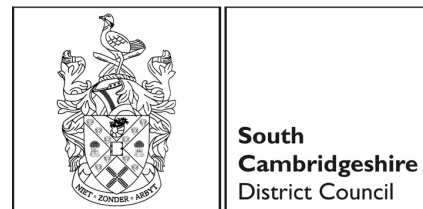


South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB23 6EA

t: 03450 450 500
f: 01954 713149
dx: DX 729500 Cambridge 15
minicom: 01480 376743
www.scambs.gov.uk



24 April 2015

To: Chairman – Councillor Roger Hickford
Vice-Chairman – Councillor Jose Hales
Members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee – Councillors David Bard,
Alison Elcox, Lynda Harford, Philippa Hart, Douglas de Lacey, David Morgan and
Bunty Waters

Quorum: 6

Dear Councillor

This is a supplement to the previously-published agenda for the meeting of **SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE** on **THURSDAY, 30 APRIL 2015**, containing those reports which had not been received by the original publication deadline.

Yours faithfully
JEAN HUNTER
Chief Executive

Requests for a large print agenda must be received at least 48 hours before the meeting.

AGENDA

8. **Scrutiny Orchard Park Task and Finish Group Interim Recommendations**

PAGES
1 - 10

This page is left blank intentionally.

Agenda Item 8



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

Report To: Scrutiny and Overview Committee

30 April 2015

From: Lessons Learned from Orchard Park Working Group

REVIEW OF LESSONS LEARNED FROM ORCHARD PARK

Purpose

1. To agree interim recommendations from the Working Group set up to review the lessons learned from Orchard Park and request that Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends to Cabinet that these be endorsed and forwarded to the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee (NJDCC).
2. This is not a key decision because Cabinet is the decision-maker. However, it will be a key decision for Cabinet because:
 - (a) it results in the authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to this Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates, and
 - (b) it is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends to Cabinet that the interim recommendations from the Working Group (see paragraph 16) are endorsed and forwarded to the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The interim recommendations have been drawn up by the Working Group following an analysis of the information gathered during a series of discussions and interviews that have been carried out. Further work will be carried out by the Working Group but it is hoped that the interim recommendations will be endorsed by Cabinet and provide useful information to support the NJDCC in its deliberations in July 2015.

Background

6. Following a Member's suggestion at Council in June 2014 Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed on 3 July 2014 to set up a Working Group to review the lessons learned from Orchard Park. It was agreed that the group's remit would be to look at how the recommendations made in 2008 by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee regarding Orchard Park [then called Arbury Park] had been implemented, if they had been applied to subsequent developments and what the effects of them had been. The initial timescale for this work was estimated to be 12 months. However, in the light of the NJDCC being required to consider in July the application for Phase 2 of that development, the interim recommendations of the Working Group may provide useful information to support the committee in its deliberations.

5. The membership of the working group is:

- Cllr Lynda Harford (Chairman)
- Cllr David Bard
- Cllr Alison Elcox
- Cllr Jose Hales
- Tracy Mann, Development Officer

The Working Group first met on 9 September 2014 and has been supported by officers from Democratic Services and the Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Team.

7. On 9 October 2008 Cabinet received a report from the Arbury Park Task and Finish Group which had been set up to examine questions raised by residents of the new development. Cabinet undertook to provide a response and action plan and this was presented to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 4 December 2008. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee welcomed the response and action plan and resolved to review it at a meeting in April 2009. The recommendations of the Arbury Park Task and Finish Group can be found at Appendix A.

8. A further report entitled 'Progress since the Task and Finish Group Review' was submitted to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 5 November 2009. At that time it was noted that the economic climate had changed significantly and subsequently its effects may have influenced implementation of some of the recommendations.

9. The setting up of the current Working Group was agreed in response to concerns expressed by a Local Member with regard to progress in resolving further issues at Orchard Park.

Considerations

10. An initial list was drawn up of officers and stakeholders who would be able to provide evidence of compliance with, and the effects of, the recommendations from the 2007 review. The Working Group has looked at Orchard Park, Cambourne and the fringe sites.

11. The Working Group has met seven times, including its inception meeting plus attendance at an Orchard Park Community Council meeting. Those who have been interviewed, consulted or supported the review to date include:

- South Cambridgeshire District Council Officers
- Cambridge City Council Officers
- Cambourne Parish Council
- Orchard Park Community Council
- Local Members for Cambourne and Orchard Park
- Peter Bailey (Dr), Cambourne Medical Practice

12. Each individual or group was asked to reflect on the 2007 review recommendations and asked for their view on how these had been taken forward and what effects they had observed following the recommendations being made.

