

## THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee held on 25 September 2018 at 7.10pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

**Present:** Cllrs B Austin (Chairman), D Bretherton (Deputy Chairman), P Cowell, M Dyer, H Fickling, P Lambert, A Midwinter (Town Mayor) and M Stiles

**Officers**

G Hunt, Town Clerk

G Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer

A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

### 1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Dodds (Unwell), Emery (Personal) and Jones (Holiday).

### 2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 Public Participation & Public Questions

There were no applications to address the Committee.

There were no public questions put to the Committee.

### 4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 August 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 5 Working Groups

To **receive** a verbal update from the chairmen of:

- a) NPCC Co-Ordination Working Group – there had been no requirement for the group to meet.
- b) The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Working Group

The Town Clerk reported further discussions had taken place with Chinnor Rugby Football Club regarding their future plans.

The Town Clerk had spoken to another s106 Officer (the ninth since 2015) to explain the decision on spending s106 money, related to 17 Thame Park Road, was the District Council's and not the Town Council.

- c) The Green Living Plan Working Group

Cllr Fickling reported that the Green Living Plan consultation was due to close on 30 September 2018. To date 110 responses had been received of which 70% were completed online. Cllr Fickling encouraged everyone who had not already done so to respond to the consultation.

Lord Williams's School Off Timetable morning in January will be on the Green Living Plan.

- d) The Town Centre Working Group

The Market Town Co-ordinator had provided a comprehensive report. Cllr Austin commended the work being done by the Town Centre Working Group.

e) Transport Plan Working Group

The Town Clerk continued to receive various requests from residents related to speed calming, parking, the Thame to Haddenham cycle route and other transport related issues.

The Town Clerk has had discussions with Henley Town Clerk and Sgt Neil Anns regarding civil parking enforcement and the monitoring of the two hour on street parking areas in the town. The Town Clerk has raised a legal question with the County Council to clarify the current position. A report will be prepared for the Policy & Resources Committee to consider at the October meeting.

Mr Peter Clark, the outgoing CEO at the County Council has arranged for the Town Clerk to meet with one of his directors next Monday to discuss ideas for a new Transport Strategy for Thame that would better fit with the expansion of Thame over recent years.

f) Community Facilities Working Group

The Town Clerk had met with Mr Mark Stone, CEO of the District Council's the discussion covered a wide range of topics. The Town Clerk had in particular stressed the need for the Town Council to be involved in planning the future of the Cattle Market site.

g) Burial Space Working Group

The Town Clerk had explained yet again, to the latest s106 Officer, the current situation related to burial space.

## 6 Public Arts Strategy

Cllr Fickling commended the work carried out by the Public Arts Working Group and the Public Arts Strategy that had been produced. The Strategy set out the definition of public art, its value, what needs to be done to ensure the s106 funding is spent appropriately and that the community is involved.

Cllr Stiles, Chair of the Public Arts Working Group proposed the Strategy is agreed allowing the Town Centre Working Group to be able to start to progress projects proposed in Section 10, within available funds to completion, in line with the Strategy.

### **RESOLVED that:**

***i) The Public Arts Strategy be approved.***

## 7 South Oxfordshire District Local Plan

Members noted the comments from the District's planning barrister made at a planning appeal near Emmer Green that show the District are arguing a need for 627 dwellings per year, in line with the revised national methodology for calculating housing need. This would give the District a 7.6 year housing land supply.

The Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer (NPCO) reported this does not mean this figure will translate into the pre-submission version of the District LP in spring of 2019. The Growth Deal and the new national methodology for calculating housing need conflict, with the former providing a mechanism for significant growth to expand the region's economy, controlled by infrastructure and environmental constraints, and the latter being more constrained by being a function of population movements and house prices. The two simplest models for the new plan are outlined below. It was

noted that due to the delay in the plan's submission another year will have to be added to the Plan's lifespan, giving a plan period of 2011-2034:

- 1) Relying upon the pure national methodology to give an annualised figure, i.e., the 627 mentioned above (which is presumably an adjustment of the early Government calculation of 617 per annum). This would equal a total of 14,421 homes, excluding any extra that might result from cross-border agreements.

It is worth noting that within their first pre-submission plan (October 2017) SODC identified 13,284 dwellings as having been allocated through the Core Strategy, completed, under construction, or with planning permission. There should therefore only be a requirement for a maximum of 1,137 homes to be allocated within the new plan, excepting any commitment to provide for unmet need from other areas. The reality is this number should be lower, as more planning permissions will have been granted since October 2017;

- 2) Proposing the growth expected of the District under the Oxfordshire Growth Deal. This would give an annualised housing need similar or identical to that proposed within their first pre-submission local plan of 775 homes per annum. Note however this did not include Oxford's unmet need, nor the unexplained uplift that resulted in over 22,500 homes being identified as either completed, current supply, or new allocations.

