

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**  
**9 JULY 2013**

**Present:** Councillors Maskell (Chair), Ayub, Duveen, K Edwards, Gittings, Page, Ruhemann, Stanway, White and Willis.

**Apologies:** Councillors Harris and Tickner

**2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of 22 May 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**3. MINUTES OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee on 13 June 2013 were received.

**4. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES**

The Minutes of the following meetings were submitted:

- Reading Climate Change Partnership Board, 23 January 2013;
- Joint Waste Disposal Board, 14 March 2013.

**Resolved:** That the Minutes be noted.

**5. DRAFT READING CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2013-2020 'READING MEANS BUSINESS ON CLIMATE CHANGE'**

The Head of Policy, Performance and Community submitted a report on a new draft Climate Change Strategy 2013-20 'Reading Means Business on Climate Change' the current edit of which was attached at Appendix A.

The report stated that the development of the new Strategy, which was to be launched in September 2013, had been overseen by the Reading Climate Change Partnership. Following public consultation in November and December 2012, the draft of the Strategy had been revised and was currently in the process of final edit.

The new Strategy had been developed through extensive stakeholder consultation, including a conference with over one hundred stakeholders in January 2012, a second well attended stakeholder consultation workshop in July 2012, and consultation via the Reading Green Business Network (RGBN) website.

A number of themes had been identified, and 'theme leads' from a range of partner agencies (including RBC) had volunteered to co-ordinate and develop each theme chapter, in consultation with stakeholders.

The themes were:

- Energy
- Low Carbon Development
- Natural Environment

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- Water Supply and Flooding
- Transport
- Purchasing, Supply and Consumption
- Education, Communication and Influencing Behaviour
- Community.

For each of the eight themes, a number of strategic priorities had been identified, as set out in Appendix B. These formed the framework for detailed action plans for each theme of the Strategy.

It was proposed that the final Strategy be submitted to the Policy Committee for approval at its meeting on 23 September 2013.

Members of the Committee commented on aspects of the draft Strategy and also asked questions, which were answered by the Sustainability Manager.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the Sustainability Manager consider the comments now made by members on the draft Reading Climate Change Strategy 2013-20, 'Reading Means Business on Climate Change' (Appendix A);
- (2) That the Head of Policy, Performance and Community be authorised to make minor changes to the draft, prior to the final Strategy being submitted to Policy Committee on 23 September 2013 for agreement.

**6. DRAFT REVISED S106 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report setting out the key changes included in the Draft Revised S106 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which was attached at Appendix 1.

The report stated that the existing adopted guidance on S106 planning obligations had been published in 2004 and some of its evidence base was now viewed as relatively out of date. The introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which had been devised to replace various provisions currently being made under planning obligations, had taken priority over a review of the SPD. As part of this, Cabinet had previously considered new Supplementary Planning Documents on Employment and Skills Training and Affordable Housing, which would remain outside the CIL regime. However, the Government was currently consulting on new regulations for CIL, including a proposal to extend the time for its introduction by a further 12 months. As it might remain in place until 2015, it had been decided that the existing S106 guidance should be reviewed so that there was up to date guidance on matters that would eventually be dealt with under the CIL. It was proposed to adopt a revised version of the guidance as an interim measure prior to the introduction of the CIL.

The main changes proposed in the revised SPD were the update of plans and costs. The primary infrastructure for which S106 would be sought was for transport, education and open space, along with other types of infrastructure in accordance with

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the Council's adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document Policy DM3: Infrastructure. This set out all the types of infrastructure, which would be sought, where relevant, and in accordance with legal tests.

This revised SPD would need to be read in conjunction with the Employment, Skills and Training SPD and Affordable Housing SPD.

It was proposed that the Draft Revised SPD be the subject of consultation for a period of six weeks, the results of which would be reported to a future Committee meeting.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the Draft Revised S106 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, at Appendix 1, be approved for consultation for a period of six weeks;
- (2) That the results of the consultation be reported back to a future Committee meeting, when approval for adoption would be sought.

**7. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: AFFORDABLE HOUSING REPORT OF CONSULTATION AND ADOPTION**

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report providing the results of consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Affordable Housing which had been approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 5 November 2012 (Minute 71 refers), and seeking adoption of the revised SPD document.

Appendix 1 contained a Statement of Consultation which provided a schedule summarising each representation and a recommended Council response to each. Appendix 1 had been made available on the Council website and copies had also been placed in the Group Rooms.

The report stated that the SPD was a significant update to the Affordable Housing section of the existing Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (adopted September 2004). It set out how relevant affordable housing policies in the Reading Borough Local Development Framework (LDF policies: CS16 (Affordable Housing), CS13 (Impact of Employment Development), DM6 (affordable Housing) and DM7 (Accommodation for Vulnerable People)) could be met in the current financial, legislative and operational environment for the provision of affordable housing. A copy of the revised SPD was attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That results of the consultation undertaken during November and December 2012 on the Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document be noted and the recommended Council responses be approved;
- (2) That the revised Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 2 to the report) be adopted.

**8. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report seeking approval of a draft Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The report stated that Reading Borough Council had made good progress in producing planning policy documents, and was one of a minority of local authorities to have a full set of development plans in place. Nevertheless, the Core Strategy was now over five years old and the Government had made substantial changes to the planning system including the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As a result, a small number of the Council's policies were susceptible to challenge on appeal. There was a need to review various parts of the Council's evidence base and to reconsider policies in the light of the NPPF, which would mean production of a single Local Plan.

