

Medway Council
Meeting of Regeneration, Community and Culture
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 18 August 2010

6.30pm to 7.55pm

Record of the meeting

- Present:** Councillors: Andrews, Bright (Chairman), Crack, Godwin, Griffin, Hewett, Hicks and Maisey
- Substitutes:** Councillors:
Haydock (Substitute for Mackinlay)
Maple (Substitute for Hubbard)
- In Attendance:** Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture
John Finlayson, Medway Waterfront Regeneration Manager
Stephen Gaimster, Assistant Director Development, Economy and Transport
Teri Hemmings, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Mark Johnson, Senior Transport Planner
Jonathan Male, Senior Lawyer
Brian McCutcheon, Local and Regional Planning Manager
Martin McKay, Design and Conservation Manager

244 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 6 July 2010 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

245 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tony Goulden, Hubbard and Mackinlay.

246 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

247 Declarations of interest

There were none.

248 Local Transport Plan 3 (Policy development)

Discussion

The Senior Transport Planner informed the Committee on the production of the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) and the public consultation which was currently being undertaken. He also notified Members of the slight revision to the programme in that the preparation of the Implementation Plan would be rescheduled to September/October 2010.

Members then asked the officers various questions, which included: -

- Concerns about the impact of the abolishing of the South East Plan and drive of the localism agenda and whether the Council was continuing to work closely with colleagues at Kent County Council (KCC);
- Security of keeping bicycles at train stations and how more cyclists would be encourage to cycle to stations;
- Suggestion that all residential areas in Medway should be 20mph zones and how this would be considered as the Twydall Accessibility Scheme which would have tested this was no longer being implemented;
- Concern that the bus service in Medway was no longer fit for purpose and should be reviewed, along with the consideration of a late night service;
- Review of taxi licenses in Medway as there had been complaints there were too many;
- Concern that the resources are no longer to fulfil the comments in the plan about air quality, following budget cuts relating to this issue;
- Concerns regarding revenue funding for Medway Tunnel and continued lobbying to the government to provide funding for its maintenance and suggestion that it should be considered to accommodate cyclists;
- Concerns of 24 hour bus lanes in Medway having a detrimental affect on traffic flow;
- Improved accessibility to public transport for people with mobility scooters.

Officers confirmed they were in regular contact with County colleagues and would be meeting with them shortly to discuss the production of KCC's LTP. They also explained they were in regular contact with rail, bus and taxi operators and would pick up the issues raised and would also speak with the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services with regard to the issue of 20mph zones. In relation to Medway Tunnel, the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture explained that there was concerns in relation to revenue funding for the maintenance of the tunnel and that there was an Act of Parliament which forbids cyclists and pedestrians from using the tunnel. It would require a new Act and would also be difficult to amend without causing problems in terms of emergency accesses so was not advised. In relation to the issue for people with mobility scooters the Senior Transport Planner undertook to raise the issue with Medway Access Group for their thoughts and would investigate the issue with Arriva.

Decision

The Committee noted the Local Transport Plan 3, which was currently out to public consultation, notes the comments from the Committee and that the Committee will give further consideration at the end of the consultation period.

249 Historic Rochester Conservation Area Appraisal (Policy development)

Discussion

The Design and Conservation Officer gave a presentation to the Committee which informed Members of the statutory duty of the Council to preserve and enhance Conservation Areas and explained the proposed changes to the Historic Rochester Conservation Area following the recent review and consultation process.

Members then asked officers a number of questions, which included: -

- Concerns regarding financial implications of extending the conservation area, in terms of resources;
- Concern with regard to the Corporation Street development;
- Suggestion that the pier be included in the conservation area;
- Concern regarding access issues for some businesses if traffic is excluded on Sundays;
- Suggestion that roller shutters are resisted and instead shutters which are more in keeping should be used;
- Suggestion that the importance of the trees in the paddock area should be referred to in the appraisal;
- Surfacing should be sensitive to the area;
- A local list of buildings of local historic importance should be compiled.

Officers responded that the main purpose of the conservation area was to help in terms of controlling what actions third parties took on properties and it was felt that this could be done with existing resources. There was now a Corporation Street development Brief, which would assist in ensuring development of the site would be complementary. Officers undertook to review the boundary to consider the inclusion of the pier and also explained that a local list of buildings of local historic importance was being considered also.

