

## Minutes of the Meeting of the LICENSING AND PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE held on 22 October 2020

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### PRESENT -

Councillor David Reeve (Chair); Councillor Clive Woodbridge (Vice-Chair); Councillors Monica Coleman, Neil Dallen, Robert Foote, Chris Frost, Liz Frost, Rob Geleit, Julie Morris and Phil Neale

In Attendance: Councillor Bernie Muir

Officers present: Amardip Healy (Chief Legal Officer), Viv Evans (Interim Head of Planning), Wai-Po Poon (Senior Planning Policy Officer) and Sarah Keeble (Democratic Services Officer)

#### 14 QUESTION TIME

No questions were submitted or asked at the meeting by members of the public.

#### 15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business at the meeting.

#### 16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee held on 10 September were agreed as a true record and the Committee authorised the Chair to sign them.

#### 17 WHITE PAPER: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Committee received a report on the Council's draft response to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) published Planning for the Future White Paper on 6 August 2020.

The Committee noted the report and raised the following points:

**Question 4:** What are your top three priorities for planning in your local area?

Point 3 be amended to read:

- Increasing the number of affordable housing particularly houses for the homeless and key workers.

**Question 8A:** Do you agree that a standard method for establishing housing requirements (that takes into account constraints) should be introduced?

Answer:

- To be changed from 'Yes' to 'Not sure'.

Paragraph 1:

- The Committee considered this paragraph and requested it make reference to protected areas and ONS. The Officer agreed to include these comments in the response.

And the penultimate sentence of the final paragraph be amended to read:

- The Council is not suggesting that there shouldn't be growth, but that perhaps it should be a more realistic target, particularly in the context of climate change and the issues that have arisen from the pandemic and the impact on the character of the area, health and well-being, economy and high streets.

**Question 9A:** Do you agree that there should be automatic outline permission for areas for substantial development (Growth areas) with faster routes for detailed consent?

Answer:

- To be changed from 'Not sure' to 'No'.

**Question 10:** Do you agree with our proposals to make decision-making faster and more certain?

The response to this question was discussed at length and the Committee raised possible amendments throughout. These included:

- Changing the answer from 'A cautious yes' to 'No'.
- The implementation of stronger wording to describe not supporting the gradual erosion of local democracy and decision making on planning issues.
- Change of wording to best describe the Committee's feelings towards repaying developers fees.
- Inclusion of the word 'accurate' in bullet point 7.

**Question 16:** Sustainability is at the heart of our proposals. What is your priority for sustainability in your area?

- The Committee noted the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic on sustainable housing. These included more people working from home, and in some cases; home-schooling. It was noted that more internal space for working and living, and more outdoor on-site amenity space is necessary. The Officer agreed to include these comments within the response.

Following consideration of this matter, it was agreed that the Officer would include the Committee's comments in the response.

**Numbering:**

- Question 22 numbering to be amended to read question 21, and subsequent numbers to follow.

**Question 23A:** Should the Government replace the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 10 planning obligations with a new consolidated Infrastructure Levy, which is charged as a fixe proportion of development value above a set threshold?

- The Committee requested the addition of the word 'on-site' and the Officer agreed that they would include this in the response.
- The Committee agreed to change the answer from 'No' to 'Not sure - on the basis that we should support Government setting giving us flexibility to increase that locally'.

**Question 23D:** Should we allow local authorities to borrow against the Infrastructure Levy, to support infrastructure delivery in their area?

- The Committee discussed the response to this question, and noted that although they do not need to borrow, they would like the authority to be able to should they have to. It was agreed that the answer would be changed from 'No' to 'Yes'.

**Question 25D:** If an in-kind delivery approach is taken, are there additional steps that would need to be taken to support affordable housing quality?

- The Officer agreed to note the Committee's comments regarding work like CIL as a form of tax in the response.

Following consideration, it was resolved unanimously that the Committee:

- (1) Noted and approved the draft response to the government's White Paper "Planning for the Future"**

**Subject to the amendments as agreed by the Officer.**

*The meeting began at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.42 pm*

COUNCILLOR DAVID REEVE (CHAIR)