

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 04 December 2023 at 5.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Bartlett – Chairman

Cllr S Aitkenhead – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr P Broadhead, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr S Moore,
Cllr L Northover, Cllr K Salmon, Cllr M Tarling, Cllr T Trent,
Cllr O Walters, Cllr C Adams (In place of Cllr B Dove) and
Cllr P Hilliard (In place of Cllr L Dedman)

Present virtually: Cllr F Rice

Also in attendance: Cllr A Martin, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr M Phipps, Cllr K Wilson

Also in attendance virtually Cllr S Armstrong, Cllr S Carr-Brown and Cllr P Canavan

22. Apologies

Apologies for this meeting were received from Cllr L Dedman.

23. Substitute Members

Cllr P Hilliard substituted for Cllr L Dedman

24. Declarations of Interests

Cllr T Trent advised for the purpose of transparency, in relation to agenda item 5 – BCP Community Safety Partnership Annual Report 2023, that he was a member of the Police and Crime Panel.

Cllr S Moore and Cllr S Bartlett advised for the purpose of transparency, in relation to agenda item 6 – Consultation on the Draft BCP Local Plan and the draft BCP Charging Schedule that they had been involved in the Local Plan Working Group.

Cllr M Tarling advised for the purpose of transparency, in relation to agenda item 6 – Consultation on the Draft BCP Local Plan and the draft BCP Charging Schedule, that as a Town Councillor they had been involved in the Christchurch Planning Working Group.

25. Public Issues

There were none received on this occasion.

26. BCP Community Safety Partnership Annual Report 2023

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Chair of the Community Safety Partnership presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Board was informed that the paper provided Members with an update since the last report to Overview and Scrutiny Panel in December 2022. The Local Government Act 2000 includes crime and disorder scrutiny as one of the functions the council must ensure its scrutiny arrangements cover. Sections 19 and 20 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and related regulations require the Council to have a committee with the functions of reviewing and scrutinising decisions and actions in respect of the discharge of crime and disorder functions by “responsible authorities”. The specifics of the duty are set out in the Police and Justice Act 2006, which also allows members to refer any “local crime and disorder matter” raised with them by anyone living or working in their area, to the Crime and Disorder Committee. The Board welcomed the report and raised a number of issues during the discussion of this item including:

- Reductions in CCTV monitoring. It was hoped to minimise reductions in CCTV monitoring but at present there would be a reduction in monitoring times in order to achieve budget savings.
- CSAS officers – CSAS Officers would be prioritised in the town centre area. The DfT funding would allow CSAS officers to also be positioned in key transport locations. In response to a question regarding the impact of potential cuts in CSAS officers from a police perspective, the Board was informed that the Police were aware that there was a risk that anti-social behaviour may rise in these areas. It was suggested that other bodies should be approached for additional CSAS funding before any reductions were made.
- Violence against women and girls – violent and sexual offences were shown within the same category it was asked if it was possible to separate these to provide better information. It was acknowledged that this could probably be done to make things more clear. There may be an App available to allow people to indicate when they feel unsafe. There was further work needed on this to ensure that the data from this would be available.
- Sharing of the outcomes from the various different groups. There was a risk that there could be duplication between different bodies and there was currently a mapping exercise underway to look at how and where issues were being covered. From this there would be a reporting mechanism which would then feed up through the CSP.
- Communications – This was being assessed and it was acknowledged that this could be improved as there was some excellent work going on which may not always be communicated well.
- It was acknowledged that reporting of crime was an issue, both because some felt that there was no point in reporting as action wouldn't be taken but also some felt it was too difficult to report. It was noted that data on this was now being compiled and analysed.
- The Serious Violence Needs Assessment was excellent and included a lot of detail, but it had required someone to manually go through all of these issues and there should be an improved way of doing this.

- Being part of a community – The Board was advised that the BCP residents survey taking place next year would ask about this issue. There may be particular groups of people who may not feel safe linked to community belonging. The Communities Manager undertook to provide a link to this information which was online.
- Links to crime and deprivation. It was noted that inequality in itself was a risk factor for crime and whether it would be possible to start recording this. The Serious Violence Strategy included the clear links around this issue, once this was signed off there would be great level of information which would be shared and feedback would be welcomed.
- The importance of early intervention was highlighted and Officers undertook to raise this with the youth service.

