

Cabinet Lead Reports – Full Council 9 December 2015

Councillor David Guest: Cabinet Lead for Economy and Planning

Planning & Housing Development

Major Developments – Progress Update

Market Parade, Havant

The outline application for 130 flats and ground commercial uses in a tower block is progressing and will be considered relative to proposals in the emerging Local Development Order (LDO). As this proposal would mark a significant change to Havant Town Centre it is likely to be brought to DMC for decision.

Initial ideas emerging from the LDO work is to create frontage to Havant Park, changing the focus of the Market Parade area and making better use of the very attractive town park. Public consultation on the LDO is programmed for February.

Havant Railway footbridge roof is currently being repaired and as a short term improvement. Hampshire County Council has commissioned a study into options for the full replacement of the bridge and an Expression of Interest has been submitted to the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Fund for future financing of the bridge.

Dunsbury Hill Business Gateway

Infrastructure works adjacent to the A3M are progressing at pace as is the associated ASDA roundabout works. Reserve Matters application for Fat Face's new 18,037 SqM (194,000sqft) facility is progressing well. Securing the expansion of a major employer in the borough at this strategic site will be a boost to the long term prosperity of the area. The facility is scheduled for completion in August 2017 and will bring 100 new jobs. Portsmouth CC is also in discussion with other potential occupiers.

Waterlooville Town Centre

The continuing success of the Wellington Retail Park is impacting on the High Street town centre with challenges of getting the footfall between the two areas and the Dukes Walk retail area and the new homes in the MDA. Section 106 monies (£1.19m) are due to be paid by the MDA developers for works to integrate the MDA with the town centre after the completion of the 1550th dwelling. Whilst this work is likely to be some years away, it is important to engage with all the interested parties as soon as possible in order to make the necessary improvements. A Council funded master plan is being considered as a way to drive the changes that will be needed.

Commercial Developments

Retail development on Solent Road is progressing with Next due to open in April and M&S in May. An Expression of Interest has been submitted to the Solent LEP for Local Growth Fund money for new highway infrastructure to support business development at Brockhampton West on Harts Farm Way. Hampshire CC is undertaking another study to try and find solutions to the congestion in the Southmoor Lane - Harts Farm Way area.

Housebuilding

Members will all be able to see new housing being developed throughout the borough giving a clear indication of developer and home buyers confidence in the area. Current major applications at Station Road, Hayling Island for 75 homes and employment units and 43 homes at Meadowlands in Hart Plain are progressing well.

Developers are reporting issues with skilled labour, with demand exceeding supply. As the need to deliver more and more homes continues to be a national and local priority the need for more labour will be an issue and the Council's focus on apprentices, training and skills plans and work with local colleges will be beneficial.

Planning Policy and Urban Design

Partnership for Urban South Hampshire – Spatial Strategy Update

The evidence base work being undertaken by consultants (GL Hearn) indicates that there will be a need for more housing to be identified up to 2036. The updated Spatial Strategy that would set out indicative housing targets for the PUSH area is now programmed for consultation in June 2016. This is a delayed timescale. Whilst it would have been better for Havant to progress its Local Plan update alongside the PUSH strategy we will nevertheless need to press ahead otherwise speculative applications become more likely and the Council's ability to plan those decreases without an up to date Local Plan. Again I would encourage councillors to become involved in the Local Plan review as this will have a major impact on us all.

Prosperity Havant

The Prosperity Havant agenda is gaining momentum with Havant being represented at the MIPIM UK property investment exhibition in October as part a Solent-wide partnership. This highly successful national event generated hundreds of investment leads which we are currently in process of following up.

A key partner in the Prosperity Havant work is Portsmouth CC and our relationship with the city council is developing positively with regular meetings being set up with my opposite number there to discuss mutually beneficial opportunities.

Skills

I am monitoring the Prosperity Havant agenda as its success will generate infrastructure demands and demands for a skilled workforce. As we are seeing in the building trades, an available workforce is critical to success. Whilst the Borough Council is not directly involved in education and training we need to use our influence to support those bodies that do so that our workforce is adaptable to the future needs of the economy. This will be fundamental to Prosperity Havant alongside the availability of great development investments.

