

Minutes of a meeting of the **Policy Group** of the Purbeck District Council held in the Council Chamber, Westport House, Wareham on Wednesday 16 May 2018 at 7.00pm.

Present:-

Councillor Barry Quinn (Vice-Chairman) – In the Chair

Councillors Laura Miller and Bill Pipe

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting: Richard Conway, Environment Manager; Bridget Downton, General Manager – Planning and Community Services; Sue Joyce, General Manager – Resources; Rebecca Kirk, General Manager – Public Health and Housing; Steve Mackenzie, Chief Executive; Kirsty Riglar, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager and Alison Turnock, Natural Heritage and Tourism Manager.

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Group).

1.18/19 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cherry Brooks, Gary Suttle and Peter Webb.

2.18/19 **Urgent items**

The Chairman reported there were no urgent items.

3.18/19 **Public participation time**

Mr Nigel Hill of Moreton addressed the Group in relation to the report relating to the Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy. He expressed his concerns about the adoption of this Strategy in the context of the Local Plan Review which did not propose any houses for Swanage. He compared this to Moreton, where it was proposed that between 440 and 600 houses be developed. He considered that Moreton was being treated poorly in comparison to Swanage. The General Manager – Planning and Community Services explained that this Strategy was a document which would sit alongside the Swanage Local Plan, which allocated 200 houses in the town. The Strategy was intended to identify the green infrastructure required for development in Swanage to be carried forward. There would be a district-wide green infrastructure strategy in due course once the revised Local Plan was adopted.

4.18/19 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2018 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

5.18/19 **Declarations of Interest by Members**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

6.18/19 **Forward Plan**

The Policy Group considered the current Forward Plan. The Chief Executive reported that two further reports would be added to the Forward Plan relating to:

- (a) additional funding for local government reorganisation – to release the Council's contribution of £134,000 identified in the Local Partnerships report; and
- (b) the possibility of developing an innovation hub at the Enterprise Zone.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be received.

7.18/19 **Local Plan Review**

The General Manager – Planning and Community Services reminded Members that Council had received the consultation report at its meeting the previous week. The Planning Policy team were now working on drafting the policies for inclusion in the Local Plan. She added that Capita Re had undertaken a 'critical friend' review to identify any gaps that needed to be addressed. The pre-submission draft of the Local Plan was scheduled to be considered by Policy Group in September and Council in October 2018.

8.18/19 **Licensing of houses in multiple occupation – review of fees**

The Environment Manager presented a report regarding a review of the fees charged for the mandatory licensing of houses in multiple occupation in light of new Regulations which changed the definition of properties requiring a licence. The current licence fee structure was adopted by the Council in 2005 but had not been reviewed since that time due to the small number of licences granted; to date there were only three properties in Purbeck which required licensing. However, the new legislation extended the definition of houses in multiple occupation to include all properties where there were two or more households residing and where there were five or more people living. This change was likely to result in more properties in Purbeck requiring a licence. The proposed fee structure would see the cost of a new five year licence rise from £475 to £650 and a renewal would cost £550. Particular attention was drawn to the rounding down of the final costs of a licence to align the fees to those set by the Dorset Councils Partnership and enable online application and payment through the system shared with the Partnership.

The Housing Portfolio Holder supported the proposed fee structure and welcomed the use of the system shared with the Dorset Councils Partnership.

In response to a Member's question, the Environment Manager explained that it was not yet known what other properties would fall within the revised definition and the potential numbers within Purbeck. Whilst pro-active messaging about the need for licences would be promulgated, it was the responsibility of landlords to contact the Council to apply for a licence.

Resolved that a report be submitted to Council recommending the adoption of the proposed fee structure for the mandatory licensing of houses in multiple occupation as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

9.18/19 **Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy**

The Natural Heritage and Tourism Manager presented a report seeking support for the adoption of the Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This Strategy provided additional detail to support the implementation of policies SGI (Swanage Green Infrastructure) and OSR (Open Space and Recreation) of the Swanage Local Plan and contained an audit and analysis of the existing green infrastructure network in the town. A schedule of costed projects and initiatives was also included in the Strategy, together with potential sources of funding. Particular attention was drawn to the priority projects, including the production of guidance for developers to ensure that proposals were meeting the requirements of the Strategy and Swanage Local Plan. Following a period of consultation, some minor changes were proposed to the Strategy.

Members welcomed the report, expressing support for the Strategy. In response to a Member's question, officers confirmed that a delegation was being sought to agree only minor changes to the Strategy; any significant changes would need to be referred to the Swanage Local Plan Steering Group.

In response to a Member's question, the General Manager – Planning and Community Services explained that the Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy had been a trial for this type of work. It was considered possible to take a similar approach district-wide but this would need to focus on strategic links between green infrastructure. For those areas where significant housing development was proposed, the Council would need to be very clear about what green infrastructure would need to be provided alongside the houses and this would therefore need to be considered on a site by site basis. The Natural Heritage and Tourism Manager added that officers had begun to consider how a district-wide green infrastructure strategy could be structured and the level of detail that this would include.

Resolved that a report be submitted to Council recommending that:

- (1) the Council adopts the Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy Supplementary Planning Document, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) the Council delegates agreement of minor changes to the Supplementary Planning Document prior to adoption to the General Manager, Planning and Community Services, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

The meeting ended at 7.25pm.

Chairman