



# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A Meeting of the **COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held at the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **MONDAY 19 OCTOBER 2015 AT 7.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Couldrick', written in a cursive style.

Andy Couldrick  
Chief Executive  
Published on 9 October 2015

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website.

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## **Our Vision**

***A great place to live, an even better place to do business***

### ***Our Priorities***

**Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential**

**Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth**

**Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development**

**Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough**

**Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services**

### ***The Underpinning Principles***

**Offer excellent value for your Council Tax**

**Provide affordable homes**

**Look after the vulnerable**

**Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life**

**Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency**

**Deliver quality in all that we do**

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### Councillors

Chris Bowring  
Ken Miall  
Bill Soane

Michael Firmager  
Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey  
Shahid Younis

Norman Jorgensen  
David Sleight

### Substitutes

Mark Ashwell  
Alison Swaddle

Lindsay Ferris

Tom McCann

| ITEM NO. | WARD | SUBJECT  | PAGE NO. |
|----------|------|--|----------|
| 1.       |      | <b>ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2015/16 MUNICIPAL YEAR</b><br>To elect a Chairman for the 2015/16 municipal year.  |          |
| 2.       |      | <b>ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2015/16 MUNICIPAL YEAR</b><br>To elect a Vice-Chairman for the 2015/16 municipal year.  |          |
| 3.       |      | <b>APOLOGIES</b><br>To receive any apologies for absence.  |          |
| 4.       |      | <b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b><br>To receive any declarations of interest.   |          |
| 5.       |      | <b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b><br>To answer any public questions<br><br>A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.<br><br>The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee.<br><br>Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a> |          |
| 6.       |      | <b>MEMBER QUESTION TIME</b><br>To answer any member questions.   |          |

- |    |  |   |              |
|----|--|---|--------------|
| 7. | Emmbrook;<br>Ewendons;<br>Norreys; Wescott | <b>REVIEW OF TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION SCHEME</b><br>To consider the business case for the regeneration of the town centre and to scope the review. <i>(Part 2 sheet)</i>                  | 5 - 156      |
| 8. | None Specific                              | <b>WORK PROGRAMME</b><br>To consider the Committee's work programme for the remainder of the municipal year.  | 157 -<br>162 |
| 9. |  | <b>ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT</b><br>A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading. |              |

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Committee may exclude the public in order to discuss the Part 2 sheets above and to do so it must pass a resolution in the following terms:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as appropriate.

### **CONTACT OFFICER**

|                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Colm Ó Caomhánaigh</b> | Democratic Services Officer        |
| <b>Tel</b>                | 0118 974 6059                      |
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## COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 18 OCTOBER 2015

### TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION BRIEFING

#### **Introduction to Regeneration**

Wokingham Borough Council is undergoing a period of intense change.

In 2004 the Council started the process of developing the Core Strategy (Local Plan) which identified the best locations for building the 13,232 new houses that needed to be delivered within the Borough in response to the South East Plan (The Regional Spatial Strategy).

Following an extensive period of consultation and options reviews the decision was made to move forward with the majority of new homes being delivered in four Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) at Arborfield (3,500 new homes), South of the M4 (2,700 new homes), North Wokingham (1,600 new homes) and South Wokingham (2,500 new homes). Locations for the remainder of the new housing were identified through the Managing Development Delivery (MDD) process, which includes the allocation of Wokingham Town Centre as a good location for sustainable residential growth. A plan of the local development can be found in Appendix 1 – Overarching Plans

In addition to identifying where this residential growth should occur within Wokingham borough the Core Strategy process also involved a comprehensive review of local infrastructure needs and what would be required to support both the existing and the proposed local residential levels. A variety of assessments were undertaken looking at areas such as roads, school places and leisure facilities. The infrastructure review also looked in detail at retail provision across the Borough with the Council commissioning Donaldsons to undertake a comprehensive Retail Study in 2007.

The Donaldson's report looked at both food (Convenience) and non-food (Comparison) retail across the borough, reviewing a range of factors such as local demographics, spend patterns, retail location and quantity of existing provision. The results of the study identified that there would be a significant shortfall within Wokingham Borough by 2026 of comparison and convenience retail floorspace necessary to support the size of the local population. The Core Strategy and Study went onto identify the best locations for this shortfall to be delivered in response to the SDL locations.

