

Planning Committee

MEMBERS: Councillor UNGAR (Chairman); Councillor HARRIS (Deputy Chairman); Councillors) Mrs HEARN, JENKINS, LIDDIARD (as substitute for Taylor), MIAH, MURRAY and Mrs WEST.

(An apology for absence was reported from Councillor Taylor)

26 Declaration of Interests.

There were none.

27 Proposed Submission Core Strategy (The Eastbourne Plan).

The committee considered the report of the Senior Head of Development and Environment informing Members of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy (The Eastbourne Plan), prior to its consideration at Cabinet on 7 September 2011 and before the commencement of a 12-week representation period, following which the Strategy would be submitted to the Secretary of State.

The main spirit of the Eastbourne Plan was to stimulate regeneration and renewal of the town centre, delivering sufficient improvements to the provision of community facilities and protecting its green heart at Eastbourne Park as well as the areas of outstanding natural beauty that had been incorporated into the South Downs National Park.

Therefore the majority housing would take place on land that had already previously been developed. A modest number of small amenity sites had also been identified as having potential for housing, but these had been assessed as being of low value and poor quality. Higher residential densities would also be supported in some of the town's most sustainable neighbourhoods: Old Town, Meads, Upperton, Langney and Seaside, subject to the usual design and conservation policy requirements.

The Eastbourne Plan had divided the town into 14 neighbourhoods. A key diagram for each showed the overall vision and indicated the key places of change likely to occur in each area over the plan period. Each neighbourhood vision had been based on extensive analysis of local information as well as local knowledge through neighbourhood consultation events for each area.

The Plan had been prepared in accordance with the relevant government regulations and guidance and has now reached the stage of Proposed Submission. The Proposed Submission stage now required a further period of publicity to enable stakeholders and interested parties an opportunity to make formal representations based on the 'soundness' and 'legal

compliance' of the Strategy that would be considered by an independent Planning Inspector early next year (expected to start in April 2012).

As well as incorporating the changes outlined in the previously approved Consultation report, (See Cabinet minutes dated 13 July 2011), the latest Proposed Submission version included the following:

- Updated housing figures following the latest returns on housing delivery, windfalls and known developments;
- Contingency policies should the housing market not recover as quickly as anticipated and expected housing delivery targets are not being met;
- Stronger emphasis on maximizing the opportunities for renewable energy in new developments;
- A stronger focus on positively planning for the future by changing the neighbourhood visions into policies, and strengthening the infrastructure delivery proposals; and
- Other Policy updates to reflect the recently issued draft National Planning Policy Framework as well as recommendations made following a 'technical health check' by legal specialists.

Once approved by full Council (14 September 2011) the Proposed Submission Core Strategy (The Eastbourne Plan) would be published for interested parties to make formal representations based on the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan to be considered by a Planning Inspector at a Planning Examination. Following the 12 week consultation period which would end on 9 December 2011, the Council would consider and summarise the representations made. Members were advised that Cabinet would be asked to delegate the approval of the final document, submitted to the government, to the cross-party LDF Steering Group.

The committee were asked to consider the attached report and were advised that any comments would be reported to Cabinet verbally at their meeting on 7 September 2011.

Members discussed the plan in its entirety, making comments on various aspects including the designation of the Broadway shopping area, opportunities for residential development near the railway station at Hampden Park, Conservation area boundaries in Meads, the Business Park at Sovereign Harbour, affordable housing and developer contributions, sustainable travel and access to the South Downs National Park – in particular the promotion of bus routes to access points in Peppercombe Road and Cherry Garden Road.

Councillor Jenkins raised concerns regarding the proposed cycle route through Sovereign Harbour, which included the lock, and highlighted the fact that access currently was by agreement only and that it was not currently a right of way. The Senior Head of Development and Environment responded stating that it was hoped that any cycle route would be agreed by negotiation, and that currently it was an aspiration of the Council and therefore had been included in the current version of the Core Strategy. Any objections by the landowners would inform future versions of the Strategy.

Councillor Jenkins also asked that the two sites in Sovereign Harbour highlighted within the Strategy as non-residential (sites 4 and 8), be designated as such as soon as possible to protect the land and strengthen the Council's position with regard to any future planning applications. The Senior Head of Development and Environment responded that in his opinion the Core Strategy was not the correct document to go into such detail and would be inconsistent with the treatment of the other 13 neighbourhoods. However, the Senior Head of Development and Environment stated that he would look at other ways of ensuring the communities' wishes for their areas were realised. The Principal Planning Policy Officer added that opportunities to formalise the Sovereign Harbour Master Plan were being explored.

Councillor Liddiard highlighted that the former Caffyns car showroom site on Upperton Road was not marked on the Upperton Key Diagram despite being identified as being within a Development Opportunity Site in the Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP). This highlighted a discrepancy between the Town Centre boundary in the Eastbourne Plan and the boundary depicted in the Town Centre AAP. The Principal Planning Policy Officer confirmed that the boundary would be regularised so that it reflected the one shown in the Town Centre AAP.

The meeting closed at 7.00 p.m.

**Councillor Ungar
(Chairman)**