

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, 30th November, 2016 at 6.00 pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn

PRESENT: Councillor P Gidney (Chairman)
Councillors Miss L Bambridge, A Bubb, Mrs J Collingham, C J Crofts, M Chenery of Horsbrugh, M Howland, P Rochford and Mrs E Watson.

Portfolio Holders

Councillor A Beales - Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets

Councillor R Blunt - Portfolio Holder for Development

Councillor B Long - Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment

Councillor Mrs E Nockolds – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health

Officers:

Chris Bamfield – Executive Director, Commercial Services

Jemma Curtis – Regeneration Programmes Manager

Ostap Paparega – Regeneration and Economic Development Manager

By Invitation:

John Balch – NWES Director

Simon Davis - Levitate

Niall McNevin - Levitate

RD70: APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

The Vice Chairman, Councillor Rochford was absent at the beginning of the meeting therefore a Vice Chairman was appointed for the meeting.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Howland be appointed Vice Chairman for the meeting.

RD71: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kunes.

RD72: MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes from the Regeneration and Development Panel meeting held on 19th October 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments:

RD62: Feedback from the talk on the Essential Benefits of Trees: the word 'poor' be amended to 'raised many issues'.

RD65: St George's Guildhall Complex: Quality Surveyor, should read Quantity Surveyor.

RD73: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was none.

RD74: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

RD75: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Bird – RD82
Councillor Pope – RD77 to RD83.

RD76: **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chairman reminded the Panel that Members of the King's Lynn Area Advisory Committee had been invited to the meeting for the Riverfront Delivery Plan item. The Chairman explained that he had received correspondence from a Member of the Committee, Councillor Smith, who was unable to attend the meeting. The Chairman read out the correspondence from Councillor Smith.

RD77: **UPDATE FROM NWES DIRECTOR**

The Chairman welcomed John Balch from NWES to the meeting. John Balch explained that he was an NWES Director and the Managing Director of Property Services. The Panel was provided with an update on the King's Lynn Innovation Centre (KLIC).

John Balch reminded those present that the KLIC had been opened in June 2016 and the aim was to have the centre at 50% occupancy within 12 months of operation. Currently the centre was 40% full. The Panel was informed that there were approximately 19 centres across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and North East London and typically they were at 50% capacity within the first year, 75% in year two and then it usually took a few years to get to complete capacity. John Balch felt that the KLIC was doing well in terms of occupied space.

John Balch explained that NWES and the Council had worked together and he thanked the officers and Members involved in the project for their co-operation. He stated that they had a good work ethic and he was optimistic for the future.

The Chairman thanked John Balch for attending the meeting and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Pope addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He referred to the centre being at 40% capacity and asked at what point the centre would break even financially. John Balch explained that approximately 60% occupancy and other activities would result in the facility breaking even and 65% would result in a surplus, it was hoped that this would be achieved by the end of year two.

Councillor Blunt, Portfolio Holder for Development, informed the Panel that he had been appointed as the Borough Council's representative on the KLIC Project Steering Group which would meet on a quarterly basis and Councillor Blunt commented that he would be happy to keep the Panel updated on progress as appropriate.

In response to a question, John Balch explained that a local IT company had been the first tenant in. The company was local and looking to expand and the KLIC was their opportunity to do so. He felt that by having an established tenant in, it could encourage other enterprises into the KLIC. John Balch also explained that the KLIC did offer shared services.

The Panel was informed that NWES provided support to tenants such as access to clients, development support and advice on grant funding opportunities.

In response to questions from the Panel, John Balch confirmed that the shortest formal term of let was one month. The KLIC also had facilities available for drop in sessions, co-working space and shared facilities. The Panel was informed that in the future NWES would be looking at a Membership programme so users could use the facilities for meetings, conferences and drop in sessions if required.

RESOLVED: (i) The update was noted.
(ii) Members be kept updated on progress as required.

RD78: ST GEORGE'S GUILDHALL UPDATE

The Executive Director, Commercial Services provided the Panel with an update on the Heritage Lottery Fund Grant Application for St George's Guildhall. He explained that, because of the funding required for the project, the bid application would have to be submitted at national level rather than regional level. The deadline for submission of the bid was the 8th December 2016. The Executive Director explained that it was important to hit the 8th December funding deadline as a separate application for funding would also be made to the Arts Lottery, and if this was successful any funds awarded would have to be spent before 2019.

The Panel was informed that a decision on the Guildhall from the Heritage Lottery Fund was expected in March/April 2017.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health explained that meetings with user groups had been held and they were generally supportive of the proposals and the user groups had agreed to come together to write a formal letter of support. She explained that the seating proposed for the Guildhall would provide the flexibility for numerous layouts, which should hopefully cater for most of the user groups and a flat floor layout would also be available. The Portfolio Holder also explained that meetings had been held with Lavender Hill Mob Theatre Company who could potentially use the spaces available for workshops etc. and they had been consulted on accessibility.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director and Portfolio Holder for the update and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

In response to a question, the Portfolio Holder explained that consultation with the user groups had had a positive outcome as now a solution, which was suitable for all, had been proposed. She explained that the Heritage Lottery Fund would want the Council to work with the local community and user groups and take their views into consideration.

The Executive Director explained that as part of the project work to the Fermoy Gallery would be carried out to bring it up to standard to accommodate National Exhibitions.

In response to a question, the Executive Director explained that the Council leased the Guildhall from the National Trust and the Council had been in regular contact with the National Trust regarding the proposals. The Executive Director explained that repair work to the Guildhall would be required in the future and the Heritage Lottery Fund application would assist in taking the cost of the works away from the Council. Councillor Howland asked if there was the option to purchase the Guildhall from the National Trust and the Executive Director agreed to investigate if this was a possibility.

The Executive Director explained that if the Stage one bid was successful, a Stage two submission would follow, however, if the Arts Lottery bid application was successful, the Council may have to do some work in advance, as the Arts Lottery money would have to be spent within a certain timescale.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

RD79: **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

RD80: **EXEMPT - RIVERFRONT DELIVERY PLAN**

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager and the Regeneration Programmes Manager provided the Panel with an update on the Riverfront Delivery Plan.

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager informed the Panel that a tender exercise had been carried out and consultants had been appointed to review the existing studies of the area, meet with key stakeholders and carry out a public consultation before presenting their findings.

The Panel was reminded that the baseline report which was part of the Urban Design Analysis had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Simon Davis and Niall McNevin to the meeting, who provided the Panel with information on the area and suggested options. The Panel was also provided with the results of the public consultation exercise. The Panel was informed that over 200 people had responded to the public consultation exercise.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that the next step was for the all data and information to be reviewed and fed back to the Council. Then a final options report would be created and consideration would need to be given to the preferred option. The Regeneration and Development Panel would be kept updated on progress at the relevant time and it was possible that another public consultation exercise would be carried out on the final options report.

The Chairman thanked Simon Davis and Niall McNevin for attending the meeting and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Crofts stated that the area in question was unique and contained lots of Listed Buildings. He felt that more needed to be done to promote the area to tourists, especially those who came in on bus trips. He commented that not many bus trips came to King's Lynn and more should be done to encourage this. He suggested that provision for a bus park be included in the area.

Councillor Mrs Watson suggested that installing additional pontoons would be good for the area, however they would need to be publicised and there would need to be more activity in the area to draw people in.

Councillor Pope addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He stated that there was a problem with siltation at the Nar Loop and Niall McNevin commented that any options for this area would look at issues such as this. He explained that barriers could be put in place so that water could flow out to the River Nar, but the Nar couldn't flow into the Loop, which could reduce siltation. He explained that river flows, drainage and siltation would be looked at with regards to the body of water and possible future uses. Councillor Pope referred to the Marina proposals and commented that he hoped that the same mistakes were not made this time. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Councillor Beales explained that the Council had moved on from the Marina. He explained that assets acquired during the Marina proposals were still owned by the Council and would assist in the delivery of the Riverfront Project.

Councillor Bambridge asked who would undertake any development, whether it would be the Council or an outside developer. She also made reference to the lock gate and if it would be costly to open the gate at the Purfleet. She also referred to potential proposals for King's Staithe Square and reminded those present that the area was residential and needed to take into consideration the comfort of residents. She also referred to the Harding's Way Bus Route and suggested that one possibility could be to open the route up to users of the Boal Quay Car Park. Councillor Bambridge commented that the promotion of King's Lynn was important and marketing needed to be targeted. Councillor Beales, The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, responded to the comments made by Councillor Bambridge, he explained that the area would be respected and preserving the heritage was key. He commented that different options could be looked at in terms of who would develop site. Development could be carried out in partnership, similar to the development at Marsh Lane and Lynnsport, it all depended on how much control Members wanted to retain. The Portfolio Holder explained that at the moment this was just the idea stage and now was the time to put suggestions forward which could be taken into consideration. The Portfolio Holder agreed that marketing of the area was important and that it needed to be targeted. He also explained that density, height and mass of development would be carefully considered; however he reminded those present that the area was currently less dense than it had been in the past.

Councillor Crofts suggested that work be carried out to encourage more boats into King's Lynn and this could be achieved by additional pontoons. He also felt that some of the areas for development may not be commercially viable, therefore required public body intervention in order to stimulate development.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health, Councillor Nockolds explained that the existing pontoons were promoted independently and jointly with Fosdyke and Wisbech. Councillor Collingham commented that it was a challenge to sail into King's Lynn because of moving sandbanks, tides and flows.

Councillor Collingham commented that the area needed to cater for the needs of young people, which would draw families into the town centre. She felt that a play area and facilities for children should be introduced and she suggested a pirate ship play area. The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health explained that the West Norfolk Tourism Forum's Destination Management Plan mentioned the need for high quality attractions to draw in young children.

