

PLANNING & HOUSING PORTFOLIO – PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS

Planning

Planning Policy

This year will see the start of some major new planning policy projects, notably, the first stages of the Local Plan Review and working with nearby authorities in respect of strategic and cross boundary housing and transport issues. Members will be aware that the Project Initiation Document for this important piece of work was recently approved by Council and that this includes a project plan and a series of milestones leading to adoption of a new Plan in 2019. This is of course an estimate at this early stage as there are many variables that may affect progress.

There are also some significant changes to planning policy at national level which will need to be considered, particularly around starter homes, brownfield registers, increasing permitted development rights and amendments to local and neighbourhood plan-making processes aimed at speeding up the process.

Other on-going key areas of policy work include:

- Concluding the Site Allocations Development Plan Document which it is anticipated will be adopted in early 2018
- A proposed approach for securing development contributions to mitigate additional traffic impacts on A27 Chichester Bypass. We anticipate that developer contributions collected via this process will be used to support the government funded A27 improvement scheme.
- The refresh of the Infrastructure Business Plan approved by Council earlier this year. This document is prepared in liaison with WSCC following engagement and consultation with infrastructure providers and the city, town and parish councils.
- Preparation of a masterplan for the Southern Gateway area of the city.
- New SPD's providing guidance on (a) Surface Water and Drainage and (b) development in the Chichester Harbour AONB.
- Continued support to PC's preparing Neighbourhood Plans.

Conservation and Design

For the year ahead:

- Completion of the reviews of the Chichester and Selsey conservation areas and the possible designation of a new conservation area at East Selsey together with proposals to remove some permitted development rights where necessary in order to protect the character of the areas.
- Conservation area reviews to be commenced for Fishbourne and Westbourne.
- There will also be consultation on the Historic Environment Protocol which will set out the Council's approach to managing the historic environment.

Development Management

The service receives around 2500 planning applications a year (within and outside the national park). In addition to applications for minor development, the Service anticipates further large scale development proposals coming forward this year for the strategic development locations – particularly Shopwyke where the developers are now in the process of submitting 'reserved matters' applications with construction likely to commence shortly and West of Chichester and Westhampnett, both of which are at the outline permission stage for their first phases. The strategic development proposed for Tangmere has stalled due to land ownership issues and so following approval by Cabinet on 7 June officers are obtaining specialist advice in relation to a potential CPO that would enable the development identified in the Local Plan to be delivered.

The Government is proposing the introduction of further performance measures via the Housing and Planning Act and it will be important to ensure that the good performance that the Service has attained in the last year (with all 3 national performance targets being met for the 2nd

successive year) is continuously improved upon. It may, as a consequence, be appropriate to look at introducing suitable local performance indicators to ensure that we are not at risk of designation by the government. During this year, two key areas of the DM Service- the use and discharge of planning conditions and the pre-application advice service are to be reviewed by a Member task and finish group.

Additionally, the existing arrangement between the Council and SDNPA to provide DM services on behalf of the Park Authority is due to end in March 2017. Officers will be working with the SDNPA and other host authorities during the year on a review of the existing S101 agency agreement with a view to reporting new arrangements to Cabinet in due course.

Planning Enforcement

The service continues to investigate alleged breaches of planning control and to resolve them where possible, all in accordance with the adopted Planning Enforcement Strategy. A number of high profile cases remain on-going including a 'direct action' case at Oving; a gypsy encampment at Birdham and a biogas development in Kirdford. These require unusually high levels of officer time and resources due to their complexity. Despite staffing difficulties last year, the team issued 48 formal notices - 8 more than the preceding year and I am pleased to say that 1 of the 2 vacant posts in the team has now been filled which will assist in recovery of the service to normal levels.

Building Control

Finally, we are part of a group of Authorities (with Horsham, Crawley and Arun) looking at alternative options for the delivery of the Building Control Service.

Housing

Housing Strategy achievements in 2015 – 2016 were as follows:

- The Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020 was adopted. The strategy has a strong emphasis on homelessness prevention and ensuring that support is available for vulnerable people.
- The Private Sector Renewal Strategy 2016-2021 was adopted and it introduces the Chichester Warm Homes Initiative, which will provide assistance to the most vulnerable members of the community to tackle fuel poverty and to provide their homes with efficient heating systems.
- A weekly housing advice clinic at Stonepillow's facility at the Old Glassworks was introduced to ensure that rough sleepers are aware of their housing options.
- A mid-term review of the Housing Strategy 2013-18 together with available capital funds was undertaken and a more a flexible approach to housing delivery adopted to take account of the Housing and Planning Bill. This includes working with community land trusts to delivery affordable home and setting up a register for custom and self-build.
- Continued progress was made during the year in meeting our affordable housing targets with 184 affordable homes delivered (85 for rent and 99 for sale). This included:
 - The final phase of the redevelopment of the Heritage Site, an outdated sheltered scheme in central Chichester, to provide 36 shared ownership homes including 29 one and two bedroom flats and 7 houses.
 - The redevelopment of three garage sites to provide 21 rented homes.
 - 1 new home to meet the needs of a household with a disabled person.
 - 64 rural homes for local people.
- Over £1.45m of investment was secured by our registered provider partners from the Homes and Communities Agency.
- 115 of the affordable homes were provided on market sites.
- 69 of the new homes were enabled by the Council working with our registered provider partners and partly funded by Council investment of £1.44m.

- £263k was received in commuted sums in lieu of affordable housing on site.

