

## MINUTES

### STRATEGIC PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

28 JANUARY 2020

**Present:**

**Members:**

**Councillors:** Barrett  
Beauchamp  
Birnie (Chairman)  
P Hearn  
Hobson  
Ransley  
Riddick  
Rogers  
Silwal (Vice-  
Chairman)  
Stevens  
Taylor  
Timmis  
Woolner

**Officers:** Nathalie Bateman Strategic Planning & Regeneration Team  
Leader  
Sharon Burr Corporate and Democratic Support Officer  
James Doe Assistant Director - Planning, Development  
and Regeneration  
Russell Ham  
Emma Walker Group Manager - Environmental and  
Community Protection

**Also Attendance:**

Julie Banks Portfolio Holder Community & Regulatory  
Graham Sutton Portfolio Holder Planning & Infrastructure

The meeting began at 19:30

**66**

### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed.

#### **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES:**

Cllr Timmis spoke about Luton Airport and the effect on Dacorum in the present and looking forward. The presentation was distributed to members.

Cllr Birnie asked if there were any figures around night contours and whether they had been breached in the last two years.

Cllr Timmis replied that although she does not have figures Luton Airport has actually admitted that the night noise contour has been breached, which is why Luton Airport has put in the application to vary condition 10 that restricted the night noise.

There was a discussion regarding quieter planes that are being brought in.

Cllr Birnie asked J Doe what Dacorum is doing now with regards to the Airport.

J Doe replied that Dacorum had become more active in the last year and one of the members of the Planning Team is now managing this. He explained that we have responded on two areas – one of which is the variation of condition 10 - and the second concerns the preliminary consultation on the expansion plans to which we sent a response in December. The application to the Secretary of State is expected later this year, probably in September. This will have to be supported by a huge amount of detail.

Cllr Birnie enquired if we had any way of making representation when this goes to the Secretary of State.

J Doe replied that we will be a consultee in that process but not an immediate consultee since we do not share boundaries with the airport, but he reassured members that we will be asked for our views, and we are also sitting on working groups. Luton Borough Council has taken on an independent consultant as an adviser. He advised that the best time for the Committee to revisit this would be in late autumn, once the timescales become clear and what deadlines need to be met.

Cllr Ransley brought the point that cargo planes are not limited to noise or time, and she would like cargo planes to be included if we are making representations.

Cllr Timmis replied that there is now a noise limit on these planes, but they are huge and noisy.

Cllr Taylor asked that there be a meeting to discuss what it is that we want to achieve and what we can achieve as a neighbouring borough before we put anything formal forward.

Cllr Birnie said that we would clearly only be able to make recommendations but that is why James had suggested its inclusion in an autumn meeting.

## **67                    APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **68                    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **69                    PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**70**                    **CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN**

There were none.

**71**                    **HEMEL GARDEN COMMUNITIES**

J Doe and N Bateman presented.

Cllr Birnie asked if there was any duplication between HGC project and the New Local Plan team.

J Doe said that they talk to each other.

Cllr Beauchamp made the point that the 5.5 thousand homes in Hemel Hempstead would lead to far more density.

N Bateman replied that yes, it makes a difference – there is no development land.

J Doe added that there was an open space which will be a park.

N Bateman explained that phase 1 consisted of 2.5 thousand homes south of Redbourne Road.

Cllr Birnie asked if St Albans gives planning permission.

J Doe replied that yes, this is a fully engaged arrangement and Dacorum received all the same details so there is supposed to be joint working with strong input from DBC.

Cllr Birnie asked if HGC Board has representatives from Dacorum?

N Bateman explained that there were two members per authority.

Cllr Silwal asked how many enterprises were involved.

J Doe said that the LEP has its own governance. One of the things they have done is to put money into Junction 8.

Cllr Birnie asked if the Board consisted of members or officers?

N Bateman said that there was a chief officer and one member from each Authority. In addition, the Stakeholder steering group represents each Authority and the LEP and also includes Highways England, Homes England and the Crown Estate, which are present for part of the meeting.