RECOMMENDED/RESOLVED that

- i) Members note the progress of the Community Safety Partnership over the past year, to November 2023**
- ii) Members note the BCP Community Safety Partnership's priorities under the Serious Violence Duty.**

Voting: Nem Con

The meeting adjourned at 5:54 pm and resumed at 6.00pm

27. Consultation on the Draft BCP Local Plan and the Draft BCP CIL Charging Schedule

The Cabinet Support Member for Strategic Plan and Local Plan Delivery presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these minutes in the Minute Book. The Board was advised that the Draft BCP Local Plan set out a vision, objectives and spatial strategy to protect and enhance the environment whilst addressing the needs for new homes, jobs and infrastructure until 2039. A range of policies and site allocations were included which would inform planning decisions once the BCP Local Plan is adopted. The Draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule set out the charge per square metre new development must pay to fund supporting infrastructure. A six-week consultation was required on both documents before all feedback and evidence would be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. The Board had invited local developer representative to provide their perspective on the local plan and act as subject expert witnesses on some of the issues raised.

The Board discussed the Draft Local Plan extensively and raised a number of issues during discussions including:

- Requirements for Zero Carbon Homes - Other local authorities had introduced this, the Committee wanted to know why it wasn't possible in BCP. Consultants' advice was that the effect of this would be around 1-2 percent of a value of a home and this would meet challenge from public examination and from the inspector. It was noted most developers were interested in providing carbon neutral homes but the

infrastructure was not in place yet to fully meet this. Furthermore, it was noted that this may come in with changes to building regulations. It was suggested that there should be an amendment to require new homes to be zero carbon ready for 2025. Build costs in the area were high and most sites for development were brownfield. Building on greenfield sites made zero carbon much more feasible. Councillors felt that the plan was not ambitious enough in terms of declared climate emergency and would like to see a specific target introduced.

A move was made but not passed that Policy C2 of the Local Plan be amended to indicate that all new residential development be zero carbon. Definition of zero carbon to be added as an appended note.

Voting: 5 in favour: 6 against (1 abstention)

- Officers were asked to consider the possibility of a specific target regarding this if possible.
- Hyperlinks – These were needed throughout the document, there were none in part 2.
- Maps – Flooding zones were not clearly indicated on the maps and also a key was referred to but not included.
- Offshore wind – In response to a question it was confirmed that this couldn't be included within the local plan.
- Green Infrastructure – Whether the Plan could include improving facilities for swimming and designating rivers as bathing spaces which would help with addressing sewage issues. It was noted that this wouldn't normally be included within the local plan.
- Traveller sites – The Plan included provision for 1 site with 21 pitches. A needs assessment indicated that 14 pitches would be needed up to 2031. A transit site could be considered outside of the local plan but only one site was required in the plan. It was suggested that there were a number of sites more suitable than the Branksome Triangle site and that a site on the edge of the conurbation would be preferable for the traveller community.

A move was made but not passed that Branksome Triangle be removed as the proposed allocated site and that Cabinet consider alternative sites.

Voting: 2 in favour: 9 against (1 abstention)

There was no objection to other sites being considered but members did not feel that the site should be removed unless a more preferable site was found. It was noted that a review of all sites had been undertaken and this was the best option.

- Biodiversity net gain policy – It was noted that the wording was slightly different to the governments and seemed to allow for the option of offsite provision. It was:

RECOMMENDED: That Policy NE3 1b of the Local Plan should be amended to indicate that offsite biodiversity measures should only be

used as a last resort as the current wording is not in the spirit of government legislation.

Voting: Nem. Con.

- Talbot Village Employment Area – This had been reduced and was previously in Poole Local Plan. There would be an impact on congestion and an impact on talbot heath, it was suggested in the preceding plan that anything impacting on the heath should not go ahead. It was suggested that under P29 Talbot village employment area should be removed from the plan and growth of other employment areas should be considered in its place. The Board was advised that a number of sites were needed and the land to the south would remain as agricultural. Natural England did not object to the allocation. Other employment sites were on greenbelt.
- Poole Stadium – In response to a question it was noted that this was included within the Poole Town Policy – Town Centre North and referred to it being allocated as community facilities. The Board discussed strengthening of this, and it was:

RECOMMENDED that the wording within the local plan be strengthened to indicate that the Poole Stadium Site be retained for community, leisure use including its existing function as a stadium.

Voting: 6 in favour, 2 against (4 abstentions)

The meeting adjourned at 7.59 pm and resumed at 8.06pm

- Prescription was not the way forward - The Board was advised that there were height proposals, in areas of town which were lower than those outlined in the current Poole Local Plan. It was noted that there could be exceptions made for the right developments.
- Bournemouth Conservation areas – There were a considerable number of these which would remain, and it was suggested that these needed to be lightened up considering the need for more family housing.
- Climate Change – Concerns were raised that there was no one leading on this issue and the issue was not reflected as it needed to be within the Local Plan.
- Wessex Fields junction – The Board considered the policy to retain the proposal to allow for the possibility for future construction of the flyover if required. A study was being undertaken to look at alternative access to the Wessex Field site. It was suggested that a significant shift would be needed in sustainable travel to make the removal of this viable.

