

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 11 November 2020
10.00am, held virtually via Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Cllr Barry Stone – Chairman
Cllr Graham Middleton (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Mick Castle
Cllr Danny Douglas
Cllr C Bowes
Cllr Tim East
Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris

Cllr B Spratt
Cllr Vic Thomson
Cllr Colleen Walker
Cllr Brian Watkins

Cabinet Members Present:

Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships
Cllr Graham Plant	Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy

Also Present:

Tom McCabe	Executive Director for Community & Environmental Services.
Sarah Rhoden	Assistant Director, Performance and Governance, CES
Matt Tracey	Growth & Infrastructure Group Manager
Grahame Bygrave	Director of Highways and Waste, CES
Ninan Xu	Infrastructure and Economic Growth Project Officer
John Jones	Head of Environment
Steve Miller	Director, Heritage and Culture
Mark Ogden	Flood and Water Manager
Sophie Leney	Head of Trading Standards
Vince Muspratt	Director, Growth and Development, CES

1. Apologies and substitutions

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Jess Barnard (Cllr Danny Douglas substituted)

2. Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 Cllr Tim East declared an 'other' interest in item 11, CES Enforcement Policy.

4. Items of Urgent Business

- 4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

5. Public Question Time

- 5.1 No public questions were received.

6. Local Member Issues / Questions

- 6.1 The list of Local Member questions/issues is attached at Appendix A.
- 6.2 In response to the supplementary issue, the Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services replied that they have a member approved speed management policy and as Officers, they do not have the discretion to work outside of that policy and there was strict criteria as to what met that 30mph policy. Drivers unknown to the area should judge by the local surroundings what speed they should travel. If Anglia Water introduced the geocasing that would go a long way to meeting the resident's concerns.

7. Environmental Policy - Update

- 7.1 This current report provides a further update for the Infrastructure and Development Committee including progress with carbon reporting, tree planting, a concept for a land management exemplar project and the timetable for internal engagement with staff and members.
- 7.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- 7.2.1 The original idea was to plan a tree for every resident of Norfolk totally 900k trees. However, it was felt that 1 million trees was a more appropriate number. Tree planting had to be carried out at the right time of year and working with local communities to find the right locations had been impacted due to Covid-19 but hard work was still being put into the planting. Planting had taken place, albeit less than had wished. There would be bursts of activity due to the nature of the planting. A pledge had also been shared with all other local authorities.
- 7.2.2 With regards to sourcing and funding the trees, there had been a procurement exercise carried out through the corporate procurement team and there are economies of scale sourcing so many trees. There had been successful grants sourced through Woodland Trust and part of a Defra funding initiative.
- 7.2.3 Although it had been appreciated that some work had been delayed due to national circumstances, more detail of what had happened to move the policy on would be beneficial to the Select Committee and this would be circulated.
- 7.2.4 Any contracts procured were certainly being driven by the policy to ensure it met the standards of NCC's ambition.
- 7.2.5 Although it was an ambitious target to reduce carbon to net zero by 2030, NCC were committed to the challenge.
- 7.2.6 **The Select Committee asked**
- 7.3 The Select Committee **RESOLVED**
1. To Review and comment on progress to date to deliver the objectives of the Environmental Policy.

2. To note the timetable and actions to engage and consult across the whole organisation on carbon reduction measures

8 Current Position of the Norfolk Economy

- 8.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (8) which explained how large the impact of Covid -19 has been on people and business in the county. It also summarised the substantial response to the challenge and how NCC had moved quickly to plan the support for the economy, introducing programmes and fast-tracking project delivery to revive the economy.
- 8.2 The Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy introduced the report and explained that the report provided an economic snapshot around the impact of Covid-19 and how it had affected the local economy.
- 8.3 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
 - 8.3.1 Although there was concern over retailers in the City Centre who had to close during lockdown compared to some retailers in outer retail parks, this was unfortunately due to Government guidelines regarding Covid-19.
 - 8.3.2 There was currently a survey being undertaken to discover gaps in the service regarding business start up grants so there wasn't a repeat of delivering the same services.
 - 8.3.3 The furlough scheme had enabled business to remain stable where otherwise they may have not. The real value of furlough and the approach that the Government had taken won't be realised until some time after the pandemic.
 - 8.3.4 The street closure scheme in St Benedicts could possibly be re-considered if there was a request and strong representation from City Council.
- 8.3 The Select Committee **RESOLVED** to
 1. To note the impact of COVID-19 on the Norfolk economy and the measures being taken to mitigate
 2. To Acknowledge the work done to date and the direction of travel of the Council's economic recovery work

9 Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP)

- 9.1 The Committee received the annual report which outlined Norfolk's high-level strategic infrastructure priorities for the next 10 years, pulling together information on key projects needed to support planned development and deliver economic growth in Norfolk.
- 9.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
 - 9.2.1 There had been additional pressures with the impact of Covid-19 which had affected changes being made. Although it was disappointing to not have received the full amount of funds through the transforming cities bid, there were still significant opportunities and a number of funding sources, particularly with the Covid recovery.

