

Report of the Environment & Planning Sub-committee

The Committee met on 8th November. Bursars' attention is drawn to the following matters that either arose at that meeting or subsequently.

1. Transport-demand management consultation/infrastructure improvement

Rachel Stopard, CEO of the Greater Cambridge Partnership presented on the GCP's transport plans for the city. There is much greater alignment amongst the various entities involved in regional planning on the merits of a wholly new urban transport system for Cambridge (probably a metro running underground in the City Centre). There is also recognition that demand management measures need to be preceded by service improvements in existing public transport. A consultation on demand management measures is imminent and will revisit congestion charging and a workplace parking levy. BEPSC will co-ordinate a collective Collegiate response which should not preclude individual Colleges from submitting responses on matters of particular interest.

2. Planning – early review of Joint Local Plan

City and South Cambs will be starting to prepare revisions to the Joint Local Plan shortly as part of the "early review" mechanism embedded in last year's Plan approval. Meetings have been held with operational and political leaders within the Authorities. The following matters are relevant for Bursars:

- i) *Student Housing Policy* – Colleges seem broadly content with the more permissive policy towards development on core College sites and the associated release of HMO's back into the housing market. However there have been specific and material issues caused by individual councillors or conservation officers finding reasons not to apply this policy on specific College projects. Any College encountering such an issue is encouraged to get in touch with the Chair of BEPSC in order that advocacy to optimise adherence to the new policy can be brought to bear on Planning Leadership and consistency of practice and criteria encouraged and reiterated in the revised Plan.
- ii) *Masterplanning* – A number of Colleges are engaged in medium term masterplanning exercises. Planning expressed great willingness to interact with Colleges as these exercises take shape in order to give early feedback.
- iii) *Forward pipeline of projects* – While BEPSC did not feel that Colleges would be willing to share "early" plans for projects (ie before pre-app stage) with the Planning Authorities, given the likelihood that such disclosure might interact unfavourably with Colleges' own approval processes, there is an open invitation from Planning to do so.
- iv) *Strategic sites/affordable housing* – the Housing Strategy consultation (concluded on 25 January) makes clear that greater housing delivery, especially in the affordable/social/keyworker segments is a major priority of the forthcoming plan revision. Stephen Kelly and Lewis Herbert have both confirmed this in recent meetings and indicated a willingness to engage with Colleges on strategic planning applications where incremental delivery of this type might be undertaken. A

meeting of the relevant Council officials and Colleges with an interest in this area is being planned for 1H 2019.

- v) *Conservation/English Heritage* – We have been informed that the City needs to recover more costs in connection with conservation advice and therefore plans to start charging for “ad hoc” advice from April 2019. As yet we have no further details. It was suggested that such charging might be more palatable if the charge covered ad hoc advice from both Conservation and English Heritage. City Planning were investigating how this might be implemented. BEPSC will keep Bursars informed.

3. Environment- emissions measurement and management by Colleges

Collegiate emissions measurement/reduction – Council has asked ESSC to review its target date for carbon neutrality with a view to advancing it from 2050 to 2040 and improving the credibility and inclusiveness of its emission measurement. It is also seeking to establish a concordat with the Colleges whereby they might agree to produce individual, preferably standardised, emission measurements accompanied in due course by emission reduction targets. ESSC has been asked to help Colleges devise a low cost, relatively easily implemented emissions measurement template for Collegiate use as a first step.

Tim Harvey-Samuel, Chair, BEPSC – February 2019