



Junction 11 Working Group

Held at:	Boulogne Room - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Thursday, 21 September 2017
Present	Councillors John Collier, David Godfrey, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee, David Monk and Dick Pascoe
Apologies for Absence	Councillor Rory Love
Officers Present:	Andy Jarrett (Head of Strategic Development Project), Chris Lewis (Planning Advisor), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Mark Luetchford (Communications Manager), Susan Priest (Corporate Director - Strategic Development) and Julia Wallace (Masterplanning Project Manager)
Others Present:	Councillor Mrs Ann Berry

1. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee declared a voluntary announcement in that she has properties in the area of Otterpool Park. She remained in the meeting during discussions.

2. **Otterpool Park Charter**

Chris Lewis, Planning Advisor, updated members on the preparation of a Charter for Otterpool Park which builds on the development principles shown as a sustainability wheel in the original Expression of Interest to government for garden town status.

The relationship of the draft Charter to other work being carried out was explained. The document when finalised will help inform future planning policy and masterplanning.

The Charter expands on the segments of the wheel and sets out in more detail the corporate ambitions for Otterpool Park.

The intention is to undertake targeted stakeholder consultation prior to presenting to Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in October.

Members reviewed each page of the draft Charter, including the Foreword, noting their support for the following:

- Landscaping – retaining and enhancing green and blue assets with a focus on quality open space and net bio-diversity gain;
- Natural landscape – plans for a signature country park adjacent to the castle, advanced woodland planting, providing space for play areas, playing fields and informal outdoor performances. Ensuring separation of the new settlement from Lympe. Enhancing and embracing the natural landscape;
- Making best use of technology – embracing cutting edge technology in energy and conservation, reducing household waste and responding to the Government ban in 2040 on new petrol cars and vans;
- Prioritising walking, cycling and sustainable transport –with the objective of a maximum 10 minute walk to local services; Promoting healthy and sustainable environments – high level of public health services including a state of the art medical centre that provides a range of services to reduce the need for visits to local hospitals. Design of houses to respond to changing lifetime needs;
- New homes – adaptable dwellings and the introduction of accessibility standards that ensure housing is accessible to the needs of all;
- Local heritage – maximising the heritage in the local area and its visibility. Importance of Westenhanger Castle as a heritage asset. Role heritage can play in promoting culture, art, recreation and tourism;
- High quality townscape – mix of housing types meeting housing need and demand, with lower density development radiating out from the town centre. Quality materials, varied roofscapes with balconies and roof terraces. Promoting local distinctive design;
- Economies of scale – capturing land value and removing barriers to development to deliver critical community and social infrastructure. Providing key infrastructure including schools early. Other local communities to have access to new services;
- Self-build and customer-build – giving residents the opportunity to design and build properties which will provide diversity and choice that are not always achievable in developments. Include affordable self and custom build homes. Consider whether to introduce a local connection and / or financial test;
- Providing spaces for local food growing – allowing space for allotments and bio-diverse landscaping for informal food growing;
- Legal entity – establishing a suitable legal entity for long-term management making sure the right model is in place while encouraging local community participation;
- Economic sustainability – maximising opportunities for new employment space, and establishing a vibrant local economy that fosters community prosperity but is complementary to the business offer of other local towns;

- IT services – Otterpool will be designed to have an ultrafast network and services that will allow residents and businesses to work to their full potential, encouraging homeworking and community engagement;
- Maximising investment in and the use of existing infrastructure assets – making for a “smarter” town philosophy; utilising the infrastructure already in place and upgrading physical infrastructure that requires improvements and investment i.e. Westenhanger Station;
- Local neighbourhood centres –distinctive village style centres each with a primary school, recreational areas and open spaces while easily accessible to the town centre. Community buildings to be inspired designs perhaps as exemplars for zero carbon;
- Creating an attractive town centre at the heart of the settlement with a vibrant high street that meets the needs of the community, visitors and businesses alike.

The draft Charter will be subject to 21 days consultation prior to Cabinet on the 18th October. The draft document will be made available on the Council’s website and the town and parish Councils will be invited to respond along with other key stakeholders.

A special meeting of the Shepway District and Parish Councils’ Joint Committee will be arranged to discuss the draft Charter.

Members were also informed that a Place Panel has been set up to provide advice on the draft charter and to provide the Local Planning Authority with external challenge and expertise throughout the local plan making process.

3. **Longterm Stewardship**

Julia Wallace, Masterplanning, Urban Design and Viability Manager, presented members with progress and research to date in respect of the principles of long term stewardship.

Members were informed that the study visits to Poundbury and Caterham Barracks provided an insight in to how different approaches to management and maintenance of sites can be undertaken.

It was clear that no one model suits all as each have different needs and assets. Particular attention should be given to producing a good structure, clear specifications and considering cost implications at an early stage in the process.

A number of case studies were presented to members as follows:

- Milton Keynes Parks Trust – this is different in size and financial costs to Otterpool Park, is a charity and company limited by guarantee.

- Caterham Barracks – operates on a much smaller scale but covers a much wider Caterham community. LTS model is a charitable trust which includes representative from local groups.
- Cambourne Parish Council – manages the green space, sports facilities, verges, community hub and other spaces, has an annual budget based on the usual parish precepts.
- North West Bicester – uses a Local Management Association led by local people with resident representation adopting a staged approach over a number of years with full handover to new body at the end of the development process.
- Chilmington Green – LTS will be via a charitable company with trustees initially drawn from a number of areas such as parish, county and voluntary sector organisations.

Another option discussed by members was the Land Trust which is a national charity set up specifically to manage land assets, parks and wildlife areas, together with community buildings. Using the Land Trust would mean leasing the land to the trust over a long period.

Members considered that this would mean different groups managing different parts of the site. No real financial information on funding was given and it was therefore agreed that further investigation was needed on funding; endowments and service charges and all cost implications through the preparation of a strategy. Members also asked to be briefed on the LTS arrangements for Letchworth.

Members noted that to produce the LTS strategy more work is required on which assets should be included and excluded. .

Members considered that the governance structure in future could reflect a Town Council with local representation and with democratic accountability.

Members asked that “cultural and community events” is given more consideration as to the how this would work, preferring consideration to be given to community development as oppose to restricting to events.

Members agreed the underlying principles will be put with a recommendation to Cabinet in October.