

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel held on Tuesday, 11th April, 2023 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors J Collingham (Chair), C Bower, M de Whalley, P Gidney, B Jones, C Manning, C Morley, T Parish (substitute for P Beal), C Rose and D Whitby.

REMOTE ATTENDANCE: Councillor Bone

OFFICERS:

Duncan Hall – Assistant Director

Matthew Henry – Assistant Director

Abigail Rawlings – Project Support Officer

Heather Northey – Interim Project Manager

RD91: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beal, Crofts, Devereux and Sampson.

RD92: MINUTES

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

RD93: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was none.

RD94: URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

RD95: MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34

There was none.

RD96: CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

RD97: UPDATE ON THE TOURISM INFORMAL WORKING GROUP

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The Assistant Director provided the update, providing an overview of the workshop sessions, and the guest speakers that had attended the sessions. Members were reminded that the notes from the workshop sessions and draft action plans were available to view on Mod Gov. The draft action plans from each session would be developed into an overall action plan to be considered by the Panel.

Further workshop sessions would be scheduled after the Election.

The Chair reminded Members that the Informal Working Group had also been tasked with looking at the Notices of Motion and previous Panel comments relating to Campervan parking, Caravan Parking and a Tourism Levy and it was explained that these themes had been looked at in depth by the Informal Working Group and would be included in their final report.

Councillor Parish referred to sustainable tourism and it was explained that this had been considered by the Informal Working Group including looking at the type of options and offer provided, being sympathetic to those areas that could not accommodate an increase in tourism and available facilities.

In response to a comment from Councillor Parish, the Assistant Director explained that a future workshop session would be themed around experiential tourism which included management, control and the offer of the experiences and itineraries.

The Chair explained that the Informal Working Group had also considered encouraging all year tourism so that the peak period could be stretched out, balancing this with the effect it could have on residents.

Councillor Morley asked if a representative from an Employment Agency had been invited to one of the workshops. The Assistant Director explained that the Working Group had looked at workforce issues in several of their workshop sessions.

Councillor de Whalley welcomed discussions on bus stops and waiting points and ensuring that they were accessible. He referred to the Ferry and explained that this was an important tourism provision. The Chair explained that transport had been considered as part of the Infrastructure Workshop Session and lots of options had been discussed. The Assistant Director explained that the Borough Council were working with Norfolk County Council to look at opportunities for the West Lynn Ferry.

Councillor Morley suggested that the Informal Working Group look at 'dog friendly' tourism offers.

Councillor Bubb commented that the current economic climate needed to be considered when encouraging businesses to develop their offer. He also referred to the resources required to keep a tourism area looking tidy and presentable and referred to a recent visit to Hunstanton. Councillor Bower commented that Hunstanton was very well maintained and referred to the previous success of Hunstanton in Bloom.

The Chair thanked the Panel for their comments which would be considered by the Informal Working Group and explained that the full report would be presented to the Regeneration and Development Panel in due course.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

RD98: **CABINET REPORT - SOUTHGATES AREA MASTERPLAN DELIVERY PLAN**

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The Assistant Director presented the report and reminded the Panel that they had considered the Masterplan previously. He outlined the recommendations within the report, the exploration of further funding opportunities and the STARS project, which was a Norfolk County Council led project with the Borough Council being part of the Project Team.

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

Councillor Morley commented that the Masterplan was not sufficient to be a Supplementary Planning Document and the recommendations should be amended to reflect this. He also commented that he felt it was the wrong time to take this through the democratic process and it should wait until after the election. He referred to the STARS project and the additional funding which would be required. The Assistant Director referred to the Levelling Up Fund Bid and further funding opportunities which would be explored.

Information was also provided on property acquisitions and the sitting tenants. Reference was also made to the Community Shop which was currently using the old HSS Building.

Councillor Jones referred to traffic flow and felt that the merging and opening of lanes was dangerous and could cause bottlenecks. He did not feel that the Masterplan alleviated this issue and more detail was required on traffic movement. The Assistant Director commented that

the transport side of the project was separate and the Masterplan focussed on making the Southgates a gateway to the town. Councillor Jones also commented that some people had no option but to use a car, so this needed to be considered when encouraging active travel and alternative travel options.

