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BUSINESS AND HOUSING POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 21 September 2021

Attendance:

Councillors
Weir (Chairperson)

Fern
Bronk
Isaacs

Lumby
Radcliffe
Scott

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Craske

Deputy Members:

Councillor Edwards (as deputy for Councillor Craske)

Other members in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Horrill

[Audio and video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies from committee members were noted as above. Apologies had also been received from Monica Gill of Tenants and Council Together (TACT).

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Lumby declared a non-pecuniary interest concerning items upon the agenda that may be related to his role as a County Councillor.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 22 JUNE 2021**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 22 June 2021 be approved and adopted.

4. **TO NOTE THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2021/22**

RESOLVED:

That the current version of the 2021/22 work programme be noted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

David Chafe and David Light of TACT spoke regarding agenda item 6 – “Next Generation Winchester”. They commented that it was a useful piece of research that would help other departments of the council. They agreed that high house prices were a barrier for young people wanting to live in the district and they welcomed the council looking into other, affordable housing solutions. Concerning item 7 – “New Homes Programme Update Report”, Mr Chafe asked if the housing needs analysis highlighted the differences in preferences between flats and houses? Mr Light also felt that there had been an increase in the number of people not accepting offers for a flat in the hope of an offer for a house. Officers responded to these points.

Councillor Horrill spoke on several items on the agenda. Regarding item 6, “Next Generation Winchester”, she commended the work undertaken and the model of engagement used and hoped that the data would be refreshed regularly to ensure its suitability in being used proactively. Concerning item 7 – “New Homes Programme Update Report”, she welcomed the support of TACT to the council's plans and the current plans for extra care schemes but asked for information on future sites. She supported the proposal of a rent review task force and referred to the benefits that this could bring. Regarding the Housing Company, she urged the council to go further and asked for information to understand how the model could work in enabling additional units to come forward. Officers responded to these points.

Concerning items 8 and 9, Councillor Horrill believed that the Green Economic Development Strategy and the Local Plan needed to be more closely aligned and she asked when the Local Plan economic analysis would be completed and what level of response had so far been achieved. Officers responded to these points.

6. **PRESENTATION - "NEXT GENERATION WINCHESTER" - PROJECT UPDATE**

The Housing Policy and Projects Officer provided the committee with a presentation, the slides of which had been circulated in advance to members and made available on the councils' website. The presentation gave a summary of the project whose aim was to understand the expectations, barriers and challenges that young people in the district experience in accessing housing. The presentation concentrated on the findings and outcomes of the project and officers sought the committee's views on the next steps.

The committee welcomed the presentation and asked a range of questions concerning; the branding used, the management of young peoples expectations, how to include students' views within the project, the volume split of urban and rural participants, the different responses and findings between urban and rural young people, understanding the drivers of why young people leave the district, the availability of privately rented accommodation, how do comparable cities retain their young people, did the council need to raise the level of its ambitions and put more resources into shared ownership schemes. The questions were responded to by the Housing Policy and Projects Officer and the Corporate Head of Housing.

RESOLVED:

The committee:

1. noted the contents of the presentation.
2. agreed that the engagement model be commended for future use.
3. agreed that the research and findings of the project should be embedded within the housing strategy review.
4. agreed that the research and findings of the project should form part of the evidence base for future stages of the Local Plan.

7. **NEW HOMES PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT**

(Report Ref: BHP022)

The Strategic Director and the Service Lead - New Homes Delivery introduced the report and provided the committee with an overview of the new homes programme and proposals for schemes currently being worked on. The report sought the committee's views regarding rent policy, sub-market rented housing in Winnall and how the current data on housing need would influence future development. Mr Botham brought members up to date on the current data within the report.

The committee asked questions on a range of subjects including; total housing costs for tenants and whether energy efficiency measures were able to be tracked, the wider plans for meeting the district's housing need including asset management or communal housing, whether there were adequate resources in the new homes team, whether shared ownership was an effective element of the programme, the impact of the loss of common spaces within developments, whether in rural areas the programme could be closer aligned to local need, whether the re-purposing of garage areas was viable and the potential of modular construction methods. The questions were responded to by the Corporate Head of Housing, the Strategic Director and the Service Lead - New Homes Delivery.

RESOLVED:

The committee agreed that:

1. its comments be noted by officers
2. a piece of work was required to understand the different housing tenures and housing need of residents over a lifetime, including home ownership options and the associated housing costs.
3. a proposal be brought forward for a revised business case for a special vehicle to manage sub-market rented housing in Winnall
4. officers revisit the work programme in light of the above.

8. **LOCAL PLAN - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Strategic Planning Manager provided the committee with a presentation that gave the initial high-level findings from the Local Plan strategic issues and priorities consultation concerning the economic sector, the districts businesses and its High Streets.

The committee asked several questions concerning; the council's scope to influence the pattern of land and building use, the limited commercial space in rural areas and the impact on local businesses. The questions were responded to by the Strategic Planning Manager.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the presentation be noted

9. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT TEN-YEAR GREEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY - REPORT**

(Report Ref: BHP020)

The Service Lead - Economy & Tourism introduced the report and provided the committee with an overview of the contents of the report and an overview of the key elements of the strategy and its background. Consultants representing Urban Foresight and Thirdlife Economics provided a presentation giving the detail of the strategy, the slides of which had been circulated in advance to members and made available on the council's website. The committees' views were sought on several matters before the strategy was presented to the cabinet in October 2021.

The committee asked several questions concerning; whether the evidence from the local plan analysis should be completed and fed into this report before its completion, whether the report could be condensed to be more accessible and did the council had adequate resources to take this work forward. The questions were responded to by officers and the consultants.

RESOLVED:

The committee agreed:

1. it welcomed the report and that its comments be noted by officers
2. that a version of the strategy report be made as accessible as possible, and a digested version be considered as a communications tool
3. that the council continues its engagement with external stakeholders to further refine and develop the strategy
4. that further, practical sessions be undertaken with members to understand the trade-offs in achieving the council's goal of zero net carbon

10. **A DIGITAL ECONOMY FOR WINCHESTER - UPDATE**

(Verbal Update)

The Service Lead - Economy & Tourism provided the committee with a verbal update providing details of progress since the previous meeting. He updated members regarding the public survey responses and wider public engagement, the call for evidence process, the task and finish group meeting in October and the online panel debate scheduled for November or December. Mr Gostelow also advised that the survey and call for evidence would close in January and following evaluation it was planned to bring an update paper to this policy committee in March 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the update was noted

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.00 pm

Chairperson

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