

PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
1 APRIL 1999

Present: Councillors Mrs Ballin (Chairman), Adams, Bayle, Mrs Clifford, Egan, Finnie, Grayson, Jones, Piasecki, Mrs Pile, Ryan, Sargeant, Simonds, Thompson, Wade and Worrall

Apologies for absence were received from:
Councillors Mrs Doyle, Flood and Veakins

553. Substitute Members

The Committee noted the attendance of the following substitute Members in accordance with Standing Order No. 38:

Councillor Mrs Clifford for Councillor Veakins
Councillor Egan for Councillor Flood
Councillor Thompson for Councillor Mrs Doyle

554. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 January 1999 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

555. Minutes of Sub Committees

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Highways Sub Committee held on 18 March 1999, and of the Planning Control Sub Committee held on 24 September, 14 January, 3 February and 18 February 1999 as set out in Appendices A to D, be noted and received.

556. Quarterly Operations Report (Item 1)

The Committee received a copy of the Director of Planning & Transportation's Quarterly Operations Report.

The Director briefly drew the Committee's attention to the key points emerging from the report, in particular, the impact of the Local Plan and Town Centre inquiry on staffing resources, and the efforts already being made to enhance the vibrancy of the town centre through the current town centre management initiative. He answered a number of questions arising from the report.

RESOLVED that the Quarterly Operations Report be received.

557. **Revenue Budgets 1999/2000**

The Committee considered a further report on its Revenue Budgets for 1999/2000 which set out the detailed budget having regard to changes made by the Strategy & Policy Committee and the overall budget approved by the Council on 3 March 1999.

RESOLVED that the detailed Planning & Transportation Committee budget as outlined in Annex B of the report be approved.

558. **Capital Programme 1999/2000-2001/2002 (Item 3)**

The Committee considered a report inviting it to review its capital spending requirements and to submit its proposals to the Strategy and Policy Committee for inclusion within the Council's Capital Programme. In addition, the Committee was required to review progress on its currently approved schemes and determine the specific items for which funding would have to be carried forward into 1999/2000.

The Director of Planning & Transportation answered a number of questions in relation to the report. In particular, he advised the Committee that slippage was inevitable and that, in some cases, it was a matter of when a decision to implement particular works was taken during the year. Where such slippage occurred, there was a continuing commitment to complete the affected projects in the current year by carrying forward the unspent funds.

RESOLVED that the schemes summarised in Annex E of the report be submitted to the Strategy & Policy Committee for inclusion within the Capital Programme for 1999/2000.

559. **Service Plan 1999/2000**

The Committee considered a report which invited it to approve its Service Plan for 1999/2000.

The Director of Planning & Transportation answered a number of questions, in particular, advising the Committee:

- That the performance indicators provided a means both of monitoring the Department's performance in-house, and in comparison with other authorities.
- That engineering and education were as important to reducing accidents as enforcement of speed limits.
- That long-term trends were the most important indicators when considering the effectiveness of measures aimed at reducing accidents.
- That safety in the Council's multi-storey car parks had been improved by re-lamping, refurbishment, the installation of closed circuit television cameras which operated while the car parks were open and the introduction of security patrols.

- That the Council would continue to seek to process planning applications within the prescribed timescale, but that it remained the view of the officers that quality was more important than speed, albeit that the Director expected time to be used efficiently.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Planning & Transportation Committee Service Plan 1999/2000 outlined in Annex A of the report be approved; and,
- (ii) the policy objectives within the Service Plan be submitted to the Strategy and Policy Committee for inclusion in the Council's overall Service Plan 1999/2000.

560. **Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan - Changes to Policy R15 and Proposal PH1.9 - Response to Public Consultation (Item 5)**

In accordance with Standing Order 25, Councillor Mrs Ballin declared an interest in this item and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.

COUNCILLOR SARGEANT IN THE CHAIR.

The Committee considered a report which was intended:

- to inform Members of the representations received as a result of public consultation on the additional further proposed changes to Policy R15, Amen Corner, and to Proposal PH1.9, Peacock Farm, approved by the Special Planning and Transportation Committee on 19 November 1998 (Min 351 refers);
- to recommend to Members the Borough Council's response to the representations that should be included in the Borough Council's proofs of evidence and written representations to the Public Local Inquiry concerning these matters.

The Director of Planning & Transportation indicated that he had nothing to add in relation to Proposal PH1.9 but reminded the Committee that it had considered the settlement boundary referred to in Policy R15 previously and that, for any further alteration to be made, there should be a change in circumstances to justify it. He suggested that such a change would not be appropriate when proposals were only at the outline application stage but, could be reconsidered once there was more certainty about the future boundaries arising from redevelopment.

The Committee, however, did not believe that the existing site boundary was sustainable being located between properties and considered that there was a more logical line defined by existing rows of trees and chain link fencing beyond the properties, thereby extending the site.

Having reached this view, the Committee agreed that the properties previously consulted regarding the proposed policies should be re-consulted on this latest change as a matter of urgency in order to ensure that their views could be submitted to the Local Plan Inspector in accordance with the current schedule, thereby avoiding any further delay to the process which might be detrimental to the Council's interests.

