

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Minutes from the Meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel held on Wednesday, 5th June, 2024 at 6.00 pm in the Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn

PRESENT: Councillors Bearshaw (Chair), Beal, Blunt, Bubb, Collingham, Colwell, Crofts, Everett, Hodson, Lintern, Osborne and Ratcliffe.

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:

Councillor Beales – Leader of the Council
Councillor Ring – Deputy Leader of the Council
Councillor Moriarty – Portfolio Holder for Development (remotely)
Councillor de Whalley – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity

OFFICERS:

Duncan Hall – Assistant Director
Jemma Curtis – Regeneration Programmes Manager
Alex Fradley – Planning Policy Manager

BY INVITATION:

Ian Parkes – Norfolk County Council

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillors Kemp, Long and Rose.

RD1: **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

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RESOLVED: Councillor Everett was appointed Vice Chair of the Panel for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year.

RD2: **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There was none.

RD3: **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

RD4: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was none.

RD5: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

RD6: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors Kemp, Long and Rose.

RD7: **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

RD8: **APPOINTMENTS TO TASK GROUPS AND INFORMAL WORKING GROUPS**

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The Panel were invited to arrange for the appointment of Members to serve on Informal Working Groups and Task Groups which had previously been established by the Panel.

RESOLVED: 1. That the Custom and Self Build Policy Development Task Group continues to operate as a 5 Member Task Group and the Democratic Services Officer be instructed to seek Membership of the Task Group from Group Leaders for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year.

2. That the Guildhall and Creative Hub Task Group be disbanded as any future Cabinet reports relating to the Guildhall and Creative Hub would be presented to the Panel as a whole.

3. That the Transport and Infrastructure Informal Working Group continue with the membership agreed by the Panel at their meeting in April with the addition of Councillor Ratcliffe.

4. That the Tourism Informal Working Group continues as a joint Informal Working Group with the Environment and Community Panel and the two panel Chairs liaise accordingly.

RD9: **TO AGREE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE INFORMAL WORKING GROUP**

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The Panel considered the draft Terms of Reference for the Transport Strategy Informal Working Group.

RESOLVED: The Terms of Reference were agreed with the following amendments:

1. The Informal Working Group would comprise of six core Members.
2. The Informal Working Group to report back to the Regeneration and Development Panel meeting in December 2024.
3. Item 6 of the Terms of Reference to be deleted as it was a duplication.

RD10: **KING'S LYNN TRANSPORT STRATEGY AND STARS UPDATE**

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Ian Parkes from Norfolk County Council provided the Panel with an update on the King's Lynn Transport Strategy. He explained that the Issues and Opportunities Report was the first output from the Strategy and would go out for Stakeholder and Member consultation shortly. All Members would be engaged in the consultation process and following the consultation and implementation plan would be produced.

Ian Parkes outlined the process and the next steps which included shortlisting options and the creation of the Implementation Plan.

Ian Parkes invited comments from Members and also explained that comments could be emailed through to him as part of the consultation process.

The Chair thanked Ian Parkes for the presentation and invited comments from the Panel on the King's Lynn Transport Strategy Issues and Opportunities Report, as summarised below.

The Chair explained that it was important for this work to link in with the work of the Informal Working Group which had been established by the Panel and Ian Parkes reminded Members that there would be Member engagement events scheduled to ensure that Councillors were able to provide comment on the Strategy.

Councillor Colwell welcomed opportunities to take pedestrians away from the busy Gaywood Road, and instead take them along the river bank. He also commented that it was necessary to have a safe crossing area at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Roundabout.

Councillor Colwell commented that the lack of buses linking Gaywood to St James Medical centre should be looked at, as well as providing more taxis and buses to serve the night time economy.

Councillor Colwell commented that the King's Lynn Area Committee were also looking at Tennyson Road crossing at the Walks and he welcomed any solutions. Ian Parkes explained that this area was being looked at as part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and a scheme was being pulled together.

Councillor Blunt asked if the Panel would have the opportunity to comment on the draft Strategy before it was finalised and suggested

that it be brought to the Panel for consideration as a single item Agenda. Ian Parkes reminded Members of the Member engagement sessions that would be arranged.

The Chair referred to the Local Housing Needs Assessment and felt that the vision included in the report needed more detail.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Everett asked Ian Parkes how much longer the funding was in place for the £1.50 bus fares and if there was opportunities for this to be extended. Ian Parkes explained that he would ask his colleagues to provide an update on this.

Councillor Beal referred to buses serving Hunstanton and that most of them stopped around 9pm, which was a problem for those attending the theatre, bars and employment. He asked that consideration be given to extending the services available.

In response to a question from Councillor Bubb it was explained that WSP had been commissioned to carry out the study and this would be used to update the Transport Strategy so that opportunities for funding could be sought.