Option 1) is less contentious, and would provide an up to date "stop-gap" local plan prior to the adoption of the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP) for Oxfordshire. It would also serve to remove a main driver for non-plan-led planning applications which are costly to deal with in terms of resources.

Option 2) would therefore come forward as a result of pressure on the authority from the Growth Deal partners, and/or the Government. The 100,000 homes agreed for Oxfordshire are to be delivered by 2031, yet the District would have to plan through until 2034. It would be natural for other parties to expect to see the 100,000 homes within this draft plan, i.e., for concrete proof that SODC intend to meet its part of the deal.

Balanced against the wish to exert pressure on SODC will be the need of the partners and Government to recognise the recent change of leadership at SODC, and the absolute requirement for the Planning Team to be free to focus on the JSSP.

The further complication brought by the Expressway should not trouble this current South Oxfordshire Local Plan. If the Growth Deal for Oxfordshire succeeds, the SODC Local Plan's lifespan will be brief, as it will be quickly superseded by the JSSP. With the exact route not to be announced until autumn of 2020, it is expected that growth related to the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Expressway and the wider corridor will, therefore, be provided for within the JSSP.

Within the context of the growth corridor, no growth has yet been allocated to any geographic region within Oxfordshire. Any numbers seen to date are speculative.

Looking at the JSSP and the response from Ian Hudspeth at the Need Not Greed Meeting yesterday evening, SODC will be under pressure to meet their agreement under the Growth Deal.

A question was raised as to how democratic the JSSP and the Growth Deal were considering the impact both would have. Ian Hudspeth had answered the same question at the meeting yesterday evening explaining the only voting members on the Growth Board were the democratically elected leaders of the County, District and City Councils.

The NPCO stated in effect the JSSP represented the reintroduction of the old County Structure Plan. The Government having realised the need for a mid-tier to be reintroduced to the planning system.

## **8 Thame Neighbourhood Plan Revision**

It was noted that work is underway on appraising the existing, cross-border evidence base. Particular attention is being paid to Thame's sphere of influence in matters of retail, employment, education and health.

## **9 Oxfordshire Growth Board**

The Oxfordshire Growth Board was meeting this evening. The NPCO reported some of the items on the agenda for discussion included a presentation from the Environment Agency and Active Oxfordshire, rail connectivity, the expressway, a sub national transport body group to influence co-operation between national and local transport projects, a Scrutiny Panel and Advisory groups.

The Government had issued a Ministerial Statement providing Oxfordshire temporary protection whilst the JSSP is developed. The District Councils needing only to prove a 3 year housing land supply rather than 5.

## **10 Oxford – Cambridge Expressway**

Members noted the announcement made on 12 September 2018 that the preferred corridor for the Expressway was that called "B" (more detail in the Highways England booklet). The final route will be chosen, next. It had not yet been decided whether to route the corridor west of Oxford, potentially using an upgraded A34, or south and east of Oxford, crossing the M40 near Wheatley.

The route alternatives will be taken out to public consultation in autumn 2019, with a decision being made one year later. At the Need Not Greed meeting yesterday evening it was reported that as many as seven routes may be consulted upon. Build is due to start around 2025, with completion by 2030.

## **11 Kingsmead Business Park**

It was noted that a pre-application meeting was held on 6 September 2018 between the Town Council and Angle Properties, owners of Kingsmead Business Park off Howland Road, on their revised plans for the whole site.

It was also noted that planning application P18/S1243/FUL – for the erection of 68 bed care home and associated vehicular parking, landscaping, ancillary infrastructure and other works on the DAF Trucks site had been withdrawn, presumably because new plans for the whole site will include revised Care Home provision.

## **12 Affordable Housing / Community Land Trust (CLT)**

Cllr Austin reported that members of the CLT Working Group had taken part in a very successful 'Visioning' Workshop last Monday. The Workshop provided the time to think and discuss the key vision and objectives of the group.

Working teams had been formed to move forward with the different areas of legal formation, PR, project planning and investigating suitable sites. Cllr Austin will be contacting the members shortly to arrange a follow up meeting.

There was a clear need for a Housing Needs Analysis to be undertaken and the Town Clerk had raised the issue when he met with Mark Stone, CEO at SODC.

As a result of the workshop Cllr Austin had applied for Stage 3 funding from the National CLT Network to enable the next step of legal formation of the group to take place.

**13 Housing Needs Survey**

The Town Clerk had stressed the importance of a new housing needs survey for the market towns during his meeting with the Chief Executive Officer for SODC, Mark Stone on 31 August 2018.

**14 Health Hub / Hallam Land**

Members noted that an internal meeting has been arranged with Hallam Land, and a representative from the surgery, in order for the Town Council to further appraise and discuss Hallam's pre-application proposal. This has been set for 26 September 2018, all Members have been invited to attend.

The Town Clerk had submitted separately the Town Councillor comments on the pre-application submission to SODC, in case of use to the SODC Planning Officer.

**15 Other Items to Note**

The items were noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.57pm

Signed .....  
Chairman, 6 November 2018