Wokingham town centre was identified as a key retail growth location. This reflected the level of local development which would see 4,000 new homes delivered to the edges of Wokingham town centre, a growth of circa 30% on the existing town base and Wokingham's classification as an important sub-regional centre within the South East Plan, and its identity as the major town centre within the borough.

## **Town Centre Masterplan**

In order to provide clear, distinctive and deliverable vision for Wokingham, the Core Strategy identified the need to produce an additional Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which would look specifically at development within Wokingham Town Centre. This document was titled the Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan SPD and was adopted in June 2010 following extensive public consultation.

Work on developing a Masterplan began in 2008 when a public workshop was held to look at the level of development and where it would best be located to create a successful and sustainable town centre that met local resident and business's needs.

To further guide this process the Council commissioned a Retail Study Refresh from Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) in February 2010 to ensure the Masterplan was based upon the latest retail needs information. The NLP findings continued to demonstrate a significant shortfall in retail needs for the area.

The final Masterplan covers a comprehensive range of infrastructure including approaches to parking, public transport, highways, leisure, residential and retail growth within the town centre. The role of the Masterplan is to provide planning guidance on development within the town centre and it is a strong material consideration in the assessment of planning application within the town centre.

A copy of the Masterplan can be downloaded from the Council website at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-guidance-and-documents/>

## **Council Led Regeneration Scheme**

The need for a strong local Masterplan vision had become increasingly evident in consideration of private led development schemes emerging in the town centre.

Although, at the time, these schemes were generally acceptable in terms of planning policy there were concerns that they could result in overdevelopment and potentially lead to a fracturing of the town centre through the delivery of two retail locations which would work in competition rather than together to reinforce the retail circuits identified in the Masterplan. There were also concerns that the developments concentrated on profit making to the detriment of local residents and business. In addition it was becoming unsure whether the private schemes could be delivered due to market shifts and concerns over commercial viability.

Following discussions in June 2008 it was agreed to move forward with a Wokingham Borough Council led regeneration scheme for Wokingham Town Centre. This initial phase of the project involved the locations of Elms Field, the Paddocks car park and Peach Place, with the Carnival Pool site being brought forward in 2014 as a further phase of regeneration.

As this represented the first major mixed use commercial led development the council had been involved with a decision was made to identify a development partner and project team with demonstrable experience in delivering this type of scheme. Following a comprehensive OJEU Competitive Dialogue procurement process Wilson Bowden and their partner company David Wilson Homes were identified as the Council's preferred development partners in October 2010 for the Elms Field, Paddocks and Peach Place Regeneration projects.

A further procurement process was undertaken in July 2013 to identify a multi-disciplinary project team and lead consultant to aid in developing a new Carnival Pool Leisure Hub and Multi-storey car park. Ove ARUP was appointed in response to this process.

### **Objectives of Regeneration**

Taking into account public consultations and the work done for the Core Strategy and Masterplan the following objectives were set out for the Town Centre Regeneration project

–

- Improving the economic vitality and viability of the town
- Improving the social vitality and viability of the town
- Improving and enhancing public open spaces and active use of public realm
- Enhancing the architectural quality of the town centre and public realm
- Improving pedestrian accessibility in the town centre and access to the town

Further information on the objectives can be found in in the Wokingham Town Centre Project Briefing Document which can be downloaded from the Regeneration Website [www.regenerationcompany.co.uk](http://www.regenerationcompany.co.uk)

### **Benefits of Council as Developer**

A review of what needed to be done in order to meet the aforementioned objectives identified key points which need to be addressed for the town to succeed. It was also agreed that the Council were best placed to deliver regeneration directly if the following benefits are to be realised for the wider community.

- The town is declining and needs successful regeneration to occur in a timely manner when many private schemes are failing or being delayed.
- Regeneration needs to deliver the right balance of community and non-profit benefits and commercially profitable elements to meet the desires of local residents and businesses.
- Local residents need to be able to access a better variety of quality facilities and services in the town, reducing their need to go elsewhere for shopping, socialisation and leisure.
- The quality and range of retail, leisure and service offer should meet local aspirations and help differentiate Wokingham from other larger local neighbours or 'clone towns'

- Development needs to be high quality and flexible to remain successful for the long term
- Key sites need to be developed with an overarching regeneration so that they work together to strengthen the town rather than in competition which risks weakening Wokingham
- Wokingham needs to support and attract business by providing the infrastructure they request such as hotels, business spaces, schools and good quality housing to attract skilled employees
- A need to secure a good range of local jobs and employment opportunities to meet the needs of a larger population
- Regeneration is a starting point and needs to act as a catalyst to encourage other projects to come forward in the town, both private and public, and to attract ongoing investment in Wokingham
- Regeneration must be financially viable, self-funding and must not rely on additional tax payer support to pay for its delivery.
- The Council needs to invest in the community to create long term sources of funding for the council which are not dependent on local council tax or central government allocations.

## **Project Scope**

The Council's regeneration proposals encompass four priority projects in line with sites identified in the Masterplan. These have been designed to achieve both the objectives and the benefits identified within this report, as well as through ongoing consultation with local residents, businesses and professional advisors.

- Peach Place Refurbishment\* (major façade refurbishment of the Rose Street/Market Place corner, including the bringing forward of flats above Boots, replacement and enclosure of the staircase and conversion of the empty offices above Clarks to Residential)
- Peach Place Redevelopment\* (Creation of a new retail/leisure units facing out onto Peach Street and onto a new public square with residential above and facing onto Rose Street)
- Elms Field and the Paddocks car park\*\* (Creation of new retail/leisure units, foodstore, hotel, Cinema, new road and residential units framing an enhanced town centre park)
- Carnival Pool (Refurbishment of existing swimming pool and creation of a new leisure/community centre alongside a new multi-storey car park)

\*Although Peach Place is a single physical site, a decision was made to break this down into two projects, refurbishment and redevelopment phases, early on in the process. This would allow the Council to retain Boots and Clarks within the town as they, along with the integrated John Wood Sports unit, were deemed important anchor tenants to keep trading



within Wokingham town centre. This will help maintain footfall as well as generating ongoing rental income which helps to offset the costs of delivering the regeneration.

\*\*The Elms Field and paddocks car park phase also include part of the Shute End offices car park which may be required if the Council proceeds with a proposed through road to link Shute End with Wellington Road.

A plan of the key sites can be found downloaded from the Regeneration Website [www.regenerationcompany.co.uk](http://www.regenerationcompany.co.uk)

### **Project Viability and Funding**

The overarching financial objective of the regeneration is that the project must be financially viable as a project and that it must not rely upon additional financial support from the tax payer.

Effectively this means that the sales/investment value of the completed assets must exceed the value of the cost of their delivery. This includes the cost of delivering all non-value elements such as the park, play-area and leisure/community developments.

In order to ensure this objective is met, the project is a success and risks are mitigated the Council has been undertaking the following control and review measures –

- Continued financial appraisal reviews to ensure that the costs and income projections remain up to date and reflect latest information
- Continued viability testing to ensure that the project generates an agreed minimum profit on cost percentage before it can proceed.
- Further review of the Retail Study in 2013 to reflect commercial market conditions
- Independent review of financial information through the planning pre-application process
- Market Testing by Lettings advisors Strutt & Parker to ensure that any designs are fit for purpose and that there is market interest in the scheme and Wokingham
- Pre-lets of key units to commercial tenants to ensure that income is guaranteed before commencement and that the right mix of businesses is secured for the town centre.

At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting in June 2015 Members requested more detailed demonstration of the tools being used to manage the finances of the schemes.

Attached to Part 2 of this report are:

- Cost plans for each scheme: These are detailed cost plans based on each scheme, prepared by national consultants – Faithful and Gould (Peach Place and Elms Field) and Arup (Carnival Pool)
- Rental value forecasts for Peach Place and Elms Field prepared by a leading national retail consultancy – Strutt and Parker

- Cost Plans and value forecasts for the residential elements of the scheme from our Joint Venture Partner David Wilson Homes.
- Appraisals – All of the above feed into to a master appraisal for each scheme, prepared by MLA commercial development consultancy for Peach Place and Elms Field and Savills for Carnival Pool.

A full detailed appraisal is required by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in support of each major Planning Application. The LPA utilise an external consultancy practice – Alder King – to challenge and verify the approach, costs, values and assumptions.

The appraisals are reviewed and updated at key points in the process.

The Elms Field appraisal will be updated to support the Planning Application Submission in November, with the cost plans and rental/sales schedules being updated beforehand.

Both Carnival Pool and Elms Field appraisals will be updated following that which will provide a current suite of appraisals for the Regeneration of the town.

The appraisal assumes that all assets are sold upon completion – this is a standard approach in terms of measuring a scheme’s viability and in no way assumes that is the approach to be taken

The decisions to hold or sell assets, or indeed a mixture of both, will be the subject of an Executive decision in due course.

As an example of an alternative approach, we have ‘cash flowed’ an approach whereby all residential assets are sold and all commercial assets are retained. This will be remodelled upon updating the appraisals. The latest version is as used for the last Overview and Scrutiny meeting in June and is again included in Part 2 of this report.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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**COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**Work Programme from October 2015**

**Please note that the work programme is a 'live' document and subject to change at short notice.  
The information in this work programme is subject to approval at the Committee meeting scheduled for  
19 October 2015**

*The order in which items are listed at this stage may not reflect the order they subsequently appear on the agenda / are dealt with  
at the scrutiny meeting.*

**All Meetings start at 7.00pm in the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, unless otherwise stated.**

**COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

| DATE OF MEETING | ITEM  | PURPOSE OF REPORT   | REASON FOR CONSIDERATION   | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER |
|-----------------|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| 23 Nov 2015     | <b>Road Repairs - impact of expected initiatives around customer service and public and ward Member road repair notifications.</b>                      | To receive an initial report on the issue to include impact of expected initiatives around customer service and public and ward Member road repair notifications so the Committee can seek assurance that current arrangements are effective.   | Referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee                         | Matt Davey                            |
|                 | <b>Review of Outside Bodies Appointments – Update on Review of the Voluntary Sector by the Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration and Communities</b> | Following on from the work of the Community Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive an update from the Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration and Community Services on the review of voluntary sector outside bodies.<br><br>This will enable the Committee to seek reassurance regarding the Council's appointment to these outside bodies. | Transferred from Community Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee | Brian Grady/<br>Mark Ashwell          |

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  | <b>To assess and review and the potential impact of the Government's Right to Buy Scheme</b>                     | To consider how to progress a review of this scrutiny review subject.  | Review referred to the Committee by the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee   | Stuart Rowbotham/<br>Simon Price             |
|  | <b>Update from Executive Member for Highways and Planning on Council Policy on Houses of Multiple Occupation</b> | For the Committee to receive an update from the Executive Member for Planning and Highways on the Council's policies towards Houses of Multiple Occupation, (HMOs) so that the Committee can seek assurance that adequate measures are in place to protect the interests of residents. | OSMC request at its meeting on 27/07/15 that the Executive Member consider the Council's policy towards HMOs and report back | Councillor<br>John Kaiser/<br>Clare Lawrence |
|  | <b>Work Programme</b>  | To consider the work programme for the committee for 2015/2016 so that the resources of the committee can be used as effectively as possible.  | Standing Item  | Democratic Services                          |

| DATE OF MEETING | ITEM           | PURPOSE OF REPORT   | REASON FOR CONSIDERATION | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER |
|-----------------|----------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 20 Jan 2016     | Work Programme | To consider the work programme for the committee for 2015/2016 so that the resources of the committee can be used as effectively as possible. | Standing Item            | Democratic Services                   |

| DATE OF MEETING | ITEM   | PURPOSE OF REPORT   | REASON FOR CONSIDERATION   | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER |
|-----------------|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| 14 Mar 2016     | <b>Update on the Progress of the Community Café at Shutters, Wokingham Borough Council</b> | To consider an update report on how the project has developed from the group of young people running the Café in order that the Committee can understand the impact and value added of the project. | Requested by the Community Partnership O & S Committee in March 2015<br><br><i>(Transferred from the Community Partnerships O &amp; S Forward Programme)</i> | Brian Grady                           |
|                 | <b>Work Programme</b>  | To consider the work programme for the committee for 2015/2016 so that the resources of the committee can be used as effectively as possible.   | Standing Item  | Democratic Services                   |

**POTENTIAL ITEMS FOR REVIEW REFERRED FROM  
THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

| DATE OF MEETING | ITEM  | PURPOSE OF REPORT  | REASON FOR CONSIDERATION  | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER |
|-----------------|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| TBC             | <b>Possible income generation possibilities from the Cross Rail project</b> | To consider possible income generation opportunities from the Crossrail project. | Referred to the Community Partnerships O & S Committee by the Overview & Scrutiny Management<br><br><i>(Transferred from the Community Partnerships O &amp; S Committee Forward Programme).</i> |                                       |