

# Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 16 March 2022  
10.00am, held at County Hall, Norwich

**Present:**

Cllr Barry Stone – Chair

Cllr Steffan Aquarone  
Cllr Graham Carpenter  
Cllr Chris Dawson  
Cllr Barry Duffin  
Cllr Phillip Duigan

Cllr Lana Hemsall  
Cllr William Richmond  
Cllr Chrissie Rumsby  
Cllr Colleen Walker  
Cllr Tony White

**Also Present:**

David Cumming	Strategic Transport Team Manager, CES
David Dukes	Head of Inward Investment, CES
John Jones	Head of Environment, CES
Jon Peddle	Food and Farming Manager, Trading Standards, CES
Nicola Ledain	Committee Officer, Democratic Services
Tom McCabe	Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
Vince Muspratt	Director, Growth and Development, CES
Sarah Rhoden	Assistant Director, Performance and Governance, CES
Ceri Sumner	Director, Community, Information and Learning, CES

**1. Apologies and substitutions**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Claire Bowes, Cllr Robert Savage, Cllr James Bensly, Cllr Vic Thomson (substituted by Cllr Graham Carpenter, Cllr Barry Duffin, Cllr Lana Hemsall and Cllr Phillip Duigan respectively). Apologies were also received from Cllr Jim Moriarty and Cllr David Bills.

**2. Minutes**

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

- 3.1 There were no interests declared.

**4. Items of Urgent Business**

- 4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

**5. Public Question Time**

- 5.1 There were no public questions received.

## 6. Local Member Issues / Questions

6.1 There were no local Member issues or questions received.

## 7. Update on Developing an Overarching Policy for the Use of Glyphosate Based Herbicides by NCC

7.1 The Committee received the annexed report which set out the plans and the timetable for developing the policy following meetings with the working group and the key officers.

7.2 During discussion, the following points were noted:

7.2.1 The timetable in developing the policy outlined that it would be brought to Infrastructure and Development Committee in November. The brief had been written and been agreed by the working group that would oversee the work, and they had identified three consultants that had experience. They would be looking carefully at approach and methodology and it was possible that the recording systems would also be reviewed so that the use of this pesticide could be recorded. The consultant would also be asked to see how the use of this chemical aligns with the councils Environmental Policy. All the work should be completed towards the end of summer, with the draft policy ready at the beginning of September. It would then be reviewed by the Infrastructure and Development Committee in November and Cabinet in February 2023. The working group was represented by the various NCC departments and Norse. Part of the remit of the work was looking at alternatives, however that was quite challenging as this had already been looked into, and there could be cost implications to using alternatives.

7.2.2 Members expressed concern that the ragwort was overgrowing all along the highways and was costing thousands of pounds to control it at the cost of landowners.

7.2.3 There had been conversations with institutes such as John Innes Centre that could develop local pesticides, but they had suggested that they were not the most appropriate institute to help with this. If they had thought they were suitable, they would have also charged. The three contractors that had been identified had been recommended by JIC. It was also noted that NCC were the first County Council to address developing a policy such as this.

7.2.4 The working group felt it was necessary for an independent expert to validate the policy. All the chosen consultants have had careers spanning many years in this field and are part of various networks and associations and some had ties with the John Innes Centre.

7.2.5 NCC would be working closely with Suffolk County Council on this as they had similar issues. It was suggested that they are asked for a contribution towards the cost of the consultants.

7.2.6 The Select Committee **RESOLVED** to note the revised timetable and information regarding the development of a Policy for the use of Glyphosate-Based Herbicides by NCC

## 8. Invest Norfolk and Suffolk

- 8.1 The Committee received an annexed report and presentation which reminded members of the rationale for establishing Invest Norfolk and Suffolk, progress to date and plans for the coming year and beyond.
- 8.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- 8.2.1 In addition to those mentioned in the presentation, there was also a project in King's Lynn which would be of allow progress but the site was selected by the company as the only UK location. The steps taken to secure the site had been sincere. To unlock more opportunities, more of this working with Food Enterprise Park was helpful. The focus on food and having a sector focus had been helpful especially with the anchor companies that had been based there. There were also opportunities in bases such as Norwich Research Park, where scientists and nutritionists were on site to develop and collaborate food and nutrition.
- 8.2.2 Newer companies were being seen to offer higher wage, more technical roles and higher skilled than they would have a few years ago. It was potentially the role of growth and development to work with partners at districts, institutions and LEP to see that shift in the rest of the economy, but this would not be changed dramatically quickly.
- 8.2.3 The £1.98million of investment mentioned in the presentation was clarified as given to a range of 140 small and medium enterprises.
- 8.2.4 The first wave of the shared prosperity fund would be shared by district councils and NCC would be using it as an opportunity by offering the collaboration with NCC to try and protect those programmes and operate them across the county.
- 8.2.5 In making the county attractive, improving broadband and connectivity had been very helpful. One single issue that could hinder investment was public transport, and providing good access for workers to a number of sites. Frequencies and number of bus stops were issues. People want to move around but were limited because of access to public transport.
- 8.2.6 Investment in renewable energies were now being made because they had too, but there was still investment being made into oil and gas. More innovation and technology had been needed to access more of the North Sea stock. However, re-investment in the oil and gas it was a question of flexibility on those companies that had now invested in the renewable sector and would they be willing to revert.
- 8.3 The Select Committee **considered** the presentation, **examined** current and past performance, discussed issues, priorities and trends and **recommended** future areas of focus.

