. Asked for complaints procedure details to be included, which councillors could signpost to residents to show the process was clear and open.

In response to Members' questions the Head of Planning Services and Planning Policy Officer said the following:

General

- i. A bespoke consultation strategy had been agreed for the Local Plan and this was considered to have been very successful in supporting the levels of community engagement in the Local plan process seen so far. Over 20,000 responses had been received to the local plan since work started in March 2011. Residents knew about the Statement of

- Community Involvement document and how to make comments/representations as part of the planning application process.
- ii. The last Statement of Community Involvement received 19 responses to consultation when it was prepared in 2007.
 - iii. A bespoke consultation plan (the Cambridge Local Plan – Towards 2031: Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy) had been brought to DPSSC outlining how the community would be consulted. They appear to feel engaged in council consultation processes, over 20,000 responses were received over the course of the Local Plan consultations.

Section 4 Planning for the Future – How Will we Consult?

- iv. Officers undertook to clarify in paragraph 4.11 how residents can get on the consultation database. Further details will also be set out in the Statement of Community Involvement regarding council consultation activities with residents, such as letter drops.

Section 5 Development Management – How will we Consult?

- v. The Public Access System was set up so resident groups can access planning application details on-line. Training had been provided to help support resident groups self-serve to access information on-line. An email list of planning applications was also circulated to known lead contacts.
- vi. It was hard for the council to keep a contacts list updated resident group contacts as these periodically changed when new groups formed, or when membership/roles within groups changed. Therefore the focus was on helping groups to self-serve.
- vii. Officers proposed to review key resident group contacts at the twice yearly residents' forum. Officers undertook to include further details in the Statement of Community Involvement setting out how information could be accessed using the Public Access System.

Section 5 Development Management – How can I Respond to Consultations?

- viii. Officers undertook to check the names of groups in paragraph 5.18.

Section 5 Development Management – What Happens After the Consultation?

- ix. Officers undertook to clarify the role of Councillors in paragraph 5.24. Residents can ask Councillors to advise on the planning process, call-in planning items for scrutiny at committee, plus speak at committee as Ward Councillors. There is a 21 day consultation period where items can be requested for scrutiny at committee, or they will be decided by officer delegation.

Section 6 Monitoring and Review of the Statement of Community Involvement

- x. The Annual Monitoring Report will set out how many consultation responses have been received.

Councillors requested a change to the recommendation. Councillor Reid formally proposed to amend the following recommendation from the Officer's report (amendments shown in bold):

Adopted the content of the Statement of Community Involvement 2013 and agreed to bring it into immediate effect; **subject to inclusion of amendments from 5 November DPSSC; text to be approved by Executive Councillor, Chair and Spokes. No public consultation was deemed necessary.**

The Committee unanimously approved this amended recommendation.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendation as amended.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 5.00 pm

CHAIR

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