

**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, 30th July, 2019 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mrs J Collingham (Chair), L Bambridge, J Bhondi, F Bone, M de Whalley, M Howland, B Jones, J Lowe, C Manning, T Parish, S Patel and D Whitby

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors C Joyce, A Kemp, C Morley, D Pope and A Ryves.

**PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:**

Councillor R Blunt – Portfolio Holder for Development  
 Councillor I Devereux – Portfolio Holder for Environment  
 Councillor P Gidney – Portfolio Holder for Project Delivery  
 Councillor P Kunes – Portfolio Holder for Commercial Services  
 Councillor B Long – Leader of the Council  
 Councillor G Middleton – Portfolio Holder for Business Development

**OFFICERS:**

Chris Bamfield – Executive Director, Commercial Services  
 Mark Fuller – Principal Project Surveyor  
 Alan Gomm – LDF Manager  
 Ged Greaves – Senior Policy and Performance Officer  
 Geoff Hall – Executive Director, Development  
 Ray Harding – Chief Executive  
 Matthew Henry – Property Services Manager  
 Steven King – THI Project Officer  
 Dave Robson – Environmental Health Manager

**RD14: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs Nockolds.

**RD15: MINUTES**

A request to amend the minutes had been received from Councillor Rust and was read out by the Chair as follows:

“I’d like to pass to you a request for the minutes to be altered on a matter of accuracy. The minutes state that I did not oppose the cinema, however, what I actually said is that I did not oppose it per se and I went on to list the provisos and concerns I had. I did actually state I shared the concerns of my fellow Labour party Councillors – Jones and Bone, who had articulated issues they were worried about.”

The Democratic Officer explained that the draft minutes currently read as “Councillor Rust addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. She commented that she did not oppose the proposal but was concerned that the cost of the tickets would present a barrier to some people.”

The Panel felt that the minutes summarised the comments made by Councillor Rust and did not require amending.

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

RD16: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor de Whalley declared an interest in the Guildhall Workshop session as he had been involved in meetings with the Shakespeare Trust. He stated he was not a Trustee.

Councillor Bone declared an interest in the Guildhall Workshop session as he had been involved in a newspaper article relating to the Guildhall.

RD17: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

RD18: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Blunt – all items.  
 Councillor Devereux – all items.  
 Councillor Joyce – all items.  
 Councillor Kemp – all items.  
 Councillor Kunes – RD25.  
 Councillor Middleton – all items.  
 Councillor Pope – all items.  
 Councillor Ryves – all items.

The asked that, in the future where possible, Members provide more detail on the items that they would like to attend under Standing Order 34, rather than a blanket ‘all items’.

RD19: **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence had been received from Councillor Rust regarding the minutes of the previous meeting which had been considered under item RD15.

RD20: **FULL YEAR 2018-2019 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Senior Policy and Performance Officer presented the report. He explained that each year the Cabinet agreed the Performance Indicators and each Panel monitored the Performance Indicators that were relevant to the Panel, on a quarterly basis.

The Panel's attention was drawn to the indicators which had not met target:

- CO8b – Number of residential house sales completed – NORA
- CO9a – Number of residential houses commenced – Marsh Lane
- CO9b – Number of residential houses completed – Marsh Lane
- CO10b – Number of residential sales completed – Lynnsport 4/5

The Senior Policy and Performance Officer referred to the notes against the indicators provided by the Service Manager. An update report would be provided to the Panel in October, but having checked recent sales date, progress was being made.

The Chair thanked the Senior Policy and Performance Officer for his report. There were no questions from the Panel.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel reviewed the monitoring report and agreed the actions in the action report.

RD21: **KING'S LYNN TRANSPORT STUDY**

The LDF Manager and Environmental Health Manager provided an update on the King's Lynn Transport Study (as attached).

It was explained that the Stage 2 document had now been published which detailed the outcome of the options appraisal. Schemes would now be broken into short, medium and long term interventions and Stage 3 work would include creation of a strategy for the area.

A further update would be provided to the Panel once the Stage 3 work had been completed, prior to its submission to Cabinet.

The Chair thanked officers for their presentation and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below. She commented that she felt that the report was difficult to digest and she was unclear on the proposals.

Councillor Bambridge commented that resident only parking for the Friars should be considered and that school start and finish times across King's Lynn should be staggered to relieve congestion. Councillor Bambridge also commented that interventions on the bus network may not be possible as they were privately operated.

Councillor de Whalley asked how the plan would contribute towards the 2050 zero carbon emissions commitment. He also asked why Stage 2 had not been subject to public consultation and that there was little mention of off road cycle lanes within the report.

The Cabinet Member for Project Delivery, Councillor Gidney, commented that the report needed a simplified analysis, broken down into traffic types, issues prioritised and then delivery systems could be looked at. He also stated that there was no mention of automated traffic lights in the report.