## 9. Progress with delivering the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP)

- 9.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report which provided an update for members on progress with delivering the NAIP. Norfolk County Council had set out its priorities for increasing public use and enjoyment of the Norfolk Rights of Way

network in the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP) which was adopted by the Council in 2019 and runs for 10 years.

9.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:

9.2.1 The NAIP were supported by Members of the committee, and it was suggested that communities and parishes were equipped to maintain footpaths and public rights of way and this should be part of the plan.

9.2.2 The Committee identified that the delivery plan showed at least seven projects that were funded by the European Union, some had ended last year or this year and some were due to be ending in the next year. Officers agreed that that projects needed a longer term legacy and viewed as a longer term strategy and vision. Work had often started through projects but continued to offer benefits to Norfolk for much longer. Some projects became larger scale projects and others helped initiate other bigger, more beneficial projects and persuaded others to invest to do a bigger and better job.

9.2.3 The Committee identified that as part of the 'improve access for all' on pages 31 and 32, it outlined areas for improvement and priority actions. Members asked how these were going to be achieved. Officers explained that for access for all projects, they engaged the groups that had a direct impact on those areas and were currently working with carers who work with individuals with dementia to understand the challenges, and build understanding through the engagement. For the detail on page 31 and 32, the Chair agreed that a written response could be given.

9.2.4 With reference to page 36, the Experience project would be in partnership with Cycling UK and hubs would be situated around Norfolk. Two of the hubs had been identified. The rest hadn't been confirmed but it was important to have community involvement, engagement and agreement.

9.3 The Committee **RESOLVED**

1. To note officers' ongoing work to deliver the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP)
2. To note processes in place to monitor the plan

## 10. Trading Standards Service Plan

10.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services which set out the Trading Standards Service Plan for 2022/23.

The plan details the activities the Service will undertake, reflecting the issues and problems Norfolk people and businesses face, ensuring that the service is focused on the needs of the county, and aligning with the Better Together, For Norfolk priorities of:

- A vibrant and sustainable economy
- Better opportunities for children and young people
- Healthy, fulfilling and independent lives
- Strong, engaged and inclusive communities
- A greener, more resilient future

- 10.2 Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships, Cllr Margaret Dewsbury introduced the report.
- 10.3 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- 10.3.1 There was currently a recruitment for a graduate intake into trading standards which had over 90 applicants for nine or ten places. Officers had reached out to different sectors to try and achieve a more diverse workforce, and, along with comparable pay, this had helped. In terms of what Councillors could do to help the department, awareness of the work the team undertake, and promote it in their local areas.
- 10.3.2 It could be beneficial to set up some virtual sessions about the diverse range of work that the department carries out for councillors to join.
- 10.3.3 There was slight surprise at the low number of successful prosecutions. Officers explained that this was a consequence of the effective use of the enforcement policy. Business compliance was also reached by means other than legal action where possible, but in these cases prosecution was taken as the final step, as other interventions had failed to achieve business compliance, or offences were so serious that prosecution was the appropriate action from the start.
- 10.4 The Select Committee **RESOLVED** to;
1. Review and comment on the Trading Standards Service Plan 2022/23 (Appendix 1 of the report) including:
    - Annex I: Enforcement of Age Restricted Sales and Illicit Tobacco Products Plan 2022/23 (Appendix 2 of the report)
    - Annex II: Food & Feed Law Enforcement Plan 2022/23 (Appendix 3 of the report), and
    - Annex III: Delivery of Animal Health & Welfare Framework 2022/23 (Appendix 4 of the report) prior to consideration by Cabinet.
  2. Review and comment on the Trading Standards' Business Services Policy (Appendix 5) prior to consideration by Cabinet.

## 11. Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan

- 11.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services which outlined the proposal which would help shape the LTP4 Implementation Plan.
- 11.2 The timetable for the adoption of the LTP Implementation Plan had been brought forward as, when adopted it – together with the LTP Strategy – would form the transport plan for the area. This would bring the plan up to date and state clearly where the authority wants to be, such as improvements to public transport, more energy efficient travel etc.
- 11.3 During discussion, it was noted that, before behaviours could be changed, it was necessary to understand the behaviours and the need for the travel. Behaviour changes formed part of the actions in the plan. Detail around how that would be carried out would become more apparent as the plan moved forward.
- 11.4 Officers explained this this was a high level strategy and implementation plan and, as each project went through their process, detail would become more apparent. It

was confirmed that the Habitats Regulation Assessment had been carried out, and was one of the many assessment that had supported the development of the plan. It would be published alongside all other material for consultation, once the consultation was launched.

- 11.5 It wouldn't be possible for the Committee to receive a quarterly report on the LTP indicators, but an annual report could be put on the forward plan.
- 11.6 The Select Committee **RESOLVED**;  
1. To make any comments on the LTP4 Implementation Plan to be considered as part of the public consultation process, the outcomes of which will be used to finalise the strategy.

## **12. Forward Work Programme**

- 12.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services set out the Forward Work Programme for the Committee to enable the Committee to review and shape.
- 12.2 The Select Committee reviewed the report and **RESOLVED** to  
1. Review and agree the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee set out in Appendix A.

The meeting closed at 11.53am

**Chair**



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