13. The Working Group is part way through the review and as such this report includes interim recommendations. These recommendations are being submitted at this stage in order to provide information for members of the Northstowe Joint Development Committee prior to their consideration of the Phase 2 application for that

development. There is still, however, work to be done to obtain the views of residents and local members particularly with regard to the fringe sites.

14. It is interesting to see the very prompt acknowledgement of both councils to the change in the economic climate and their response to the needs of developers. It is not apparent that developers have responded similarly since the improvement in the economic climate. Much of the feedback has reflected growing frustration with the consequences of this and the emphasis that developers now put on viability arguments. It is recognised that this is outside the remit of the Working Group but members have expressed a desire that the Council should use its best endeavours to make Central Government aware of what appears to be unequal support for developers in this respect and its consequences.
15. The Working Group's general observation is that there is evidence that both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council have been attentive to all of the recommendations and in many cases processes have been adopted to follow those recommendations.
16. The following interim recommendations have been agreed by the Working Group:

Recommendation 1 – The decision to require a road adoption strategy for Northstowe should be replicated on all future developments.

This recommendation relates to 1d in the original recommendations which included a requirement for developers to maintain paths and roads to an adoptable standard where houses are occupied. Subsequent to this both councils now require roads, wherever practicable, to be built to an adoptable standard but issues remain because the County Council cannot be obliged to adopt all roads.

The practice of using temporary haul roads should be promoted. This avoids conflict with other road users on part occupied developments and can facilitate early adoption of roads. [The County Council will not adopt a road that is still being used by construction traffic.]

Recommendation 2 – The good practice of school provision concurrent with first occupations should be continued.

This makes interim provision of resource for other key services such as health and also offers opportunities for social interaction.

Recommendation 3 – More consideration should be given to a greater variety of opportunities for social interaction for early occupants of new developments.

There is evidence that although schools have proved valuable in providing community activities to bring residents together there are different responses to these arrangements. Some residents see this as welcoming and others may find it hostile and cliquey.

It has been suggested that innovative solutions could include pop-up coffee shops, cinemas and internet cafés.

Recommendation 4 – South Cambridgeshire District Council should adopt the charging strategy used by Cambridge City Council in connection with pre-application advice.

This recommendation relates to 3a in the original recommendations, which covered pre-application advice. Both councils have subsequently adopted policies for pre-application advice that have been well received and are working well. Cambridge City Council uses a traffic light system to monitor acceptance of the advice offered to make an application acceptable. They acknowledge however that some developers will choose to submit an application which is still deficient of some information or solutions. In these cases, where subsequent officer advice is required on those aspects after submission, the Council charges for that advice.

Recommendation 5 – Consideration should be given to further work being carried out on ‘New Town Blues’ and the referral rates to social services and their impacts on costs for councils and other public services.

It has become apparent that evidence of ‘New Town Blues’ has been available since the 1930s but little of this learning seems to have been taken forward and it is acknowledged that much of this relates to funding. Failure to invest sufficiently in adequate community support at the start of a development has a major impact on future costs to councils and other public services.

Recommendation 6 – Funding should be secured for training and/or technical support to be provided for parish councils affected by strategic development applications. There should be greater flexibility in the use of funds allocated.

Whilst some officer support has been available to parish councils at the time they are considering applications it is felt that there is a greater need than has been satisfied so far. A commitment for funding should be sought for this from developers at pre-application stage.

Some of the parish councils required to comment on strategic development applications are small and have limited resource. Although it is acknowledged that small grants have been made available for administrative functions, other costs such as heating and lighting meeting rooms have not been met.

17. Further planned work includes:

- (a) Meetings with relevant County Council officers
- (b) Meetings with appropriate parish councils and local members
- (c) Meetings with residents’ groups
- (d) Meetings with other relevant South Cambridgeshire District Council officers

This work will provide additional evidence of the way the councils responded to the recommendations and establish from residents’ point of view the effects they had.

Options

18. Scrutiny and Overview Committee could:
- (a) recommend to Cabinet that the interim recommendations from the Working Group are endorsed and forwarded to the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee.
 - (b) recommend to Cabinet that the interim recommendations from the Working Group, with any amendments made at the meeting, are endorsed and forwarded to the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee.
 - (c) refuse to recommend to Cabinet that the interim recommendations from the Working Group are endorsed and forwarded to the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee.