Cllr Stevens enquired how the 11,000 houses were distributed e.g. 5.5 each?

J Doe replied that the slide shows how the split works on either side of the boundary. There is a debate in terms of our own Local Plan regarding making a claim on some

of the St Albans land as this is essentially an extension of Hemel Hempstead. That is a request that we have made of St Albans through its ongoing Local Plan process and that request is still live.

Cllr Timmis asked if the green area on the map was Crown Estate?

N Bateman replied that only about 60% was and said that they would be engaging with other owners in the spring. There are still some to be brought into the programme but these will not be significant in the plan.

Cllr Timmis wanted to know what happened with CIL payments when dealing with St Albans land.

N Bateman said that would be subject to St Albans' policies.

J Doe said it was another issue that has been raised with St Albans – S106 finance payments should be directed to Hemel Hempstead. A lot of Section 106 payments would actually be going into the structure on site e.g. Schools, open spaces etc.,

N Bateman continued with her report.

Cllr Taylor said that he was particularly interested in the sustainable transport strategy and how it will be developed, he asked if there would be a chance for members to be involved in that

N Bateman explained that we are developing the strategy, there had only been limited engagement as it is high level, this has been looking at the fundamental links in the town and the priorities for taking this forward. The second stage is likely to commence in April.

Cllr Taylor asked if it was possible to share with members the work done so far and the scoping of the next stage.

J Doe explained that it is in draft form at the moment and it will be three or four weeks before there is anything to pass on but that they would do so when it was available.

N Bateman said that in terms of sustainable transport the idea is that there would be a shift of 60 percent within new developments towards this. We need to make sure that it is tailored to this town with its hills etc.,

Cllr Beauchamp asked at what point public engagement was envisaged.

N Bateman responded that there would be public engagement as part of the work they are doing and going forward.

Cllr Taylor said that he would like to clarify the point that he would be looking for input from Bus Companies as to how one would encourage bus usage.

N Bateman confirmed that would be part of the second stage.

Cllr Stevens asked if the HGC engagement strategy in March overlaps with the Local Plan.

N Bateman told him that they were two different entities. She explained that the engagement strategy she was referring to is applicable to Hemel Garden Communities whereas the Local Plan is about the whole borough and will have its own engagement strategy.

Cllr Silwal asked about the figures for jobs.

N Bateman said that the likelihood is for around 8000 jobs to support commercial development and then around 2000 for the wider picture such as local centres, schools etc.

Cllr Birnie enquired whether phase 1 was all on St Albans land.

N Bateman agreed that it was but said that Dacorum want to ensure that it fits in with the spatial vision for the town and that it relates well.

Cllr Hobson asked for clarification on whether the boundary could be moved.

J Doe explained that the only way to resolve that would be a Boundary Commission review but that would have to be part of a joint plan and is not envisaged at present. St Albans would be responsible for providing its own services, but we may look to assist with this as a revenue generating opportunity.

Cllr Beauchamp remarked that there was no mention of Buncefield.

J Doe said that Health and Safety Executive has looked at this and it is reflected in the design.

Cllr Ransley asked if we could insist that housing reflects what we have in Hemel Hempstead.

N Bateman said that we have limited powers but we do have government support. J Doe mentioned that there is another document being worked on that is a joint piece of work with St Albans with the intention of developing firm design guidance which will pick up of all the things like ensuring it relates well to Hemel Hempstead's New Local Plan.

Cllr Sutton thanked James Doe, Natalie Bateman and the team and said that it would be good to have a task and finish group set up if possible so that there could be more member engagement and working with the neighbouring authority. Cllr Sutton added that he felt the scheme was good for both the existing population here and newcomers.

The report was noted and agreed.

**72**                    **EVENT POLICY**

Cllr Julie Banks gave an introduction to the policy. She said that the Corporate Health and Safety Team has a primary role to advise Corporate Management Team and Group Managers on all Health, Safety and Welfare matters.