Decision

The Committee recommended that officers note the comments of the committee and that the Cabinet agree the following;

- 1) to adopt the Appraisal document and the new Management Plan;
- 2) the extension of the Conservation Area referred to in the report;
- 3) making Article 4 Directions for residential dwellings as set out in the Management Plan;

- 4) to authorise the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth to investigate the most effective method of additional advertisement control and to undertake all necessary procedures in order to apply for such controls, including the carrying out of any consultations and the consideration of any representations.

250 Best Street/High Street Masterplan Chatham (Policy development)

Discussion

The Local and Regional Planning Manager introduced the report to the Committee and explained that significant efforts had been made to consult widely. No major changes were suggested. Certain minor changes were however proposed, as set out in the schedule of consultation responses included with the report.

Members then raised a number of issues, which included: -

- Concern regarding the impact on traffic systems;
- The fantastic response achieved by students from Rainham Mark school;
- Concern over empty and derelict buildings close to the masterplan area and the impact they have on people's perception of the area;
- A view that the Nucleus Art Centre should be recognised in the masterplan;
- Concern that the attitude and opinions of the public, as detailed in the report, will continue despite regeneration.

Officers confirmed that as the masterplan suggested provision of two car and two bus entry points to the centre it was not considered that amendments to the road network would be necessary. In relation to the Nucleus Art Centre officers would consider giving it a higher profile in the masterplan. In relation to people's perceptions, it was explained that there were a lot of city centre regeneration schemes, which had achieved radical changes in perception and attitude.

Decision

The Committee recommended that the comments from Members are forwarded to Cabinet and recommend the Cabinet to adopt the Best Street/High Street masterplan.

251 Gun Wharf Masterplan Chatham (Policy development)

Discussion

The Local and Regional Planning Manager introduced the report and explained that the Gun Wharf area was of very historical significance and therefore the comments from English Heritage were of great importance and changes had been made to address their concerns.

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 18 August 2010

Members then asked officers a number of questions, which included: -

- Concern that new builds were sympathetic to the surroundings;
- Reference should be made to the ordnance building occupied by the Royal Air Force Club;
- Concern over the poor state of St Mary's Church and the importance of finding a viable use for it.;

Officers confirmed that the ordnance building was a key part of the masterplan, particularly due to its prime position. In relation to St Mary's Church it was confirmed that the issue was recognised and there had been a helpful response from the diocese. It was also felt that if the building erected at the rear of the church was three storey it could then realise more commercial use of the church. Officers undertook to organise a site visit for the committee to the church.

Decision

The Committee recommended that officers note the comments from Members and recommend the Cabinet to approve the Gun Wharf Masterplan.

252 Petitions (petitions)

Discussion

The Members noted the report and it was suggested that introducing 20mph zones in residential areas across Medway would reduce the number of petitions received requesting traffic calming measures.

Decision

The Committee noted the petition response and appropriate office action.

253 Work programme (Business management)

Discussion

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator introduced the report and informed the Committee that the PACT task group would report back to 16 November 2010 meeting. She also advised that a new Forward Plan had been published since the agenda and two items had been added for the Committee to consider adding to its work programme, which were: -

- Building for Life, which would need to be added to the agenda for 29 September 2010;
- Medway Housing design Standards, which was a supplementary planning document and would be brought to the committee approximately February 2011.

**Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 18 August
2010**

Decision

The Committee noted that: -

- (1) a report on the Local Development Framework: Draft Core Strategy will be considered at the next meeting;
- (2) a report on the Interface Land Supplementary Planning Document will be considered at the next meeting;
- (3) a report from the Winter Service Task Group will be considered on 16 November 2010;
- (4) a report on the Local Transport Plan 3 (consultation responses) will be considered on 16 November 2010;
- (5) a report from the PACT Task Group will be considered on 16 November 2010;
- (6) a report on Building for Life will be considered at the next meeting;
- (7) a report on Medway Housing Design Standards will be considered by the committee approximately in February 2011;
- (8) the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Enforcement will be held to account on 31 March 2011.

Chairman

Date:

Caroline Salisbury

Telephone: 01634 332013

Email: democratic.services@medway.gov.uk