

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Thursday, 16 April 2020

Present:

Councillors March (Vice-Chairman), Dawlings, Mackonochie and Scott

Officers in Attendance: William Benson (Chief Executive), Patricia Narebor (Head of Legal Partnership), Stephen Baughen (Head of Planning Services) and Caroline Britt (Democratic Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

CAB153/19 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors McDermott, Bailey and Stanyer. Also, Lee Colyer (Director of Finance, Policy and Development), Paul Taylor (Director of Change and Communities) and Stephen McGinnes (Mid Kent Services Director).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

CAB154/19 Councillor March declared a non pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 8 – The Hawkhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan (made 2018) Proposed (non material) modifications. A dispensation had been granted to allow participation and to vote.

NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

CAB155/19 There were no Visiting Members who had registered as wishing to speak.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 12 MARCH 2020

CAB156/19 Members reviewed the minutes. No amendments were proposed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting dated 12 March 2020 be approved as a correct record.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

CAB157/19 Pursuant to Cabinet Procedure Rule 28.3, Councillor Everitt had submitted the question as follows:

“Is the current accommodation for those living on the street indefinitely available for the duration of this crisis and is there significant extra capacity to meet a potential increase in need.”

Councillor Mackonochie, Portfolio holder for Communities and Wellbeing provided the following reply:

“ Yes, the Council will continue to provide emergency housing to rough sleepers while the UK lockdown measures are in place. There is not significant extra capacity, as emergency accommodation is in high demand across Kent, but the Housing team are closely monitoring the level of need for local people who are in a homeless situation. To ensure availability of accommodation we are block booking spaces with housing providers and

continuing to make best use of our temporary accommodation flats.”

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

CAB158/19 There were no questions from members of the public.

CONSIDERATION OF THE FORWARD PLAN AS AT 11 MARCH 2020

CAB159/19 Members considered the plan. No amendments were proposed.

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan as at 11 March 2020 be noted.

HAWKHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MADE 2018) - PROPOSED (NON-MATERIAL) MODIFICATIONS

CAB160/19 Stephen Baughen, Head of Planning introduced the report that proposed minor (non-material) modifications to the made Hawkhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Discussion and responses to Members questions included the following matters:

- The Hawkhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was ‘made’ (adopted) by Full Council on 26 March 2018.
- Since that date the Hawkhurst NDP had formed part of the overall development plan for Tunbridge Wells Borough and all decisions on planning proposals within Hawkhurst Parish were required to take account of the policies within the ‘made’ development plan.
- Changes in planning legislation and national policy needed to be monitored and any implications to be considered for the NDP.
- Hawkhurst were now proposing a light touch review to take account of recent changes.
- The minor modifications were presented to members of the public by the Parish Council in late 2019. Planning policy officers had reviewed and commented on the proposed changes.
- The Parish Council would carry out a more detailed review of their NDP at a later date that would reflect subsequent stages of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan.
- National Planning Practice Guidance set out 3 ways that an NDP could be amended. The first was for minor material modifications which did not require a review by an independent examiner or referendum. Other more expensive changes required a review by either an independent examiner or referendum.
- The proposed amendments for the Hawkhurst NDP were considered minor and therefore did not require review by either an independent examiner or referendum.
- It was noted that the legal advice confirmed the ‘made’ date would remain the same as the original ‘made’ date of March 2018, but when referred to should state both this date and the modified date of April 2020 (subject to approval by Cabinet).
- In the ‘made’ NDP it set out that the preferred location for a new Community Centre was All Saints Church. Subsequently, planning permission had been granted for its conversion to residential. This meant it was no longer available for a Community Centre. The reference and accompanying map would be removed from the proposed amended NDP.

- The Planning Policy Department at TWBC was now set up with a dedicated officer with responsibility for NDP's. One of the roles included liaison with the Parishes as and when substantial changes to national policy were announced. This would ensure new policy was incorporated into the NDP's.
- Subsequent to the making of the Hawkhurst NDP there had been changes to national policy, particularly around the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which had not been altered since 2012.
- Government had issued a Planning White Paper which had indicated further changes to the planning system. If and when any changes were announced, TWBC liaise with the Parishes to ensure that where NDP's were being produced, those changes were reflected. For those with existing NDP's any changes would be included when it was next reviewed.
- TWBC were currently reviewing the detailed representations made on the Borough Local Plan. This would include elements around biomass burning.
- For Planning Applications, these should always be determined in accordance with current planning policy unless material considerations indicated otherwise.

RESOLVED – That the proposed minor (non-material) modifications to the 'made' (adopted) Hawkhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) be incorporated into a modified Hawkhurst NDP be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION:

Approval would reflect changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and take account of some minor factual updates. In doing so, the Council would continue its support of the development of NDP's which is specifically included in the Five Year Plan.

URGENT BUSINESS

CAB161/19 There was no urgent business.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

CAB162/19 The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday 25 June 2020 commencing at 10:30am in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Tunbridge Wells.

NOTES:

The meeting concluded at 11.00 am.
An audio recording of this meeting is available on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council website.