

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, 19th October, 2021 at 4.30 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors J Collingham (Chair), L Bambridge, F Bone, C J Crofts, M de Whalley, P Gidney, B Jones, C Manning, T Parish (substitute for C Morley) and D Whitby.

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:

Councillor R Blunt – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development
Councillor G Middleton – Portfolio Holder for Business, Culture and Heritage

OFFICERS:

Duncan Hall – Assistant Director, Regeneration, Housing and Place
David Ousby – Assistant Director, Programme and Project Delivery
Lorraine Gore – Chief Executive
Alan Gomm – Planning Policy Manager

BY INVITATION:

Councillor Bubb
Sharon Edwards – Business Improvement District
Vicky Etheridge – Business Improvement District

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillors Rust and Ryves

RD52: **MINUTES SILENCE FOR SIR DAVID AMESS MP**

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The Chair opened the meeting and those present observed a minutes silence to commemorate the life and public service of Sir David Amess MP, send a message of love to his family and friends and a message of support to all those in politics that an attack on any of them is an attack on democracy and therefore all of us, and will not win.

RD53: **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beal, Bower and Morley.

RD54: **MINUTES**

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

RD55: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was none.

RD56: URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

RD57: MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34

Councillors Ryves and Rust.

RD58: CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

RD59: DISCOVER KING'S LYNN RENEWAL PROPOSAL FOR A SECOND TERM

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The Chief Executive presented the Cabinet report and explained that the Council could place a vote for the continuation of the BID for a second term. The recommendation was that the Council continued its support of the BID and the Business Plan and the Chief Executive is instructed to vote accordingly on behalf of the Council.

Representatives from the Business Improvement District were present at the meeting and provided information on the work carried out during the past five years, plans for the second term if the ballot was successful and the priorities and objectives of the BID as set out in the Business Plan.

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

Councillor Crofts asked if more could be done to encourage coach trips into the town centre and Vicky Etheridge explained that she had been working with the Tourism Officer at the Borough Council on encouraging visitors to the town centre. Councillor Crofts commented that the Tuesday Market Place would be ideal for coach parking as it was central and had facilities nearby.

Councillor Jones asked about improvements to the appearance of vacant units, especially when the owners could not be tracked down. He suggested that projections could go on the shop fronts to improve the appearance. Vicky Etheridge acknowledged that it was difficult

when owners could not be tracked down, but efforts were made to overcome obstacles and utilise existing business contacts.

Councillor Parish felt that a thriving regular market was important. Vicky Etheridge provided details of the monthly farmers market which was held on the Saturday Market Place and the Christmas Market which had been held for the past three years. She explained that this year the Christmas Market would be held in the vacant Argos building, which had the benefit of being indoors, in a central location and would hopefully bring visitors into the town centre.

Councillor de Whalley also felt it was important to have a thriving market and it was important to support independent and specialist businesses. He also asked if the BID could assist with improving the Ferry access to the town centre. It was explained that the work of the BID was based on the priorities which had been agreed by the levy payers and needed to be spent within the BID area.

Councillor Bambridge made reference to the Markets Informal Working Group that she had previously sat on a few years ago. She felt that this work should be revisited. She also raised concerns about the location of the Christmas Market and it was explained that work to make it look festive would be carried out and it was a central flexible space.

Councillor Bone referred to the market offer of the town and suggested that a flea market or car boot sale type event could be a good way to encourage people into the town centre. Vicky Etheridge explained that she had considered this and was in discussion with charity shops and it was possible that a recycling and upcycling event could be looked at.

Councillor Bubb addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and commented that there were no maps in the town centre with businesses highlighted. It was explained that digital signage was currently being looked at for the town centre.

The Chair, Councillor Collingham commented that improvements to the entrances to the town centre needed to be looked at, including the railway gates which she felt needed painting. She asked for further information on the Christmas Market and it was confirmed that the event would take place on 11th and 12th December and it was hoped that 30 stalls would be available.

Councillor Rust addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and felt that a downloadable and printable map of the town centre would be beneficial that people could access before they visited the town centre. She also felt that a drop off point for coach trips in the town centre was important and she made reference to the Community Renewal Fund and pop up shops.

Councillor Parish abstained from voting on recommendation (a).

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration and Development Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Endorse the Discover King's Lynn Business Plan 2022-2027
- b) Instruct the Chief Executive to vote in favour of the BID on behalf of the Council.

RD60: **CHRISTMAS MARKET UPDATE**

The Panel was advised that this had been covered during consideration of the previous item.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

RD61: **TREE PLANTING AND DEVELOPMENT SITES**

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The Assistant Director, Programme and Project Delivery gave a presentation on Tree Planting and Development Sites, as attached. The presentation included a summary of tree planting and future plans for tree planting across Major Housing Project Development Sites.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director for his presentation and invited questions and comments from those present, as summarised below.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Gidney made reference to designated land, death rates and root balls. He felt that Planning Policies should give consideration to tree planting and staffing and resources should be considered. The Assistant Director explained that as many trees as possible were replaced and there were only a few sites which could not be accessed because they were in private gardens. He also provided detail on adoption of areas.

