

21 AUGUST 2017

Minutes of a meeting of the **PLANNING POLICY & BUILT HERITAGE WORKING PARTY** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer at 10.00 am when there were present:

Councillors

Mrs S Arnold (Chairman)
J Punchard (Vice-Chairman)

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|-------------------|-----------------|
| Mrs J English | R Reynolds |
| Mrs P Grove-Jones | S Shaw |
| Ms V Gay | Mrs V Uprichard |
| Ms K Ward | |

Observers:

Mrs A Claussen-Reynolds
N Dixon
Mrs A Fitch-Tillett
Mrs A Green
Ms M Prior
J Rest
B Smith

Officers

Mr M Ashwell – Planning Policy Manager
Mr I Withington – Planning Policy Team Leader

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N Pearce and N Smith.

19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

20. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

23. UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Planning Policy Manager informed the Working Party that he would arrange a presentation by a representative of BT for the next meeting.

24. NORFOLK STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION

The Planning Policy Manager presented an overview of the Norfolk Strategic Framework which had been published for consultation, and a table of comments to be recommended to Cabinet as the Council's response to the consultation.

The Working Party discussed the suggested response.

Agreements 1-3

Councillor Ms V R Gay stated that the coastline was one of the distinguishing features of the County and the need to defend it should be included. She also questioned whether the term "...safeguarding and enhancement ..." had a different meaning to "preserve and enhance" which had been used previously.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that coastal issues had been included in his comments. "Preserve" was used in the national guidelines and he agreed that it would be preferable.

Councillor J Punchard considered that it was important to include health within the agreements.

Councillor J Rest considered that most of the headline objectives were achievable except for "address all housing needs".

The Planning Policy Manager explained that Government legislation required all housing needs to be addressed.

Agreement 4

Comments agreed.

Agreements 5, 6 and 7

Councillor N D Dixon referred to Hoveton and Wroxham which had issues in common and considered that there were other examples elsewhere. There were common constraints which fed into each other and more needed to be done to identify them and address the concerns.

Councillor Mrs V Uprichard stated that some of the objectives were the responsibility of Norfolk County Council (NCC).

The Planning Policy Manager confirmed that NCC would also sign up and be bound by the agreements. NCC had authored a large part of the document and sat on the Duty to Co-operate Forum.

Agreement 8

Members strongly supported the need to widen the focus to reflect the importance of key sectors in the rural economy.

Councillor R Reynolds stated that it was important that the larger towns in North Norfolk were not forgotten.

Councillor N D Dixon considered that the tourism industry was equal to “Tier 1” economic zones. Much of the economy was focused on micro-businesses which were dependent on broadband speeds, mobile phones etc and other businesses were concerned about the road network. Power was also an issue for part of the area.

It was agreed that Councillor Dixon would consider suggested wording to cover these concerns.

Home-working was recognised by Members as a growth industry with a need for investment, and that there were people who would work at home if they were able to. Evidence was needed to support this view. It was suggested that a survey could be sent out with Council tax bills, or evidence obtained from Census data, although the situation was likely to have changed somewhat since the Census was conducted. Councillor Ms K Ward stated that a survey had been conducted by the Cabinet Office which she offered to share.

The Chairman suggested that support should also be shown for the fishing industry.

Agreement 9

Councillor N D Dixon considered that there needed to be more articulation as to how cross boundary infrastructure would be delivered.

Agreements 10-17

Comments agreed.

Councillor J Punchard considered that adding an additional buffer could lead to more planning appeals.

Councillor R Reynolds stated that there was a shortage of builders throughout the country and pushing to build even more houses could lead to failure if this was not addressed.

Agreement 18

Considered under Minute 25.

Agreement 19

Councillor N D Dixon considered that the link between green (and blue) infrastructure and tourism had not been recognised. It was crucial that such infrastructure was preserved.

Councillor Ms V R Gay endorsed Councillor Dixon’s comments. Green infrastructure was vital to the life of residents and further emphasis would be helpful.

Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett considered that the Norfolk Coast Partnership would wish to have an input. She considered that visitor pressure should be recognised.

The Planning Policy Manager stated those with an interest in green and blue infrastructure would be involved through the Officer level working group and a report would be brought to the Working Party in due course. Visitor pressure was reflected in the wording of the agreement but had not been included in the report.

