



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENT
CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL
ON 25 JANUARY 2016**

Present: Councillors Sandford (Chairman), N Khan MBE (Vice Chairman), D Over, L Ayres, R Brown, C Harper, R Bisby, M Jamil, JA Fox, J Whitby

Also Present: Councillor JR Fox, Group Leader, Werrington First
Councillor N Thulbourn
Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development

Officers Present: Simon Machen, Corporate Director for Growth and Regeneration
Howard Bright, Head of Growth
Anne Keogh, Housing and Strategic Planning Manager
Caroline Hannon, Senior Housing Strategy & Enabling Officer
Lewis Banks, Principal Transport Planning Officer
Amy Petri, Principal Programme & Project Officer
Peter Garnham, Highway Service Delivery Manager
Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

Item 5. Portfolio Progress Report from the Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development

Councillor Harper declared an interest in that he was Chairman of the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee.

There were no whipping declarations.

3. Minutes of Meetings held on 12 November 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2015 were approved as an accurate record.

4. Call in of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

5. Portfolio Progress Report from the Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development. The report provided the Committee with an update on the progress of the growth, strategic planning, strategic housing and economic engagement and business development areas of the Cabinet Member's portfolio.

Questions and observations were made around the following areas:

Growth

- In light of the fact that the Westgate development and Queensgate cinema development is going to Judicial Review, was there any danger of the Queensgate owners spending their money elsewhere? *Members were informed that due to there being a Judicial Review detailed discussion on the subject could not take place. The Director for Growth and Regeneration advised that any disgruntled party could seek Judicial Review if not happy with the planning approval process and whilst this did not happen very often it was more likely to happen with retail and leisure developments.*
- What was the current situation with the Judicial Review? *Members were informed that the Council was confident in its decision making and had met with and continued to have dialogue with both parties.*
- Was there anything that the Council could do to speed up this process? *Members were advised that under the Local Plan, the Council was permitted to use compulsory purchase powers to facilitate a development in North Westgate. The Council had very limited land ownership interests in North Westgate but due to the presence of the Peterborough Investment Partnership the Council could in the future get involved and bring forward development on the complex brown field sites.*
- Members were informed that the land in North Westgate was owned by various land owners but it was one owner who had applied for the Judicial Review.
- Was the council confident that the growth, as referred to in the report was truly sustainable in terms of the requirement of houses being constructed and the facilities which were being built in conjunction with the houses? *Members were informed that this was correct to the best of the council's belief. There was a very large growth agenda for the city and the authority was keen to ensure that the infrastructure was in place before large scale developments were given permission to go ahead.*
- Members highlighted that there had been many complaints from residents about a lack of public transport and community facilities around the Manor Drive area. *Members were informed that older development schemes had tended to have less infrastructure facilities but in similar situations in the future planning decisions about community infrastructure would be decided differently.*
- Members commented that some developers did not build the infrastructure that they had initially intended to in their original planning application and asked what could be done to stop this happening? *Members were informed that every application that the local authority approved had a time limit. Under the current system the local authority could not force a developer to start developing their site however the government was looking at ways to force developers to develop their land. An example was that they may make developers pay council tax after a set time period even if they had not built any houses. There were ongoing discussions with local developers to encourage them to start building.*
- Members asked if it was still the plan for the Manor Farm development to go across Gunthorpe Road. *Members was advised that the Norwood Side of the Paston Norwood Reserve Allocation would come forward to the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee later that week due to a variation of the S106 Agreement on the Paston side partly to accelerate the delivery of the primary school. There would also be an allocation for a secondary school. The whole site would be developed and this year the Council with support from the Local Enterprise Partnership would undertake capacity improvement works on junction 20 to help unlock that development.*
- Members wanted to know what was stopping the council building their own houses. *Members were advised that the Council could not build council houses because the council had not retained their housing stock and was not a registered provider. However houses could be built in partnership with other organisations that have house building expertise and this was being looked at.*

- How much office space was there in Peterborough? *Members were advised that there was office space available in Peterborough and that permission had been granted for a swathe of further office space on the Fletton Quays site. The Council had no control over the loss of office floor space in the city centre to residential apartment developments. Fletton Quays would aim to provide high quality, purpose built and contemporary office space.*

Strategic Planning

- Members referred to paragraph 5.20 and the interest in 'neighbourhood planning' continuing to grow. Were all of the neighbourhood plans in parished areas? If so, what was happening to enable those areas which were not parished to participate in neighbourhood planning? *Members were advised that seven neighbourhood plans had been brought forward and all of these were from parished areas but a properly constituted community association can also participate in neighbourhood planning. The council would assist anyone wishing to create a neighbourhood plan but it was for areas to choose to do this themselves.*
- Members were concerned that the neighbourhood plans were more applicable to rural areas and not urban areas.
- Could the council further assist small populations or by parish councils coming together to put forward a neighbourhood plan? Some smaller communities had found it was a very complex process to try and produce a neighbourhood plan. *Members were advised that parish councils could work together to combine their expertise and professionalism to produce their own neighbourhood plans.*
- Members requested that an officer contact Parish Councils to extend the Council's offer to help with the creation of neighbourhood plans. *Members were advised that Peterborough City Council currently assisted with the neighbourhood planning process and that there was an officer whose remit this was under. The role of the Council was to offer technical support, not to coordinate. The plans would need to be parish or community association led.*
- Members commented that the neighbourhood planning process was very difficult and that small voluntary organisations often lacked expertise in the area which resulted in the plans not coming to fruition.
- The Corporate Director for Growth and Regeneration provided clarity with regard to the old style neighbourhood/community action plans and the current statutory neighbourhood plans which was part of the Local Plan process and advised that there was clear guidance in place to assist communities in developing community plans.

Strategic Housing

- Could links with Fenland District Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council be used to put forward a regional strategy? *Members were advised that this was already in place with Rutland County Council, South Holland District Council and South Kesteven District Council in the form of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.*
- Members referred to paragraph 5.25 and sought clarification with regard to the statement about the best value for the £multi-million affordable housing capital fund and a proposed change to Council policy. *Members were informed that the council had approximately £14M of right to buy receipts from former housing stock and approximately £3M of S106 monies to provide affordable housing. Historically this was given away as grants to housing associations. This statement in the report was alluding to how something different could be done to recycle the fund to support housing delivery in the city.*

Economic Engagement and Business Development

- Members were advised that UKTI stood for UK Trade and Investment which was a government body.
- What have Slough Borough Council done to overtake Peterborough in the growth statistics? *Members were advised that Slough was a hug, urban area and very different*

from Peterborough. It was accessible by the M4 and had close links to Windsor and London.

- *What was being done to help regenerate the older part of the city? Members were advised that old sites were being developed into housing and the station quarter, Fletton Quays and North Westgate were areas that would be renewed. Second rate office stock across the city was being replaced with residential accommodation and there was also the public realm investment.*
- *Had the development of Alconbury air base had any undue influence on the development of Peterborough and in particular South of Peterborough? Members were advised that the answer to this question was no because little progress on the development at Alconbury had been made.*

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for presenting an informative report and responding to questions raised by the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommended that Cabinet examine the ways in which Parish Councils and local communities can be given a greater amount of support in the creation of neighbourhood plans.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Committee noted the report and requested the following information:

- A briefing note on the proposals for the Paston Reserve Development and public transport issues for the Norwood site.

6. Task and Finish Group Report – Review of Peterborough Strategic Housing Strategy

The report was introduced by the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group and provided the Committee with an interim progress report following the Task and Finish Group's review of the existing Housing Strategy and formulation of initial recommendations regarding the priorities for the next Housing Strategy. The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group highlighted the following:

- The report was an interim report due to the fact that the timing of the refreshed Housing Strategy had been extended due to the publication of the Housing and Planning Bill in October 2015 the proposals of which could have a far reaching effect on the future of housing delivery, particularly affordable housing.
- The number of houses, the quality of houses and the locality for rural areas were the biggest pressures; and
- It was recommended that the Task and Finish Group continue in order to connect the Strategic Housing Strategy up with the Local Plan.

Questions and observations were made around the following areas:

- *What would the timescales be for finalising the future Housing Strategy? Members were advised that the Housing and Planning Bill had gone through the House of Commons and would then go through the House of Lords. The date for this had not yet been publicised and it was likely that various changes would occur. It was hoped that by the summer the Council would be in a much better place to move forward with the Housing Strategy.*
- The Senior Democratic Services Officer clarified that if the Task and Finish Group were to continue into the next municipal year it would need to be reconstituted.
- *Could the council set up an agency to build homes that were affordable but not council houses and could financial assistant be put in place to enable people to have a loan from the council to enable them to buy their first home. Members were informed that the Task and Finish group were recommending that a range of financial tools are set up to enable people to get onto the housing market and officers were looking into this.*

