



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Folkestone
Date	Tuesday, 28 June 2016
Present	Councillors Mrs Ann Berry, Clive Goddard, Mrs Claire Jeffrey, Michael Lyons, Frank McKenna, Ian Meyers, Dick Pascoe (In place of Peter Gane), Peter Simmons and Mrs Rodica Wheeler
Apologies for Absence	Councillor Peter Gane
Officers Present:	Chris Lewis (Planning Advisor), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Susan Priest (Corporate Director - Strategic Development), Alistair Stewart (Chief Executive) and Julia Wallace (Masterplanning Project Manager)
Others Present:	David Monk, Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee, Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Ms Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Alan Ewart-James, Cabinet Member for Housing

6. **Declarations of Interest**

The following committee members wished it known that they had received emails relating to Otterpool Park – A Garden Town of the Future:

Councillors Mrs Ann Berry, Michael Lyons, Mrs Claire Jeffrey and Peter Simmons.

7. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2016 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

8. **Otterpool Park: A Garden Town of the Future - Proposal**

Report C/16/08 went to Cabinet on 8 June 2016. It set out the case for a potential new garden settlement in the district and sought Cabinet approval to submit an expression of interest for Otterpool Park, in response to the

Government's prospectus for "Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities".

The draft expression of interest, which was included as a confidential appendix to the report, set out the unique and well-connected location for a potential garden settlement of up to 12,000 new homes near Junction 11 of the M20. It included a potential vision and key guiding principles that provide a foundation for working with land owners and the wider community to plan and deliver a new garden community.

The expression of interest is without prejudice to any future decisions the Council might take in its capacity as local planning authority.

It was resolved:

1. That the Cabinet agrees that a proposed new garden town at Otterpool Park has the potential to be a unique opportunity to deliver the strategic objectives of the Corporate Plan relating to boosting the local economy, increasing job opportunities and providing more homes.
2. That the detailed expression of interest, attached to this report, be agreed as the Council's formal submission to the Department of Communities and Local Government's prospectus for "Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities", subject to any changes considered necessary by the Director of Strategic Development in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
3. That a further report be considered by Cabinet to consider the outcome of the expression of interest to Government.

David Monk, Leader of the Council introduced the report informing members that the council is now waiting for a response from government on the decision in respect of the expression of interest.

Dr Susan Priest, Corporate Director – Strategic Operations gave a presentation on Otterpool Park. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

Dr Priest informed members that this was a major transformational project shaping the district for the next 30+ years, with significant potential for quality, innovative design, local employment opportunities and accessible open space.

As a garden settlement it will allow officers to plan effectively from the start to create a distinct community which will include ultra-fast IT and other significant community facilities. There is a need for growth in the district and this will provide that over a number of years.

The area of the site is ideal for connecting to London, the Channel Tunnel and Port of Dover and has easy access to the coast and countryside.

There are a number of guiding principles to the park, along with information in respect of key elements and opportunities, all shown in the attached

presentation papers. There is a strong need for community engagement to involve existing and potential new residents.

Members paid particular attention to the following:

- Local involvement – officers will work with parish/town councils as the scheme is progressed. The best new developments are done with local consent.
- Expression of interest – this is with civil servants who are now reviewing it, to be followed by a recommendation to the Minister who in turn will notify the council of its decision.
- Timescales – although the timescale is for up to 30 years it enables the council to plan and fulfil its future housing needs for the district.
- Outline Plan for development – a detailed plan will not be available for some time but officers will work with the local community and take into account ancient woodland, green space and heritage assets.

9. **Exclusion of the Public**

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Claire Jeffrey
Seconded by Councillor Dick Pascoe and

Resolved:

To exclude the public from the following item of business, on the grounds that it is likely to disclose exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972: ‘Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).’

‘Financial or business affairs’ includes contemplated as well as current activities.

(Voting: For 9; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

10. **Otterpool Park**

Report C/16/09, which also related to the Otterpool Park proposal, went to Cabinet on 8 June 2016. The discussion was of a commercial nature.

It was resolved:

1. To receive and note report C/16/09.
2. To authorise the Corporate Director – Strategic Operations, in

- consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise the terms of and enter into a planning collaboration agreement with the owners of Folkestone Racecourse to regulate the working arrangements between the parties as land owners and promoters with an objective of securing a suitable outline planning permission for a new garden town.
3. To authorise the Corporate Director – Strategic Operations, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise the terms of and enter into any option agreements with other land owners within the area of search that are considered necessary to deliver the Councils ambition for a new garden town.
 4. To note that a further, more detailed, development agreement is proposed between the Council and the owners of Folkestone Racecourse and to authorise the Corporate Director – Strategic Operations to negotiate that agreement in the best interests of the Council with further report being presented to Cabinet prior to the agreement being entered into.
 5. To agree an initial landowner promoter budget in order to fund relevant activities of up to £1m in the first instance to be funded from the appropriate reserves with delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance to approve the funding source.

Julia Wallace, Otterpool Park Project Manager for Masterplanning and Design gave a presentation on this report. The following points were discussed:

- Purpose of the report was to take actions as landowner in order to deliver a new garden town. These actions include entering a collaboration agreement with owners of Folkestone Racecourse, entering options agreements with other landowners and agreeing a budget for initial work.
- Why promote a new garden community - as the landowner it allows the Council to retain control of a quality development meeting housing needs in a way that is planned, meeting corporate objectives such as health issues and economic growth.
- Collaboration Agreement – an initial agreement to set out how the parties will work together, establish principles and objectives and agree to share appointment of consultants, setting out the intention to enter a development agreement.
- Budget and financial implications – with an initial budget of £1M to cover options on land, appointment of consultants (this fee will be split with the owners of Folkestone Racecourse) and legal costs. It was agreed that as the project moves forward further financial costs will be required so a financial plan will be put in place.

Following the presentation members were given the opportunity to ask questions and a list of the issues raised are below:

Government Funding – funding from central government is already underway through the development process and further discussions are taking place.

Business Land – Significant land will be put aside for business and officers will look at types of employment, job creation and infrastructure to assist with those who want to work from home.

Local business opportunities – the council should wherever possible involve local businesses to work on the scheme.

Housing - there will be some self-build properties on the site, along with housing for first time buyers and older population. It has shown in developments around the country that housing for older people creates opportunities to plan for health care provision.

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Otterpool Park

A Garden Town of the Future

Page 7

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

28th June 2016

Minute Item 8

Folkestone
Hythe & Romney Marsh
Shepway District Council



www.shepway.gov.uk

Otterpool Park

- Major transformational project shaping the district for the next 30+ years
- Ambitious new Garden Settlement proposed for the area south of M20 at jct 11
- A proposed new community built around:
 - Quality & innovative design
 - Cutting-edge technologies
 - Local employment opportunities
 - Accessible green space for all to enjoy
 - High quality public realm
- Differentiated by the scale & quality of accessible open space

A unique location for growth

FIGURE 1: South East England Context



Why a Garden Settlement?

- Effectively planned from the start as a coherent whole community
- Scale allows the necessary infrastructure to be funded, inc ultra-fast IT and other significant community facilities
- Built out in discrete phases as distinct neighbourhoods
- Embrace landscape features in a well designed and planned approach
- Opportunity to change demography from a steadily ageing, non working population – new vibrancy, skills, jobs etc

Why Otterpool Park?

Growth in the district is needed:

- Evidence we need to plan now – 30 years +
- To the north – predominately Kent AONB
- To the south – significant area designated at Flood Zone 3a

Capacity and infrastructure to support growth:

- Jct 11, M20
- Westenhanger train station
- Channel Tunnel

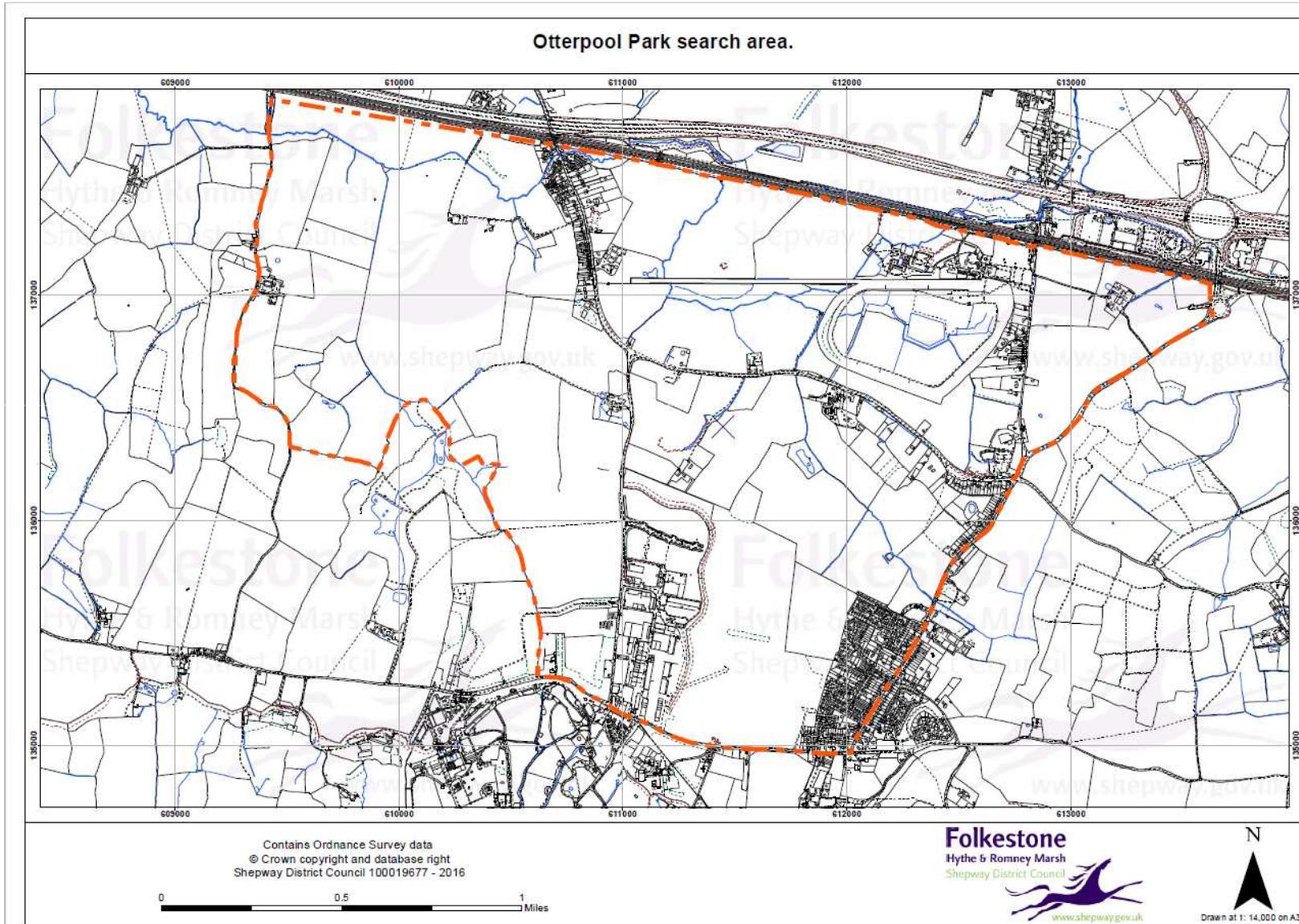
Complement existing communities, retain character, and with more investment in:

