

Cabinet Lead Reports – Full Council 17 February 2016

Councillor David Guest: Cabinet Lead for Economy and Planning

Continuous Service Improvement in Planning

In my last report I reminded Councillors of the Peer Review that was carried out in December 2014 and reported in February 2015. A year on there has been a range of improvements to the planning service. The performance of the Development management team has improved with the vast majority of targets exceeded. However, there's no room for complacency and the focus on performance will be intensified particularly in respect of discharge of conditions and enhancing the pre-application service offer. At the heart of the service improvements is the need to reduce the gap between the fees that the service can charge and the overall cost of the service.

The Planning managers are holding a workshop with planning agents on 18 March to listen to their suggestions for service improvements. We also want to know if you have any thoughts on how the service can be improved from your or your constituents' perspective and would be pleased to hear from you.

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 likely to be considered at the Development Management Committee on the 25 February. In accordance with the local plan the application will need to be considered within the context of the wider Market Parade area that subject to separate proposals in the emerging Local Development Order (LDO).

The Market Parade Local Development Order (LDO) continues to progress well. An informal public exhibition will be held on Tuesday 1st March in the Havant United Reformed Church about the work so far, including illustrative drawings of what a comprehensive redevelopment could look like. A formal four week consultation period will take place in the late spring/early summer once the draft LDO is complete. This remains an exciting opportunity to regenerate a key area of the town centre. Any further questions or details can be forwarded to Robyn Lyons (Principal Planning Officer – Planning Policy

The key issue will be viable development proposals. Financial viability is crucial to attract developer investment, so design evolution must proceed with this in mind. Any development proposal that fails to pass a viability test will not proceed,

Dunsbury Hill Business Gateway

Infrastructure works adjacent to the A3M continue to progress at pace as is the associated ASDA roundabout works. The Reserve Matters application for Fat Face's new 18,037 M² (194,000 ft²) facility was approved before Christmas. James Wharton the Minister for Growth visited the site on 29 January with the Council Leader and took part in a turf cutting ceremony with the leader of Portsmouth CC. All of which are raising the profile of the borough

Waterlooville Town Centre

An initial piece of work has been commissioned to engage with the key landowner and interested parties in Waterlooville town centre. The aim is to understand each of their perspectives on the future of the centre and their ability to participate in short to long term improvements to the overall town centre offer. The Minister for growth James Wharton visited the Major Development Area on the 29 January and was shown the scale of the new housing, the success of the SUDs drainage works and the new primary school.

Commercial Developments

We are waiting to hear about any progress on the Expressions of Interest 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 and the Havant railway footbridge. Hampshire CC is due to report this month on its latest study to try and find solutions to the congestion in the Southmoor Lane - Harts Farm Way area.

Housebuilding

Planning permission was granted before Christmas for 76 new homes at Station Road, Hayling Island (work started on site) and the application for 43 homes at Meadowlands in Hart Plain is due to go to Development Management Committee in March. Other major residential applications currently being considered are 175 dwellings South of Bartons Road, Havant and 39 apartments at the Former Wessex site in New Lane Havant.

Development Management Committee

In the 2015/16 Council year there were sixteen meetings of the Development Management Committee scheduled; four of which were cancelled as they were not required. Five of the meetings were held solely to hear Councillor 'red card' referrals showing the democracy is properly playing its part in planning decisions. The effectiveness of the delegated decision process in the constitution and DMC will continue to be monitored and subject to scrutiny.

The Planning Advisory Service says that DMC decisions cost ten times more than officer delegated decisions.

Planning Policy and Urban Design

I have responded to the government's consultation on proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework. A key aspect of the government's proposals is the inclusion of 'Starter Homes' in the definition of affordable homes. Starter homes will be available for first time buyers under 40 to buy with a 20% market price discount and then allowing them to sell on after 5 years.

It is not yet decided if Starter Homes will be an additional requirement or part of the Affordable Homes proportion of planning consents, which already comprise shared equity and social rented homes.

Prosperity Havant

The Prosperity Havant agenda continues with high profile ministerial visits to the borough by Liz Truss MP Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 22 January, James Wharton MP Minister for Local Growth on 29 January and Brandon Lewis MP, Minister of State for Housing and Planning on 12 February. Alan Mak MP has played a large part in getting such high profile visitors to the borough.

We have also heard earlier today from our tree officer and guest speaker about the benefits of trees to the prosperity of an area, The term treeconomics has been used and bearing in mind the wealth of trees we have in the borough they should play an important role in maintaining our borough as a good place to live in and invest.

Partnership for Urban South Hampshire – Spatial Strategy Update

PUSH continues to consider how they can plan for the delivery of new homes and jobs in the region to meet the needs identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment work. The spatial Strategy consultation is scheduled for June 2016. This will need to be integrated with the new local plan that the team are working on. I would encourage councillors to come along to the Local Plan panel meetings as the Local Plan review currently underway will have a major impact on us all.

Local Pan

A 'call for sites' finished last week seeking input from landowners, developers and the public on suggested areas for new housing and employment development. The information will be used in the local plan review. Various other evidence base studies are underway to support the local plan update. It is anticipated to have public consultation on the plan in June alongside the PUSH Spatial Strategy. A bid to the Department Communities and Local Government for funding to support the acceleration of the Local Plan process has been successful bringing in £60,000. This will be used to intensify public engagement on the emerging plan using Design Charrettes which are similar to Planning For Real.