- Officers provided the Committee with further context regarding statistics provided to the Task and Finish Group and advised that within the statistics provided the Strategic Housing Market Assessment calculates that 1005 new homes would need to be built per year to meet the identified housing need in Peterborough and 620 of these homes should be affordable housing. This calculation is based on evidence of past population growth trends, the demographics of the area, the likely formation of new households in the future and the likely size of new households. It also takes into account the affordability of homes in the area.
- Members referred to the figures included on page 25 of the report which was a breakdown of housing requirements as identified by the Task and Finish Group for the next 5 years. Members wanted to know why they had been included as they were not targets that could be included in the Housing Strategy. *Members were advised that the Task and Finish Group felt the figures represented an ideal solution to relieve pressures adequately. The Task and Finish Group came up with their own criteria and this information was a minimum suggestion of how this could be achieved. The figures did not take into account development viability and were the opinion of members of the Task and Finish Group and only asked the Committee to note their findings.*
- It was clarified that the Local Plan had a target of 30% affordable housing (split between affordable rental and shared equity housing) on schemes of 15 houses or more.
- Members commented that the Task and Finish Group's figures for executive housing were low and that this could act as a disincentive for developers in Peterborough. *Members were advised that although that might be possible the Task and Finish Group had identified that the current largest need in Peterborough was for affordable housing to buy and rent. The recommendation for a financial tool kit to be developed would hopefully assist this issue.*
- Members commented that there seemed to be a disparity between the demand for affordable housing and the supply. *Members were informed that the grant had disappeared for affordable housing so it was more difficult for housing associations to build rented homes.*
- Members were advised that the Task and Finish Group had looked at specific strategic issues within the Housing Strategy as opposed to the entire plan as a whole. Issues such as open spaces and infrastructure would be covered in the Local Plan. The Housing Strategy would support these elements of the Local Plan. The Housing Strategy would also need to link to the Environment Capital Action Plan.

Councillor Khan recommended that the Task and Finish Group continued to review the Housing Strategy once the outcomes and impact of the Housing and Planning Bill have been identified and if possible the Task and Finish Group membership should be the same group of people. The Committee unanimously agreed to this recommendation.

Councillor Khan, seconded by Councillor Jamil also recommended that the figures as identified by the Task and Finish Group regarding the breakdown of housing requirements for Peterborough be noted. Councillor Ayres objected to the recommendation and called for a vote. The Committee took a vote on the recommendation to note the following figures (5 in favour, 5 against):

| | |
|--|-----|
| A breakdown of the housing requirements as identified by the working group | |
| i/ Affordable Rent Housing | 40% |
| ii/ Affordable to Buy Housing | 35% |
| iii/ Health Housing | 8% |
| iv/ Executive Housing | 12% |
| v/ Prestige Housing | 5% |

Due to an equality of votes, the Chairman used his casting vote and voted in favour of the recommendation to note the Task and Finish Group's housing figures. The recommendation was therefore carried.

One member sought assurance on whether the Chairman was allowed to use his casting vote. The Senior Democratic Services Officer provided clarification of the Standing Orders and confirmed that the Chairman could use his casting vote.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Task and Finish for their interim report and the considerable work undertaken so far.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee noted the report and made the following recommendations:

The Task and Finish Group to continue into the next municipal year and if possible with the same membership.

That the Task and Finish Group's housing figures as suggested in the interim report be noted:

A breakdown of housing requirements as identified by the working group

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| i/ Affordable Rent Housing | 40% |
| ii/ Affordable to Buy Housing | 35% |
| iii/ Health Housing | 8% |
| iv/ Executive Housing | 12% |
| v/ Prestige Housing | 5% |

7. Local Transport Plan Programme of Works 2016/17

The report was introduced by the Principal Programme & Project Officer and provided the Committee with information regarding the Local Transport Plan Programme of Works 2016/17 before submission to the Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Housing, Economic Development and Business Engagement for approval.

Questions and observations were made around the following areas:

- Members referred to page 35 of the report, Footbridge Safety Schemes. What improvements would be made to the Queensgate Footbridge? *The Corporate Director responded that the funding was for some temporary reinstatement works and that there was a proposal through the Local Enterprise Partnership for a comprehensive refurbishment of the footbridge in future plans. A decision had been made to keep the footbridge and the current Queensgate owners had expressed that once improved, they may take on the ownership of the footbridge.*
- Members referred to page 31, Appendix A, Integrated Transport Programme 2016/2017 table. Under the section Core Bus routes why had the Eastfield Road location been prioritised in the new bus route plans? *Members were advised that it had been linked to the sustainable travel initiative which had offered £900,000 of revenue to support sustainable transport. The bid was structured in a focused approach to intensively target the east of the city. Infrastructure would be improved on Eastfield Road to facilitate this.*
- Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI). Did this refer to upgrading existing RTPI's? *Members were informed that this was about expanding this technology to new bus stops that currently did not have the technology.*
- Members referred to page 33, Carriageway surface dressing treatment. Some areas of treatment had not been as effective as anticipated. Could it be ensured that carriageway surface dressing treatment was completed effectively especially in areas with lots of learner drivers? *Members were advised that this programme was becoming more challenging and that the Council were trying to implement the programme in some of the through routes across the city. Challenges arose with power steering which caused circles where the chippings had come off of the road but a product would be used to improve the embedment of the chippings.*