LEP engagement

The council continues to work to raise the profile of the areas key investment opportunities with Solent Local Enterprise Partnership. Initial expressions of interest have been submitted for funding from the next round of the Local Growth Fund for enabling infrastructure to support delivery of Brockhampton West and for Havant footbridge. If shortlisted, we will be invited to submit full business cases for each project in the New Year.

Planning Training for Councillors

Councillor training on urban design principles was provided by officers from Eastleigh BC on 17th November. A simple urban design checklist is being produced to help raise design and quality in development proposals. It is intended to create an online training facility alongside this for councillors and officers. This will complement the 'How Planning Works' and 'Planning Decisions and Probity' courses which have recently been created.

An online training programme, including the conditions training, is currently being developed for DMC members and other Councillors interested in planning or who would want to be trained for DMC.

Coastal Management & Climate Change

Beach Management Activities 2015

This autumn, the East Solent Coastal Partnership (ESCP) successfully supervised a beach management operation, placing c. 6,273m³ of beach material on to the Eastoke Frontage. Beach materials were dredged from the approach channel to Chichester Harbour and recycled back to the Eastoke Frontage. This operation not only increased the depth of the approach channel, managing the navigational risk to Local Mariners, it also increased the volume of material on the beach, maintaining the standard of protection, creating a double benefit to the local Mariners and Residents of Eastoke. This project was delivered by ESCP working closely with the Chichester Harbour Conservancy. This is a great example of a win-win project, with 100% of the cost, including ESCP officer time, being recovered via EA flood defence grant in aid providing multiple benefits. We will continue to monitor the beach

profile during the winter months, specifically in the lead up to and post stormy conditions.

We are in the process of updating our Beach Management Plan Environmental Impact Assessment for the next phase of our beach management programme. We are continuing to engage with the Hayling Island Golf Club with regard to integrating them into the plan, mitigating the risk of erosion in front of their eastern frontage whilst using the shingle accretion at Gunner Point as a source for recycling (another win-win situation).

The EA Grant funding allocation this year is a total £288k, and with an internal carry over of £24.3k from the 2014/15 grant fund, giving a total budget of £312.3k for 2015/16 to continue to provide flood risk management to the residents of Eastoke.

Timber Maintenance Repairs, South Hayling Frontage (Timber Groynes & Coast Guard Sloping Timber Revetment)

The ESCP successfully appointed J T Mackley who have been onsite since 2nd November 2015 and are due to complete onsite on 27th November 2015. The works were appointed through our Minor Work Framework for repairs to the timber groyne structures along the Eastoke Frontage. Works have also been carried out on the Coast Guard Revetment, repairing damage from recent stormy weathers and to steps over the timber splash wall at Eastoke Corner Carpark. The works have included repairing and replacing missing groynes planks and piles and also repairing the planking on the revetment. This is to ensure these structures remain effective at managing the natural movement of beach material. All of the above structures, specifically the West Beach Revetment, Coast Guard Revetment and Timber Splash wall are showing signs of deterioration. ESCP will continue regular monitoring to inform the recommendation for maintenance for these structures.

Eastoke Flood Boards

During storm periods waves can overtop the beach crest at Eastoke and seawater can reach the promenade. During larger storm events the water levels can fill the promenade and lead to flood risk to properties if not properly managed. To manage this risk a series of Storm boards are installed each winter season to minimise flooding in storm events.

Flood boards at 9 locations between Eastoke Corner Car Park and the Bosmere Road Beach Access have been deployed. Beach levels and wave overtopping levels will continue to be monitored over the winter storm period by our Coastal Incident Officers to manage flood risk. These boards are due to come out in Spring 2016.

Solent Bird Movement and Coastal Network Studies

The Solent Bird Studies is a collaborative project arising from a need to understand how birds may be affected by future coastal defence work across the Solent. The project has two main parts. Part 1 is the roost network study which aims to understand the importance of the network of high tide roost sites and inland feeding areas within the Solent. Part 2 is the bird movement study which seeks to identify sites in the Solent of importance for feeding and roosting, and the links between these sites. Both studies will help guide decision makers on whether the loss or change of use of any one area would negatively affect the network of sites.

