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BHTC Strategic Development KAG

- Our Objectives

9th Sept 2019

Background

Burgess Hill developed a town-wide strategy, which was initiated around 2006 by a Lib Dem regime and subsequently was taken forward by the Conservatives, the final document being published in 2011. It was in response to a central Government target given to Mid Sussex to build some 17,000 homes by John Prescott – we as a town looked at what was feasible to be built in the Burgess Hill. The report concluded that BH could take around 4,000 and recommended that we should take the hit, on the assumption that we could raise on Section 106 contributions around £10,000 to £20,000 per house. It contained a list of infrastructure needed if the development went ahead, totalling £40m. This included money for an Arts Centre to replace the Martlets at a cost of £4m.

In the development of this plan, the contractors who had been approached with the task of building the housing agreed that they would contribute a further £40m to the BH Town Council to build the additional infrastructure to support the town expansion.

This approach was rejected by MSDC as the planning authority, but much of the content of the strategy was incorporated into the District Plan. However, because of disagreements within MSDC this plan was only submitted for agreement in 2018, and in consequence only section 106 money was raised, not all of which was spent on BH infrastructure. The deal between the developers and BHTC was scrapped. Community Infrastructure Levy, which is less restrictive in the way it can be spent, has not been raised; 25% of which would have been payable to BHTC. The Council has an on-going commitment to consider CIL. Key findings of the Government commissioned research published to date has identified that CIL is significantly under delivering against anticipated funding.

In fact around 2,000 houses have been given planning permission since the rejection of the strategy, and a further 3,500 will be built on the Northern Arc.

The Key Documents

The BH Town-wide Strategy 2011 <https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/strategicvision>

The BH Neighbourhood Plan 2015 <https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplan/>

The District Plan 2014 <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/>

Supplementary:

The Sustainability Report <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/>

The BH Transport Strategy *has this reported?*

The BH Cultural Quarter <https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/culturalquarter>

The BH Regeneration Programme

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The Regeneration Programme has several components, **including 15,000 new jobs and:**

- Burgess Hill Town Centre transformation (£65m)
- 5,000 new homes, of which 3,500 are earmarked for the Northern Arc
- A Science & Technology Business Park (48 hectares)
- A Centre for Community Sport
- Full Fibre Digital Infrastructure
- Upgrading the A2300 to dual carriageway
- Improved Transport Connectivity **in particular sustainable transport**
- The Hub – a 15ha site with planning permission for 50,000 m²

The total cost of all these developments nears £1bn, of which over £993m is private sector spending.

The BH Regeneration Programme has an overarching political board, supported by an executive board. The four who sit on the political board, having overall control of the programme, are Louise Goldsmith (Leader WSCC), Lee Harris (Chief Exec WSCC), Jonathan Ash-Edwards (Leader MSDC), Kathryn Hall (Chief Exec MSDC). They tend to meet **6 monthly**.

Reporting to them (to do the work) is the Growth Board, who meet monthly. This is chaired by Kathryn Hall MSDC Chief Executive, supported by Sally Blomfield (of MSDC planning). Also on this sits **Lee Harris (Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment) as the senior officer from WSCC**, Paul Jackson-Cole, who leads the Burgess Hill Programme for West Sussex County Council, and Mark Healy, the Programme Manager for Mid Sussex District Council.

A **Members Steering Group Group** consisting of Councillors was set up to **act as a task and finish group for specific projects. The group's role is also to provide political oversight for all projects that make up the BH Growth Programme.** This is chaired by **Judy Llewellyn-Burke, Deputy Leader of MSDC** (who is responsible for oversight of the economics of the BH Growth), Andrew Barrett-Miles as County Councillor (the only one who lives in Burgess Hill), Joy Dennis, Andrew McNaughton (MSDC cabinet member for planning), plus an array of officers including Judy Holmes and the transport Manager for West Sussex. Initially Cllrs Pru Moore and Cllr Holden attended to represent the Burgess Hill Town Council; this role has now transferred to Cllr Robert Eggleston following local elections in May

In addition there is/was a Sustainability Project that has some 10 members whose task is to check that all the component parts of the Programme are supported by the correct infrastructure, including road, railway, parking facilities etc.

In addition, the Town and Parish Strategic Liaison Group which is chaired by the Leader of Mid Sussex District Council has representatives from the towns and villages who are likely to be affected by the BH Regeneration, including the likes of Twineham and Bolney. Some BH Councillors are likely to be invited to attend the future meetings.

BHTC ran a Transport Group which took a specific interest in the transport aspects of the programme - it has reported and has faded. It should be regenerated itself since there are big transport issues to consider. All the grants for transport improvements eg A2300 widening

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have to be spent by 2021 so these schemes are being pushed through quickly. WSCC is responsible for the delivery.

There is a SHEILA working group which is responsible for ensuring a land supply strategic planning, in particular house building. Sue Hatton is our representative on this body.

The BHTC Strategic Development KAG has a prime responsibility to represent the interests of BH, and to ensure that the Regeneration Programme is delivered in line with the 2011 Town-wide Strategy and indeed in the current interests of the residents of BH.

BH Town Centre

The planning and delivery of the transformed BH Town Centre was outsourced to New River REIT, who were given a termed lease from MSDC the Freeholders to redevelop an area that broadly equates to the Martlets centre. The Martlets Hall was included within this deal, and the proposal was that the Hall itself would be closed and not replaced.

The Culture Quarter

Following strong public protests about the closure of the centre, an advisory committee was set up by the Town Council including representatives of the Centre users to look at options for the design, development and running of what became terms as an Arts Centre, including a purpose-built theatre for the performing arts. Currently this is chaired by Robert Eggleston and supported by the BHTC chief executive.

The Role of the Strategic Devt. KAG

The role of the Strategic Development KAG is to ensure that the needs of Burgess Hill are met within the current planning framework, which includes the BH Regeneration Programme.

Immediate Actions

We look to have a greater representation of Burgess Hill Councillors in the governance of the Regeneration Programme.

We aim to get a realistic share of the development money to fund the infrastructure needs of the town given its rapid current and planned expansion.

We need to agree the recommendations of the Cultural Quarter Committee and canvass support for its recommendations within the governance of the Regeneration Programme.

We will look to a way of updating the Neighbourhood Plans which is incremental only and does not involve another major exercise at great cost of time and expenditure.

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