

# Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 29 May 2019  
10am, Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich**

**Present:**

Cllr Barry Stone – Chairman

Cllr Danny Douglas  
Cllr Phillip Duigan  
Cllr Claire Bowes  
Cllr Tim East  
Cllr Simon Eyre  
Cllr Brian Iles

Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris  
Cllr Graham Middleton  
Cllr Vic Thomson  
Cllr Colleen Walker  
Cllr Brian Watkins  
Cllr Tony White

**Officers Present:**

Helen Edwards

Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer), Norfolk County Council

Tom McCabe

Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services, CES

Steve Miller

Assistant Director, Culture and Heritage, CES

Vince Muspratt

Assistant Director, Growth and Development, CES

Sarah Rhoden

Head of Support and Development, CES

Stuart Ruff

Chief Fire Officer

Ceri Sumner

Assistant Director, Community, Information and Learning, CES

Nick Tupper

Assistant Director, Highways and Waste, CES

**1. Apologies and substitutions**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Stuart Clancy, substituted by Philip Duigan; Jess Barnard, substituted by Danny Douglas; Terry Jermy, substituted by Colleen Walker and Beverley Spratt, substituted by Simon Eyre.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest declared.

**3. Items of Urgent Business**

- 3.1 There were no items of urgent business.

#### **4. Public Question Time**

- 4.1 There were no public questions submitted.

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

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

#### **6. Terms of Reference and Working Arrangements**

- 6.1 The Committee received the annexed report (6) which set out the terms of reference and parts of the Constitution relevant to the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee and were attached at appendix A of the report.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that to be as transparent as possible, it was necessary to have as little exempt information as possible and to take most reports in the public domain. The Chairman acknowledged that this would be adopted as far as was practicable.
- 6.3 Clarity was given over where sustainable development would sit within the Cabinet governance structure. The Executive Director explained that it would sit within the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee.
- 6.4 The Committee **REVIEWED, CONSIDERED** and **AGREED** its terms of reference included within the Constitution.

#### **7. Key Service Issues and Risks - Presentation**

- 7.1 The Committee received the presentation from the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services. The presentation outlined the areas of the Community and Environmental Service and identified any key risks and issues within those areas.
- 7.2 The Committee heard that the Chief Fire Officer would oversee the Fire Service finances and operational resources as part of the Integrated Risk Management Plan. If anything fell outside of the budget, there would be necessary conversations through the appropriate channels.
- 7.3 Although the bus networks are generally commercial services, Norfolk County Council had an opportunity to influence factors within the networks. The Committee heard that the Transforming Cities fund was one of those opportunities, working together with the district councils in the Greater Norwich Area. The County Council also played a part in subsidising some routes, awarding grants and funding concessionary fares.

- 7.4 The Assistant Director agreed to provide a list of bus shelters which were owned by Norfolk County Council. Members expressed concern that it was difficult to discover who the owners were. Officers acknowledged this but only held a list of those owned by Norfolk County Council.
- 7.5 There was concern expressed that subsidised routes were becoming unsustainable with fewer passengers, based on recent data. It was felt that this was an important area to be reviewed by the Committee, as well as the general issue of public transport. It was suggested that community transport could be linked into public transport if the programming and timetabling was carefully thought out and organised.
- 7.6 The Committee heard that the gritting routes were reviewed every year due to additional requests for gritting plus new roads opening such as the Broadland Northway. The network for the Winter 2019 was already being prepared to target the gritting where it would be needed most.
- 7.7 Some Members felt that an integrated waste service with disposal would be more efficient and effective than the current set-up. One service would be responsible for the collection and disposal of waste.
- 7.8 There were various organisations involved in stopping fly-tipping; County Council, District Council and Environment Agency. The biggest problem area in terms of increased fly-tipping currently was the 'man with the van' who would pick up rubbish from a household at a cost, and then dump it in the countryside.
- 7.9 The Assistant Director confirmed that a way of recycling paint was being investigated.
- 7.10 As part of the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy activities were being aligned around that to help promote the local economy in conjunction with district councils. The Select Committee were informed that the Local Enterprise Partnership included representatives from the County Council and district councils.
- 7.11 It was clarified that the responsibility of appointing Members to be representatives to outside bodies lay with the Leader.
- 7.12 The Select Committee **NOTED** the presentation and associated risks and issues of each service area.

## **8. Policy and Strategy Framework and draft Forward Plan**

- 8.1 The Committee received the annexed report (8) which provided details of the relevant policy and strategy framework to enable the Select Committee to develop its Forward Plan and have oversight of policy and strategy development work across relevant services.
- 8.2 The Committee received an update on the Mineral and Waste Local Plan. There had been one round of consultation and Officers were currently considering responses.

The preferred option would be taken to the August meeting of Cabinet after which there would be then another 6-week consultation period. Responses from that would then be gathered when a final plan would be referred to the Secretary of State. There was a 12-month turnover with the Secretary of State, so a final decision was hoped to be received approximately September 2021.

