

LOCAL PLANS WORKING GROUP

TUESDAY 30 JUNE 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bateson (Chairman), Derek Wilson (Vice-Chairman), George Bathurst, Claire Stretton and Leo Walters.

Also Present: Councillor Malcolm Beer.

Officers: Sarah Ball, Wendy Binmore, Phill Gill, Jennifer Heaton, Chris Hilton and Peter Lerner.

PART I

01/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Geoff Hill, David Hilton and MJ Saunders.

02/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Bathurst – Declared a Pecuniary Interest as he had links to the Windsor Link Railway. Cllr Bathurst left the room during discussions which mentioned the Windsor Link Railway.

03/15 MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I Minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 20 January 2015 be approved.

04/15 BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN PROGRAMME

Sarah Ball, Team Manager - Strategy and Plans gave a brief summary and the implications of the progressional plan. The main points included:

- Para 2.4 of the report indicated there were opportunities to hold several consultations.
- There were two consultations underway: Retail and Call for Sites.
- Para 2.6 of the report identified reasons why the consultations were important.
- Para 2.9 of the report indicated the timetable with June 2017 being scheduled for the adoption of the plan.
- Para 2.10 – 2.15 illustrated the work Officers had carried out to date with other organisations and authorities.
- It had not been a case of just sending emails and attending meetings; proper engagement had taken place with considerable emphasis on ensuring other Authorities talked to each other and cooperated.

Peter Lerner, interim Planning Policy Manager stated the bar had been set higher and higher and a lot had been learnt from Surrey and Cheshire Authorities where they thought they had been fulfilling their duty to cooperate but in fact they had not. Cllr Wilson commented without the duty to cooperate, the BLP could not be

implemented or adopted.

Sarah Ball confirmed the borough was responding to Surrey Council regarding their Minerals and Waste Plan. There was a joining of minds covering the Minerals and Waste Plan but there was not intention at the present time to join up with Surrey Council; that might happen in the future.

Cllr Wilson confirmed that special meetings may be called in advance of a Full Council meeting. It would be appropriate to call a special meeting to discuss documents. In response to a question about the Borough Local Plan timetable and why the Borough was dependent on the Planning Inspectorate, Sarah Ball explained that the Planning Inspectorate monitored progress with plans and determined the start date for an examination; the start date for the examination process begins when the Borough submits its plan. The Planning Inspectorate did try to prevent delay and they would have a good idea of when the Borough wanted to submit its plan. Cllr Bateson confirmed the worst case scenario would be to think the Borough was ready to submit by September 2016 but, the inspectorates report would not be ready until April 2017. Peter Lerner suggested the Borough engage with the Inspectorate at an early stage and query with them the timings of the stages.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Members of the Local Plans Working Group noted the content of the report.

05/15 UPDATE ON CIL

Peter Lerner, interim Planning Policy Manager stated the update gave details of key stages the CIL consultation which had been carried out. A preliminary charging schedule had been produced and the rates agreed by Cabinet were to go to consultation. Peter Lerner added the rates were considered reasonable as the Borough had sought professional advice on the matter.

Peter Lerner stated the Borough was not in the best possible place as there was no Borough Local Plan to back it up. However, when the time came, the Borough would be ready to adopt the plan. A CIL workshop was being held on 9 July 2015 where experts would be available to answer any queries. If there was a reason to change the rates, it would need to be agreed by Lead Members. Peter Lerner stated he was asking Cabinet to approve the final schedule of rates prior to them being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. The inspector was going to issue a report with conclusions and outcomes and then the Borough would be asked to implement it.

Peter Lerner confirmed that all CIL payment would be linked to specific cases in the Borough, such as flood defence or other infrastructure. The list of examples provided on where CIL money would be spent was not exhaustive. Peter Lerner also confirmed the reason there was no charge against development within Maidenhead Town Centre was to do with viability. There was a need to look at what obstacles were in the way of developers' viability, such as affordable housing. If developments were not viable, then the Borough would not get the type of development in Maidenhead Town Centre that was needed.