Councillor Collingham commented that the vision needed to include bus hubs, and an extension of the rail network. Ian Parkes commented that this report was the Issues and Opportunities report and provided an evidence base to formulate ideas and could be built on to develop interventions.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that the previous King's Lynn Transport Strategy had been published in 2019 and this process would update the 2019 strategy to ensure that it was fit for purpose and included short, medium and long term measures.

Councillor Colwell commented that it was important to plan for the future increase of housing.

The Chair commented that the vision needed to include the need for an additional rail station and transport hub. He also referred to opportunities to link Norwich Airport which brought in a lot of freight to West Norfolk.

In response to a query from Councillor Ratcliffe, Ian Parkes explained that West Winch Growth Area was a key area within the Strategy.

The Chair commented that the Ferry Service needed recognising in the plan, including the need for disabled access and repairs.

Councillor Lintern commented that transport hubs and rail issues needed to feature in the plan.

Councillor Kemp addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and commented that mention of Hardings Way being used for vehicles needed to be removed. Ian Parkes explained that a study of this area had been undertaken and the report mentioned that allowing general vehicles along Hardings Way would be of no benefit, therefore it had been removed from the plan.

Councillor Crofts commented that Hardings Way was an underused area and ways to alleviate traffic should be investigated.

Councillor Long addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and explained that it was important to progress the Strategy so that projects were shovel ready once funding opportunities were available. He commented that a Parkway Station should be considered within the Strategy.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Beales informed Members that discussions were ongoing with Eastern Powerhouse to look at opportunities for rail networks in this area.

Ian Parkes then provided the Panel with an update on the STARS project explaining that this had come from the previous Transport Strategy and formed part of the Southgates Masterplan. He explained that work was ongoing on the Outline Business Case which would be submitted to DfT. Discussions were also ongoing with Historic England and Conservation Officers. Ian Parkes explained that as the scheme progressed, further updates could be provided to Members.

The Chair commented that he would like to see more detail of the traffic modelling as he had understood that the work would not improve traffic flow.

Councillor Long addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and commented that it was important to ensure that adequate disabled access was included in any work. He also commented that it was important to consider the impact the work would have on local businesses.

Councillor Kemp addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and commented that if the scheme increased congestion it would need to be relooked at as it would impact air quality. She also raised concerns relating to the Town Wall and Ian Parkes explained that Historic England and Conservation Officers were being engaged in the process.

RESOLVED: The Panel noted the update.

RD11: **CABINET REPORT - LOCAL PLAN UPDATE - PROCESS TO ADOPTION INCLUDING MAIN MODIFICATIONS CONSULTATION**

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The Planning Policy Manager presented the Cabinet Report which set out the process to adoption, which included consulting on the Main Modifications required to ensure that the Local Plan was legally compliant and sound.

The Chair thanked the Planning Policy Manager for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

In response to a question from Councillor Lintern regarding solar farms, the Planning Policy Manager explained the examination was under the NPPF and there were policies within the Local Plan related to climate change mitigation and adaptation but there wasn't a specific policy for solar farms. National Policy currently set out the approach in this space. He also explained that the next would offer the opportunity to review out policies and explore such matters further as appropriate.

Councillor Crofts referred to the Gypsy and Traveller allocated sites and referred to tolerated sites. The Planning Policy Manager explained that it was a legal requirement to meet the needs of all of the communities and the consultation on the Borough Council's preferred sites and policies was now open. He encouraged Councillors and anyone who was interested to make representations through the consultation process.

The Chair referred to the five-year land supply for housing and Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Planning Policy Manager explained that there was currently a sufficient supply to meet both. With regard to Gypsy and Traveller sites this would be subject to the Hearing Sessions in September, following the current consultation, and the Inspectors could decide to remove or include sites. Any modifications would then be consulted on.

Councillor Blunt stressed the importance of ensuring a five-year land supply in the Borough.

In response to a question from Councillor Blunt it was confirmed that the accelerated timetable had been agreed jointly with officers and the Inspector and it was felt that it was achievable.

Councillor Kemp addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and the Planning Policy Manager confirmed that the West Winch Growth Area had been considered carefully.

Councillor Moriarty, Portfolio Holder for Development, thanked the Panel for their comments. He also thanked officers and the Planning

Policy Manager for their hard work on bringing this forward. He reminded Members that they would still have the opportunity to make comments now on the Gypsy and Traveller consultation and when the main modifications went out for consultation later this month.

RESOLVED: That the Panel supported the recommendations to Cabinet, as set out below.

1. Cabinet notes and endorses the agreed accelerated timescale for the Local Plan through to adoption, as agreed with the Inspectors at the recent Examination hearings, and as set out in the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS), April 2024.

2. Cabinet notes and endorses the requirement to consult on the Main Modifications, which is legally required to ensure that the Local Plan can be made sound.

RD12: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

RD13: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel would be held on 23rd July 2024 at 6.00pm in the Town Hall, King's Lynn.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm