

Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee



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| Date | 13 April 2006 |
| Venue | Town Hall, Lytham St Annes |
| Committee members | Councillor Kevin Eastham (Chairman) Councillor Colin Walton (Vice-Chairman) John Bennett, Harold Butler, Dr Trevor Fiddler, Barbara Pagett, Heather Speak |
| Other Councillors | Raymond Norsworthy, Roger Small |
| Officers | Phil Woodward, Tracy Scholes, Paul Walker, Tony Donnelly, Mark Evans, Lyndsey Lacey, Richard Wood |

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

2. Substitute members

Nil

3. Fylde Borough Housing Needs Survey

Tony Donnelly (Development Plans Manager) and Richard Wood (Housing Consultant) presented a joint report on a review of the Fylde Borough Housing Needs Survey that had been undertaken by Fordham Research in December 2002.

In brief, the report outlined the findings of the Fordham report and commented on a combination of factors, which made many sites unviable for the provision of affordable housing. In addition, it made reference to a re-evaluation that had been carried out by Richard Wood who was working within the housing section. New findings based on revisiting the original data in the context of current advice on the provision of affordable housing were identified. A copy of the report was circulated with the agenda.

Mr Donnelly indicated that in the period since the housing needs survey was adopted no affordable homes had been built. He explained the two main reasons behind this fact.

Members sought clarification on the minimum requirement for affordable housing in both the urban and rural areas. It was confirmed that the requirement was 100% in the rural areas and 60% in the urban areas.

Mr Donnelly explained that irrespective of the conclusions of the Housing Corporation study of 2005 (Challenging Perceptions) the policy of 60% affordable housing as a proportion of all future developments could not be changed, for the time being, as it was part of the Fylde Borough Local Plan (As Amended) (October 2005). He added that there was scope for the modification of the proportions of the type of affordable housing within the 60% figure. In this respect, the provision of shared equity housing had an effective role to play in the supply of affordable housing.

Reference was also made to the commuted sum issue and the need to adopt a more flexible approach to the investment of funds raised under this arrangement. Roger Small (Portfolio holder for Development and Regeneration) addressed this point. He indicated that a report on this issue would be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 10 May. It was likely that a meeting would be convened of all interested parties to look at this matter in detail.

Following a full debate the Committee RESOLVED:

1. To support the recommended changes to the 2002 Housing Needs Survey as set out below:
 - With the aim of moving towards a more sustainable development in line with more recent research on affordable housing and to better address the needs of the borough, the mix of affordable housing types be changed to a proportion in the order of a 50/50 split in relation to the provision of social rented and shared equity housing within the overall minimum 60% of affordable housing referred to in exception 3 of Policy HL1 in the Fylde Borough Local Plan (As Amended)(Oct 2005) . This would result in schemes broadly involving 40% market dwellings, 30% social rented and 30% shared equity dwellings. This approach would be operated flexibly to reflect particular housing needs, which may be identified in local areas.
 - The same overall approach would be taken to proposals submitted under the rural exceptions policy (Policy HL3) of the local plan such that schemes would broadly involve 50% social rented dwellings and 50% shared equity dwellings. This approach would again be operated flexibly to reflect particular housing needs that may be identified in local areas.

- That secondary gains of social rented be encouraged wherever possible and that efforts be made to try and achieve two levels of shared ownership in order to widen the accessibility of the type of housing to a wider range of income groups.
2. To recommend that the Portfolio Holder for Development and Regeneration/ Cabinet considers the report and provides feedback to committee on the above recommendations and proposals for the future investment of the affordable housing commuted sums budget.

4. Blackpool Airport Area Action Plan

Tony Donnelly (Development Plans Manager) reported on a proposed Area Action Plan for Blackpool Airport.

Mr Donnelly explained that in light of the decision of the Council to include in the Local Development Scheme an Area Action Plan for Blackpool Airport, it was necessary to look at the options relating to the scope of the work, the area to be covered by the plan and the related arrangements.

It was further reported that Blackpool Airport had recently commissioned a firm of planning consultants to produce a master plan for the airport in respect of the period 2005 to 2030. The production of a master plan was in line with the guidance contained in the white paper 'The Future of Air Transport 2003'. It was expected that the master plan would be published for consultation purposes in the near future.

The Committee was advised that the Council did not have all the information available to make a definitive decision at the present time. The final airport master plan when published and the LEP socio/economic impact study were likely to help inform the decision. The report detailed various options for consideration at a later date.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED:

1. To approve the following work being undertaken in the interim period.
 - Consideration of the draft airport master plan when published;
 - Consideration of the airport socio/economic impact study when published;
 - Engagement/discussions with the airport management and their representatives;
 - Engagement/discussions with Blackpool Borough Council and Re Blackpool;
 - Engagement/discussions with LSP;

- Consideration of relationship with Regional Spatial Strategy, the Community Plan and the Corporate Plan;
 - Consideration of airport permitted development rights;
 - Consideration of controls open to the Council when new airport development proposals are submitted.
2. To present an interim report to the next meeting and refer the draft Airport Master Plan to the committee when published.

5. The acquisition of planning gain through planning obligations

Tony Donnelly (Development Plans Manager) presented an options report to committee on the acquisition of planning gain through planning obligations.

The report outlined the options available to the council in terms of applying a more systematic approach to the acquisition of planning gain through the means of planning obligations.

Members enquired under what circumstances the council imposed commuted sums and the method in which they were calculated. Mr Donnelly addressed this point.

The Committee RESOLVED:

1. To take no action on a major piece of new work for the time being.
2. That the circumstances in which commuted sums in lieu of on site provision of amenity open spaces under Policy TREC 17 of the local plan should be identified, agreed and implemented.
3. That agreement should be reached on the introduction of a formula on which to calculate commuted sums in lieu of the provision of open space.
4. The above matters be considered corporately involving Streetscene Services.
5. To present a progress report to the next meeting of the committee.

6. Care Homes - a briefing note

Mark Evans (Development Control Manager) presented a briefing note on care homes. The note provided an interpretation on when a private house used for care purposes becomes a residential institution for planning purposes.

The report provided an overview of the Use Classes Order in particular, Class C3 and Class C2 and the relevance of the interpretation of a material change of use.

Members referred to several care homes for children that were operating in the Borough and enquired whether the use would fall within class C2. Mr Evans made reference to recent case history on the subject.

After a full discussion the Committee RESOLVED:

- 1.To agree the principle of inviting a planning application for the use of the premises within the Borough, and
- 2.To request the Executive Manager (Democratic and Member Services) to ensure that the above is achieved with in the terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegation

7. Strategic Planning and Development Unit - Staffing

Phil Woodward (Executive Director) presented a report on the current staffing position within the Unit and the associated implications of the performance and management of the service.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED to note the report and to record the committees thanks and appreciation to Messrs P Drinnan, M Evans T Donnelly and all those others involved in delivering the day to day requirements of the service under difficult circumstances.