A move was made but not passed to recommend that Cabinet remove '2g' from Policy E5 – Wessex Fields of the Local Plan.

Voting: 4 in favour, 7 against (1 abstention)

- Sovereign Centre Housing – It was noted that the Sovereign Centre development had been removed from the Bournemouth Towns Fund

consultation. The Sovereign Centre was an important site for regeneration and would include both commercial and residential development. It was suggested that '4b' which referred be removed from Policy P4 of the Local Plan. It was felt that with the demolishing and rebuilding process many things would not return.

- Process for approval – Clarification on what constituted minor changes was sought, these would not be anything substantial. It was further suggested that the wording of recommendation 'd' was not clear. It was explained that the intended purpose of recommendation 'd' was following government guidelines which would be to automatically submit the draft plan following consultation along with consultation comments. **The Board requested that the wording of recommendation 'd' be reconsidered to ensure that the intention of it was clear. It was acknowledged that a failsafe was needed to ensure that the plan would not fail if submitted for the examination process.**
- Town Centre Developments Parking – It was suggested that not requiring parking for Town Centre developments would lead to problems with on street parking. It was noted that these issues would need to be addressed through the Parking Supplementary Planning Document and the strategic public car parking policy. However they were referenced within the transport section of the local plan. Members emphasised that this was an important issue. Following further discussion it was:

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet consider whether wording could be added under the Transport Strategy, section on parking of the Local Plan, to the effect that although developers were not required to provide parking on town centre developments, they should be able to show that there is no adverse impact from residents bringing cars to these sites if no parking is provided.

Voting: 8 in favour, 3 against (1 abstention)

- Affordable Housing – Concerns were raised regarding the Nil Contribution required for Bournemouth and Poole Town Centres and noted that the majority of developments would have no contribution. The Board was advised that the Plan was aiming to strike a balance between CIL and Affordable Housing. Only developments of over 10 properties would be liable for affordable housing. Affordable Housing could be negotiated away by developers but the position for CIL was stronger. It was suggested that the Plan would not provide for many affordable homes, it was consequently:

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet reconsiders the affordable housing policy to develop a new proposal which is completely consistent and will deliver affordable housing from Town Centre Developments.

Voting: 6 in favour, 4 against (2 abstentions)

- Evidence base – It was not clear from the information the Board had available what the evidence base was for many of the decisions. The Board asked when further information would be made available. It was noted that the evidence base would be published in full alongside the consultation. It was also noted that some of the evidence appeared to be out of date.
- The Workplace Strategy and Built Environment Strategy were not published, and the retail strategy appeared to be out of date.
- Sustainable Travel – There was a strong theme throughout the plan, which appeared to be completely anti-car. It was reflective of the green agenda but was not balanced and seemed extreme in this regard.

In addition, throughout the meeting Councillors raised a number of issues regarding the local plan and requested responses on these including:

- Viability assessments pushing up the price of development land.
- Operational area of Bournemouth Airport
- Bus infrastructure reference
- Weight to be given to the SPD regarding parking provision Page 338 Provision of parking at the Two Riversmeet/gas works site.
- It would be useful if the document explained what the meters squared measurement was.
- Improving accessibility for wheelchair users should be clearer including making infrastructure accessible.
- Whether potential for a Tram system could be included
- Growth of office space in town centres should be included in objectives.
- The impact of tall buildings on nearby properties.
- Policy E12 welcome stronger wording on community facilities.

Following discussion, the Chair thanked all for their attendance and outlined the recommendations to Cabinet from the report.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board supported the following recommendations as set out in the Cabinet report subject to the suggested recommendations outlined above:

RECOMMENDED/RESOLVED that

- a) the Draft BCP Local Plan and Draft CIL Charging Schedule are approved for public consultation for a period of six weeks from January 2024;**
- b) any minor changes following Council on 9 January to the Draft BCP Local Plan and Draft CIL Charging Schedule are delegated to the Director of Planning and Destination in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places for inclusion in the consultation versions;**
- c) any changes to the corporate strategy resulting from the outcome of Cabinet on 13 December are delegated to the Director of Planning and Destination in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic Places for consideration and incorporation into the Draft BCP Local Plan;**

e) the Local Development Scheme is approved to reflect the amended timetable.

Voting: Nem. Con.

28. Forward Plan

The Chair presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Board considered its current Forward Plan. The Chairman reminded the Board that there was a work programming workshop the following week. A concern was raised that the item on Wessex Fields should be moved forward. The Chair advised that this could be discussed along with other issues during work programming.

The meeting ended at 9.59 pm

CHAIRMAN