The LDF Manager explained that the Stage 2 document included the options which were feasible and Stage 3 would look at them in more detail. He explained that Appendix H of the report mentioned cycle routes, buses and automated traffic signals. Interventions did include the bus network infrastructure.

Councillor Kemp addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and stated that the Council's priority should be Climate Change and that the Hardings Way bus lane should not be opened up to traffic because travel by bus, cycle and walking should be encouraged. She gave merit to the suggestions for park and ride facilities at Clenchwarton and encouraged use of the Ferry which was also a form of park and ride. She stated that the Council needed to rule out the idea of allowing traffic on Hardings Way.

Councillor Ryves addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. In response to a question from Councillor Ryves, it was confirmed that the provision of electric charging points was included in the report. He also asked if consideration would be given to car parking offers in line with the potential new cinema at the Corn Exchange. The Environmental Health Manager explained that a Car Parking Strategy was being produced which would look at this.

The Leader, Councillor Long, explained that this study had been long awaited. He explained that Norfolk County Council had a Transport Committee, but there had not been much investment in King's Lynn.

The Portfolio Holder for Development, Councillor Blunt, commented that the Study was still a work in progress and the Strategy would be produced and presented to the Panel once ready.

In response to a question from the Chair it was confirmed that Park and Ride was still in the list of potential schemes.

**RESOLVED:** The update was noted.

RD22: **GUILDHALL WORKSHOP SESSION**

Officers presented Members of the Panel with an update on the Guildhall (as attached). The Executive Director invited Members to contact him if they would like a tour of the complex.

The Chair invited the Panel Members to participate in a Workshop session which would suggest ideas on the future use of the Guildhall. Suggestions would be used to inform future bid applications.

The Panel broke into groups and looked at three different aspects of the Guildhall; audiences, activities and uses. The groups fed back the following ideas:

### Audiences

- Synergy across the whole site
- Young people and those in education
- Play in a day
- Stage School
- Appeal to tourists and the local community
- Coach parties
- Link with Shakespeare was a unique selling point and should be exploited
- Improved access for people with disabilities was required
- Schemes such as 'friends of the Guildhall'
- Rehearsal space for rent
- Conference and meeting facilities
- Emerging talent and upcoming artists.
- Musical Groups
- Comedy Clubs in Crofters
- Event hire – intimate space for weddings and functions
- Workshop space
- Arts Clubs
- Christmas Market/Grotto

### Audiences

- Shakespeare
- Independent films and films made by local people of all ages
- Contemporary Arts
- Theatre
- Arts
- Dance
- All ages and abilities
- Professional and amateur

### Uses

- Flat floor was essential in the Guildhall to create a flexible use space

- Community events and engagement
- Retail - crafts, speciality and variety
- Artistic outlet
- Work with Charitable Organisations
- More emphasis on the kitchen
- Improved disabled access was essential
- Co-ordinated whole site management
- Flexible seating
- Comfort
- Uses can be restricted by security
- Cultural Hub
- Museum
- Arts space
- Importance of annual/recurring events to build and grow the offer
- Diversity

The Chair commented that the Guildhall stage should be movable to make the space as flexible as possible.

Councillor Ryves addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and asked if the site could be sold to a commercial operator and converted into a pub or restaurant. The Executive Director explained that there was a covenant on the Guildhall which meant that it had to remain as a theatre and gallery. Discussions had been held with the National Trust on this issue, but it was non-negotiable.

Members of the Panel commented that the link with Shakespeare should be exploited as a unique selling point.

The Executive Director thanked the Panel for their suggestions and explained that more detail on future bid applications would be brought back to the Panel as appropriate.

**RESOLVED:** The results of the workshop session would be used to assist with future bid applications.

RD23: **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 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.

RD24: **EXEMPT - NELSON/BOAL QUAY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

The Executive Director provided the Panel with an update on the site.

The Chair thanked the Executive Director for the update and invited questions and comments from the Panel.

Officers answered questions relating to the future plans for the site, investment opportunities and flood risk.

**RESOLVED:** The update was noted.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

RD25: **SOUTH LYNN BRICK KILN**

Councillor Kemp had requested that this item be considered by the Panel and was invited to address the Panel.

She commented that heritage was very important. She explained that the brick kiln had been de-listed, and formed part of the Heritage Action Zone site. She felt that the Heritage Action Zone was the perfect place to showcase this historic asset but was concerned that there was no report available on how the brick kiln could be restored.

Councillor Kemp suggested that a competition for local companies to restore the brick kiln could be held and that the asset should not be lost as heritage was important in an industrial area.

She explained that there was funding available to restore historic buildings and this building should not be lost as once it was gone it was gone and there would be no way of getting it back.

Councillor Joyce addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He asked why the Civic Society had not been made aware of the decision to de-list the building and why there had been no Councillor consultation on the demolition order. He stated that there was a live planning application on the site, and he was aware of one developer that wanted to incorporate the brick kiln as a feature on the site.