The Housing Strategy priorities for 2016 – 2017, in line with the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan reviewed by OSC in January 2016 and approved by Cabinet in February 2017, are as follows:

Maximising the supply of local housing:

- Scope briefing on Housing Needs evidence for review of Local Plan.
- Maximise delivery of affordable housing on market sites. This will include reviewing Local Plan housing policies and the Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance to reflect changes brought about by the Housing & Planning Act 2016 and associated regulations.
- Identification of opportunities to deliver additional affordable rented homes and the allocation of commuted sums as required.
- Self-build register to be set up and need monitored.
- Developers Charter Forum to be held in September. Local builders and developers to be made aware of government loans and funding initiatives and representatives from Chichester College and job centre to attend to talk about apprentices.
- Continue to pursue the delivery of smaller family housing, providing expert witness advice at appeal as required.
- Promote role of Rural Housing Enabler and relationship with SDNP.
- Keep abreast with Arun /WSCC progress with setting up Housing Company.
- Contribute to Starter Homes Bid for Southern Gateway.

Effective use of existing stock

- Adoption of new Private Sector Housing Strategy.
- Continued work with registered provider partners to identify opportunities to provide additional affordable homes within existing assets, including hard to let and outdated dwellings.
- Undertake a review of the Council's Allocation Scheme.

Enabling local people to find their own solutions

- Promote and increase opportunities for first time buyers and economically active households to access homeownership. This will include leaflets to CDC employees, local employers, features in staff update, Observer, Initiatives; promotion at Community Forums and on the council's web site; support to and promotion of the Starter Homes scheme at Lower Graylingwell and the bid for starter homes funding to develop the Southern Gateway.
- Promotion of CLTs and other options for community led housing delivery. This will include distributing leaflets to parish councils, presentations at community forums, an exhibition and promotion during Rural Housing Week and briefing to members.

Additional support for those most in need

- An options appraisal of the potential to purchase additional hostel accommodation adjacent to Westward House.
- Review and consider the potential to extend Homefinder
- Introduce the Chichester Warm Homes Incentive scheme to help those with excess cold and fuel.
- Work with registered provider partners to identify the most vulnerable single people under 35 years old affected by the transitional welfare arrangements.

PLANNING AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO STRATEGY

PLANNING

The past year has been a productive and successful year for Planning Services in the achievement amongst others of:-

- Adoption of Local Plan
- Adoption of CIL
- Adoption of The Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document
- The Council approved Infrastructure Business Plan – an important step in setting out the rolling five year plan to priorities the spending of CIL funds
- The Planning Service has met all three national performance standards for meeting planning applications.
- 4 Neighbourhood Plans have been adopted.
- Strategic Sites.
 - o Resolution to grant outline planning permission for 300 dwellings at Westhampnett
 - o Shopwyke Lakes – granted permission for 500 dwellings

The above achievements are important as they give a strong basis on which we can achieve our future objectives.

OBJECTIVES

- Review of Local Plan:
 - o Planned end date 31st July 2019.
 - o Gather the evidence base. E.g. OAN, SHLAA etc. Initial evidence base to be finalized by 31st January 2017.

- Site Allocations Plan
 - o End Date May 2017
 - o Gather the evidence base
 - o Prepare the plan
 - o Carry out consultation
 - o Submit for examination and adopt the plan.

- To continue the review of the IBP.

- Strategic Sites.
 - o The expected masterplan for West of Chichester is expected to go before the Planning Committee in April 2016 to be followed within a few months by the planning application.

o Tangmere. In order to progress the development at Tangmere consider the CPO of land at Tangmere. To seek specialist advice and carry out statutory procedures.

- Supplementary Planning Documents to be considered.
- o Surface Water and Foul Drainage.
- o Chichester Harbour SPD
- o SPD Addendum on A27 Financial Contributions from Development

• Conservation Area Appraisals which commenced in 2016 will continue

- o Selsey Conservation Area
- o Fishbourne Conservation area
- o Westbourne Conservation Area

• Reviews and Appraisals of methods of working to ensure greater efficiencies and performance in the Planning Service.

- o Conservation Area Appraisals
- o Support working electronically across the Service
- o Review of the Pre-application Advice Process
- SDNPA Review of existing agreement and conclusion of work to complete new agreement with SDNP
- Review of Building Control Service Delivery

HOUSING

The Housing and Planning Bill if passed will have a profound impact on the delivery of affordable housing with the Government's emphasis on owner occupiers rather than rented. Although details of the rules and regulations have yet to be published the direction of the Government is clear. Although there is still a lack of certainty the Housing Service is formulating creative and practical solutions to meeting the challenging times ahead.

The four key priorities in the strategy are:-

- Maximise the supply of local homes to meet the needs of local people
- Make the most effective use of existing stock, whilst maintaining sustainable communities
- Enable local people to find their own solutions
- Provide additional support for those that most need it.
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We will retain the affordable housing targets and the updated Housing Strategy Delivery Plan.

- Strengthen the evidence base of local need and affordability.
- Support opportunities for intermediate and starter home housing to support the local economy and growth, whilst ensuring they are affordable to and accessible by local households.
- Extending Homefinder. – We have just recruited two full time staff to Homefinder which will enable the service to be more proactive in finding suitable accommodation. Consideration is also being given to incentivising landlords by reducing management charges

- Continuing to explore the options for affordable housing delivery to meet the needs of those unable to purchase and making best use of the Council's resources
- Provide advice and support to communities to meet their own housing needs through registered providers or Community Land Trusts.

o It is essential that we reach the parishes with this message. At the next round of Forum meetings it is proposed that presentations will be given by officers from the Housing Service to promote CLTs. There will also be publicity to promote ways in which communities can meet their housing needs,

- A custom build and self-build register has been set up.
- Through the Chichester Warm Homes Initiative work with the Well Being Team to address excess cold and fuel poverty - a priority for the Private Sector Renewal Strategy

Cabinet reviewed and updated the Housing Strategy in February 2016 and agreed new capital allocations to support the proposals.

Susan Taylor

Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing

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