Councillor de Whalley referred to the 128 survey responses, the risks of the Brownfield Fund, Devolution and Tree planting. He was also concerned for the businesses and residents and the potential development in a flood zone area. The Assistant Director explained that the survey was carried out by an external company. The full responses were included in the consultation results. He also explained that residential development and flood risk would be considered as part of the planning process. The Project Support Officer explained that a landscape architect was involved in the project who would look at tree planting and meetings had been held with landowners of Wisbech Road.

Councillor Parish commented that progress of the Masterplan had been ongoing for years. He acknowledged that the area did need improving, but was concerned about the cost and financial risks.

Councillor Morley reiterated that the Masterplan should not form part of Supplementary Planning Guidance, but the STARS project should get up and running as soon as possible.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Gidney commented that planning was essential as often public projects over spent and went over time. He also had some reservations about the junction design.

Councillor Bone commented that he was concerned for residents of The Friars and the traffic light changes which he felt would make the situation worse. The Project Support Officer explained that businesses had been involved in looking at parking issues and their responses had been fed back to the consultants.

The Panel considered the recommendations as set out in the report and concerns were raised relating to the relationship between the Masterplan and the STARS project, the additional funding requirements and the build and development element of the project.

The Assistant Director confirmed that the Masterplan being taken forward as a Supplementary Planning Document had been looked at as a potential option, but the Cabinet report stated that it was now not being taken forward as one.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration and Development Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out below, with the amendments highlighted in bold.

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the final Southgates Masterplan Development Brief Document and the preferred option as set out in Appendix 1. **To be clear the Panel did not believe that it was appropriate that this becomes a Supplementary Planning Document.**
2. Approve further feasibility and options testing for the development and delivery of the sites in the Southgates area, **subject to viability and sustainability considerations to be brought back to the Regeneration and Development Panel for consideration.**
3. Delegate authority to Assistant Director for Property and Projects in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Property, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration & Portfolio for Finance, to agree BCKLWN land contribution to Norfolk County Council's King's Lynn – Sustainable Transport and Regeneration Scheme (STARS) project.
4. Instruct Regeneration and Economic Development officers to progress with seeking further external funding that may be required to deliver the scheme.
5. A further report is brought back to Cabinet to update on the outcome of the next steps detailed in sections 4 & 5 of this report and consider the final arrangements for overall scheme delivery in early 2024.

RD99: **RIVERFRONT REGENERATION TOWN DEAL PROJECT UPDATE**

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The Assistant Director introduced the Panel to Heather Northey, Interim Project Manager who provided an update on the Riverfront Regeneration Town Deal Project and the recent workshop which had taken place.

She explained that the project was now entering RIBA Stage 3 and a design team would be appointed to take this forward. A review of RIBA Stage 2 had been conducted. It was explained that the project could be amended and reprioritised at this stage and a workshop session had been arranged to gain feedback on the way forward.

The Chair thanked officers for the update and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

In response to questions from Councillor Morley it was confirmed that RIBA Stage 3 would deal with the specifics and what could actually be achieved, phases had been identified. The Assistant Director reminded the Panel that the RIBA Stage 2 report had been presented to the Panel and considered by Cabinet in September 2022.

The Panel discussed the proposals relating to the tower, customs house and opportunities to attract tourists.

Councillor Bone commented that any development needed to represent the maritime heritage of King's Lynn.

Councillor Bubb explained that there were railway lines underneath the surface of the Quay which would be a good tourist attraction if they were exposed.

The Vice Chair indicated that he would like to ask some questions which should be considered in exempt session and these were considered later on in the meeting.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

RD100: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Decisions List was noted.

RD101: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 13th June 2023 at 4.30pm.

RD102: **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

RD103: **EXEMPT - RIVERFRONT REGENERATION TOWN DEAL PROJECT UPDATE**

Officers responded to questions and comments from the Panel relating to the Riverfront Regeneration Town Deal Project.

RD104: **EXEMPT - CABINET REPORT - ASSET MANAGEMENT - LAND AND PROPERTY - KING'S LYNN - NAR OUSE BUSINESS PARK: PROPOSED SALE OF LAND.**

Officers presented the Cabinet Report as included in the Agenda. The Chair thanked the officers for the report and invited questions and comments from Members.

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

The meeting closed at 6.46 pm