
Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Tuesday, 9 June 2026 from 7.00 pm - 7.57 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Hayden Brawn (Vice-Chair), Simon Clark, Charles Gibson (Chair), Peter MacDonald, Julien Speed, Terry Thompson (Substitute for Councillor Alastair Gould) and Mike Whiting.

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Councillors Mike Baldock and Monique Bonney.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Natalie Earl, Joanne Johnson, Jhilmil Kishore, Kellie MacKenzie and Stuart Watson.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (VIRTUALLY): Councillor Dolley Wooster.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Kieran Golding, Alastair Gould and James Hunt.

62 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

63 **Minutes**

There were no minutes to consider.

64 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

65 **Designating Area of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCA)**

The Principal Heritage Officer introduced the report as set out in the agenda papers.

The Chair invited questions and comments from Members and these included:

- Welcomed the report and supported that Conservation Areas not being ruined by unsatisfactory advertising;
- Faversham Town Council had responded to say that it broadly agreed with the proposals, however this was not included in the report; and
- congratulated the officer on the report and her work in liaising closely with local residents and Queenborough Town Council.

Councillor Whiting proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Brawn.

Councillor Baldock and Councillor Bonney were in attendance remotely, and therefore unable to vote.

Resolved:

(1) That the outcomes of the public consultation, which concluded on 26 May

2026, relating to the proposed designation of an Area of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCA) be noted.

Recommendation:

- (1) That the Policy and Resources Committee agree the amendments set out in the report, and that the updated Area of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCA) document and associated guidelines, be adopted for the purpose of designating the ASCA.***

66 Whole Plan Viability Assessment Update Note 2026

The Project Manager (Planning Policy) introduced the report as set out in the agenda papers.

The Chair invited questions and comments from Members and these included:

- Concerned that the necessary water supply could not be provided;
- the water table at Faversham was going down and this needed to be reviewed with the water provider;
- it was clear that water supply was an issue and could not be provided for the existing population let alone additional development;
- an updated Whole Plan Viability Assessment (WPVA) was needed to reassure Members that what was being suggested was deliverable and defensible;
- concerned that the proposed mitigation against water shortages were not robust enough;
- did not consider it was realistically viable for the proposed housing targets to come forward and guarantee a reliable water supply. The Council should follow other local authorities such as Tunbridge Wells who had hit back in that regard;
- suggested that the Chair of the Council's Environmental Services and Climate Change Committee invite representatives from Southern Water and South East Water to attend a meeting to provide assurance that they can supply the water needed for new development;
- a water recycling plant was proposed for Sittingbourne, and a decontamination plant for the Isle of Sheppey. These facilities were very expensive to operate and questioned whether provision of these was reasonable, whilst doubting they would happen in any case;
- if Policy C10 was amended as requested at the previous meeting of the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group (PTPWG), how would that affect this WPVA?;
- reminded Members that a motion had been agreed by Full Council on 1 April 2026 that representatives of Southern Water and South East Water attend a committee of the Council and account for recent service failures and how they planned to supply water for new developments; and
- the WPVA was a thorough and effective report which highlighted the high cost of new build homes.

Officers responded and advised that:

- The WPVA looked at amongst other matters the cost of the mitigation criteria within the climate changes policies that included matters such as measures to

address water shortages and whether the Local Plan (LP) could still be viably delivered;

- this updated WPVA provided the most up-to-date viability and financial data on build costs and sales value of dwellings to inform the deliverability of LP and Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
- referred to Chapter 7 (Regulation 18 Responses) of the WPVA and all representations regarding the viability of the LP had been responded to and considered in the WPVA by the consultants.

At this point, the Planning Manager reminded Members that at the last PTPWG meeting on 27 May 2026 following a proposal by Councillor Speed, it had been agreed that officers investigate whether the following wording could be added to draft Policy C10 (Water Supply, Sewage Network Capacity and Waste Water Treatment Capacity): *“That planning permission will not be granted where adequate water supply, sewage network capacity or waste water treatment capacity cannot be demonstrated unless funded and deliverable mitigation or infrastructure upgrades are secured and operational prior to occupation.”* The Planning Manager reported that the Policy Planning Team were looking at the examples provided by Councillor Speed for the emerging Eastbourne and Lewes Joint LP and the London Borough of Merton LP. Officers would contact Members once their investigations were complete by email to advise whether the wording could be included or whether it needed to be amended.

In response to questions from a Member, the Planning Manager said they would also write to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government on the proposed wording. If the wording to draft Policy C10 was agreed it would likely not affect the WPVA.

Councillor Brawn proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Councillor Speed.

Councillor Baldock and Councillor Bonney were in attendance remotely, and therefore unable to vote.

Resolved:

(1) That the Whole Plan Viability Assessment Update Note 2026 be noted.

67 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment - non strategic sites 2026

The Project Manager (Planning Policy) introduced the report as set out in the agenda papers.

