

DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKING PARTY

Meeting: 22 September 2021
At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor David Meller (Chair) in the chair; Councillors Anna Charles-Jones, Dean Fitzpatrick, Graham Greenhalgh, Mark Hunter, Mike Hurleston, Colin MacAlister, Tom McGee and Andy Sorton.

1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

That Councillor Mark Hunter be appointed Vice Chair of the Development Plan Working Party until the next Annual Council Meeting.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 30 November 2020 were approved as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and Officers were invited to declare any interests which they may have had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

The following interests were declared:

Personal Interests

| <u>Councillor</u> | <u>Interest</u> |
|--|--|
| Anna Charles-Jones, Mark Hunter and Mike Hurleston | Any item on the agenda relating to the Stockport Mayoral Development Corporate as an observer or member of the Board of the Mayoral Development Corporation. |

4. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 8 to prevent the disclosure of information relating to an individual as defined in paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the disclosure of which would not be in the public interest, would not be fair to the applicants and would breach their data protection principles.

5. AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Strategic Head of Place Making and Planning gave a verbal presentation which updated Members on the latest position in relation to Affordable Housing.

The following comments were made/issues raised:

- Members commented on the frustration felt by residents and Members when planning applications were granted and were not delivered quickly. The worry was that the design would get 'watered down'.
- Higher proportions of affordable housing were needed in all areas of the Borough, and there was support for high levels of affordable housing on greenbelt sites.
- A short discussion took place relating to the definition of viability and how this was assessed.
- In response to a Member question relating to the definition of affordability, Members were advised that the definition needed to be clear. The maximum price of houses should be linked to wages if possible. However, the policy needed to be reasonable and not prevent development.
- Members made the point that policies need to be drawn up which allow affordable housing across the Borough. Perhaps one way of achieving this would be to work out the ultimate objective and then work backwards to get to that point.

RESOLVED – That the verbal report be noted.

6. TOWN CENTRE POLICIES UPDATE

The Strategic Head of Place Making and Planning gave a verbal presentation which updated Members on Town Centre Policies.

The following comments were made/issues raised:

- Members considered that this was an important part of the agenda and stated that the focus on town centre living was appreciated.
- It was acknowledged that it was important to be open minded with regard to residential living in the town centre.
- Members raised concerns regarding the infrastructure necessary to support those people living in the town centre, particularly in relation to doctors, dentists, play areas and school places. It was felt that this infrastructure was not in place at the current time.
- It was agreed that these issues were likely to continue to dominate the political debate and that far more work needed to be done to understand what the Borough already has and what it needs in order to meet need.

RESOLVED – That the verbal report be noted.

7. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES UPDATE

The Strategic Head of Place Making and Planning gave a verbal presentation which updated Members on Employment Policies.

The following comments were made/issues raised:

- Members commented that it was important that the focus was not entirely on residential matters.

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- The ways in which people work are changing rapidly and in addition to this more and more people are shopping online rather than in person. Therefore there is an increased need for warehousing and logistics. It was felt important to understand exactly what was going to be needed in future and consequently more detail was required.
- Members acknowledged that a mix of employment uses was important for the economy of the Borough and vital therefore that resilience was built in to any future plans.
- Members commented that there was conflict between residential and employment land and that difficult decisions in relation to this lie ahead.

RESOLVED – That the verbal report be noted.

Item 'Not for Publication'

8. BROWNFIELD FIRST POLICY

The Strategic Head of Place Making and Planning submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which set out what might be meant by 'Brownfield First'.

The following comments were made/issues raised:

- Members asked what assessment had been made of how many brownfield sites there were and also where they were located. Members requested further information in relation to this.
- Members also sought reassurance with regard to how robust this policy would be.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That the next meeting of the Working Party be held on 23 November 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm