

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on
Tuesday, 7 June 2016 at 10.00 a.m.

Portfolio Holder: Robert Turner

Councillors in attendance:

Opposition spokesmen: Bridget Smith and Ingrid Tregoing

Also in attendance: Kevin Cuffley and Lynda Harford

Officers:

Gemma Barron	Sustainable Communities & Partnerships Manager
Jonathan Dixon	Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Clare Gibbons	Development Officer
Jo Mills	Planning and New Communities Director
Trovine Monteiro	Consultancy Unit - Team Leader
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer
Claire Spencer	Senior Planning Officer (Transport Policy)
Alison Talkington	Senior Planning Policy Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In connection with Minute no. 6 (Heritage Guardianship Sites: Landbeach Tithe Barn, East Hatley Church and Sawston Tannery Drying Shed), Councillor Kevin Cuffley (a local Member for Sawston) declared a non-pecuniary interest because he had been involved locally in seeking a satisfactory outcome for the Sawston Tannery Drying Shed.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Planning Portfolio Holder signed as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2016.

3. CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL - PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY 2016 AND INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY 2016

The Planning Portfolio Holder considered the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2016 and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2016.

The Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Manager summarised the report, highlighting the methodology adopted in each case, and the Strategies' significance as part of South Cambridgeshire District Council's Development Plan process. One particular challenge was to anticipate the likely post-2031 demands as a result of population growth in such areas as Waterbeach.

The Portfolio Holder led a discussion on the need to recognise demand for facilities not currently available in the area, such as an ice rink and dry ski slope, and new and emerging sports and pastimes. Councillor Bridget Smith said that many recreational activities took place in locations such as community centres, and stressed the importance of the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy in providing evidence of the need for community facilities that were 'fit for purpose'. Councillor Kevin Cuffley called for better liaison with the Football Association, and highlighted the expense involved in complying with the latest standards. He also stressed the need to provide facilities for disabled people. Councillor

Lynda Harford urged officers to be mindful of viability. It would be unfortunate if formal facilities were provided at the expense of the provision of more informal recreational pursuits, such as cycling and dog walking.

The Planning Portfolio Holder:

(a) **endorsed** the following strategies in their current form:

- Playing Pitch Strategy 2016 (Appendix A to the report)
- Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2016 (Appendix B to the report)

(b) **agreed** that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and New Communities to make any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING IN SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Against a backdrop of growing interest among local communities in preparing Neighbourhood Plans, providing an opportunity for Parish Councils to produce plans that would sit alongside South Cambridgeshire District Council's Local Plan, the Planning Portfolio Holder considered a report examining how the district council is working with local communities.

The report highlighted the statutory duty of district councils to advise, and assist, those Parish Councils preparing Neighbourhood Plans.

Taking care not to direct her comment at officers, Councillor Bridget Smith regretted the fact that South Cambridgeshire District Council had not been encouraging Neighbourhood Planning three years ago. She said that the consequence of not doing so was that some communities were now suffering intense development pressures. The Planning and New Communities Director highlighted that, at that time, neighbourhood plans were a relatively new concept, and parish councils were given the opportunity to include Parish-led proposals within the Local Plan as an alternative to them preparing neighbourhood plans. A number of Parish Councils had taken advantage of this alternative course.

Councillor Smith expressed concern about the adequacy, or otherwise, of district council resources available to provide appropriate support to Parish Councils. The Planning and New Communities Director admitted that the delay in adopting the Local Plan had caused problems by virtue of some of the district Council's housing policies being deemed out-of-date. She pointed out that the Planning Policy Team responsible for Neighbourhood Plans was the same one striving to ensure that the emerging Local Plan passed successfully through the Inquiry stage and progressed eventually to adoption.

Councillor Lynda Harford said that South Cambridgeshire District Council should seek innovative ways to support local communities in preparing Neighbourhood Plans that complemented the District-wide Local Plan.

The Planning Portfolio Holder and others present discussed a proposal to set up a Neighbourhood Plan Task and Finish Group.

The Planning Portfolio Holder **agreed** to

- a) set up a Task and Finish Group consisting provisionally of four District Councillors, two Parish Councillors and two Parish Council clerks to oversee the development of a number of documents relating to the review of working with Parish Councils to include

- i. a revised agreement for use between the Council and any Parish Council preparing a Neighbourhood Plan;
 - ii. a standard and enhanced offer to Parish Councils preparing Neighbourhood Plans; and
 - iii. Guidance to Neighbourhood Plans in South Cambridgeshire
- b) Consider, at a Portfolio Holder meeting in Autumn 2016, the documents referred to in a) above, submit them to consultation with Parish Councils, and then consider proposed modifications (if any) before finalising those documents; and
- c) conduct an annual review of how the Council works with Parish Councils on Neighbourhood Plans.

5. PILOT BROWNFIELD REGISTER

The Planning Portfolio Holder considered a report seeking his endorsement of the Pilot South Cambridgeshire Brownfield Register, and its submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

The Portfolio Holder and others present noted that the Pilot Register consisted only of sites, which either were already in the adopted Local Development Framework or in the emerging Local Plan, or which had planning permission. A major challenge for South Cambridgeshire District Council would be that of available resources once the requirement to prepare a register comes into effect. The Portfolio Holder added that, once granted, it was important to the Council that planning permission was implemented as soon as possible.

Councillor Lynda Harford mentioned the impact that 'permission in principle' could have on pre-application negotiations, and the speed of delivery. The Principal Planning Policy Officer replied that the Government's rationale behind Brownfield Registers was to help tackle the housing crisis. He explained that sites suggested in future would need to be tested, following a process similar to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The Register would be eligible for the grant of permission in principle, but the Local Planning Authority (LPA) still needed to consider whether or not to give such consent, and any matters to be addressed. In response to Councillor Harford, the Planning and New Communities Director said that permission in principle in effect replaced the need for pre-application advice, although LPAs might still want to offer such advice and landowners might want to take advantage of it.

Those present reflected on what the Regulations might include, and speculated on how the LPA would deal with sites that were only partially brownfield. The Portfolio Holder requested that officers present a further report to him once those Regulations had been published.

The Planning Portfolio Holder:

- a. **endorsed** the Pilot South Cambridgeshire Brownfield Register and Report in Appendix 1 for submission to DCLG; and
- b. **agreed** that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and New Communities to make any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder.

6. HERITAGE GUARDIANSHIP SITES: LANDBEACH TITHE BARN, EAST HATLEY CHURCH AND SAWSTON TANNERY DRYING SHED

The Planning Portfolio Holder **received and noted** a report updating him on progress with the Landbeach Tithe Barn project and, in particular, access to the barn, the Sawston Tannery Drying Shed project, and the transfer of St Denis Church at East Hatley

In connection with the Tithe Barn, Councillor Ingrid Tregoeing (a local Member) noted that her predecessor had been a member of the Trust responsible for the Barn. Councillor Bridget Smith noted that good progress was being made.

In connection with St. Denis church, Councillor Bridget Smith (a local Member) expressed her gratitude to all concerned for what was proving to be a good outcome.

In connection with the Sawston Drying Shed, Councillor Kevin Cuffley expressed doubt surrounding the project's value for money, and the ability to find a future use for the building.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

The Planning Portfolio Holder and others present **noted** the Work Programme attached to the agenda.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled Planning Portfolio Holder meeting was on Friday 9 September 2016 at 10.00am.

If required, additional Planning Portfolio Holder meetings would be convened if, but only if, required in order to consider matters arising as a result of the Local Plan Inquiry.

The Meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.