Implications

19. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

20. The Working Group has not costed the work which would be required following endorsement of the recommendations if they are accepted.

Staffing

21. The Working Group has not estimated the staffing requirements that the recommendations would result in should they be accepted.

Consultation responses

22. Paragraph 11 lists those who have been interviewed, consulted or supported the review. The recommendations have been agreed by the Working Group.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Establish successful and sustainable New Communities with housing and employment at Northstowe and the major growth sites, served by an improved A14 and A428.

23. The findings of the Working Group should directly impact the way in which the Council approaches strategic developments and aims to further support the work to establish successful and sustainable New Communities.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Arbury Park: Scrutiny Report

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=293&MId=4021&Ver=4>

Cabinet Response to Arbury Park Report

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=417&MId=4039&Ver=4>

Orchard Park Action Plan: Review

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=417&MId=4039&Ver=4>

Contact Officers:

Gemma Barron – Sustainable Communities and
Partnerships Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713340

Tracy Mann – Development Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713342

Chairman of Working Group:

Cllr Lynda Harford

APPENDIX A

Recommendations from the 2007 Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

1. Design Guide:

- 1a. The master developer or the Council should produce a Design Guide, before the first planning applications are made; this should be formally adopted and then enforced when evaluation applications.
- 1b. The Design Guide should set out an agreed programme for phasing the development, aiming for whole sections to be completed before moving to the next phase.
- 1c. The Design Guide should spell out the approach to crime and safety design issues; encouraging joint working with police and the Council's arts, sports and community teams.
- 1d. The County and District Councils should specify road and footpath materials that are attractive as well as durable and fit for purpose. Planning permission should require the developer to provide and maintain paths and roads to an adoptable standard where houses are occupied.
- 1e. Design aspects not covered in the main Design Guide should be the subject of subsequent design codes.
- 1f. The Council should develop and use a scoring system such as at Huntingdonshire District Council to assess large development and inform the district-wide Design Guide.

2. Urban Design:

- 2a. Urban design expertise should be retained and used throughout the pre-planning, planning and construction stages at Arbury Park and future large developments.
- 2b. The urban designer and planning enforcement officer should closely monitor the development at every stage, as resources allow.

3. Standard of Planning Applications:

- 3a. SCDC should develop a stronger reputation via pre-application meetings that if proposals are not acceptable they will be refused without negotiation.

4. S106 Agreement

- 4a. S106 Officers should provide a communication hub and actively ensure that work progresses in all aspects and in compliance with agreed trigger points.
- 4b. The counting of occupations should be done (at least monthly) by only one party – preferably the planning authority, to avoid duplication – and then shared with parish, City, District and County Council colleagues.
- 4c. S106 negotiations should invite timely input from local stakeholders, whilst retaining probity and confidentiality of negotiations.

5. Phased Construction:

- 5a. Large developments should be built according to a phasing plan, starting at one or two points, as appropriate for the size of development, then building outwards. The aim should be for residential streets and areas to be completed in phases so that new residents suffer minimum

disturbance by ongoing building works. However, it should also be noted that phasing could have the effect of slowing down the rate at which affordable homes are built.

- 5b. Commercial and community facilities should be included in the first phase, with an information centre and community development officer being on-site as soon as properties are occupied, perhaps initially in a dual-use community house.
- 5c. These should be funded and put in place at the earliest stage and then reimbursed via the S106 Agreement.

6. Community Development:

- 6a. A community development plan should be produced, in consultation with stakeholders, at a very early stage for each new development. It should be clear who has responsibility for delivery, monitoring and regular updating of the plan.
- 6b. The work of arms-length community development staff should be agreed and managed via a partnership agreement. This should be reviewed quarterly as the number of residents grow.
- 6c. An early priority should be to arrange regular and varied community activities, bringing residents together in small and larger numbers until networks develop and become self-sustaining.
- 6d. Another key service is the initial 'Welcome Pack' which should be supplied to new residents on moving in; inclusion of a current map should be a priority. A fuller 'Information Pack' should be supplied, preferably in person, within three weeks. These packs should provide information that is: timely*, concise, self-explanatory, accurate; and signposting any further sources of help.

*For example information about local surgeries may be needed on day one.

- 6e. All the information should also be available electronically.