The Chair invited questions and comments from Members and these included:

- Sought clarification on whether the proposed housing development at Land to the West of Bobbing was now a strategic site?
- the impact of the proposed housing development at Bobbing needed to be considered in detail as there were very sensitive environments adjacent to the site;
- referred to CFS50 Land East of Faversham expansion, set out on page 329 of the report, and noted the assessment had made clear that employment land was the least suitable option and would require the most mitigation. What were officers

views on this; and

- referred to page 236 of the report SHELAA/402 Hollybush Farm Caravan Park, Oak Lane, Minster-on-Sea and considered that given that it was near eroding cliffs the sensitivity rating should be higher.

The Project Manager responded and advised that:

- The proposed major housing development at Bobbing was a strategic site and was subject of a 'live' planning application which would be considered at the Extraordinary Planning Committee on 24 June 2026. As part of the planning process the application included detailed assessments on matters such as landscape, and the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) had undertaken a high level landscape assessment of the site and, the landscape sensitivity assessment provided further detail for criteria in site allocation policies. For planning applications the most detailed level of landscape assessments was carried out and so there would not be the need for those types of site to be considered in this landscape sensitivity study;
- The employment area proposed for the site land east of Faversham was considerably smaller than that presented in the HELAA that considered the site for a much larger mixed use development. The employment element of the site would be more logical option on the eastern half of that site. Officers would explore mitigation solutions in order to take the site forward in the LP; and
- coastal erosion was an important separate matter. However, this assessment focused on the sensitivity to the landscape from proposed development rather than the impact on the landscape from coastal erosion.

Councillor Brawn proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Councillor Speed.

Councillor Thompson asked that it be minuted that he had abstained from voting.

Councillor Baldock and Councillor Bonney were in attendance remotely, and therefore unable to vote.

Resolved:

(1) That the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – non strategic sites 2026 be noted.

68 Local Plan Transport Modelling - a verbal update

The Project Manager (Planning Policy) gave a verbal update on the Local Plan Transport Modelling which included a slide presentation on the evidence timetable. He reported that the sites selected for allocation at the Council meeting on 1 April 2026 had been submitted to Jacobs, the Council's consultants producing the Transport and Air Quality Modelling for the LP. The Consultants were also undertaking, an additional optional piece of evidence focusing on Modal Shift Strategy. Jacobs had been selected due to their joint venture with Kent County Council (KCC) who were producing a Kent-wide Transport Model and had been used by other local authorities resulting in some time and costs savings at the start of the work.

The Project Manager explained that transport modelling was a complex piece of

evidence and could take several months to produce, but Jacobs were making excellent progress and were in the final stages of producing an 'output' report which contained forecast data on the impacts on the road network from existing consented development and development that would come forward from the Local Plan. This work would go on to identify junction hotspots from the proposed development which then would determine what junctions were required for modelling. The modelling would then inform what recommendations there were for mitigation.

The Project Manager showed a slide of Jacobs proposed work programme, he advised that Jacobs were currently working on the Local Junction Modelling and 16 junctions currently appeared to require re-modelling. The Project Manager reported that Jacobs would be attending the PTPWG on 30 June 2026 to present their findings to-date.

The Project Manager reported that once Jacobs had highlighted what the recommendations for mitigation would be, they would then commence designing the mitigation which would be an ongoing process and involve strategy stakeholders such as National Highways and KCC. Jacobs would be running a workshop for statutory stakeholders and other interested parties that Members could attend, date to be confirmed during the Summer.

The Chair invited questions and comments from Members and these included:

- Would there be an opportunity for all members of the Swale Joint Transportation Board (JTB) to comment on the transport modelling?;
- referred to Peel Ports reopening a new freight head at Sheerness Docks in a couple of years' time and the implications of this needed to be considered;
- aware that officers had been in contact with Network Rail regarding the replacement of the bridge in Crown Quay Lane, Sittingbourne. There were issues currently at that location including: standing traffic; and pedestrian safety. Jacobs should look at the pinch-points around the railway bridges when carrying out the modelling. This needed to be encapsulated in the LP and how it would be dealt with;
- there would be a presentation from Network Rail at the Swale JTB meeting on 29 June 2026 and all Members could attend;
- the Swale JTB should discuss transport modelling;
- requested that the modal shift be grounded in realism;
- KCC should look at provision of a roundabout at the St Michael's Road/Crown Quay Lane/Bell Road junction; and
- there were not enough suitable footpaths alongside traffic light junctions.

The Chair requested that Members of the Swale JTB be invited to attend the transport modelling item at the Extraordinary PTPWG on 30 June 2026 and also attend the proposed workshops. He would liaise with the officers and potentially the Chair of the Swale JTB to consider if it was appropriate for JTB to receive reports separately on the Local Plan Transport Modelling.

Resolved:

(1) That the verbal update on the Local Plan Transport Modelling be noted.

Chair

Copies of this document are available on the Council website <http://www.swale.gov.uk/dso/>. If you would like hard copies or alternative versions (i.e. large print, audio, different language) we will do our best to accommodate your request please contact Swale Borough Council at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT or telephone the Customer Service Centre 01795 417850.

All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel