

AT A MEETING of the Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee
of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on
Thursday, 8th October, 2020

Chairman:

* Councillor Russell Oppenheimer

* Councillor Graham Burgess	Councillor Michael Thierry
* Councillor John Bennison	* Councillor Martin Tod
Councillor Roland Dibbs	* Councillor Michael White
Councillor Steve Forster	* Councillor Bill Withers Lt Col (Retd)
* Councillor Gary Hughes	Councillor Gavin James
* Councillor Rupert Kyrle	Councillor Keith House
* Councillor Derek Mellor	Councillor Fred Birkett
* Councillor Stephen Philpott	* Councillor Rhydian Vaughan MBE
* Councillor David Simpson	Councillor Michael Westbrook

*Present

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillor Rob Humby, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment, and Councillor Jonathan Glen, Chairman of the Policy and Resources Select Committee.

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dibbs and Councillor Forster.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

12. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

13. **DEPUTATIONS**

The Select Committee received the following deputations:

Tim Pickering, Walk Ride Waterlooville (Item 7)
Meg Lampard, Gosport and Fareham Friends of the Earth (Item 8)
Cllr Jackie Porter (Item 8)

14. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman confirmed the Active Places Summit that was due to take place on 19 October 2019.

15. **HAMPSHIRE COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

The Committee received a presentation from the Assistant Director for Economic Development (item 6 in the minute book) on recovery in Hampshire following the impacts of Covid.

Live data was being used to monitor and manage various areas of the economy. The retail, hospitality and leisure sectors have been especially impacted and relied heavily on grants, and of course the winter months are the most challenging for the tourism sector. Short, medium and longer term interventions to support recovery have been identified, including exploring the potential to create new flexible workspaces for businesses. Rural connectivity and broadband remained a priority, particularly with so many people relying on stable and reliable internet connections and with the current increase in home working.

During questions, it was confirmed that specific opportunities were being sought to align with Borough and District Councils and shared priorities and areas of focus.

Members thanked officers for their work and for the update.

16. **POP UP SCHEMES - TRAVEL**

The Select Committee received a joint presentation on Pop-up Schemes and School Streets (items 7 and 8 in the minute book).

Members were given an introduction to Tranche 1 of the Pop-up Schemes that had been established across the County, which had assisted with social distancing whilst travelling and helped provide alternatives for key workers with travelling to work. 42 schemes had been delivered, with QR codes being available at each one, allowing the public to share feedback on how it was working. Tranche 2 of the schemes would be “to enable authorities to install further, more permanent measures to cement cycling and walking habits. Where applicable, this will enable local authorities to implement schemes already planned in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)”.

The School Streets scheme looked at traffic on the roads near Hampshire

schools and was a broadening of the focus to include modal shift and air quality objectives rather than look exclusively at road safety. It was acknowledged that such an initiative would not work for schools on main roads or as part of the bus network, which would cause a negative impact on traffic in the local areas. A pilot would need to be designed with schools that were fully supportive of the proposals and the ambitions of the school streets concept, but it was emphasised that the costs and practicalities involved would also need careful consideration.

The Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment thanked the Select Committee for looking at the School Streets ideas and reinforced the importance of working closely with schools for any pilot to be effective.

The Committee thanked officers for their work.

17. **SCHOOL STREETS SCHEME**

This item was considered along with the Pop-up Schemes presentation (item 7 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

The Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee asked the Director of ETE to research a School Streets Scheme pilot and how this could be implemented, with a report to come back for consideration at the January 2021 Select Committee meeting.

18. **PLANNING WHITE PAPER**

Councillor Rupert Kyrle declared an interest as the Cabinet Member for Environment at Eastleigh Borough Council.

Councillor Gary Hughes declared an interest as the Cabinet Lead for Planning, Hayling Seafront Strategy, Commercial Services

The Select Committee considered a report from the Head of Strategic Planning (item 9 in the minute book) on the Planning White paper¹, which proposed fundamental reforms to the planning system.

The four main proposals around the current Planning scheme were discussed, initiated because the current system was seen by the current Government as cumbersome and not easy for the public to understand. The key proposal of the White Paper, 'Planning For The Future', was that land would be categorised into three main groups; 'growth', 'renewal' and 'protected' and planning system changes introduced to support increased delivery of housing, based on these categories.

Whilst the consultation was very high level and not too detailed, it was imperative

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

that the County Council had early engagement as the implications would be significant in how the planning process worked across Hampshire.

