



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MEETING** : Monday, 4th November 2019

**PRESENT** : Cllrs. Coole (Chair), Ryall (Vice-Chair), Finnegan, Haigh, Hilton, Hyman, Organ, Patel, Pullen, Stephens, Taylor, Walford and Wilson

**Others in Attendance**

Andrew Gravells, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy

Councillor Field (Councillor for Podsmead)

Principal Planning Officer

Planning Policy Officer

Representative from Gloucester City Homes

**APOLOGIES** : Cllrs. Dee, Lewis, Toleman and Tracey

**11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**12. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING**

There were no declarations of party whipping.

**13. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**14. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)**

There were no petitions or deputations.

**15. MATSON AND PODSMEAD ESTATE REGENERATION DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

5.1 The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning Strategy presented the report and outlined key elements.

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- 5.2 Councillor Field who represents the Podsmead ward was then invited to present his views. He explained that his experience during his by-election campaign was that, overall, people were content with the Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). In particular, he felt that the proposals regarding conservation, improving bungalows, and the environmental plans would all be positive developments. Nonetheless, he suggested that certain proposals could be amended. For example, whilst he welcomed the proposals to carry out work on some of the bungalows in Podsmead, he stated that the plans could be more expansive. Additionally, he suggested that the green spaces proposals could be improved by including play areas in the plans. Moreover, he advised that the SPD provided a good opportunity to improve transport in the area, aim to open empty shops, as well as making better use of the available space. Lastly, he added that whilst he was happy with the changes overall, he felt that the City Council needed to better communicate with residents to remind them that, at this stage in the process, these were aspirations which were not set in stone
- 5.3 The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning Strategy, Councillor Gravells highlighted that this was a draft response to the original document, and so it was important that the appropriate language was used. He then thanked the Committee, the Chair, Gloucester City Homes and the planning department for the work involved in producing the SPD.
- 5.4 Councillor Gravells then moved the discussion to the public consultation which had been carried out. He noted that there had been 366 comments, with the majority of these focused on open spaces. He brought the Committees' attention to Section 3.11 of the report which detailed the key proposed changes following the consultation, and in particular wanted to highlight the removal of the 'one move only' approach.
- 5.5 The Principal Planning Officer then addressed the Committee. She advised that the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government had published the National Design Guide, and that reference would be made to this within the SPD before the Council meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2019. Furthermore, she informed the Committee that they were still awaiting an update on the open space plan. Finally, she added that Officers were in contact with Gloucester City Homes on the issue of ownership of the properties. This would help to highlight where the bungalows are, as well enabling Officers to understand the current mix of properties.
- 5.6 Councillor Haigh thanked Officers for the development of the SPD. She then outlined what she thought were some of the highlights in the SPD. Firstly, she was pleased with what she felt was a measured approach taken in removing the framework plans. Secondly, she was of the view that the removal of the one move only approach would allow for greater flexibility and was thus to be welcomed. Thirdly, she was pleased with the proposals to preserve the distinctive characteristics of both Matson and Podsmead respectively. Overall, she thought that the document was positive. Nonetheless, she also believed that more resident involvement was needed, and further, that vibrant community assets such as pubs should not be damaged by regeneration. Moreover, she was keen to see climate change

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considerations incorporated into any plans, thus ensuring that both Matson and Podsmead become carbon neutral communities.

- 5.7 The Planning Policy Officer responded to say that he agreed with much of Councillor Haigh 's observations. He concurred that good communication with residents was key and should not just become a tick box exercise.
- 5.8 Councillor Organ congratulated the Officers, Gloucester City Homes and the residents involved in the SPD. He added that the SPD was still a work in progress, meaning that coordination would be key moving forward. Likewise, there would potentially be further changes for which it was important to be prepared for. Additionally, he submitted that it was important that any plans incorporated good quality design, pursuant to the National Design Guide. He was of the view that good quality housing has holistic benefits such as promoting good health and wellbeing. In sum, he believed that the strategic elements of the SPD should be kept as transparent as possible.
- 5.9 Councillor Pullen echoed the comments made previously, noting that the SPD was to be welcomed. He noted the positive language throughout the document. On the topic of mapping community assets, he queried what was missing to fill the gaps.
- 6.0 The Planning Policy Officer advised that the SPD was about working collaboratively. As an example, Officers were working with colleagues from the health sector to carry out health assessments.
- 6.1 Councillor Hilton was concerned with retaining the characteristics of the two areas. He stated that the SPD should not change the feel of the space, but rather, strengthen the existing assets. As an example, he suggested that one of the best features about the Podsmead ward is its open spaces, and therefore any plans should seek to retain this feature.
- 6.2 Councillor Gravells added that the SPD was a long-term project and one of the biggest regeneration projects in the county. Moreover, it was important that it was done right. On this issue, Councillor Hyman added that he was pleased a coordinated approach was being taken.
- 6.3 Councillor Haigh suggested that various types of homes were needed, including family homes and flats. Similarly, she submitted that there were potential challenges to be faced in relation to Local Housing Allowance rates and rent, amongst others. Additionally, she expressed her view that there was housing need for the whole city, and thus it was important to link the different housing policies where possible.
- 6.4 There was consensus amongst the committee that the report was to be welcomed.

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6.5 **RESOLVED:** - That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the Report.

6.6 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** 25<sup>TH</sup> OF NOVEMBER 2019.

**Time of commencement: 6:30pm**

**Time of conclusion: 19:15pm**

**Chair**