To-date the project has gone from strength to strength. The project has released an innovative smartphone app and website which embraces Citizen Science and allows the public and experts alike to submit sightings of protected species around the Solent. This along with analysis of existing data will guide the project. The approach is supported by an expert panel who are steering the project team. In just two months, more than 2,300 bird records have been submitted by over 100 app users, capturing 50 different species. The project team are also undertaking detailed site surveys of key areas identified in the Shoreline Management Plan. The project has received a lot of support in the media with local environmentalist Chris Packham supporting the project on social media and an interview about the project on BBC Radio Solent. The project has also featured in magazines and local newspapers.

Completion of the project is scheduled for April 2017 with the outputs of interest to the Environment Agency, Natural England and local authorities across the Solent. Another example of how the ESCP is leading the way in working with the environment while protecting our communities from flooding and erosion.

Building Control

North Street Wall, Emsworth

Efforts by the Council to design a suitable replacement for the dangerous retaining wall on North Street, secure planning consent and then procure works to build a new wall, resulted in tenders received in the region of £97,000.

Discussions with the highway authority regarding contributory funding for replacement of the wall have not been met favourably and therefore, at Cabinet briefing, it was decided that this option was not possible.

It was agreed that the Council is prepared to facilitate removal of the existing wall and build a new wall provided that the costs of this work and future

contingent liabilities are met and adopted by the adjacent householders whose land is offered support by the wall.

The Council has written to the householders to request that they seek agreement with their neighbours to elect legal representation to enable discussions to continue towards early resolution of the matter with the Council. In the meantime the wall remains in position and the footpath fenced off to ensure that should it collapse, no pedestrians are injured.

Economic Development and Business Support,

Digital business skills programme

This training programme that is designed to assist businesses in areas including e-commerce, social media and digital marketing was very well received by the 15 businesses attending;

'I just wanted to let you know how amazing it was for Havant Borough Council to fund the marketing workshops I have been attending. I have learnt so much that I can put into action immediately and I have absolutely no doubt that the knowledge that has been shared over the past three weeks will have a positive impact on my business.'

'Please thank everyone involved in making the workshops happen. Several people have asked me whether HBC will run them again and if so how they could take part. I hope for the sake of other small businesses that HBC can find the money for future workshops - they were so worthwhile. Many thanks again' - Phoebe @ Mill Pond Cakes.

Business start up programme

Our business start up programme which provides £1000 grants and business planning advice is progressing well. Twenty four businesses have attended business planning workshops at South Downs College with nine business plans submitted to date and five approved to receive the £1000 grant.

Shop front improvement scheme

HBC continues to encourage local property owners in our town centres to improve the visual appearance of their shop fronts. The scheme is progressing well with a positive response rate of approx. 65%. The scheme has made a considerable difference to some prominent buildings in the town centres.

Small Business Saturday

On Saturday 5th December, all council car parks will have FREE parking for up to 3 hours to support this event to promote small business and the benefits

of shopping locally. Posters have been produced and distributed to independent shops to display in their window. Two press adverts placed in two Portsmouth News Christmas supplements will be issued in November.

Business breakfast

On 30th October, a Business Breakfast was hosted by HBC and attended by Alan Mak as keynote speaker. Alan gave his full support for the Prosperity Havant agenda and underlined the importance of skills, employability and apprenticeships. The event was very well received with further contributions from developer's investors and a local business P and I Generators who are expanding into new premises in the borough.

Tourism and Special Events.

National Watersports Festival

The National Watersports Festival took place at Hayling Island over the weekend of the 4th– 6th September. Attendance over the weekend was approximately 6000 visitors and competitors. HBC ran taster sessions in several water sport disciplines, 120 local residents were able to take advantage of this opportunity. Businesses on the island confirmed they had a successful weekend.

Virgin Kite Surf Armada

The Virgin Kite Surf Armada was held on the weekend of 16th–18th October and saw approximately 3000 visitors over the weekend enjoy the exhibitors, clinics and talks from some of the countries elite kite surfers. While the weather conditions prevented the world record attempt, the event was very successful and further underlines Hayling as a national watersports destination.

National Great British Food Fortnight Awards

Emsworth came second at these awards this year (they won last year) which was a fantastic result for a small town competing against larger towns and cities from across the country.