

# Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 17 July 2019  
10am, Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich

## Present:

Cllr Barry Stone – Chairman

Cllr Jess Barnard

Cllr Stuart Clancy

Cllr David Bills

Cllr Brian Iles

Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris

Cllr Graham Middleton

Cllr Beverley Spratt

Cllr Vic Thomson

Cllr Colleen Walker

Cllr Brian Watkins

Cllr Tony White

Cllr Margaret Dewsbury

Lorne Green

Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships

Police and Crime Commissioner

## Officers Present:

Tom McCabe

Sarah Rhoden

Stuart Ruff

Nick Johnson

Caroline Jeffery

Kevin Townly

Stephen Faulkner

Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services, CES

Head of Support and Development, CES

Chief Fire Officer, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service

Head of Planning

Principal Planner

Asset and Capital Programme Manager

Principal Planner

## 1. Apologies and substitutions

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Tim East.

## 2. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2019

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2019 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

2.2 It was confirmed that the Labour representative on the Local Transport Plan task and finish group would be Cllr Danny Douglas.

## 3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest declared.

#### **4. Items of Urgent Business**

4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

#### **5. Public Question Time**

5.1 There was one public question submitted which is attached at Appendix A.

5.2 A supplementary comment was made that the conclusion for that site contravenes the plan as the site was close to Great Yarmouth and would have access to the highway. Officers replied that there was a method of ranking proposed sites in the document from the options available. There would be a chance to submit views in response to the consultation.

#### **6. Local Member Issues / Questions**

6.1 There was one member question submitted which is attached at Appendix A.

6.2 A supplementary question was asked around there being a mention of incineration in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan yet Norfolk had a no-incineration ethos after the Saddlebow application. West Lynn were unhappy with this and fracking would essentially only affect West Norfolk.

6.3 Officers explained that the Local Plan document related to all forms of waste. It was not possible to adopt an anti-incineration approach that would contravene national planning policy.

6.4 A Member of the Committee raised the point that the discussion around the preferred route for the Norwich Western Link should be had in this committee. It was confirmed that the scrutiny committee would be discussing this and any future policy developments on Norwich Western Link would be brought to the Infrastructure and Development Committee.

6.5 It was also raised that road closures in various areas across the County were causing delays. The Executive Director confirmed that the local highways team would always try to get in touch with the local parish council concerned, but there were times when emergency closures couldn't be avoided and NCC would work with the external agencies to avoid as much disruption as possible.

#### **7. Environment Policy for Norfolk**

7.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the Chairman of the task and finish group and his report is attached at appendix A.

7.2 Some Members expressed a concern that the group were making small progress as the original intention was for the experts to be present at this meeting. Officers explained that bringing the experts to a full meeting of the select committee would duplicate work and a full report would be brought to the September meeting.

## **8. Local Transport Plan 4**

8.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the Chairman of the Transport task and finish group.

8.2 He reported that although the group hadn't met yet it was hoped that the first meeting would take place before the end of July 2019 where the terms of reference and how to integrate the local plan into the transport plan would be discussed.

8.3 The Chairman of the task and finish group explained that the group would be led by what the members expectations were and what they wanted to focus on. It was felt that it was essential that the two plans (local plan and transport plan) came together and were integrated at some point.

8.4 Members felt that the task and finish group should ensure the Plan developed is deliverable as it will impact on others. They also felt it was important to look at a broad spectrum of evidence such as road haulage association and the chamber of commerce, and ensure all stakeholders were involved.

## **9. Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service – HMICFRS Inspection Outcomes**

9.1 The Committee received the annexed report (9) which set out the findings of the recent inspection of our Fire and Rescue Service by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services. It highlighted four areas where NFRS were providing a good service to Norfolk communities. It also highlighted some areas where they needed to make improvements.

9.2 The Chairman welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner to the meeting and invited him to take part in the discussion on this item and the following agenda item.

9.2 Members commented that the NFRS was a well regarded and respected service but there was always room for improvement. In particular, Members asked about the bullying comments from the report and wanted assurance that an investigation had taken place. Officers explained that this was a theme that the inspectors were looking at nationally in all inspections. They assured the committee that it had been picked up from comments in the staff survey but the service and staff representatives have now signed up to a joint statement of commitment that was owned by those who worked to it.

- 9.3 Officers confirmed that there was a wide range of support available if an individual felt the need to 'whistleblow'. Again, the Officers emphasised that the report had picked up on a small number of comments in the staff survey.
- 9.4 The Service were doing their best to attract female firefighters. Following a question from the Police and Crime Commissioner, officers clarified that there were currently 2-3% of females that worked in an operational role with a larger proportion working in control and other important areas of the service. The service had a clear commitment to be an equal employer but would always look to recruit the best person for the job regardless of gender.
- 9.5 Members acknowledged that the report identified a strong approach to safeguarding. It was currently a simple approach and more training would be required in refreshed approaches.
- 9.5 The Committee **REVIEWED** and **COMMENTED** on the draft Improvement Plan set out in Appendix A of the report. Challenge and input was given around whether the Improvement Plan was robust in addressing the improvement areas identified, and realistic in terms of delivery.