In response to a question from Councillor Jones, it was clarified that the type of trees planted was given consideration and more information was available in the Council's Tree and Woodland Strategy which was available on the website and had previously been considered by the Environment and Community Panel.

Councillor de Whalley asked if biodiversity was considered and made reference to the maintenance of sites and antisocial behaviour. The Assistant Director explained that a range of measures were considered in deciding which type of trees were planted in each location. He also explained that opportunities to engage the local community and look at ways to tackle antisocial behaviour were also looked at.

Councillor Parish felt that resources needed to be looked at.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development, Councillor Blunt informed the Panel that a report was being prepared on Enforcement resources to ensure that they were adequate and balanced.

Councillor Ryves addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and felt that the scheme was not good in terms of value for money or for reducing the carbon footprint. The Assistant Director acknowledged that tree planting alone would not meet carbon net zero targets, but it all contributed and was part of the wider plan.

RESOLVED: The Panel noted the work being carried out.

RD62: **CIL CABINET REPORT**

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Councillor Blunt presented the Cabinet Report which presented a number of changes to the present processes following the first round of grant applications for CIL funding. The proposed changes were outlined to the Panel by the Planning Policy Manager and it was explained that the changes had been agreed by the CIL Spending Panel and would simplify the process.

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

Councillor Parish commented that he supported the recommendations to make the process simpler.

Councillor Bambridge asked if consideration could be given to making the pages easier to find on the website.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration and Development Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as follows:

Cabinet is recommended to make changes to the CIL Spending-Application process as set out in Section 3 of this report.

RD63: **TO CONSIDER HOW THE PANEL CAN ASSIST TO DEVELOP POLICY/STRATEGY ON THE LONG TERM VISIONS FOR TOWN CENTRES**

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The Chair explained that she would like the Panel to give consideration on how they could assist to develop policy and strategy on the long term visions for the Town Centres in the Borough.

It was suggested that Members of the Panel meet informally to come up with ideas for this and they could be presented to a future meeting possibly as part of a workshop session.

Members of the Panel agreed to split into groups to give each area consideration and report back to the next Panel meeting their ideas.

RESOLVED: That The Panel consider ways to assist developing policy and strategy for King's Lynn, Hunstanton and Downham Market and proposals be presented to a future meeting,

RD64: **PROPOSALS FROM COUNCILLOR BUBB - TWO PROPOSALS FOR THE WATERFRONT**

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The Chair invited Councillor Bubb to present his proposals.

His first idea was a touring caravan site at the Somerfield and Thomas Site in King's Lynn which would encourage people into the town centre. He explained that the existing building could be utilised to provide facilities for the site and would have the added benefit of providing facilities for the users of the Pontoons.

The Chair invited questions and comments on the proposal.

Councillor Bone liked the idea, but felt that a different location, other than in the historic core of King's Lynn should be considered. He suggested Boal Quay.

Councillor Bambridge commented that any development would need to be low level and agreed that Boal Quay would be a better site.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Development, Councillor Bunt explained that there were plans for the future of the Waterfront and suggested that Councillor Bubb provide additional information on costings so that it could be looked at in more detail.

Councillor Crofts supported the idea, but felt that a different location should be considered.

The Portfolio Holder for Business, Culture and Heritage explained that there was a need for this in the camping community, but the location needed careful consideration. He also explained that the relevant planning permissions and licences would need to be obtained, but it was worth exploring the idea further.

The Assistant Director commented that from the visitor economy and night time economy perspective the concept had potential.

Councillor Bubb then presented his second proposal which was to replace the Ferry with a transporter bridge.

The Vice Chair raised concerns about shipping and the expense of the project and the impact the height of the bridge would have on King's Lynn. He also suggested an alternative of an underpass.

RESOLVED: The information was noted and could be considered in the future as appropriate.

RD65: **PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

No questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting.

RD66: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

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Councillor Bambridge referred to a recent event she had attended hosted by Historic England which covered Master planning and getting communities involved in architecture and design and she felt that it would be good for the Panel to receive similar information

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

RD67: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel was scheduled to take place on 7th December 2021 at 4.30pm in the Town Hall.

RD68: **TOWNS FUND - VERBAL UPDATE**

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The Assistant Director, Regeneration, Housing and Place provided the Panel with an update on the Towns Fund. He provided information on the Local Assurance Framework and the Council's involvement in the Town Deal Board.

He reminded the Panel that anything that required a Council decision would come through the normal decision making process and the Regeneration and Development Panel would have the opportunity to be involved.

The Portfolio Holder for Business, Culture and Heritage confirmed he had responded to Councillor Morley on questions raised at the previous meeting relating to Governance.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

The meeting closed at 7.06 pm