The first step in preparing a Local Plan required a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS was a programme tool, which set out the planning policy documents that the Council intended to produce, and their purpose, timescales and geographical area. The report therefore sought approval of a draft LDS which showed the documents that the Council intended to produce over the coming years.

**Resolved:** That the Local Development Scheme (Appendix 2) be approved and brought into effect, and that it form the basis for production of planning policy, with effect from 9 July 2013.

**9. THE BUILDING (LOCAL AUTHORITY CHARGES) REGULATIONS 2010 - AMENDING THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report informing the Committee of a proposed change to the scheme of delegation in the method of setting charges for the statutory building regulation function.

The report stated that The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 (the 2010 Regulations) allowed local authorities to fix their own charges in a scheme, based on full recovery of their costs.

These charges allowed for flexibility in setting charges in an environment where the Council was in direct competition with private sector building control providers.

In recognition of the need to regularly review and adjust charges to ensure a break-even position, the report requested that delegated authority be given to allow the Head of Planning and Building Control and the Head of Finance, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, to make any necessary adjustments to the charging scheme from time to time.

**Resolved:** That the Head of Planning and Building Control be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, to review and adjust the level of charges set under the charging scheme and to publicise any amendments to the scheme, as required by the Regulations.

**10. FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2010 - LEAD LOCAL FLOOD AUTHORITY DUTIES: DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO HEAD OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report seeking the Committee's approval to delegate authority to the Head of Highways and Transport to carry out the Lead Local Flood Authority Duties as set out in the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) and Flood Risk Regulations 2009.

The report stated that under the FWMA, County and Unitary Authorities had been designated as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and given the leadership role for local flood risk management from all sources of flooding, except main rivers and the sea. The Act identified areas where the LLFA was expected to carry out duties as set out in Section 5 of the report. The Council also had a statutory obligation under the Flood Risk Regulations (2009), which sat side by side with the FWMA, and this obligation included the preparation of a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) for Reading.

The report described the main areas of new responsibility assigned to the LLFA (both through the FWMA itself and also through other legislation which was amended in Schedule 2 to the FWMA).

**Resolved:** That the Head of Highways and Transport be given delegated authority to exercise the powers and duties of Lead Local Flood Authority in the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, the Flood Risk Regulations 2009, and the Land Drainage Act 1991, as follows:

**Flood & Water Management Act 2010**

Section 9 - Duties with regard to the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Section 14 - Power to request information

Section 19 - Duty to investigate and report flood incidents

Section 21 - Duty to establish and maintain a register and record of flood risk assets

Section 30 and Schedule 1 - Power to designate structures and features that affect flooding

Section 32 and Schedule 3 - Powers and duties relating to sustainable drainage

**Flood Risk Regulations 2009**

Part 2 - Preparation of Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Reports of past and potential future flooding.

**Land Drainage Act 1991**

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Section 14A as amended - Power to carry out works to manage flood risk from surface water runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses, where the work was desirable having regard to the 'local strategy for flood risk management'.

Section 23 as amended - Regulation of Ordinary Watercourses:

- Issuing of Consents for any works to ordinary watercourses that might obstruct or alter the flow of an ordinary watercourse;
- Enforcement action to rectify unlawful and potentially damaging work to a watercourse.

## 11. DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT - PINCH POINT FUNDING

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report updating the Committee on the Pinch Point applications submitted to the Department for Transport for improvements to the highway network to improve traffic flow.

The report stated that the Council had submitted three bids to the Department for Transport's (DfT) Pinch Point fund. The fund, for which £170 million was available, was to support improvements to the highway network that would remove/reduce current or future bottlenecks.

The three bids submitted were for:

- Reading Bridge Structural Improvements and Traffic Management;
- A33 Congestion Relief;
- A4 Eastern Gateway Improvements.

The DfT had announced on 31 May 2013 that the Council had been awarded funding for two of the bid submissions, ie £3.067 million for the Reading Bridge Structural Improvements and Traffic Management Pinch Point scheme, and £1.442 million for the A33 Congestion Relief Pinch Point Scheme.

The Reading Bridge structural maintenance scheme would address issues that had been identified in the structure as a result of long-term exposure to weather where water leakage through the structure had caused deterioration. As the works would include structural strengthening and re-waterproofing and resurfacing there was also the opportunity to include investigation of the introduction of a 'tidal flow' lane traffic management system to maximise the capacity for peak time traffic southbound in the morning and northbound in the evening.

The A33 scheme comprised a range of measures to improve journey time reliability and reduce congestion along the corridor. This included extending the left-turn filter lanes for exiting the A33 onto Rose Kiln Lane (north and southbound); providing more direct pedestrian and cycle links alongside the A33 crossing of the Kennet; providing an alternative pedestrian and cycle route to negotiate seasonal flooding around the Bennet Road area; and partial signalling at peak times only of the junction of the A33 with South Oak Way.

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The A4 bid had not been awarded any funding. However, funding opportunities would continue to be sought for this cross-boundary scheme, the total cost of which, including local contributions, was £1.546 million.

Officers would now continue to progress the detailed design and delivery programme for the two successful schemes, including spend profiles, and it was proposed that a further report be submitted to a future meeting seeking scheme and spend approval.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the report and the successful award of grant funding for the A33 Congestion Relief Pinch Point Scheme and the Reading Bridge Structural Improvements & Traffic Management Pinch Point Scheme, be noted;
- (2) That a further report be submitted to the Traffic Management Sub-Committee at its meeting on 12 September 2013, seeking detailed scheme and spend approval.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 7.55pm).