The Executive Director for Development provided the Panel with the history of the site. He explained that in 1996 it had been reported that the building was dilapidated, over grown, crumbling and likely to collapse. A report had been produced in 2007 by Morston Assets in support of an application for a supermarket which sought to demolish the kiln. He explained that the report referred to a structural report which stated that there were cracks, missing bricks and the building was deteriorating. It also stated that the roof was likely to collapse if the plant growth was removed. The Executive Director explained that the building had been in a poor condition for a significant amount of time.

The Executive Director referred to the report from Historic England. The report included comments from the Civic Society which proved that

they had been consulted as part of the de-listing process. The Executive Director clarified that there was not a live planning application on the site, the application had been determined over a year ago.

The THI Project Officer provided the Panel with information on the de-listing process. He explained that, as part of the Heritage Action Zone project, listings had to be updated, therefore a review had been carried out. This had resulted in some buildings being delisted, some being downgraded and some being added to the list.

Councillor de Whalley commented that the purpose of the Heritage Action Zone was to breathe life into new areas by combining development with heritage. He felt that demolishing the brick kiln was counter intuitive to the project aims.

Councillor Ryves addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He explained that he had been in touch with a professional expert who had provided reasons as to why the building should be retained and actions which could be progressed to determine the condition of the building including how it could be restored.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Long, stated that in the past there had been a planning application on the site, but development had not taken place. Then there was the millennium community project which had proposed housing, a new College campus and commercial premises on the site, but that development had stalled, until recently, and now there was housing on the site and the site had started to be regenerated.

He appreciated concerns raised but asked Members not to be misled by the information Councillor Kemp had provided, which had been circulated with the Agenda and stated that a Lynn News poll had resulted in 80% of respondents wanting the brick kiln saved. Councillor Long referred to a poll on the Lynn News website which said that 49% of respondents would prefer a new supermarket instead, 19% had no idea it even existed and 32% cared about the brick kiln. He felt that people would generally rather see commercial development which would benefit the town.

Councillor Kemp stated that the 80% figure which she had reported had been provided to her by the Lynn News and was accurate when she had submitted her request for the item to be considered.

Councillor Long reminded the Panel that the Planning Committee had agreed the methodology for demolition and he hoped that the Panel would support the process. He stated that it was a dangerous structure and he would be accountable should anyone get hurt on the site. He reminded the Panel that reports from a number of years ago had highlighted that the structure was dangerous and could collapse. He suggested that the bricks from the brick kiln could be used as a feature



in future development, along with an interpretation board which outlined the history of the site so that it could be remembered.

Councillor Bambridge informed the Panel that she had been contacted by constituents regarding this and she commented that, in the past, the Council had demolished structures, which could now be considered historically important and the Council needed to consider carefully if this would be something that they would regret in the future.

Councillor Lowe referred to the Lynn News poll and stated that it only had received 132 votes.

Councillor Patel commented that he agreed with the comments made by Councillor Long. He asked if the responsibility for any accidents on the site lied with any other Councillor would they feel the same way about retaining the structure when they knew that it was dangerous and could collapse.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Parish commented that Historic England had determined that the brick kiln was not of ancient interest. He felt that there were other buildings which were much more worthy of retention. He agreed with the Leader in that an artefact or monument to the structure should be incorporated into any future development on the site.

Councillor Jones suggested that the demolition be delayed and the public be consulted to see if there was public interest in saving the site.

The Chief Executive reminded the Panel that officers had explained the de-listing process and the planning process and the correct processes had been followed in the same way as any developer would have to. He explained that the land that the brick kiln was on was an employment site for NORA and it was important to bring this site forward for development. He acknowledged that previous development had been designed around it, but this had not happened and the brick kiln currently limited the development options on the site and made it less attractive to potential purchasers. The Chief Executive asked the Panel to look to the future and the opportunities for this gateway site to King's Lynn. He stated that Historic England were the experts and had come to a view that the building was not worthy of Listed Building status. He asked the Panel to consider where it would be best to direct the Councils limited resources with regards to historic buildings, especially as there were so many in King's Lynn.

Councillor Ryves addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He referred to the action plan that had been sent to him by a professional expert and hoped that the Panel would give it a chance.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel supported the demolition of the brick kiln, which had been de-listed and was not considered by Historic England to be of historical importance. This would enable much needed

development to take place on the Heritage Action Zone site resulting in employment and economic benefits to King's Lynn. The Panel suggest that any development on the site should include a clearly visible and potentially useful artefact made of brick (preferably sourced from the brick oven or bricks made in it).

RD26: **RETIREMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chair informed the Panel that this would be the Chief Executives last Regeneration and Development Panel Meeting before his retirement at the end of the month and requested that thanks be recorded for his assistance and guidance to the Panel.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel recorded their thanks to the Chief Executive.

RD27: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

The meeting in September was likely to take place in Hunstanton. The Panel would be informed of the arrangements in due course.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

RD28: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel would be held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 6.00pm. Venue to be confirmed.

**The meeting closed at 8.25 pm**