

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND HOUSING TO THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2016

Welcome to my first report as an Executive member. At time of writing I have been in post for two weeks. I'd like to thank the leader, Councillor Bacon for inviting me to join the Executive and my predecessor, Councillor Fuller, for his hard work with the planning portfolio.

- **Planning Committee**

The January meeting of the Planning Committee saw approvals for Westcliffe in Niton, Ash Lane in Newport, Atkinson Drive in Newport, The Chute in Seaview and Lynbottom Civic Amenity Centre. Of note, this meeting of the committee resulted in approvals of 63 new homes towards this council's requirement to provide 525 new dwellings per year and the retention and improvement of public toilets in Seaview.

- **Article 4 directions**

On the forward plan for June we have a paper coming to Executive on the use of article 4 directions for public houses. This element of the permitted development regulations has been controversial and this is coming forward following a motion from Councillor Barry last year.

- **Parking SPD**

The Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is in draft and will come forward alongside the parking strategy for consultation.

- **Enforcement**

Work has also begun on an enforcement plan paper working up options towards the self financing of planning enforcement action and increase the effectiveness of the department. These include a charging regime for the discharge of enforcement notices and better use of the Proceeds of Crime Act which will show that we are taking a firm and proportionate response to breaches of planning. I hope any proceeds will be used to develop a "fighting fund" to allow us to expand the enforcement capabilities of the authority.

- **IT**

I am assisting the head of planning in moving forward an IT request to provide an online facility for viewing historical maps to ease the process and staffing pressures for searching for historic applications, and provide a smoother service at the point of contact for the customer. This service improvement has been specifically requested by developers and I'm pleased to be able to assist in moving this forward.

- **Planning and Housing Bill**

The head of planning and I put together a joint response to the planning and housing bill consultation for the Department for Communities and Local Government.

I have also responded to the town and country planning association research survey on the bill. In both cases I included concerns raised about the impact of starter homes on the supply of affordable rented properties and the need for the bill to address land-banking and give local planning authorities teeth to see developments to completion in a timely manner.

- **Area action plans**

The Planning Policy Team is now hard at work reviewing and collating the consultation responses to the area action plans and feeding those responses into updated versions. I hope to have further progress to report by early summer.

- **Brighstone Neighbourhood Plan**

The public consultation for the plan is underway under regulation 16. The Isle of Wight Council is undertaking a consultation on the proposed Brighstone Neighbourhood Development Plan and supporting documents. The consultation will run from **Friday 22 January until midday Monday 7 March 2016**.

- **Self build and custom build housing**

Regulations have been laid before parliament and as of 1 April 2016 this now places a statutory requirement upon the authority to maintain a register of suitable sites. An IT solution is under development to meet this requirement.

- **Appeals and ongoing monitoring**

In the last three month period (1/11 to 31/1) minors were at 76 per cent in time, others 91 per cent in time, and majors 12.5 per cent. The majors have taken a significant hit due to the issue of a number of permissions granted involving complex section 106 agreements which have resulted in a delay in the issuing of those decisions. I have requested an analysis of the section 106 legal process to review how such applications can be dealt with in a more timely manner. As of the period 1/4/15 to the time of writing these were at 68.27 per cent minor, 85.03 per cent other, 50 per cent majors. It should be noted that due to the relatively small number of major applications dealt with in this authority one or two applications can significantly shift the figures. A figure of 26.5 per cent of appeals have been dismissed against a national average of 30 per cent. This has been affected over the last month by the decisions on both Brickfields and Blanchards.

- **Annual Planning Monitoring Report**

The Annual Planning [14/15 monitoring report](#) is now available online. Some points of note:

- 1,392 applications were determined in the period.
- 83.7 per cent were approved.

- 526 new homes were granted permission, meeting the target set out in the strategic market housing assessment.
- 50.29 per cent of housing completions were on previously developed brownfield land while 67 per cent of housing permissions were on brownfield land.

Since taking post

- I met with representatives of the Bembridge Harbour Trust to discuss their concerns relating to the recent approval of the development at Bembridge Harbour.
- I attended Bembridge Parish Council with the head of service to answer questions about the department.
- A meeting was held at County Hall with representatives of businesses from Venture Quays to discuss options for future economic waterfront regeneration.
- I attended a meeting re: the development of the West Wight Coastal Strategy.
- I represented the Isle of Wight Council at the Solent Social Enterprise Zone stakeholder summit.
- I met with registered providers and work continues to deliver options for housing on the Island.

Councillor Julia Baker-Smith
Executive Member for Planning and Housing