Agreement 20

The Chairman stated that it was hugely important to improve broadband and mobile infrastructure as parts of the District were not properly serviced at present.

Councillor R Reynolds considered that current glass fibre technology would not disappear and connection should be a requirement for all new properties.

The Working Party considered that the Agreement should be expanded to include all mobile/broadband technology rather than focus only on 5G technology.

Other comments

Councillor Dixon commented that there had been no mention of rail capacity or bus services. He considered that there was a need to extend the National Grid so that the North Norfolk countryside was not carved up for every offshore windfarm development and that this issue should be addressed at county-wide level. There were also issues with water supply, surface water drainage and sewerage in some parts of the District. He considered that these issues should be addressed through this process.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that there were references to infrastructure issues in the documents but they were not plans of action. Councils were not providers of these services and thought needed to be given as to how the agreements might be worded.

Councillor Dixon considered that now was an appropriate time to address these issues. It would be difficult to challenge infrastructure providers if they raised no concerns with regard to site allocations.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that infrastructure providers were not co-signatories to the agreements and could not be obligated. He suggested that authorities could collectively seek to influence Government and Local Enterprise Partnerships etc to address infrastructure issues.

Councillor R Reynolds supported Councillor Dixon's comments. He considered that offshore windfarms were excellent but caused damage to the countryside with no direct benefit to North Norfolk. He considered that it may be necessary to accept pylons in the District.

Councillor Mrs A M Fitch-Tillett commented that NCC had responsibilities as Lead Local Flood Authority but had fallen behind other Authorities in England in preparing its strategy. Up to date flood maps were not available on the planning system.

The Chairman considered that installation of charging points for electric vehicles needed to be progressed.

It was agreed that the Planning Policy Manager would produce a schedule of modifications to Table 1 based on the comments above and circulate it to Members of the Working Party. Subject to this, it was

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet

That the Council welcomes and supports the production of the Framework document and indicates its overall support for the Vision, Objectives and the Agreements it contains, subject to further consideration of the comments in Table 1, as amended.

25. PLANNING IN HEALTH PROTOCOL

The Planning Policy Manager presented a report on the Planning in Health Protocol which was an engagement protocol between local planning authorities and health organisations in Norfolk. The Protocol had been prepared jointly by a team of planning officers and health practitioners and all Norfolk planning authorities were being asked to endorse it as part of their adoption of the Norfolk Strategic Framework. It would be used by planners when preparing Local Plans and determining planning applications.

Councillor N D Dixon questioned the terminology “public health” in paragraph 1.2 of the officer’s report as it was a very specific part of the health system which dealt with the prevention of illness and did not include delivery of health services.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the protocol included public health, clinical commissioning groups and the primary health care providers. He agreed to amend paragraph 1.2 to encapsulate this.

Councillor Dixon considered that a statement should be made in respect of the difficulty people had in accessing primary health care in a timely manner.

The Planning Policy Manager suggested that the point could be made in the context of the document .

Councillor Ms K Ward stated that there was nothing in the document relating to private care providers, and in particular, private residential care. An increasing number of residential care facilities also included medical facilities which would not be picked up in the protocol.

Councillor R Reynolds referred to a major scheme in Fakenham which would result in 1000 homes and asked if Section 106 agreements included future improvement of the surgery facilities.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that Section 106 agreements related to matters which made unacceptable development acceptable, eg. road improvements, school buildings, library books, health services. Section 106 agreements could be used in relation to buildings but could not influence the number of doctors. The Fakenham surgery building was large enough as it had been designed with a view to long term expansion.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that service providers were formally consulted and routinely responded saying there was no problem, which often conflicted with other people’s experience of the services.

Councillor Mrs A Claussen-Reynolds stated that Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) at NCC did excellent work. She had sat on HOSC for many years and regularly reported back.

Councillor Ms M Prior stated that there was common misunderstanding by the public regarding surgery appointments and that it was necessary to be careful about what were important issues and public perceptions.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that the Protocol was not an NNDC document. He recommended endorsement of the Protocol and concerns could be fed back as to how the Protocol could be amended in the future.

It was proposed by Councillor R Reynolds, seconded by Councillor J Punchard and

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet

That the Council approves the Planning in Health Protocol for use when preparing Local Plans and determining planning applications.

The meeting closed at 11.45 am.

CHAIRMAN
16 October 2017