As the need to review the Local Plan rapidly approaches with the PUSH Spatial Strategy expected in June, it is proposed that an Interim Position Statement on housing will be presented to Cabinet in May. This will set how planning applications that come forward for sites in advance of the local plan process could be dealt with.

Coastal Management & Climate Change

Beach Management Activities 2015/16

We have been monitoring the beach at Hayling Island over the winter, following a succession of winter storms up to and over the Christmas period. The beach has generally stood up well, with some narrowing of the crest as expected at the vulnerable Eastoke corner section. The HBC works team carried out promenade shingle clearance after the main stormy period.

Mini-bid returns have recently been submitted by contractors on our Minor works framework in order to carry out the next round of beach recycling. A pre-contract meeting has been set with the preferred bidder for Monday 8th Feb and we hope to be on site for the end of March / April. This will return the beach to its design profile where narrowing has occurred over the winter period.

We are closely monitoring the condition of the remaining sections of the West Beach Revetment which is continuing to worsen and becoming harder to maintain.

We are approaching the final year of our approved Beach Management Plan. Studies are underway to update the plan as part of an application for grant aid funding for the next 5 year phase. We are continuing to engage with the Hayling Island Golf Club with regard to potentially integrating them into the plan, mitigating the risk of erosion in front of their frontage whilst using excess shingle building up in front of the Golf Course to protect the wider Hayling frontage. The update is due to be finished in early 2017, for submission to the Environment Agency.

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 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.

The App and website (<http://solentbirds.org.uk/>) was launched in October 2015 and since then more than 8000 bird records have been submitted by over 120 app users across the Solent region, capturing 50 different species. The project has received media exposure with local environmentalist Chris Packham supporting the project on social media and in an interview about the

project on BBC Radio Solent. The project has also featured in magazines and local newspapers.

The outputs of this work support the Environment Agency, Natural England and local authorities for various projects right across the Solent. Another example of how the Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership (ESCP) is leading the way in working with the environment and local stakeholder to protect our communities from flooding and erosion.

Professional Services Framework

With the expiry of the ESCP led Professional Services framework, a new tender is currently out to market in order to renew the framework across over 20 authorities. Tenders are due for return on 19th February, with the aim of having the framework available for use by the new financial year. This will provide a selection of Consultancy services, specialising in Coastal Engineering, to support key elements of project delivery (e.g. modelling, scheme design etc).

The authorities wishing to benefit from the use of the framework will pay a fee to the ESCP in order to do so.

Economic Development

Ministerial Visit

On 29th January HBC hosted a visit from James Wharton MP, Minister for Local Growth and the Northern Powerhouse, facilitated by Alan Mak MP. This included site visits to Dunsbury Hill Business Gateway and Waterlooville Major Development Area. This represented a key opportunity to promote the strength of Havant economy as an area for significant public and private sector investment, job creation and business expansion. The principal message was that HBC and our partners are delivering on the ground and with additional Government support we could achieve much more.

A week earlier, the Rt Hon Liz Truss, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs visited Northney Farm, a successful local food producer on Hayling Island. One of her main priorities is to promote British Food and produce with the development of a 25 year strategy for the environment and devolution among the other topics discussed.

Business relationship management

The Economic Development team continue their engagement programme with local businesses. The latest visit to Southern Cross Packaging, with a member of the Executive provided an opportunity to discuss the expansion plans and key issues faced. Primary concern was around recruitment of staff to support the growth of the business. The business is expecting to take on more apprentices particularly in engineering to support the design and manufacturing of their processing equipment.

Skills & Employability

The Employability and Skills Partnership annual conference was well attended. The key issues facing those in employment or seeking it were presented by speakers representing schools, education business partnership and third sector organisations working with long term unemployed and those with difficulties. Three key issues emerged from the conference:

- Supporting job seekers into work
- Assisting those unable to work back into the labour market
- Engaging with schools to increase the number of young people taking up higher value roles in growth sectors, including engineering

These areas will now be developed as part of the Prosperity Havant Strategy

Town Centre

Small Business Saturday was successful with the business associations expressing their thanks for the council's parking offer.

Christmas events and festivals that took place in Emsworth, Waterlooville , Leigh Park and Mengham were very well attended. Businesses all agreed that footfall had increased during the events and that visitors had travelled some distance to attend the events.

We are currently working up a business support programme for the businesses in Waterlooville town centre. Consultation with independent businesses will follow to determine training needs in such things as merchandising (windows and internal) digital business skills, customer service and business accounts .

Town centre update comparison 2015 / 2016 data

Type of retailer DEC 14	Havant	Waterlooville	Emsworth	Leigh Park
Independents	104 (47.05%)	71 (36.98%)	77 (74.03%)	42 (49.41%)
Multiples	87 (39.37%)	88(46.32%)	19(18.26%)	21 (24.71%)
Charity	9 (4.07%)	12 (6.25%)	5 (4.81%)	3 (3.53%)
Vacant	21 (9.50%)	21 (10.93%)	3 (2.88%)	19 (22.35%)
total	221	192	104	85
Type of retailer Jan 2016	Havant	Waterlooville	Emsworth	Leigh Park
Independents	103 (47.68%)	74 (38.34%)	75 (72.81%)	40 (47.62)
Multiples	85 (39.35%)	87 (45.08%)	18 (17.48%)	20 (23.81%)
Charity	8 (3.70%)	13 (6.74%)	5 (4.85%)	3 (3.57%)
Vacant	20 (9.26%)	20 (10.36%)	5 (4.85%)	22 (26.19)