## **10. Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service – Emergency Services Collaboration**

- 10.1 The Committee received a presentation regarding the collaboration that had been taking place.
- 10.2 Members asked if there was any progress on collaboration with the ambulance service. Officers commented that they were always looking at ways to collaborate where they could, budget and resources dependant. Ambulances were already based at some Fire Stations and there were some collaborative working in place.
- 10.3 The Committee felt that collaboration was moving in the right direction and had made remarkable progress.
- 10.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner said he was pleased with the progress being made to collaborate. He highlighted the recent joint public engagement event held in Fakenham which he hosted.
- 10.4 It was clarified the £490k saving from estates mentioned in the presentation has been a capital saving.
- 10.5 The Committee **NOTED** the presentation and the work that had been ongoing.

## **11. Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan Review – Preferred Options Consultation**

- 11.1 The Committee received the annexed report (11) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services which provided information about the

proposed 'Preferred Options' consultation stage of the Minerals and Waste Local Plans Review, which included the proposed planning policies for minerals and waste management development and the proposed mineral extraction sites. The report also provided information on the revised Minerals and Waste Development Scheme.

- 11.2 A Member of the Committee expressed a view that the reasons given for not allocating the specific site number MIN 23 (Beeston) should include highways grounds. There was concern expressed about how sites MIN 51 and MIN 13 (Beetley) would be extracted and if this would take place sequentially. Officers explained that they would review the highways comment for site MIN 23 and if needed amend it in the Plan. With regards to sites MIN 51 and MIN 13, Officers explained that that it would be a phased extraction, but a more detailed plan of this would not be available until a planning application is submitted by the mineral operator.
- 11.3 A Member asked why site SIL 02 (at Shouldham and Marham) had been removed from the plan, after a serious objection from the MOD Defence Infrastructure Organisation due to nearby RAF Marham, but another similar area of land (Area of Search E) was still included in the plan, which would also cause similar objections. Officers explained that the MOD objection was due to concerns about large areas of open water at site SIL 02. Within Area of Search 'E', a smaller scheme could come forward which would not raise the same objections due to its size. The land is also higher in some parts of the area of search, so mineral extraction may not reach the groundwater.
- 11.4 Members were concerned that the consultation distance of 250 metres was not far reaching enough especially when some of the proposed sites are in locations which had not experienced anything similar before. The sites had the potential to affect whole communities, some of which are further away than 250 metres from the proposed site.
- 11.5 There was a request that the next part of the consultation did not take place in August or December.
- 11.6 Some Members returned to the issue raised in a public question regarding the suitability of site MIN 203 (Burgh Castle) and the conclusion not to allocate it in the Local Plan on highways grounds. Members asked officers to review this conclusion.
- 11.7 Some Members of the Committee expressed a wish that Government should be lobbied to change the Government position on fracking.
- 11.8 Members were not convinced that the Council could not include an anti-fracking policy in the Local Plan and said that other Authorities plans have included such a policy. Officers commented that they were not aware of any plans that had been successfully adopted.

- 11.9 Cllr J Barnard proposed to recommend to Cabinet that the Minerals and Waste Local Plan should include an anti-fracking policy. This was seconded by Cllr C Walker.
- 11.9.1 With 4 votes for and 7 against, the motion was **LOST**.
- 11.10 The Committee **RESOLVED** to;
1. Comment on the revised Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (MWDS) and recommend Cabinet resolve that the MWDS shall have effect from 1 September 2019.
  2. Comment on the draft Preferred Options document and recommend Cabinet agreement to publish the Preferred Options document for consultation.
  3. Comment on the consultation methods proposed in this report and recommend Cabinet agreement to carry out the Preferred Options consultation using the methods detailed in this report.

