

Planning and Highways Delegations Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 August 2019 at 2pm
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Norwich**

Voting Members Present:

Cllr Andy Grant	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste
Cllr Martin Wilby	Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure

Non-Voting Members Present:

Cllr Mick Castle	Planning (Regulatory) Committee Independent Group Spokesperson
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Officers Present:

Stephen Faulkner	Principal Planner
Laura Waters	Senior Planner; Infrastructure Development

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Colin Foulger, Cllr Brian Long, Cllr Graham Plant, Cllr Eric Seward. Also absent was Cllr David Collis.

2. Election of Chair

2.1 Cllr Martin Wilby was duly elected as Chair for the ensuing Council year

3. Election of Vice-Chair

3.1 Cllr Andy Grant was duly elected as Vice-Chair for the ensuing Council year

4. Declarations of Interest

4.1 There were no declarations of interest

5. Urgent Business

5.1 There was no urgent business discussed

6. Proposed amendments to the Internal Procedures for responding to Consultations on: a) Development Plans - Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Marine Plans; b) Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects; and c) Planning Obligations

6.1 The Committee received the report setting out proposed amendments to the existing internal procedures for responding to statutory consultations on: Development plan documents - Local, Neighbourhood and Marine Plans; Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs); and Planning Obligations.

6.2 During discussion the following points were noted:

- The Principal Planner clarified that the report outlined changes to existing

procedures agreed by the Environment Development and Transport Committee. The proposed changes would allow the Committee to make comments on developments determined by other bodies and allow for delegated Officer responses where appropriate. The changes reflected establishment of the Planning and Highways Delegations Committee and the new Council governance structure from May 2019, and new procedures for dealing with urgent decisions as set out in the updated Norfolk County Council constitution

- It was felt that Local Member input on developments was vital
- It was noted as important to seek input in line with wider Council objectives

6.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the updated / amended Internal Procedures set out in Appendices A, B and C of the report

7. Norfolk Boreas Offshore Windfarm Consultation

7.1 The Committee discussed the report outlining the DCO (Development Consent Order) application for an offshore windfarm and onshore ancillary grid connection infrastructure in Norfolk, which would be determined by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The application was defined as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008.

7.2 During Discussion the following points were noted:

- The Boreas Offshore Windfarm scheme was the sister project to the Vanguard Offshore Windfarm Scheme; the majority of outstanding issues related to the Vanguard scheme had been resolved and other remaining matters could be resolved post DCO
- The Chairman noted that the Vanguard and Boreas schemes could use the same infrastructure to limit impact on communities under scenario 1
- Page 46 of the report showed the differences between the two schemes if scenario 2 was taken forward
- The Senior Planner, Infrastructure Development, reported that Vanguard had confirmed their commitment to HVDC (high-voltage direct current) which would minimise the impact on local communities and reduce the number of ducts from 12 to 4
- It was highlighted as important for benefits for communities to be considered as part of the projects; the Chairman confirmed that Members would continue to lobby for community benefits
- The benefits of the project to Norfolk, such as Economic benefits, were noted.
- Money to mitigate against future issues caused by the cable laying on-land in Happisburgh was queried; The Principal Planner clarified that the environmental impact assessment had taken this into account and the Council's response would ask that the project would not add to coastal erosion. Coastal bodies and the Environment Agency would make formal comments on this.
- Decision on the Vanguard scheme was expected in early December 2019 with the potential for construction work starting in early 2021 if a positive outcome was received from the Secretary of State; construction for the Boreas scheme was expected to begin in early 2022. The Hornsea Project 3 and Orsted windfarm schemes were also expected to start construction in early 2022.
- Orsted had not committed to HVDC and therefore they were likely to have many booster substations; the Council had raised concerns about the impact of this
- The Vice-Chairman noted that the project would boost the renewables industry and sustainable employment in Norfolk with a view to developing the County's ability to produce its own energy in the future

- 7.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the principle of this offshore renewable energy proposal and the comments within the report, which is consistent with national renewable energy targets and objectives, subject to the implementation of appropriate highway; historic environment; and surface water conditions / requirements being resolved through the DCO.

The meeting ended at 14:12

CHAIRMAN



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