- 9.2.2 The population of Great Yarmouth and the surrounding villages are near to that of Norwich. Great Yarmouth also brings a substantial amount of tourism, and therefore the potential for rail should be maximised for these areas. It was felt that the document needed to be strengthened in this area. Although the document was focused on schemes that were agreed, NCC were leading the discussion on the Vauxhall roundabout.
- 9.2.3 The proposed road schemes would also bring in opportunities for cycle routes which in turn helps sustainable development, healthier lifestyle etc. The road schemes were not just the creation of tarmac.
- 9.2.4 Rail capacity and in particular the Trowse Swingbridge was a vital part in terms of East Norwich Regeneration proposal. Work was currently being undertaken with landowners, Local Enterprise Partnership and Homes England.
- 9.2.5 The regeneration for Yarmouth had been made particularly prominent due to the acceleration of change to shopping patterns in the last few months.
- 9.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to:
The Select committee supports the 2020 iteration of the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and recommends its formal adoption by the Cabinet.

10 Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Review

- 10.1 The Select Committee received the report which explained that Officers had reviewed the existing policies in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy against new and emerging national strategies and policies. This had resulted in the proposal of 3 new policies and minor updates to our existing policies. These proposed changes had been shared with Risk Management Authorities across Norfolk for comment.
- 10.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- 10.2.1 More information from coastal District Councils and the Environment Agency would be sought regarding frequency of tidal flooding and erosion and the potential costs to the County if defences were abandoned. The Flood and water Team Manager did explain that Shoreline Management Plans were being reviewed but the mapping for the Flood Zones had remained the same..
- 10.2.2 The flooding of roadside ditches were the responsibility of the landowner. It was best practice to speak to the relevant Highway Engineer first who would in turn speak to the landowner to see if they could clear the ditch out, rather than clear them out then charge the landowner. Most landowners are helpful and would take action themselves.
- 10.2.3 Any property, residential or commercial, that gets flooded internally would be offered a grant towards property protection. In areas where there is a lot of private drainage and the state of the drainage is unknown and more work needed to be carried out on a local level to engage with the local communities to find more about the drainage capacity and opportunities for improvements.

- 10.3 The Committee **RESOLVED**:
1. To support the draft new policies and amended existing policies for the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for adoption by Cabinet with amendments made following a public consultation.
 2. To note the work undertaken in the last 5 years on local flood risk and drainage as set out in Appendix B.

11. **CES Enforcement Policy**

- 11.1 The Select Committee received the report which outlined that the Policy had been reviewed and updated to reflect recent changes to legislation and guidance. A revised CES Enforcement Policy which was attached as an Appendix had been produced, with proposed changes highlighted in yellow, supported by explanatory notes. Once adopted, the Policy would be published via the NCC web pages.
- 11.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- 11.2.1 The word 'enforcement' in the title of the policy suggested to members of the public that enforcement would always be taken. However, enforcement is one of a number of actions that can be taken to achieve compliance. It was suggested that the policy could be retitled such as 'Compliance and Enforcement Policy'.
- 11.2.2 The Committee were gratified by the approach taken in the Policy.
- 11.3 The Committee **RESOLVED**:
1. To review and comment on the revised CES Enforcement Policy at Appendix A and its annex documents (A-1 to A-6), prior to consideration by Cabinet
 2. To note the 2019/20 enforcement performance data provided at Appendix B, and summary of stakeholder engagement at Appendix C.
 3. To recommend that the policy be retitled the CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy

12. **Forward Work Programme**

- 12.1 The Select Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out the Forward Work Programme to enable the Committee to review and agree it.
- 12.2 It was noted by the Committee that there were large reports being published for the meeting in January, and these were all reports that the Committee had requested.
- 12.3 The Select Committee reviewed the report and **RESOLVED** to
- **Agree** the Forward Work Programme for Infrastructure & Development Select Committee.

The meeting closed at 12.40pm

Chairman



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