

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION FOR RURAL
COMMUNITIES HELD AT THE BOURGES / VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL
ON 20 JUNE 2011**

PRESENT: Councillors D Over (Chairman), Cllr G Nawaz (Vice Chairman), A Shaheed and E Murphy

OFFICERS PRESENT: Richard Kay Group Manager Strategic Planning & Enabling
Alex Daynes, Senior Governance Officer
Karen Dunleavy, Governance Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harrington.

2. Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2011 were approved as an accurate record.

4. Planning Policy Updates

Planning Policies Development Plan Document

Members received an update on the Design and Development in Selected Villages Supplementary Planning Document, which was circulated for public consultation in February 2011 for a six week period. The Council's Group Manager Strategic Planning & Enabling added that there had been a few comments received, which had been taken into account to draft the document. The document had been adopted by Cabinet on 13 June 2011 as a formal policy planning document. The formal policy planning document would be used in any planning application being considered within the villages included in the document by Parish Councils and the Planning Committee.

During consideration the following observations and comments were made:

- How would Peterborough City Council ensure that the document was being used by Parish Councils? *Members' were advised that Parish Councils would be expected to refer to the Planning Policy document to state why a planning application had been refused by the panel and would need to quote the policy as part of the justification.*
- The Officer advised the Committee that there would be a presentation to Parish Councils on Neighbourhood Planning Powers later in the year. The opportunity would be taken to remind Parish Councillors about the requirement to use the Planning Policy document.

Site Allocations Document

Members received an update, on the Site Allocations document which had been in public consultation for a six week period, between February and March 2011. There had been a

large number of comments and objections received, which had been formally submitted to the Secretary Of State. The Secretary of State would appoint an inspector to investigate all 1450 comments. A hearing session would be held for the key objectors to put forward their cases in early October 2011. The inspector would produce a binding report detailing the recommendations of the investigation, which would be completed in December 2011. The final investigation report would be presented to the full Council meeting in January 2012. In accordance with the regulations full Council was to decide whether to adopt the document or not. Letters had been issued from the Programme Officer updating objectors on the process and informing them of hearing sessions due to be held at the end of August and September.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas::

- Members sought clarification on sites that had been put forward for development in the past and sites that could be considered for development, Members were advised that:
 - *The sites for development which had been submitted to the Secretary of State was not subject to change once submitted;*
 - *The proposals for site developments at Eye had been reduced following previous objections received;*
 - *Castor was considered as a site for development in the Peterborough Core Strategy, however, it was found not suitable; and*
 - *Werrington was considered for site development in the Core Strategy and had been found not to be suitable due to the health and safety issues in building a residential area on the main gas pipelines that run through that part of the land.*

Planning Policies

Members received an update from the Group Manager Strategic Planning & Enabling on the Planning Policies document which was a technical document covering detailed development land management issues and would be used for checking the design and details in all planning applications.

A six week consultation was held in February and a few issues were raised on rural matters. All comments would be looked at by an independent investigator with the findings being used to revamp the document. It had been planned that the Planning Policies document would be presented at the relevant committees and eventually at full Council for agreement.

ACTION AGREED

The Policy PP6 Rural Economy Changes would be considered at a future Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities and that Opportunity Peterborough would be invited to a meeting to discuss Sustainable Economy.

5. Review of 2010/2011 and Work Programme for 2011/2012

Members discussed and considered work programme items for the forthcoming meetings and allocated each topic for inclusion on the agendas as follows:

18 July 2011

- Bus routes – school bus routes and the health and safety issues with the location of pick up points
- Footpaths/Cycle routes – provision in rural areas
- Flood management – looking at the different agencies and their roles and responsibilities

19 September 2011

- Draft housing strategy – plans for rural areas
- Tree and woodlands strategy – preservation

21 November 2011

- Making villages energy sustainable – looking at solar panel options for rural houses
- Tourism – how this can be improved in rural areas
- Women’s Enterprise - Update

9 January 2012

- Brief budget meeting for rural issues
- Opportunity Peterborough – update on work being carried out in start up and support of businesses in rural areas
- Presentation from Transport Police – railway crossings

19 March 2012

- Leisure provision in the rural area
- Educational attainment in the rural area – successes compared locally and nationally in primary and secondary schools

It was also requested to include the provision of pre-schools and Children’s Centres on the work plan.

6. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The latest version of the Forward Plan, showing details of the key decisions that the Leader of the Council believed the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would be making over the next four months, was received.

ACTION AGREED

To note the latest version of the Forward Plan.

7. Date of the next Meeting

Monday, 18 July 2011.

CHAIRMAN
7.00pm - 7.43 pm

This page is intentionally left blank