- Street column replacement budget. How was it decided which streetlamps would use the brighter bulbs and which would use the less bright and orange lights? *Members were advised that each year a regime of structural and electrical testing occurred and columns were identified which needed replacing. Prioritised streets where there was a high need for replacement were fitted with cast iron and concrete columns. The Corporate Director advised that the street lighting columns and the network supporting them was at the end of its shelf life and therefore proposals would be brought forward in the near future for intensive investment in street lighting using an area based approach.*
- Could Peterborough move to an off-white LED streetlight to eradicate the sleep related problems caused by the white/blue LED streetlights? *Members were advised that all LEDs used were certified to European standards and that the back spill from the lights was far less than from the older orange lights. There were options to dim lights where they were too close to a house and too bright.*
- Members commented that where street columns had been replaced the street furniture on the columns had not been replaced and requested that this be done. *The Corporate Director advised that the need for signs on streetlights would be balanced alongside the need to reduce street clutter.*
- Members reminded officers that the Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities had stated that in rural areas street lighting columns should be black.
- Members referred to paragraph 3.2, on page 27, Air Quality and stated that this was the only mention of air quality within the report despite it being an important issue and suggested that a measure of air quality be shown on the screen in Long Causeway.
- Members referred to page 31, Dropped Kerb Programme. Who is the Council going to liaise with to get dropped kerbs put in place. *Members were advised that the dropped kerb programme was an annual programme and would target entire streets. There was a dropped kerb request database which would be used to determine areas of demand and suitability.*
- Ward councillors were concerned that they were not being informed when maintenance schemes affecting their area were being put in place. *Members were informed that ward councillors should be informed and would note that this should be done.*
- How was the programme of works list determined? *Members were informed that in relation to highway maintenance, an asset management principle was applied to determine which areas would be serviced. All roads were surveyed each year except unclassified roads where 25% were assessed over a four year cycle. This data was collected in accordance with national standards and a road condition index score was produced. This was then considered with factors such as location and environment to produce a final score. The budget would then be applied to the highest of these scores.*
- What was a reserved scheme? *Members were informed that reserved schemes were those schemes just below the cut-off point. These may be undertaken if the higher priority schemes could be achieved below the estimated budget.*
- Members were informed that the Lincoln Road area would be a topic of discussion for future funding for integrated transport and highways maintenance projects. Public realm funding may be used for regeneration.
- What could be done to ensure that utility companies left roads and footpaths that have undergone work in as high a standard as they were before the work was undertaken? *Members were advised that utilities have to meet a minimum standard of reinstatement and if they did not the Council could defect the work and order the utility company to return and put it right.*
- Members praised the new bus shelters that had been implemented and asked the following questions:
 - Could the £9,000 given to Wards in the past for improvements be reinstated? *Members were advised that this could not happen.*
 - How much money is allocated to new pedestrian crossings and how much do they cost? *Members were advised that the Council received a block allocation from the Department for Transport and this was split as part of the consultation process. Each crossing would vary depending on the width of the road and*

whether brand new equipment would be placed or an upgrade. The officer advised that they would provide this information outside of the meeting.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Committee noted the report and requested the following information:

- The Principal Programme & Project Officer would ask senior colleagues for more information on funding and costs of pedestrian crossings.

8. Forward Plan of Executive Decisions

The Committee received the latest version of the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions, containing key decisions that the Leader of the Council anticipated the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the course of the following month. Members were invited to comment on the Forward Plan and where appropriate identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and requested further information on the following:

- A briefing note to be provided on the Key Decision - Award of Contract for Build of a Waste Transfer Station – KEY/18APR14/02.

9. Work Programme 2015/2016

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2015/16 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme for 2015/16 and the Senior Democratic Services Officer to include any additional items as requested during the meeting.

The meeting began at 7.00pm and ended at 9.32pm

CHAIRMAN