RESOLVED that

- (i) no change be made to Additional Further Proposed Change 131A and that it be recommended to the Public Local Inquiry Inspector;
- (ii) additional Further Proposed Change 131A be approved for development control purposes;
- (iii) Additional Further Proposed Change 127A be further modified such that Policy R15 be amended to read:

“Recreational, leisure and educational development will only be acceptable in this area where it would:

- (i) *Not be reasonable to provide it within settlements;*
 - (ii) *Provide for a strong defensible boundary beyond the western and southern boundary of “Norbury”, London Road, Binfield and the southern boundary of “Lyndhurst” and “Coppid Hill House”, London Road, Binfield;*
 - (iii) *Not have an unacceptably adverse effect on significant land between Wokingham and Bracknell;*
 - (iv) *Not result in any unacceptable significant adverse environmental, road safety or transportation consequences;*
 - (v) *Contribute to the improvement of the quality and choice of public transport serving the defined area including the provision of a railway station;*
 - (vi) *Provide footpaths and cycleways through the area and links to:*
 - a Land identified for development at Peacock Farm;*
 - b Existing leisure uses to the north;*
 - c Land identified for recreation and employment uses to the east;*
 - d Wokingham District;*
 - (vii) *Provide for necessary highway works;*
 - (viii) *Not result in a net loss of residential accommodation;*
 - (ix) *Provide access to areas of open space of public value.”*
- (iv) this further modification to Additional Further Proposed Change 127A be recommended to the Public Local Inquiry Inspector; and,
- (v) this further modification to Additional Further Proposed Change 127A be approved for development control purposes.

COUNCILLOR MRS BALLIN IN THE CHAIR.

561. **Planning Policy Guidance Note 11 – Regional Planning - Public Consultation Draft (Item 6)**

The Committee considered a report inviting it to determine its response to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Region's draft Planning Policy Guidance Note 11 on Regional Planning. The revised Note was intended to reflect the Government's policies on 'Planning for the Communities of the Future' published in February 1998, and on integrated transport.

In addition to the comments set out in the report, the Director of Planning & Transportation advised the Committee that it was not considered appropriate for the location of regional or sub-regional shopping centres to be a matter for the Regional Planning Guidance.

RESOLVED that the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions be informed of the comments set out in paragraph 4.7 of the report in relation to draft Planning Policy Guidance Note 11 on Regional Planning and the Council's assertion that the location of regional and sub-regional shopping centres should remain a matter for determination by the local planning authority rather than an issue for regional planning guidance.

562. **Revision of Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 - Development Plans (Item 7)**

The Committee considered a report inviting it to determine its response to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Region's draft Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 on Development Plans. It had been refocused to provide a more strategic overview of the role and importance of development plans within the planning system and to speed up development plan preparation.

RESOLVED that the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions be informed in relation to draft Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 on Development Plans of the italicised comments set out in paragraphs 4.4-4.12 of the report.

563. **Parish Council Involvement in Planning Control Sub-Committee (Item 8)**

The Committee considered a report advising it of requests received from Town and Parish Councils for representation at Planning Control Sub-Committees.

The Director of Planning & Transportation reported that he had now received five letters and not four as stated in the report.

RESOLVED that a report on parish/town council involvement in the Planning Control Sub-Committee be prepared for detailed consideration at the next meeting of the committee.

564. **Items for Information**

The following items were submitted for information:

- Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan – Update and Other (Item 9)

Development Planning Work

- Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (Item 10)
- Safer Routes To School Initiative (Item 11)
- Extension of Part M of the Building Regulations to New Dwellings (Item 12)
- Draft Circular – Land Use Planning & Electromagnetic Fields (Item 13)
- SERPLAN Paper – SERP 477: Towards A Parking Strategy For The South East (Item 14)
- Development Directory (Item 15)
- Joint Strategic Planning Committee Items (Item 16)

The Director of Planning & Transportation answered a number of questions on issues raised by Members in relation to the information items.

565. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of Item 15 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (9) Terms proposed in the course of negotiations for a contract (Item 17)

566. **Construction Related and Other Consultancy Services (Item 17)**

In a report containing exempt information, the Committee considered the approach to be adopted in relation to consultancy services, including those currently provided by Babtie under the Highways and Planning Consultancy Agreement.

There were a number of concerns expressed by Members regarding the terms imposed upon the Council and the other five unitary authorities by the existing Highways and Planning Consultancy Agreement that had been entered into by the former County Council and to which they were bound by virtue of the legislation applying to local government reorganisation. Whilst it was noted that the officers were seeking to minimise the impact on the authorities of these, the Committee acknowledged that it was important to ensure that, whatever arrangements were made for the future delivery of the services, the transition from the existing contract to the new arrangements should be as smooth as possible.

In response to a suggestion that the new contracts should be no longer than three years, the Committee accepted advice that five years should be the minimum as the Council would have far greater control over the new arrangements than under the existing contract and that the longer contract period would avoid significant costs of re-tendering on a more frequent basis.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the proposed strategy for dealing with service delivery as set out in the report be adopted.
- (ii) tenders be invited for the two specific term contracts as set out in para 4.4.1, with the contracts being for a period of five years extendable for a further two years.
- (iii) advertisements be placed in accordance with standing orders 69 & 70 in order to establish a select list of tenderers.
- (iv) not less than five nor more than seven external service providers be invited to tender subject to there being sufficient suitable candidates, with tenders being assessed on the basis of both financial and quality submissions.
- (v) Strategy and Policy Committee be requested to endorse these recommendations.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 9:10pm

CHAIRMAN