- Sewerage, utilities, schools, GP surgeries, etc

Unique Aspects - Otterpool Park

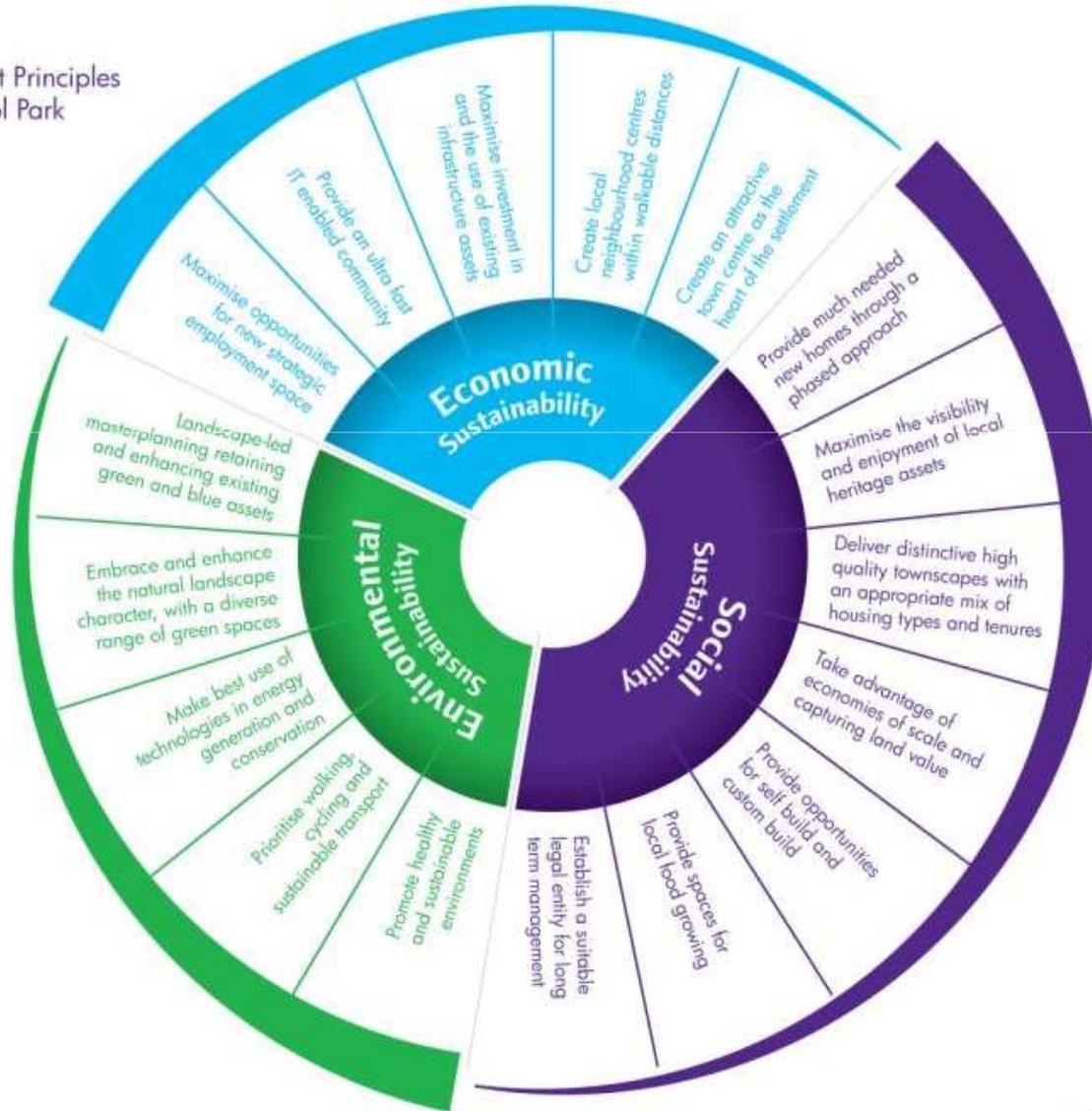
- **Connectivity**
 - London - under an hour
 - Mainland Europe - Channel Tunnel 4 miles; Port of Dover 14 miles
- **Countryside**
 - Easy access - North Downs and Romney Marsh
- **Coast**
 - Easy access – beaches, coastal park, seaside facilities
- **Culture & Leisure**
 - Westenhanger Castle, RH&D Railway, Cinque Ports
- **Creativity**
 - Support the success of Folkestone

Area of Search



Guiding Principles

Development Principles
for Otterpool Park



Key Elements & Opportunities

Key Elements:

- Opportunity to share uplift in land values to provide the investment in necessary infrastructure
- Strong local political commitment and vision to support growth
- Long-term stewardship of assets managed in perpetuity for community benefit

Opportunities:

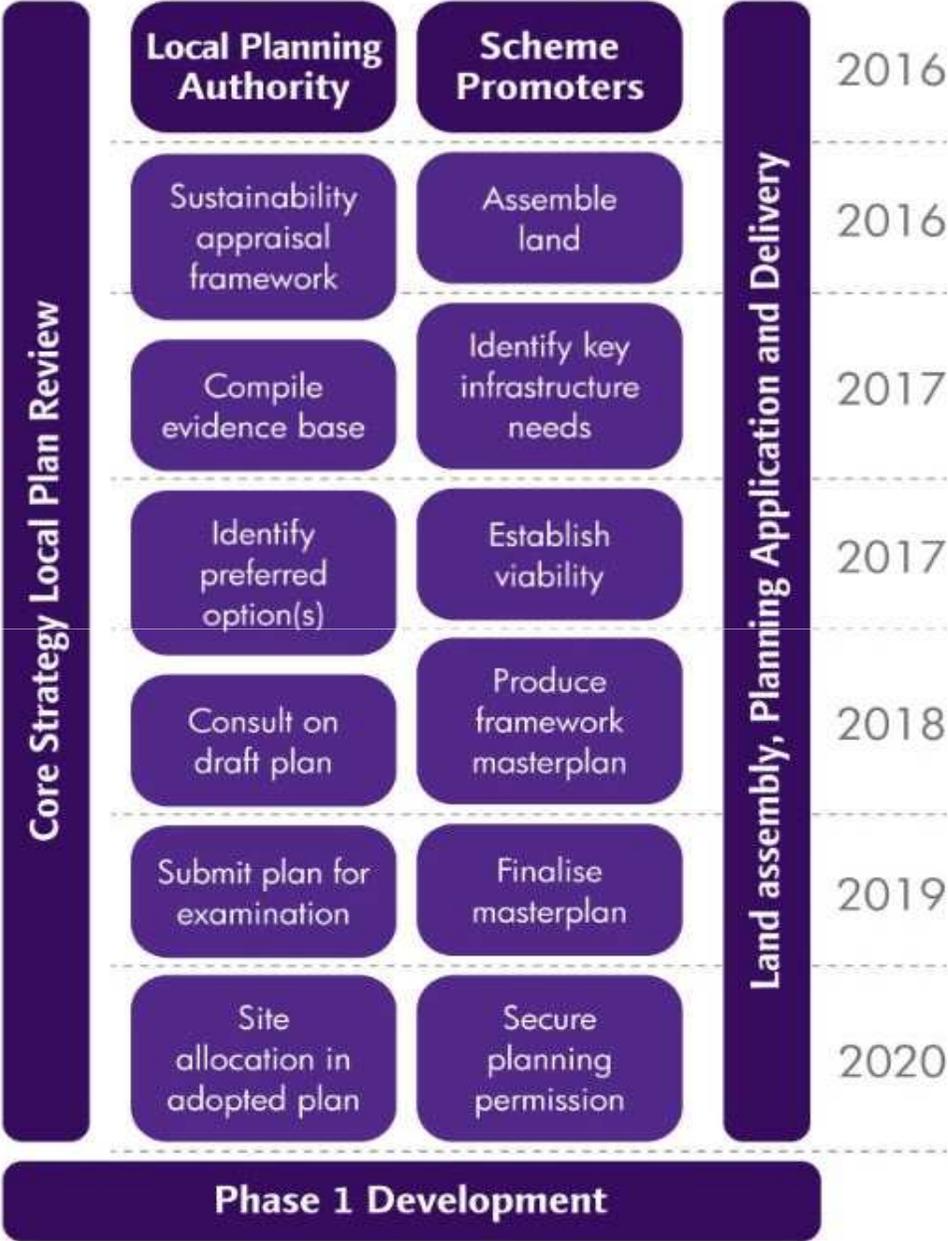
- Local business opportunities and supply chain growth
- Skills development

Community Engagement

- Close involvement in the development of proposals to shape the outcomes
- A variety of activities and opportunities will be created to involve existing and potential new residents
- Dedicated resources and investment from SDC will be made available
- Opportunities to add to the quality of existing settlement areas
- Planning for a future generation, involvement of all ages



Timescales



Questions?

