

Notes

of the Informal Meeting of the

Place Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 14th July 2021

held in the Virtual Meeting.

Meeting Commenced: 14:30 Meeting Concluded: 16:15

Councillors:

P John Crockford-Hawley (Chairman)

P Peter Crew

A Mike Bird

A Gill Bute

A Sarah Codling

P Mark Crosby

A Karin Haverson

P Huw James

A Patrick Keating

P James Tonkin

A Richard Westwood

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Also in attendance: Councillor Steve Bridger; Councillor Geoff Richardson.

Officers in attendance: Lucy Shomali, Michael Reep, Richard Kent, Jane Harrison, Alastair Shankland (Place); Leo Taylor, Brent Cross (Corporate Services)

PLA Nomination of the Vice Chairman

Cllr Crew indicated that he was content to continue as the Vice chairman for the 2021-22 municipal year. The Panel agreed that he be duly nominated pending formal endorsement at the next full meeting of the Panel.

PLA Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 March 2021 (Agenda Item 2)

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting be approved.

PLA Place Annual Directorate Statement (Agenda Item 3)

The Director of Place set out the Place Annual Directorate Statement for 2021/22. The work programme reflected the breadth of activities and work

streams to be delivered by the directorate, and the names and teams dealing with each work area would be able to be shared shortly.

There was discussion around the key challenges facing the directorate with Members noting that the new directorate structure had been developed as a means to addressing these by better integrating and streamlining the directorate functions and more effectively utilising teams on the ground.

There was also debate about how the Panel might more effectively contribute to the directorate's work with the view expressed that there was a need to manage expectations and for mutual understanding around resource and statutory constraints. This was a two-way process though and clarity around the prioritisation of resource was key.

In further discussion, Members commented on the need for realism about the long list of planned work and the need for prioritisation. The Director acknowledged the point but emphasised that all of the work identified was important. It was not about quantity but rather about timescale: the need for realistic actions plans and for managing expectation around timeframes for delivery.

Members also noted the high rate of successful funding bids and congratulated officers.

Concluded;

- (1) that the report be noted, and comments sent to officers in the form of minutes; and
- (2) that a working group be set up towards the end of the year to contribute to the development of the priorities for the 2022/23 Annual Directorate Statement.

PLA North Somerset Local Plan Update (Agenda Item 4)

The Planning Policy Manager presented the report updating Members on the progress of work on the Local Plan. Work had been progressing on refining the broad locations for growth, the role of the Green Belt, the approach to rural areas and policy development.

Concluded:

- (1) that the report be noted, and comments sent to officers in the form of minutes; and
- (2) that a working group be set up to scrutinise and advise the emerging work streams.

PLA Inward Investment in North Somerset (Agenda Item 5)

The Head of Economy, assisted by the Principal Economic Development Officer, presented a report updating, informing and requesting input from Members on the work around inward investment and the Junction 21 Enterprise Area.

Discussion centred around premises for inward investment outside the Weston Business Quarter, engaging with site owners, the demographics of

towns in the district and how this would be of value to investors, identifying symbiotic opportunities for investment, liaising with Local Plan officers to identify investment opportunities, how areas for investment are investigated by investors, and the need for buy-in from residents.

Concluded:

That the report be noted, and comments sent to officers in the form of minutes.

PLA SPEDR Panel Work Plan - July 2021 (Agenda Item 6)

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Panel's Work Plan and asked for Members' input into areas to focus on. Members were reminded that the recommendation to the Executive Member, to support the adoption of the Local List procedure, would need to be retrospectively endorsed. The Panel agreed the recommendation, noting that this would be formally endorsed by the Panel at its next formal meeting.

The current status of the Cladding Working Group was reported on. The Head of Legal Services had given the advice to not sign up to the End Our Cladding Scandal campaign. The affected buildings in Portishead were being used for a case study, and the Panel was waiting for more details about this to emerge before proceeding. Officers would liaise with national government.

Members also suggested that an all-Member briefing about WECA would be useful. It was agreed that scrutiny officers explore options with WECA officers

Concluded: that the work plan be updated, picking up actions and discussion outcomes from the present meeting.

Chairman