## **12. Highway Asset Performance**

- 12.1 The Committee received the annexed report (12) which provided an annual summary of how well NCC were managing their highway assets. Highway asset performance was assessed on an annual basis against a set of previously agreed service level priorities to inform decisions and make the best use of capital funding available. Revenue budgets, used for general maintenance and repair, were not part of the report. The capital budget for 2019/20 was £34 million and the estimated budget for 2020/21 was £35 million.
- 12.2 The Committee commented that overall the data in the report demonstrated good performance. They felt that the areas where performance was not as good appeared to be out of NCC's control.
- 12.3 Details around the A47 had not been included in the report as NCC does not manage this road. However, Officers informed the Committee that NCC continued to work the A47 alliance to deliver their aspirations and to continue to push the Highways Agency and Government for the funding agreed in 2014 which frustratingly had not yet come to fruition.
- 12.4 The Committee;
- a) **NOTED** the progress against the Asset Management Strategy Performance framework and the continuation of the current strategy and targets (Appendix A and B of the report)
  - b) **ENDORSED** the proposed realignment of the Asset Management Policy (Appendix C of the report) with the council plan agreed in May 2019
  - c) **ENDORSED** the enhanced detail in the Asset Management Strategy (Appendix D) and revised targets to 2021-22 (Appendix E of the report)
  - d) **NOTED** the performance against Key Performance Indicator's in Highway Contracts (Tarmac, WSP & Dynniq) (Appendix F of the report)

## **13. Proposed Update to Planning Obligations Standards 2019**

- 13.1 The Committee received the annexed report (13) which set out a series of suggested / proposed amendments to the Standards reflecting Government's proposals on reforming developer contributions and addressed members issues raised at the EDT Committee in March 2019. The report also suggested further joined-up working with the district councils to consider the wider implications of the Government's reforms.
- 13.2 The Committee asked about how much CIL funding had been collected to date and how much had been spent on infrastructure. Officers would get a written response to the Committee.
- 13.3 The Committee questioned how much of the issued Section 106 monies had been handed back. The Officers would issue a written response.
- 13.4 The Committee raised issues regarding health and the possible use of CIL and / or S106 for health infrastructure. The Officer explained that this was a matter for the district councils through implementation of the agreed County-wide Health Protocol, which formed part of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF). Officers also explained that the issue of using CIL/S106 for health infrastructure was being considered by the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum under the chair of Cllr John Fuller and that NCC was a member of this Forum.
- 13.5 The Committee **AGREED**;  
(1) To recommend the amended Planning Obligations Standards (as set out in Appendix A) to Cabinet on 2 September 2019 for approval;  
(2) That officers work with the District Councils to consider the wider implications of the Government's reforms in respect of infrastructure delivery to support growth in the County;  
(3) That any further amendments will be incorporated into the next annual review of the Standards for 2020.

#### **14. Forward Work Programme**

- 14.1 The Committee received the annexed report (14) which set out the forward work programme for the Committee.
- 14.2 Information regarding timescales of repairing pot holes and the work of highway rangers would be brought to the November meeting.
- 14.3 The Committee agreed that the procedures of utility companies when needing to close roads for works would be brought to a future meeting.
- 14.4 The Committee **AGREED** the work programme.

The meeting closed at 1.05pm.

## Chairman



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## INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE QUESTIONS 17 July 2019

### 5. Public Question Time

#### **Question from Philip Green (Managing Director – Folkes Plant & Aggregates Limited)**

Welcome Pit, Burgh Castle

Why is MIN203 not a Preferred Site?

Following pre-application liaison with the Highways Authority it was confirmed in writing that no objection would be raised to extending this quarry. Yet the sole reason given not to Allocate MIN203 is because Highways do not consider the access suitable! There is a contradiction in the position taken by Highways on this site.

My Company will:

- Reduce the number of HGV's
- Introduce speed control measures
- Improve road makings
- Re-surface the site access

All to the written satisfaction of the Highways Authority. Please use your Committees influence to correct this contradiction and recommend the extension as a Preferred Site.

*Response:*

*The simple answer is that the site has not been allocated because it is considered that there are other, more suitable sites, available to meet Norfolk's mineral needs. One of the key advantages of adopting an allocative approach to planning, is that it allows the authority to compare all the potential sites available and then select only the best sites sufficient to meet the mineral requirements of Norfolk.*

### 6. Local Member Issues / Member Questions

#### **Question from Councillor Alexandra Kemp**

##### **Recycling of Larger Plastics in Norfolk**

Can the Committee place "Environmentally-Friendly Destinations for Larger Recycled Plastics and for Larger Plastics in the Residual Waste Stream" on the Forward Work Plan and does it realise the strength of feeling in King's Lynn, about larger plastic items residents bring to the tip to recycle, being placed in residual waste, while 199,000 of 204,000 tonnes of residual waste, are still being burned as Refuse Derived Fuel, five years after the Incinerator Contract ended?

The Chinese market for plastics has collapsed. Environmentally-friendly commercial opportunities for pot-hole repair, highways furniture and raw material for cars and computers must be explored.

*Response:*

*There is no need to add this the forward plan as the issue is already under continuous review. Sadly, in April 2017 we had to suspend the trial of recycling rigid plastic at five recycling centres as it wasn't sustainable or affordable, but the situation is being monitored for improvements with the hope to reintroduce our trial when possible and innovative solutions are being looked at in detail as well.*