

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 27th November, 2014

Present:-

Cllr Stringer – in the Chair

Councillors

Holland, Loades, Matthews, Owen, Snell, Wallace, White, Wilkes and Williams

Apologies

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1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Sandra Simpson. Cllr Plan was in attendance as substitute for Cllr Simpson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. CALL IN REPORT - ASSET DISPOSALS (1)

The Lead Call In Member provided an overview of the reasons for the call in as detailed in the agenda and on the call in form. The Member referred to the report that had been produced in 2012 following the setting up of a working group to consider asset disposal. Concerns were expressed that lessons learnt during this earlier process had not been carried forward and that the original flaws in the process had re-emerged. Concerns were also expressed regarding the production of a 5 year plan and the use of this to develop outside of the village envelope. The Member agreed that the Council did need to sell land but was concerned that there was a rush to sell sites without any clear long term view of the future.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Assets responded on behalf of the decision making body.

It was stated that the Asset Management Strategy had been agreed in 2014 and that it was the Council's responsibility to identify land that could be put to better alternative use. Capital receipts were required by the Council and there would be of benefit to all residents in the future.

The Portfolio Holder also stated that at this stage there were no planning proposals on the table and that if planning proposals were submitted in the future then the Council's Planning Committee would have a further opportunity to assess the suitability of the proposals.

Concerns were raised that there had been a lack of consultation prior to the sites being included in the plan and the question was raised as to whether the Asset Management Strategy was in line with the NDP scrutiny report from 2011 which the Council had voted in favour of.

In his summing up the Lead Call In Member requested that the Cabinet withdraw the sites until local need could properly be assessed and more consultation carried out with local people prior to any in principle decisions being taken.

Further information was provided by officers and it was stated that there had been a public consultation and a desktop assessment with 2 out of 8 suggested sites being removed at that stage. The Council had separate responsibilities in its role as land owner and Planning Authority and that decisions relating to the suitability of the sites for planning and development were not for consideration at this time but for later debate by the Planning Committee.

Resolved:

That the decision of Cabinet made on 12th November 2014 in relation to Asset Disposals be upheld and take immediate effect.

4. CALL IN REPORT - ASSET DISPOSALS (2)

A report was submitted requesting the Committee to Consider the decision of Cabinet made at its meeting on 12th November 2014 in relation to Asset Disposals.

The decision of the Cabinet had been called in by Cllr Sweeney, Cllr Mrs Heames, Cllr Loades, Cllr Holland and Cllr Northcott.

At the meeting of the Cabinet on 12th November 2014 consideration was given to a report requesting Cabinet to Consider the decision of Cabinet made at its meeting on 12th November 2014 in relation to Asset Disposals.

At the meeting of the Cabinet on 12th November 2014 consideration had been given to a report requesting Cabinet to:

- Consider the comments received from the public following the consultation in respect of the tranche 2 sites (excluding land at Church Land Knutton and Gallowstree Lane, Westands), along with desktop technical information.
- Approve, subject to planning permissions, to dispose of the identified tranche 2 sites.
- Secure specialist consultants to prepare and submit planning applications in respect of the sites at Sandy Lane/Brampton Road, May Bank, Market Drayton Road, Loggerheads and Eccleshall Road, Loggerheads.

Consideration was given to the reasons for the call in which included the suggestion that no bringing all council owned sites into the public domain for open disposal would demonstrate adverse public reaction and that the Council's inability to demonstrate a 5 year housing supply was being used as a reason to build on all open spaces.

Consideration was also given to the presentation from the lead Call In Member and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Assets.

Resolved:

That the decision of Cabinet made on 12th November 2014 in relation to Asset Disposals be upheld and take immediate effect.

5. CALL IN REPORT - ASSET DISPOSALS (3)

A report was submitted requesting the Committee to Consider the decision of Cabinet made at its meeting on 12th November 2014 in relation to Asset Disposals.

The decision of the Cabinet had been called in by Cllr Simon Tagg, Cllr John Tagg, Cllr Miss Cooper, Cllr Matthews and Cllr Sweeney.

At the meeting of the Cabinet on 12th November 2014 consideration was given to a report requesting Cabinet to:

Consider the comments received from the public following the consultation in respect of the tranche 2 sites (excluding land at Church Land Knutton and Gallowstree Lane, Westands), along with desktop technical information.

ii) Approve, subject to planning permissions, to dispose of the identified tranche 2 sites.

iii) Secure specialist consultants to prepare and submit planning applications in respect of the sites at Sandy Lane/Brampton Road, May Bank, Market Drayton Road, Loggerheads and Eccleshall Road, Loggerheads.

Consideration was given to the reasons for the call in which included:

1. The views of local people;
2. That the decision was contrary to the Council's Conservation area Policy
3. That the site had not been treated fairly due to Cabinet having previously withdrawn 7 similar sites;

Consideration was also given to the presentation from the lead Call In Member and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Assets.

Resolved:

That the decision of Cabinet made on 12th November 2014 in relation to Asset Disposals be upheld and take immediate effect.

6. CALL IN REPORT - LOCAL PLAN CALL FOR SITES

A report was submitted requesting the Committee to Consider the decision of Cabinet made at its meeting on 12th November 2014 in relation to the Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent Joint Local Plan call for sites.

At the meeting of the Cabinet on 12 November 2014 consideration was given to a report seeking approval for the nomination and inclusion of a number of Borough Council owned sites in the information gathering exercise to identify sites with the potential to satisfy demand for housing, employment and other needs.

The decision had been called in by Cllr Holland, Cllr Loades, Cllr Sweeney, Cllr Jones, Cllr Huckfield and Cllr Northcott.

The Committee considered the reasons put forward for the Call In which included:

- Public adverse reaction;
- The fact that all Council owned sites had not been brought into the public domain to open disposal in any of the proposed tranches or for the local plan proposals.

The Committee considered the arguments put forward by the lead call in member and the responses from the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Assets.

Resolved:

That the decision of Cabinet made on 12th November 2014 in relation to the Local Plan Call for Sites be upheld and take immediate effect.

7. CALL IN REPORT - PLANNING PEER REVIEW

A report was submitted requesting the Committee to Consider the decision of Cabinet made at its meeting on 12th November 2014 in relation to the Planning Peer Review.

At the meeting of the Cabinet on 12th November 2014 consideration had been given to a report requesting Cabinet to approve an Action Plan to address the recommendations of the Planning Peer Review Team.

The decision had been called in by Cllr Loades, Cllr Sweeney, Cllr Jones, Cllr Huckfield and Cllr Northcott.

The Committee considered the grounds for the call in as put forward by the lead member and included:

- Concerns from local residents that the action plan should be referred to scrutiny for open and transparent debate to ensure that it met the needs of the Council and customers of the Planning Committee.

The Committee resolved:

That the decision of Cabinet made on 12th November 2014 in relation to Asset Disposals be upheld and take immediate effect.

Chair