

MINUTES of the meeting of Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 05 March 2013 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors Gerard Rice (Chair), Charles Curtis, Sue Gray, Tom Kelly and Richard Speight

Apologises Councillor Garry Hague, Matthew Essex and Leigh Nicholson

In attendance: David Bull – Director of Planning & Transportation
Andrew Millard - Head of Planning & Transportation
Kenna-Victoria Martin - Senior Democratic Officer

1 Minutes of the previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 21 January 2013, were approved as a correct record.

2 Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

3 Declaration of Interest

a) Interests

No interests were declared.

b) Whipping

No interests were declared.

4 Local Planning Enforcement Management

The Head of Planning and Transportation introduced the report and explained to the Committee that the report was Member driven from the training session in May 2012 with Planning Committee.

It was explained to Members that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had introduced guidance for Local Authorities which asked them to put together a Local Enforcement Devolvement Plan, which would explain how enforcement matters were dealt with locally. Members of the Committee were informed that one of the recommendations was that the Planning Enforcement Compliance plan be taken to the Planning Committee on the 14th March 2013.

The Committee were informed that to investigate complaints regarding unauthorised development, were similar to looking at a Planning Application, the difference being that instead of looking at plans, Officers looked at the reality of the site.

Members queried how many complaints were received by the Planning Department per year. Officers explained that the Council received between 400-450 complaints a year, which was about right for the size of the Authority, of those around 20-30 complaints were served with an Enforcement Notice.

It was enquired by Members as to how developments were completed, then an application would be handed in to the Planning Department and people were getting away with this. Officers explained that it was not illegal for someone to build without planning permission; however it was illegal to build without planning permission, be served with an Enforcement Notice and to ignore it. Officers further explained to the Committee that Planning schemes can be drawn out over time and that it was possible for people to drag them out over a number of years by appealing appeals.

Following further questioning from the Committee, it was identified that there were 3 personnel dealing with enforcement matters and that the Planning Enforcement Compliance Plan would be on the Councils website. Members asked if there were a way, in which a booklet could be produced for Members of the public who did not have access to the internet. Officers informed the Committee that they would speak with other colleagues to produce a booklet of which a limited number would be available in the reception at the Civic Offices.

Members queried as to whether, the Council was inline with other Boroughs with regards to planning applications. Officers explained that Thurrock Council were receiving the right amount of applications for an authority of its size and were inline to have 70 major applications for this year alone, in comparison Castle Point were in single figures, Barking and Dagenham had 14, Basildon were in the 20's and Brentwood were in the teens.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

Provided views and comments on the emerging Planning Enforcement Compliance Plan to improve the standard of planning enforcement by following various principles, adopting good practice and to allow for monitoring to ensure the effectiveness and integrity of the Planning Enforcement function.

Agree that the Planning Enforcement Compliance Plan is be reported to the Planning Committee on 14th March 2013 (for information) and be utilised by the Development Management service from 1st April 2013.

5 Impacts of Hot Food Takeaways & Options for Planning Policy to Manage the Location of Takeaways in Proximity to Schools in the Borough

The Head of Planning and Transportation introduced the report, explaining that the report was a Member driven report and that Officers had been working with colleagues from the Public Health team.

The Committee were informed that the report focused on the link between hot food takeaways and childhood obesity. Members were notified that of 98 Schools within the borough, 93 of them were situated 800m from a takeaway.

Officers concluded that further work, would need to be carried out and that this could be done via the Local Development Framework (LDF).

Members queried that the report related to schools, however it didn't state the percentage of under 16's within the borough who may be overweight. Officers advised that they would provide Members with the information via email, as they unfortunately didn't have the details to hand.

The Committee enquired as to whether it would be possible to produce a piece of work within the LDF, Officers explained that it may be possible to continue working on the topic, in order to produce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as most of the research had already been carried out. Members agreed to the idea of producing a SPD and requested that another report be brought to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee

Considered the issues and agreed Option 2 (to investigate options to develop specific planning policy to address the health impacts of hot food takeaways)

Requested that a further report go back to the next meeting of the Committee with details asked for by Members.

6 Work Programme

The Committee discussed the Work Programme and agreed the items for the first meeting of next municipal year.

RESOLVED:

That the following reports be brought to the first meeting of next municipal year in accordance with the Work Programme:

- **Local Highway Infrastructure**
- **DP World Update**

- **LDF Site Allocations and Core Strategy refresh (Inc Lakeside)**
- **Tilbury Growth Hub**

The meeting finished at 7.50pm.

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIRMAN

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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or alternatively e-mail kmartin@thurrock.gov.uk**