Members agreed that there were concerns regarding the potential reduction in affordable housing provision and the lack of measure to discourage land-banking as well as processes to keep developers accountable.

The Committee discussed what elements they wished to be passed to the Leader for inclusion in the response, and these included concerns about the proposed national Infrastructure Levy, the 30-month process for Local Plan preparation, lack of reference to the climate emergency, loss of biodiversity, affordable housing provision, land-banking by developers, and the absence of reference to other infrastructure considerations such as transport, broadband and sewage provision. (included as an appendix to the minutes).

RESOLVED

The Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee noted the government White Paper “Planning for the Future” and provided comments for consideration by the Leader in finalising Hampshire County Council’s response to the consultation.

19. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Select Committee considered the work programme (item 10 in the minute book) and it was agreed that the School Streets scheme and potential pilot be added to the programme for January 2021.

The Work Programme was then agreed by the Select Committee.

Chairman,

Cllr Keith Mans and Cllr Robert Humby
Hampshire County Council
The Castle
Winchester
SO23 8UJ

Sent as an attachment by email

Dear Leader and Deputy Leader,

As Chairman of ETE Select Committee I am writing to set out the views of the ETE Committee on the HM Government White Paper “Planning for the Future”. The Committee discussed the White Paper at our meeting on 8 October 2020. I am grateful to Cllr Humby for his comments during that discussion.

The Committee hopes that you will agree to take our views into account when formulating the official HCC response to the consultation on the White Paper. The Committee was of one mind throughout our discussion and I would summarise our concerns as follows:

- The envisaged national Infrastructure Levy does not provide certainty or clarity (for the County Council or communities) that necessary infrastructure will be delivered at the appropriate time. We also do not believe that the Levy will be in the interests of developers, many of whom need vital infrastructure to be delivered by HCC to make their developments viable. This factor may act as a block on development. We would urge you to be robust in challenging the loss of control which HCC would face if CIL and Section 106 were removed and replaced by a national levy, payable upon occupation, rather than commencement of development.
- ETE Committee believes that the proposed 30-month process for Local Plan preparation is too challenging and that the three proposed zones represent an oversimplification of land use planning. Communities in Hampshire often face complex development issues which require consultation, community engagement and local democratic control.
- We are disappointed that the White Paper does not make more of an attempt to address the Climate Emergency. The reference to introducing energy efficiency standards is vague and suggests no action will be taken on this until 2025. This is a missed opportunity. New housing is an opportunity to achieve higher levels of sustainability and reduce emissions through Design Codes, new modes of development and new types of connected communities.
- Additionally, we have concerns about the loss of biodiversity which may result from bad development approvals. We would query how the laudable Government aim to

achieve “net gain” in biodiversity can possibly be achieved with a patchwork approach to planning across Hampshire under the proposed three land designations (Growth, Renewal, Protected). Wildlife corridors and habitats will be at risk from the current proposals.

- We were concerned about the raising of the threshold for affordable housing provision which would inevitably have the effect of reducing necessary affordable housing in many parts of Hampshire.
- The proposals are almost entirely focused on housing delivery with little reference to other key planning issues such as employment and transport.
- The committee believes that Parliament should give Councils more powers to tackle “land-banking” by developers as a priority. We were disappointed that this issue does not feature in the White Paper.
- The Committee believes that the challenge of getting utilities into development sites has been underestimated by the Government. In a county of Hampshire’s size and complexity, this issue needs particular attention. Sewage and broadband are the most challenging and expensive issues. It is not clear to us how the Government intends to prevent utility connections acting as a handbrake on development in Hampshire.
- The Committee shares the Government’s aim to see more houses built for the sake of social justice and our economy. But Hampshire is a unique county due to our urban/rural mix, our two National Parks, our heritage assets and our biodiverse natural environment. We believe that the current system of housing allocations by District and Borough is not appropriate for Hampshire’s future housing requirements. With the proposed removal of the Duty to Co-operate, we believe that houses would be more sensibly planned for by HCC taking a strategic role in identifying the most suitable sites, linked to infrastructure provision, on a County-wide basis. We have a particular concern for communities on the fringes of our protected landscapes. The proposed system will place unbalanced development pressures on these communities, with potential negative impacts on the protected landscapes themselves. This needs to be recognised by the Government.

I am copying this letter to Cllr Heron due to his role on the New Forest National Park Authority and to ETE Committee Members and to Stuart Jarvis and Chris Murray.

Yours sincerely,

Russell Oppenheimer

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER

Chairman, Economy, Transport and Environment Select Committee