

## CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

### HERNE BAY AREA MEMBER PANEL

**Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday, 1st February, 2011  
at 6.30 pm in the Salvation Army Hall, 33 Richmond Street, Herne Bay**

**Present:** Mr Hirst (Chairman)  
Councillor Bissett  
Councillor Bright  
Councillor Davis  
Councillor R Flaherty  
Councillor Hando  
Mrs Law  
Councillor Lee  
Councillor Matthews  
Councillor Reuby  
Councillor McMahan  
Councillor Sonnex  
Councillor A Taylor  
Councillor Vickery-Jones

**Officers:** Velia Coffey - Strategic Director  
Ian Brown - Head of Planning and Regeneration  
Janet Davies - Corporate Project Manager  
Patrick Rynne - Senior Project Manager  
Timothy Bailey - Project Officer  
Martin Bovingdon - Estates and Valuation Manager  
James Ross - Principal Valuer  
Graham Finch - Senior Democratic Services Officer  
(Executive & Council)  
Jo Pannell - Community Engagement Manager (KCC)

#### 58 **APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M Flaherty and Chris West.

#### 59 **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

Councillors Hando and Sonnex each declared a personal interest in the item regarding the Herne Bay Central Development Area Masterplan because of their position as a member of the Development Control Committee.

Councillor Sonnex also declared an additional personal interest in that item because her husband worked for Stagecoach.

These declarations are recorded in the relevant item below.

## 60 PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

The Panel approved the revised guidance, now reported, for the question and answer session shortly after the commencement of each meeting of the Panel.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer reported that no questions had been submitted in advance for the meeting.

The Chairman invited questions from members of the public at the meeting.

The following questions were put to the Panel.

1. Mr Eburne pointed out that Pfizer has announced today that it will close its centre in Sandwich and the majority of the 2,400 people employed there will be made redundant. He asked what effect will that have on Canterbury District and the East Kent area?

The Chairman indicated that there was no doubt that the loss of jobs would affect the whole of the District and that a written response to this question would be given to Mr Eburne in due course.

2. Mr Eburne pointed out that Royal Mail had changed delivery procedures for Herne Bay and is proposing to close their Eddington Lane sorting office. He thanked the councillors, and Roger Gale MP, for their support over recent weeks. He asked what else can we do to persuade Royal Mail that their experimental systems are not working.

Some Members expressed their strong concerns about the failure of various aspects of the experimental system. Many households in Herne Bay now received only one postal delivery per week and there had been an adverse impact on businesses through the late delivery of post.

Difficulties were also being experienced by postal staff in manoeuvring the post trolleys along pavements and there were some safety issues arising regarding the weight of the post involved.

The Panel AGREED that a representative of Royal Mail be invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel to discuss the concerns regarding the experimental system for postal deliveries in Herne Bay.

## 61 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman reported that there were 7 speakers for the item regarding the Herne Bay Central Development Area Masterplan and that they would be heard immediately before the consideration of that item.

## 62 VARIATION OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

With the approval of the Panel, the Chairman varied the order of business to allow the item regarding the Herne Bay Central Development Area Masterplan to be dealt with next.

(The order of business was varied accordingly).

**HERNE BAY CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT AREA MASTERPLAN**

(At the commencement of the meeting Councillors Hando and Sonnex had each declared a personal interest in this item because of their position as members of the Development Control Committee. Councillor Sonnex also declared a further personal interest because her husband worked for Stagecoach.

Prior to the consideration of this item the following persons spoke to the item:-

Mr H Lloyd, Mr D Eburne, Mr E Kemsley (for W M Morrison), Mr A Cook, Mr A Newell, Mrs M Milner and Ms S Henson).

The Panel then considered the joint report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Head of Property and Engineering Services which updated Members on the outcome of the consultation on the Herne Bay Central Development Area Draft Master Plan.

The report indicated that in December 2009 Coplan and Denne had been selected as the Council's preferred development partner to bring forward the development of the Central Development Area. The partnership had culminated in the production of the Draft Master Plan for the Central Development Area and its subsequent public consultation from 16<sup>th</sup> August to 26<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

Of the questionnaire responses 57 were in favour of the draft proposals, 12 were undecided and 22 were opposed. A further 26 written responses were received from residents and local business. Events were well attended with the vast majority of attendees being positive about and excited by the draft Master Plan. Many wished to discuss which shops could be attracted into the scheme and were concerned about when it would be built.

There were also a substantial number of visits to the Council's webpage over the consultation period and to the Coplan website from 1<sup>st</sup> July to the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

The scheme had attracted significant support, whilst key issues appeared to be centred around parking, architecture and impact on existing trading in the town. An estimate of the number of comments arising around each key area of concern was given in the report. However, it had been noted that many respondents had reiterated their comments several times in their submissions and that the data should only be considered to represent proportions. The comments had been considered by the various officers in the professional team and amendments suggested where needed, or the Master Plan re-iterated to clarify existing commitments for respondents.

