

ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2020

PRESENT:

Councillors Cox (Chairman), Ball (Vice-Chair), S Wilcox (Vice-Chair), Binney, D Ennis, Ho, A Little, Parton-Hughes, Warburton and Westwood.

(In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.17 Councillors Eadie and Pullen attended the meeting)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gwilt, Marshall and Ray.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting, as previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the Committee's work programme.

Members were advised that the LEP review was ongoing and the scope for greater use of briefing papers for some standing items was raised.

With regard to S106 and CIL, it was advised a report would be brought to the Committee as part of the local plan process. As the Authority was not currently a provider of social or affordable housing (issues within the remit of the Community, Health and Housing Committee) the remaining issues under consideration would primarily fall within the remit of the Economic Growth, Environment and Development (O&S) Committee.

The Chairman noted that all Overview and Scrutiny Committees would also have a role in considering climate change.

5 LICHFIELD CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION

The Committee was advised that following publication of the draft Lichfield City Centre Masterplan a four week public consultation took place in January/February 2020 to establish the views and opinions of key stakeholders and the wider public.

Consideration was given to a report that summarised the representations received, the changes made as a consequence and the proposed actions going forward.

It was reported that the Car Parking Strategy and Public Realm had been identified as areas to be brought forward quickly. With regards to the consultation it was noted that over 1000 people had attended the consultation event at St Mary's.

In response to a question about commercial and revenue opportunities for the Council, it was advised that the Council had £45 million in terms of borrowing capacity, of which £35 million would be available if a current offer was accepted. In accordance with CIPFA guidance, borrowing could not be used purely for economic return, and would need to involve an element of place shaping or provide wider economic benefit. It would be for the Council to decide if it wished to invest in any of the four sites listed in the Masterplan with a view to helping deliver the plan and receiving a return/income for the Council.

The Chairman noted that a follow up meeting had been arranged for 22 April 2020.

RESOLVED: (1) That the consultation responses to the Lichfield City Centre Masterplan be noted.

(2) That subject to changes to the document resulting from the consultation, Cabinet be recommended to approve the document as a basis for the Council's ambitions for development within Lichfield City Centre.

6 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW UPDATE

It was reported that the consultation on the Local Plan Review Preferred Options had closed on 24 January 2020.

Representations had been received from approximately 460 individuals/ organisations with a further 685 individual members of the public submitting a standard response regarding proposals for Burntwood.

Whilst a range of supporting evidence had been completed, further evidence was still required to support the publication (regulation 19) version. The Local Plan evidence base that had so far been completed was being reviewed internally with additional 'critical friend' support provided externally by a barrister and planning consultancy.

The next version of the Local Plan would be the publication (regulation 19) version. At this formal stage, the document would be the Council's final position with limited scope for further alteration.

It was proposed to amend the current Local Development Scheme (LDS) programme to change the publication version consultation date from May 2020 to July 2020. This would allow sufficient time for the processing of representations to be completed and for the further work to support the evidence base to inform the publication version of the Local Plan.

There was sufficient time within the LDS programme for the alteration to be made without amending the timing of the subsequent steps including the submission date of January 2021. Members were reminded that there was a commitment in the adopted Lichfield District Local Plan Allocations to submit a review of the Local Plan by no later than the end of December 2021.

In response to a question about representations it was advised that letters were acknowledged, key issues identified and a summary of representations produced.

The Committee noted that there was a target provision of 11,780 houses with a 20-25% buffer of additional sites since not all developments granted planning permission would be delivered.

It was confirmed that further planning permissions could not be denied if the number of houses built reached the target of 11,780, and all new dwellings in an area would count towards the designated number for that specific area.

The need for sufficient infrastructure was highlighted, including health provision and education. It was advised that the infrastructure delivery plan would be developed as part of the local plan, although the actual delivery of aspects of the infrastructure, e.g. doctors' practices, would be dependent on other bodies and organisations.

Resolved: (1) That the Committee notes the progress and next steps associated with the Local Plan Review.

(2) That the Committee recommends that Cabinet approves the revised Local Development Scheme timetable set out in the report.

7 BURNTWOOD DEVELOPMENT

The Cabinet Member for Investment, Economic Growth & Tourism gave a verbal update on activity in connection with Burntwood.

It was reported that the Burntwood Town Deal partnership comprising the District, Town and County Council had met three times since the local elections and was looking collectively at initiatives. Arising from these discussions:

- the District Council was supportive of a feasibility study for a Burntwood BID
- it was proposed that an exercise be undertaken to involve the local community
- consideration was being given to the 'blue hoardings' and 'Olaf Johnson' sites.

The Committee noted that the leader of the Town Council had forwarded a number of possible initiatives and discussions were also being held with the Town Council regarding the possible transfer of parks and open spaces.

The Committee was informed that a recent Cabinet Member Decision had authorised investment in two outdoor gyms in Burntwood parks. This commitment to helping people live healthy active lives was welcomed and it was requested, with reference to the need for play equipment in the south of Burntwood, that consideration be given to the geographic distribution of such facilities to ensure access for as many residents as possible. It was confirmed that the relevant Cabinet Members would be happy to look at further proposals.

8 HS2 UPDATE

The Committee was advised that the Prime Minister had made a statement in February confirming the Government's support for HS2 phases 1, 2A and 2B. In making his statement the Prime Minister was influenced by the findings of the Oakervee Review on whether and how to proceed with HS2.

The review had concluded that there was a strong business case for the project and it had a strategic role in rebalancing the economy. It also identified the need for investment across the wider transport network.

Phase 1 had gained Royal Assent and a notice to proceed was expected in April. Phase 2A was likely to be enacted by the end of the year. Phase 2B formed part of a wider discussion about integrated transport across the north and it was likely HS2 would be asked to undertake further integrated transport planning with ministers.

It was reported that a Minister for HS2 had been appointed to provide more oversight and accountability to Parliament.

The Committee noted that some enabling works were already underway in the District including at Cappers Lane, Lichfield and the Council would be accepting an offer from HS2 to brief Members. It was advised that as a local planning authority the Council would have a role to play in considering some details of design and appearance.

Members were informed that following funding regimes had been established:

- A community fund - targeted at the voluntary/community sector to add benefit to communities along the route that are demonstrably disrupted by the construction of HS2
- A business fund - targeted at interventions that will have a positive impact on local economies affected by the construction phase of HS2
- A woodland fund - to help create native woodland or restore plantations on ancient woodland sites near to the HS2 route

Concern was expressed that 500 staff would be based at Cappers Lane which would have implications for local traffic flows, especially when taken in conjunction with increased lorry movements and the new development at Streethay. It was suggested that this be raised at the briefing to be arranged with HS2.

In response to a question about the Handsacre junction it was confirmed this link would, according to current indications, remain part of the scheme.

The importance of community engagement was emphasised with reference to the community forums established for the Trent Valley TV4 scheme and the early stages of the HS2 project.

It was advised that a community liaison manger was in place and the establishment of a community forum would be a good issue to raise at the HS2 briefing. The County Council, as lead transport authority, could also be approached about reinstating the community forums that had worked well during the early stages of phase 1.

The Chairman said the environmental statement would be awaited with interest, especially in the light of the successful challenge against the third runway at Heathrow Airport.

(The Meeting closed at 7.00 pm)

CHAIRMAN