This can be carried out by providing internal safety policies to advise management on complex areas of Health and Safety Legislation.

**Members should note these policies are for internal use and advise DBC employees on how to manage risks associated with that activity.**

Our Safety Consultants have put together these two policies following on from a review of safety arrangements and through discussions at CMT.

The Policies have been subject to internal scrutiny of both the Health, Safety and Resilience Committee and the Corporate Management Team. All relevant Council departments have been consulted.

**These policies are not to be complied with by Council Business Tenants such as the community centres and leisure contractors.** Members will be aware that they do have a duty as with all businesses to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety legislation.

Russell Ham presented the report.

Cllr Birnie said that, even after his meeting with officers where he was assured that the policy would not apply to Community Centres he was still concerned with the impact that applying these rules could have on the viability of Community Centres as he felt the policy is ambiguous and contradictory. On page 41 an exception is set out that purports to exclude Community Centres. But, it then adds a rider unless the events fall under the process of the SAG – and he asked what is that process?

R Ham replied that the policy is not new. The form can be filled out if you are having an event and SAG (Safety Advisory Group) are not authorising but advising.

Cllr Birnie asked that when they advise of this, is that mandatory and if so, do the same time limits apply to Community Centres as to other applicants?

E Walker explained that notification is not mandatory unless it is a licensable event. They are able, like any other business, to go to SAG and to register for advice which will include Police, Fire, Licensing, Environmental Health etc.,

Cllr Birnie asked whether the six week time limit would apply.

E Walker replied that the timescales are in the policy as this is a multi-agency group and the parties would need to be available to attend the meetings.

Cllr Birnie pointed out that in page 40 1.3 – the policy applies to ALL events that are in DBC owned or managed buildings which of course Community Centres fall within, and 42 2A says the same – ALL events.

Cllr Beauchamp said that he went through SAG for the street market in the Old Town and found it helpful.

E Walker repeated that it was not mandatory but is there to support events.

Cllr Timmis brought up the festival that was held in Great Gaddesden and asked if they applied.

E Walker said that this went through licencing and was passed to SAG regarding issues around noise and licencing, not to approve but to pull together everyone. SAG is for guidance and support. E Walker added that any action taken would be under individual components of the group ie: Police, Licencing, Fire etc.,

Cllr Birnie said that he felt this is an ill-defined document and need cleaning up before it goes to council.

Cllr Hobson asked if SAG is additional advice to help with the Health and Safety law and added that she thought the wording needed some clarification but other than that she was happy.

E Walker confirmed that SAG is there to give additional assistance and support.

Cllr Beauchamp said that he was told it was mandatory (re the street market) and asked if that was no longer the case? Cllr Beauchamp said that clarity as to exactly what is and isn't compulsory would be helpful.

E Walker replied that it could be that Environmental Health required that it go through DSAG. DSAG may contact you on behalf of a partner.

Cllr Birnie said that a clear statement that a submission to the SAG process was voluntary for Community Centres would address the concerns of their managers.

Cllr Stevens remarked that if Community Centres were hosting large scale events they should go through SAG as it was both helpful and good practice.

E Walker said that very few Community Centre events have as many as 500 attendees.

Cllr Birnie said that if it was specified it was voluntary in the document he would be happy to recommend.

E. Walker agreed that this would be the case.

The policy was agreed and endorsed.

### **73**                    **WORK PROGRAMME**

Work Plan

Cllr Birnie said that he wanted Parking to be included on the Work Plan.

J Doe agreed that the next meeting was oversubscribed and perhaps it was time for a meeting to sort out dates and agendas.

Cllr Birnie agreed.

Cllr Hobson asked if the subject of what happens to plastic waste could be introduced as she wishes to put together a proposal.

Cllr Birnie agreed to add this to topics, but pointed out that this is a county matter rather than a local one so there are restrictions to what can be done.

The Meeting ended at 21:35