Any recommended changes to the draft Master Plan needed to be considered in the context of the following issues:-

- (a) the results of the consultation;
- (b) their impact upon viability and sustainability; and
- (c) their compliance with Council policy.

A review of the most common comments was given in the report. These were described as the main points raised and a potential response was outlined. Members' views were sought on the suggested responses.

The Head of Planning and Regeneration responded to the comments made by the public speakers for this item and made the following points –

The idea of a covered shopping centre was not considered to be in keeping with the architecture and townscape of Herne Bay.

The provision for car parking needed to be balanced with the scale of the development and the space available.

The inclusion of a multi-storey car park allowed the retention of an open space within the development scheme and the use of that space as a market area.

The Council welcomed an opportunity to work with Morrisons regarding their ideas and the impact and scale of the development on their retail store.

Endeavours were being made to attract a mix of retail units. The Development Agreement would have a strong influence on the selection of tenants.

Work was being carried out to attract a hotel operator.

It was proposed to implement a traffic management scheme at Hanover Street to manage access for delivery vehicles during daytime hours and overnight.

The planning application for the development proposals would need to include an assessment of the impact of the development on surrounding properties. There would be pedestrian links with other parts of the town centre.

The proposals did not include provision for the parking of heavy goods vehicles.

A drop-off facility would be provided for coaches.

The scope to include community facilities / meeting space was being investigated.

Members commented on issues arising. The main points related to the following -

In 1998 development plans had been put forward by a former supermarket operator, but this scheme had not been implemented.

It was within Morrisons' control, if it wished, to look at moving to a new site.

The current development proposals did not prevent Morrisons from submitting a proposal. The company had an opportunity to talk to Officers about its concerns regarding the proposals in the Masterplan.

The shoppers at Herne Bay deserved an improvement on the current retail provision and range of goods available.

A new supermarket was needed at Herne Bay.

Whether the voluntary organisations at Beach House could be relocated to other premises?

Attention was drawn to the new centre for Age Concern at Hampton, Herne Bay. It was pointed out that there might also be scope for some organisations to be

accommodated at the Friendly Society's premises at Reculver Road. It was suggested that the voluntary organisations at Beach House pursue further enquiries about these premises.

There are also some commercial premises at Hanover Street.

A Member suggested that the developers should be asked to consider the possibility of purchasing residential properties in Hanover Street in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.

A Member pointed out that the development proposals included improvement in the public realm. If funding was required for other proposals there might be financial implications arising for other aspects of the scheme.

A Member remarked that the proposed development would be better for the residents at Hanover Street compared to the current situation.

There had been extensive consultation about the development proposals.

A Member requested an update about the inclusion of a facility for the Shopmobility service. The Head of Planning and Regeneration advised that negotiations were taking place with the developers to try and incorporate the service within the development proposals.

The development proposals should include a café.

A Member suggested that awnings be provided for the retail units in the shopping centre.

A Member felt that the development proposals did not relate to the regeneration of the town centre, but instead an opportunity for the Council to receive income.

He also pointed out that no information had been provided about traffic flows.

A Member questioned the suitability of a shared surface across the William Street / High Street junction. He felt that the shared surface scheme at Ashford did not work. A Member pointed out that the site of the proposed new supermarket was contaminated land and that the cleaning works required involved substantial expenditure.

Having considered the issues, the Panel recommended to the **Executive**

- (a) that the developers be requested to consider the possibility of purchasing residential properties in Hanover Street in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development;
- (b) its support for the following recommendations in the report -
  - (i) that the changes outlined in Appendixes 1 and 2 are agreed and the Master Plan is adopted as a material consideration for planning purposes; and
  - (ii) that authority is delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to make such minor technical and factual changes that do not materially affect the content of the Master Plan prior to printing.

64 **MINUTES - 4 JANUARY 2011**

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 4 January 2011 were agreed as a true record.

65 **ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING NOT DEALT WITH BY SEPARATE REPORTS**

**Minute No. 53 - General Fund Revenue Budget**

Councillor Matthews said that he had received the information which he had requested at the last meeting about the changes to the planting and maintenance arrangements. He mentioned that the response had indicated that for future years there would be reduced planting at inconspicuous areas and he requested clarification on the areas involved.

Another Member said that he had spoken to the portfolio holder and that a report would be made to the next meeting of the Panel on 15 March.

66 **OTHER ISSUE RAISED AT THE MEETING**

Councillor Matthews requested an update about the closure of the household waste site at Hampton whilst improvements were carried out. A county councillor indicated that the improvements were required to address concerns about safety and security issues and that the works had now been completed.

67 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 15 March 2011 at 6.30pm in the Salvation Army Hall, 33 Richmond Street, Herne Bay.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.45 pm