7. Environmental Health:

- 7a. Landscaping features such as earth mounds, should be used where possible as a noise barrier; this eliminates the uncertainty about the location, timing and nature of buildings used as a barrier.
- 7b. Noise readings should be taken before and after a barrier is erected, and on both sides of the road. Any expert hired by the Council to verify the findings should be independent of the development.
- 7c. The Highways Agency and developer should communicate and consult fully with the parish and district councils regarding any proposals to alter major roads adjacent to new developments.

8. Governance:

- 8a. The Council should explore every means of securing funding for parish councils to protect them from the financial impact of supporting large new developments. Existing parish residents must not suffer long-term costs because large-scale development has chanced to fall within their boundary.
- 8b. Governance arrangements for new developments should be settled as early as possible to enable early community facilities to be properly managed and to provide existing and new residents with a sense of community identity.

9. Delays in moving in:

- 9a. The S106 agreement should agree a process for accurately setting out building locations.
- 9b. The Cambridgeshire Bus Team and other County Council colleagues should work closely with the planning authority to ensure the location of boundaries are agreed and observed.

10. Need for a single point of contact, communication and control

- 10a. The Council and the master developer should ensure that a mechanism is established from the outset to provide a regular forum for all stakeholders to raise and resolve concerns.
- 10b. This forum could be led by a local Member who would be regarded as the champion for the new development, ensuring that co-operation and communication between all stakeholders was maintained. Such member champions should be considered for all new developments.

11. Affordable Housing:

- 11a. Future developments should emulate the practice used at Arbury Park of involving a consortium of RSLs in planning and negotiations from the outset.

12. Building site environment:

- 12a. The Council should negotiate, via the S106 process, that developers will register the site(s) on a considerate constructors scheme.
- 12b. The master developer, or consortium, should appoint an officer to monitor and oversee the development and be a point of contact for the consortium.
- 12c. Officers should explore means of ensuring that street trees are planted at an early stage, rather than at the end of the development.

13. Maps and Road Nameplates:

- 13a. The successful road-naming process at Arbury Park should be used at future developments.
- 13b. Officers should urgently explore methods for ensuring that road nameplates and current road maps are available for the first residents of a new development. These may include contractually requiring the master developer to
- Provide road nameplates and locate them as guided by the County's Highways service.
 - Provide simple, timely street maps
 - Deposit electronic plans with Section 38 agreements

14. Primary School:

- 14a. When a school is built to serve a large housing development it should be located at the centre of the site with safe walking access from all directions and adequate road crossings.
- 14b. A phasing plan for the development should provide for the school to be fully ready for use as soon as the first residents move in.
- 14c. Planning considerations for a school should ensure an optimum physical size that meets statutory access requirements and yet will not overburden the school budget. The building design should also fit the architectural context of the location. The outdoor space should provide a stimulating environment for playing a learning out of doors.
- 14d. The County Council should limit initial reception class intake to new schools and phase increases in admissions in line with forecast in-catchment pupil numbers. This would ensure

that new schools grow at the same rate as the development and can accommodate all in-catchment pupils as they arrive. This would aid community cohesion.

15. Health Facilities:

- 15a. The PCT should work with relevant surgeries to communicate with incoming residents as soon as a large development begins. Relevant surgeries may not be the nearest, but one more easily reached by public transport.

16. Utilities:

- 16a. Utilities providers should be fully consulted at regional spatial strategy planning stage; not just regarding costs but also feasibility and timescales.

17. Foul and Surface Water Drainage:

- 17a. The District Council's on site planning monitoring officers should alert Anglian Water at an early stage, of any concerns they notice regarding construction of foul and surface water drainage systems*. This would reduce the delay in their adoption later in the process.

*It must be clear that Anglian Water retains responsibility for monitoring and adoption.

- 17b. Where drainage adoption is delayed, the Council should keep residents informed as to who is responsible for dealing with any concerns.

Achievements during the Review 2008:

- Chasing overdue S106 targets and official road signs
- Progress on the Design Guide
- Cabinet restructure to create a portfolio for New Communities; an officer restructure brought together for the first time officers covering planning, community development and economic development headed by a corporate manager for new communities
- Information Pack delivered with the keys on moving in. The Welcome Pack is delivered within three weeks. Residents' survey showed that delivery is well-timed although a third of respondents did not recall receiving the pack.
- A meeting with the head teacher of the school, chair of governors and County Council staff provided a forum in which two families' applications were resolved and a way forward agreed regarding incidents of over-subscription in future
- A forum for parish and district councillors to collaborate
- Discussions progressed regarding to a safer route for cyclists at the nearby A14 interchange
- Refuse bin stores issue raised via the residents' survey has now been resolved