Peter Lerner confirmed that if a Neighbourhood Plan was adopted, then that neighbourhood would be able to claim up to 25% of CIL for their area. If everything went accordingly, the CIL arrangements would be adopted by 2016. He added that Parish Councils would also receive some funding through CIL payments.

06/15 UPDATE ON THE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

Phillip Gill, Senior Planning Officer introduced the report which gave details of the Borough Local Plan (BLP), what was happening; when and how. There were two elements of consultation: background evidence documents posted online and some specific policy questions.

The retail and town centre study in draft form had been made available to neighbouring authorities under the Duty to Cooperate. A Call for Sites was also in the public domain and requested people to suggest sites which could be used for housing or other uses.

The Borough had received 115 suggestions for housing sites and the scrutiny of those sites was ongoing. The closing date for the consultation was 20 July 2015 but the Council was always open to hear suggestions.

With regards to flood risk, the Borough was aware of that as it was a live issue. The Borough had been looking at sequential tests and the results would be available in August 2015. The Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment were also progressing. The Housing Market Assessment was a jointly commissioned piece of work which was ongoing. Phillip Gill stated he was seeking a steer from residents on some items and had produced a survey on Survey Monkey concerning:

- Local green space
- The future of Braywick Park and the relocation of the Magnet Leisure Centre.
- The capacity of Maidenhead Town Centre to absorb further development
- Windsor Link Railway – there had been support for the idea but nothing had been submitted in writing at that point.

All of the responses would be compiled to form the second preferred options Borough Local Plan.

Phillip Gill confirmed that opinions could help the Borough reassess or change direction with regards to the second preferred options. Members of the Local Plans Working Group would see the draft of the second preferred options before it is released.

Cllr Stretton stated that with Transport Modelling in Section E of the report, cars went over the boundaries therefore; would that form part of the duty to cooperate? Sarah Ball confirmed she led on that topic so it should be quite easy to talk through with neighbouring authorities. Transport Modelling should be ready to go out to consultation from August 2015.

Phillip Gill confirmed that Neighbourhood Plans or the Borough Local Plan could define what a local Green Space was; however, Central Government did not stipulate any size criteria to determine a Local Green Space. Cllr Wilson confirmed in the NPPF, it specifically said the Borough should identify Brownfield sites for

development. There was also a paper that went to Cabinet in February 2015 which stated the Borough would also look at previously developed land on Green Belt but, not Green Field sites.

Sarah Ball confirmed she had been working with the Communications Team to produce a leaflet to be distributed around the Borough and the website was being updated so that all the information regarding the consultation was available to residents.

Cllr Wilson stated it took four years for the Area Action Plan to be adopted in Maidenhead. The Borough needed the views of residents on how they felt about taller buildings. Density in Maidenhead would have to increase on Brownfield sites so there was no need to build on Green Belt land. The Magnet Centre was tired so there was the question; does the Borough spend money on refurbishing the Magnet Centre or, does the Borough build a new leisure centre? The Borough could build and open a new leisure centre somewhere before closing the Magnet down and developing the land.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Members of the Local Plans Working Group noted the content of the report.

07/15 EDGE OF SETTLEMENT ANALYSIS INCLUDING (PART 1 GREEN BELT PURPOSE ASSESSMENT AND PART 2 CONSTRAINTS, OPPORTUNITIES AND DELIVER ASSESSMENT): DRAFT METHODOLOGY IN LIGHT OF PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION.

Sarah Ball, Team Manager - Strategy and Plans explained that the report was all about the duty to cooperate and that had been embedded in the report and the consultation. There were two appendices which had been updated since work had been done in 2015 following advice received. By having a more common approach across the area, the Borough will have an easier time in assessment.

Sarah Ball confirmed she wanted comments from the group and that it would be best if Members went through the draft document and sent comments to her following the meeting. She added the document had changed a lot since 2014 for the better. Ian Bellinger had set out a table of five purposes on page 24 of the document to show how consideration could be scored or assessed. Comments were to be received by Phillip Gill by 13 July 2015 at 10am.

08/15 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on following items 5-7 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.