Councillor Bubb commented that he would not be keen on any development close to the Nar Loop and suggested floating houses as an idea. He also commented that hidden railway lines could be reinstated as they were part of the town's heritage and could be a feature of the area.

The Chairman informed those present that he had previously been Project Manager for the North Sea Haven project and he provided information on weaknesses in the area, siltation, engineering and drainage. He also referred to the idea of opening up the inland waterways and felt that this could be achieved by putting some pontoons near the Southgates. The Chairman commented that traffic was an issue in King's Lynn and something needed to be done to assist the traffic flow in King's Lynn.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Long agreed that traffic was getting worse in King's Lynn and Norfolk County Council were aware of problems. Collaborative working between the Borough and County was being looked at and better solutions were needed. The Leader of the Council referred to the underused bus route at Harding's Way and felt that this could handle more traffic if required. The Leader of the Council also referred to Air Quality issues in the town centre.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration thanked the Panel for their input. He also referred to the Chairman's technical knowledge of the area and suggested that he may like to have further input in the project.

Councillor Bambridge proposed that the Chairman of the Panel, Councillor Gidney be consulted on the Riverfront Delivery Plan because of his technical knowledge of the area. The Proposal was seconded by Councillor Crofts and agreed by the Panel.

RESOLVED: (i) The update was noted.
(ii) The comments of the Panel be taken into consideration.
(iii) That the Panel recommend that the Chairman, Councillor Gidney, be further consulted on the project as appropriate.

RD81: **EXEMPT - CABINET REPORT - NAR OUSE BUSINESS PARK ENTERPRISE ZONE IMPLEMENTATION**

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager and Regeneration Programmes Manager presented the Cabinet report which outlined the arrangements and approvals required for delivery of the Enterprise Zone to facilitate development of the employment land at the Nar Ouse Business Park.

The Panel received a presentation from the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager and Regeneration Programmes Manager which included detail of the actions required in order to implement the Enterprise Zone, planning and permissions required and associated costs and returns. The Panel was informed that planning options would require Cabinet approval and would be presented to the Regeneration and Development Panel for consideration.

The Chairman thanked the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager and the Regeneration Programmes Manager for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel.

Councillor Pope addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He made reference to the finance arrangements and the Business rates thresholds. The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager explained the thresholds for the rates of discounts and explained that the Cabinet report set out the amendments to the Treasury Management Strategy.

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager and Regeneration Programmes Manager responded to questions regarding finance, business rates discounts and infrastructure work required.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration and Development Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out in the report.

RD82: **EXEMPT - ONE PUBLIC ESTATE**

The Executive Director, Commercial Services presented the report which provided the Panel with an update on progress with the three schemes to be implemented as part of One Public Estate in the Borough.

The Executive Director provided information on the funding awarded as part of the One Public Estate bid and the feasibility studies which would be carried out. The Executive Director explained that in the future it may be possible to obtain further funding, so if Members were aware of assets which had potential and were owned by other public bodies they were encouraged to pass on details to the Executive Director.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel.

Councillor Bird addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He made reference to the Hunstanton assets which had been included in the proposals, which included Valentine Road, the Library, the School and Seafront Areas. He also asked if Hunstanton Community Centre had been included and the Executive Director confirmed that it had not. The Executive Director responded to the points made by Councillor Bird. He explained that plans were available for the Valentine Road proposals and these had been agreed in principle by the Library Service. Meetings had also been carried out with Norfolk County Council and the Bus Operators and transit times and drop off points were being considered. The Executive Director explained that the Seafront had been included in the original bid, but funding for this area had been unsuccessful, however there would be the opportunity to apply again in the future. The Executive Director reminded the Panel that the Oasis was heavily subsidised and a feasibility study could look at options for the site and alternative leisure provisions.

RESOLVED: (i) The update was noted.
(ii) The Panel to forward details of any other opportunities within the Borough which could be considered for inclusion in the One Public Estate programme in the future.

RD83: **WORK PROGRAMME AND STRUCTURE OF THE PANEL**

The Chairman reminded the Panel that at their previous meeting it had been agreed to discuss the structure of the Panel and how items were considered for inclusion on the Work Programme. Councillor Mrs Collingham suggested that this be discussed in detail at the next meeting and in the meantime she would seek views from Members of the Panel and present a short report to the next meeting.

Members of the Panel were reminded that there was an eform available on the intranet which could be completed and submitted if Members had items which they would like to be considered for addition to the Work Programme.

RESOLVED: (i) The Panel's Work Programme was noted.
(ii) An item on Structure of the Panel be added to the agenda for the next meeting.
(iii) Monitoring of the Five Year Land Supply be added to the Work Programme.
(iv) Updates to be received from the Custom and Self Build Policy Task Group as appropriate.

RD84: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 11th January 2017 at 6.00pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 1EX.

The meeting closed at 8.41 pm