**BOROUGH OF KETTERING**

**PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting held: 5th November 2014**

**Present:** Councillor Mike Tebbutt (Chair)

Councillors Groome, Manns, Mills, Moreton, Smith and Zanger

**Also Present** Councillor Brown.

**14.PP.15 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dearing and Freer.

The following substitute was noted:-

Councillor Zanger for Councillor Dearing.

**14.PP.16 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31st July 2014 be approved and signed as a correct record.

It was noted that the results of the consultation on the Community Infrastructure Levy would be taken into account and looked at when a further report was brought to the Committee on 28th January 2015.

**14.PP.17 KETTERING TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

A report was submitted which informed Members of the Kettering Town Transport Strategy and which sought endorsement of comments set out in the report as a response to the consultation.

In introducing the report, officers outlined the key objectives of the Strategy and identified current issues and challenges in the town. It was noted that the consultation period ran from 15th September to 27th October 2014.

Councillor Michael Brown addressed the Committee, commenting that he agreed with the majority of the representations in the report. However, he expressed reservations about the proposals regarding modal shift away from the car in favour of public transport and the unsuitability of public transport for some families. He also urged the Committee to endorse comments about the need to address issues surrounding the one-way system (in particular Regent Street and Wellington Street) in the response to the consultation.

In discussion on the draft response, the following comments were made:-

**Chapter 3 (Identifying the Current Issues) and Chapter 4 (Planned Growth and Development)**

* Congestion in Barton Road, Warkton Lane and Polwell Lane is very heavy, some of this traffic is due to the widening works on the A14
* A study recently published identified the route through town (Rothwell Road, Montagu Street and Stamford Road) as one of the highest accident and death areas in the country – clarification of this is needed from Northamptonshire County Council (NCC).
* Town centre network needs to be prioritised to reflect current situation
* Once the A14 is increased to three lanes between junctions 7 and 9, this could cause a bottleneck where the three lanes converge into two. There is a need to express concerns about this to NCC.
* Public transport is very poor and if there is modal shift away from the car, public transport should be vastly improved for those who need it
* Railway fares between Kettering and London are disproportionately high when compared to Bedford-London and Nottingham-London, with tickets rarely available on special offers. This should be raised with East Midlands Trains

**Town Centre Junctions**

* The proposals for two-way traffic in Eskdaill Street should be introduced sooner rather than later to promote easier travel through the town centre
* Traders in Montagu Street are concerned about losing parking in that area as it would affect trade
* Traffic flows in the area of Bowling Green Road, St Mary's Road, London Road needs to flow more smoothly than at present and the list of junction capacity improvements needs to include "St Mary's Road"
* Gold Street (pedestrian area) is very busy with vehicles on Sundays as the restrictions do not apply

**Out of Town Junctions**

* Congestion at London Road/Pytchley Road/Barton Road roundabout is made worse at peak times of the day by the pedestrian crossing near the roundabout
* Wicksteed Park traffic needs to be addressed
* The comment contained in the last paragraph on Page 5 of the report regarding the London Road/Barton Road/Pytchley Road junction should be changed to read *"… This is a key junction in the town and the strategy must include measures …"*
* Road and transport issues relating to the East Kettering Sustainable Urban Extension must be included in the comments and taken into account in the Strategy
* Comments should include congestion issues at the Windmill Avenue/Barton Road junction too.

**Strategic Road Improvements**

* Comments should include reference to the need to improve cycle links between Burton Latimer and Kettering, particularly at Junction 10 of the A14
* The inclusion of the route between Weldon and Stamford does not relate to the Kettering Town Transport Strategy
* Northampton schemes need to be completed at the same time as the Holcot to Northampton dualling

**Public Transport**

* In relation to paragraph 2.21 of the report the Committee commented that public transport needs to be radically improved, including evening and Sunday services, to effect any change in modal shift, and costs to families of using public transport must be taken into account
* The comments made regarding the rail service as made earlier also relate to this section and should be included

**Walking**

* Pedestrian crossings situation near to roundabouts increase congestion and the way they are controlled is key to improving traffic flow

**Cycling**

* Cycle connections between all towns should be improved, with a better link through Rothwell-Desborough-Kettering along existing byways
* A good cycle map needs to be produced and any gaps identified
* The ten listed key corridors should include Barton Road

**Implementation Plan**

The A43 dualling Holcot/Sywell – A14 needs to include the Kettering element of dualling.

**RESOLVED** that the comments set out in Section 2 of the report be endorsed (with amendments, comments and additions as made at the meeting included as appropriate) and forwarded to Northamptonshire County Council in response to the consultation on the Kettering Town Transport Strategy and that officers provide additional information set out in Section 2 to NCC to assist in updating the strategy.

**14.PP.18 BURTON LATIMER PARISH PLAN**

A report was submitted which informed Members of the Burton Latimer Parish Plan, and sought agreement to its adoption as an informal Council document.

It was noted that the document had been endorsed by Burton Latimer Town Council.

Officers were thanked for their help in producing the Parish Plan. It was noted that minor amendments would be made and the Plan updated as required. The Parish Plan would be made available on the Town Council's website, with copies available in the library.

**RESOLVED** that the Burton Latimer Parish Plan be adopted as an informal Council document to be reviewed and updated annually in consultation with officers if there are any minor adjustments to be made.

**14.PP.19 KETTERING TOWN CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN – MONITORING UPDATE**

A report was submitted which informed Members of the results of the third monitoring report of the Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan.

In discussion, the Committee endorsed the report, commenting that it showed Kettering was moving significantly forward. It was felt that progress should be flagged up with the Council's Executive for inclusion in the monthly update report on the town centre.

It was noted that the Development Appraisal for the Cultural Quarter had not yet been progressed. There was a need to ensure good lighting between the car park and the Market Place restaurants and it was suggested that year-round lighting, as was used in Rothwell, could be utilised and would also make an attractive entrance to the Restaurant Quarter.

Concern was expressed regarding the loss of 296 sq m of net retail floorspace in the town centre, and it was felt information on footfall in the Newlands Centre would be useful. It was noted that the Newlands Centre were supplying information.

Improvements and enhancements to shop frontages were commended. However, concern was expressed regarding some of the shops in Dalkeith Place and it was felt that this location seemed out of step with the rest of the town centre. It was agreed that this could be looked at by the Purple Flag Taskforce.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

**14.PP.20 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: PLANNING AND TRAVELLERS**

A report was submitted which informed Members of the Government's consultation on Planning and Travellers and sought endorsement of comments set out in Section 2 of the report to be sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government as the Council's response to the consultation.

It was noted that the consultation period ran from 14th September to 23rd November 2014 and the full consultation document was available to view on the Department for Communities and Local Government website.

Councillor Michael Brown (Portfolio Holder for Communications) addressed the Committee and made the following points:-

* By definition a traveller should be someone who travels, and has not settled permanently
* There should be no special provisions made for any group in planning law
* The Council should lobby to minimise the number of pitches it has to provide

In discussion, members suggested there should be time limits imposed, especially in relation to the cessation of travelling, as there needed to be a datum point for local authorities otherwise this would be open to interpretation.

In relation to Q5 in paragraph 2.2 of the report, a question was raised regarding existing brownfield sites and uses – for example a garden centre. It was noted that each site would be treated on its own merits as there may well be other circumstances and factors to be taken into account.

**RESOLVED** that the Government's consultation on Planning and Travellers be noted and comments set out in Section 2 of the report be sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government as the Council's response to the consultation.

**14.PP.21 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: HOUSING STANDARDS REVIEW: TECHNICAL CONSULTATION**

A report was submitted which informed Members of the Government's consultation on the Housing Standards Review: Technical Consultation and which sought endorsement of comments set out in Section 2 of the report to be sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government as the Council's response to the consultation.

Comments made were as follows:-

* A standard, similar to the old "Parker Morris" standard, should be introduced
* A comment regarding garden size should be added
* With regard to waste storage, a comment should be included to the effect that this should include storage space for recycling
* Design codes should still be enforceable if already in place

**RESOLVED** that the Housing Standards Review: Technical Consultation be noted and the comments set out in Section 2 of the report be endorsed as the Council's response to the consultation.

*(The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 9.45 pm)*

*Signed ……………………………………………….*

*Chair*

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