

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET 4 FEBRUARY 2020 FROM THE REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL MEETING HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2020

RD78: KING'S LYNN TRANSPORT STUDY

The Chair reminded the Panel that they had previously considered the draft Strategy, the consultation responses and the long list of options. They were now being presented with the Implementation Plan prior to it being presented to Cabinet.

Officers explained that the consultants had now produced the report which had reviewed all the proposals and took into consideration comments made following the consultation exercise. There were now 33 schemes contained within the Implementation plan, which were prioritised into short, medium and long term.

The Chair welcomed County Councillor Middleton to the meeting for this item.

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

Councillor Morley addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He explained that the Strategy should be based on how King's Lynn and West Norfolk would look up to the year 2036. He explained that movement, transport and the geographical area could change considerably over time and this should be accounted for. He commented that he did not feel the Strategy went far enough in this respect as the implementation plan was just a list of schemes and deeper thought was required on the aspirations for the future.

The Portfolio Holder for Development, Councillor Blunt acknowledged that a lot of factors could change over the time of the implementation plan, however, he felt that the short and medium term schemes addressed issues which were apparent now whilst also allowing for future growth. He explained that all schemes would be considered in further detail and could be reviewed if required.

The Environmental Health Manager explained that the scheme did not just focus on traffic and roads. It also looked at improvements to cycling networks, trains and pedestrians.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Long commented that it was important to have this strategy in place. He explained that he had raised concerns previously that there was not a strategy for King's Lynn and so the Council had worked jointly with Norfolk County Council to bring it forward. He acknowledged that things could change in the future and if required the Strategy and Implementation Plan could be reviewed.

The Chair acknowledged that this was the first version of the Implementation Plan and was pleased to hear that there may be the opportunity to review in the future.

Councillor de Whalley asked how the Council's carbon reduction aspirations and the Environmental Policy would be dovetailed into the Strategy. The LDF Manager explained that Norfolk County Council was planning a review of their Local Transport Plan and the results of this may provide information which could inform the King's Lynn Transport Strategy. Other Council Policies and priorities could be taken into consideration when progressing schemes.

Councillor de Whalley asked how schemes would be prioritised and the LDF Manager explained that schemes would be monitored and further detailed work could be carried out as required. He also referred to the Strategy document which included the objectives to improve the economic prospects of the town as well as access for residents and visitors.

The Panel was informed that King's Lynn had a large catchment area and because of this, King's Lynn would always be somewhere that would need to be accessed by car.

Councillor Kemp addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. She explained that more buses needed to be encouraged to use Hardings Way to improve the air quality along London Road. She explained that the initial vision for Hardings Way was for approximately 26 buses per hour to use the route. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the Council would be working with Norfolk County Council as appropriate and the proposed Car Parking Strategy could link in with the Transport Strategy.

Councillor Kemp referred to rail links and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Long explained that investigations had previously taken place with network rail regarding a parkway station for King's Lynn however it would be too expensive and consideration would need to be given to the impact on other services and timetables.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Parish referred to the Equalities Impact Assessment and queried why all the impacts were listed as neutral. He felt that surely some of the groups would benefit from improvements. The Environmental Health Manager explained that once the detail of individual schemes had been drawn up then the impact could be considered.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Parish referred to the two schemes which had been included relating to Hardings Way; one relating to increasing the amount of bus usage and one which referred to looking at opening it up to all traffic. The Portfolio Holder for Development, Councillor Blunt explained that there were lots of opportunities and options available and all would be investigated, but nothing had been decided yet.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Parish referred to an article in the press which stated that it would be detrimental to divert traffic away from the Southgates. Councillor Blunt reiterated that all options would be looked at.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Parish referred to the scheme relating to the dualling of part of the A149 near Knights Hill and he asked why this was not taken into consideration when planning applications for development were received and why weren't the developers asked to contribute towards road improvements. The LDF Manager explained that this scheme was not related to the Planning Applications process and transport was a Norfolk County Council function.

Councillor Kemp addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. She asked why the 2,000 new jobs to be created at the Nar Ouse Business Park had not been taken into consideration in this Strategy. The LDF Manager explained that the consultants had taken into consideration the current Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan.

Councillor Bambridge raised concern about resident car parking, in particular the Friars. She also made reference to Vancouver Avenue and stated that a pedestrian crossing was needed in this area.

Councillor Morley addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He referred to the Cabinet recommendations and suggested that the Panel make a recommendation to Cabinet that the statement of options be adopted as a plan of the way forward, but it was important that there was a cohesive strategy to sit alongside this.

In response to a question from Councillor Jones, the LDF Manager explained that some of the short term schemes could be considered as quick wins, such as traffic light sequencing, however they would all contribute to improved access to the town centre.

The LDF Manager informed the Panel that they were considering the Implementation Plan but there was also a strategy to accompany this which included vision and objectives.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Parish commented that all of the schemes within the Implementation plan would need further consideration once detailed investigations had taken place.

The Chair requested that the Panel considered what they would be recommending to Cabinet and suggested that their recommendations made reference to the Panel's comments in that it be acknowledged that the implementation plan was a list of options rather than a complete strategy and it was important that there was a strategy to sit alongside this.

The Portfolio Holder for Development, Councillor Blunt referred to the background papers listed in the report which included the full King's Lynn Transport Strategy Stage 3 report which contained the consultation responses and the wider context, including a vision and objectives.

Following the meeting a note had been prepared by officers to clarify the different elements that made up the King's Lynn Transport Strategy. A copy is attached to the minutes.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration and Development make the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1. That Cabinet note the consultation responses received as part of the consultation process and note that these are recognised in the proposal.
2. That Cabinet be informed that Members felt the Strategy was not clearly defined. Therefore they could not wholly endorse the strategy. They felt it needed work to envisage future scenarios which the Transport Strategy could address.
3. The Implementation Plan, which was considered in depth by the Panel, was agreed upon as a series of options for future scrutiny which underpinned the Implementation Strategy.