- 8.3 The Committee felt that the plan was in a too advanced stage for a task and finish group to be convened, but the Select Committee felt that they would like to review the plan and add comment before it was presented to Cabinet in August.
- 8.4 The Chairman announced that Highways had been successful in winning an award for upgrading street lights to LED lights and the energy saving that this had generated. Members of the Committee congratulated the team on the award.
- 8.5 There were various points made around transport, including rural transport, car parking around schools and home to school transport and the Local Transport Plan (LTP). It was suggested that all these issues were important and should be collated under one task and finish group which focused on the Local Transport Plan but included the other transport issues. If it was felt necessary that the other transport issues needed deeper research, a group could be set up later.
- 8.6 The LTP task and finish group members were agreed as Cllr Graham Middleton, Cllr Tony White with the Labour and Liberal Democrat member to be advised.
- 8.7 The Committee **REVIEWED** the policy and strategy framework, included the anticipated development work and **IDENTIFIED** appropriate items for inclusion on the Select Committees Forward Plan as follows:
- Minerals and Waste Local Plan review to be reviewed at the July meeting as per Forward Plan.
  - The Local Transport Plan would remain on the Forward Plan to be considered at the July meeting.

## **9. Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure and Delivery Plan (NSIDP)**

- 9.1 The Committee received the annexed report (9) which outlined the main points of the NSIDP and provided detail about the Plan. The Strategic Planning Manager stressed that the plan was produced in partnership. It brings together key strategic infrastructure schemes from other plans and programmes to move them forwards to delivery.
- 9.2 A Member noted that there were more schemes that produced carbon than there were schemes that didn't. The Executive Director explained that infrastructure to support large scale housing or employment development was likely to include infrastructure such as a road, otherwise planning permission may not be granted. Members commented that it would be beneficial for there to be more schemes that benefited people who didn't drive. The Strategic Planning Manager explained that public transport schemes tended to be smaller scale but that reviews of the NSIDP might well include any large-scale infrastructure associated with "Transforming Cities". He also drew attention to a number of rail schemes in the plan.

- 9.3 A Member suggested that a carbon change audit approach and a measure of benefits that affected everyone would be beneficial. The Strategic Planning Manager explained that each project would be subject to its own environmental assessment as part of a separate consenting process
- 9.4 The Strategic Planning Manager explained that schemes were already outlined in Local Plans and the Local Transport Plan or had come through other processes. Therefore, developments in the NSIDP had been through the necessary planning process would be subject to the relevant tests anyway. The Local Transport Plan looked longer term and fed into policy documents about future development.
- 9.5 The Select Committee commented on the plan and **AGREED** that it would review the updated plan in November prior to it being considered by Cabinet in December.
- 10. Response to agreed Climate Change Motion at Full Council on 15 April 2019**
- 10.1 The Committee received the annexed report (10) which was triggered by the climate change motion agreed at Full Council on 15 April 2019. The report provided a position statement on the current activity within the council that could be aligned with the climate change / carbon agenda, with the expectation that it would enable members to make an informed position with regards to further action.
- 10.2 A task and finish group were agreed to be set up with a proposal that it would meet weekly. The Members of the group would be Cllr Barry Stone, Cllr Beverley Spratt, Cllr Jess Barnard with the Liberal Democrat Member to be advised.
- 10.3 The Committee acknowledged that it was important to receive factually based evidence with scientific outcomes and predictions presented to the task and finish group and not to be swayed by opinions and views.
- 10.4 The Chairman explained that witnesses and representatives from the University of East Anglia would be invited as well as a representative from Extinction Rebellion.
- 10.5 The group would scrutinise Norfolk County Council and all associated companies such as Norse, Repton and Hethel.
- 10.6 The Committee **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** the way forward as set out in section two of the report.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm.

## Chairman



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## INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE QUESTIONS 29 May 2019

### 5. Public Question Time

None received.

### 6. Local Member Issues / Member Questions

#### Question from Cllr Sandra Squire

In April, this Council passed a motion reflecting how seriously we take the protection and management of the environment, how we are going to work with the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership and to create a Pollinator Action Plan. Is the Committee & wider Council going to engage with Highways England regarding the wholesale environmental destruction of the verges along the A47 & A11 corridors, by spraying them with weedkiller and to prevent them repeating the process in the Autumn. At a time when biodiversity is in crisis, habitat loss for pollinators and other insects is unacceptable and is in stark contrast to how this council manages our road network.

#### **Response**

*The Environment Service are currently working on a Draft Pollinator Action Plan. An initial internal discussion document has recently been produced. The suggested duration for the initial plan is 2019-2023. It is envisioned that the plan would take the form of a two-part document; the first being the context and the second the proposed actions. Below is a suggested contents list for the plan:*

#### *Part 1: The context*

- *A Foreword by the Cabinet Member*
- *Why are pollinators so important?*
- *Who is this plan for and what will it achieve?*
- *Why do we need this for Norfolk?*
- *What is currently being done to help pollinators?*
- *Some top tips for managing land to benefit pollinators*
- *Further info*
- *References*

#### *Part 2: The Action Plan*

- *Strategic Actions for Norfolk*
- *Actions for the County Council*
- *Communications and partnership strategy for enacting the plan*

*An approach to highways verges will be included in the county-wide actions; a draft set of actions for this has been drawn up:*

*Managing highways verges and Public Right of Ways in a pollinator-friendly manner.*

- *Develop a maintenance strategy that ensures the road verges deliver their potential for pollinators (with appropriate consideration of safety issues).*
- *Develop a maintenance strategy for Public Rights of Way that ensures the network delivers its potential for pollinators.*
- *Working with Norfolk Wildlife Trust, promote and extend the Roadside Nature Reserve scheme, designating the most important verges for Norfolk's special biodiversity.*

*This work would also include liaising and working with Highways England, and other partner organisations, on how Norfolk wishes to manage verges within the county.*

*In addition to this plan, the Green Infrastructure planning that NCC is following has as a key element the creation of a network of biodiversity corridors that will act as routes through the landscape for pollinators. This includes the Greenways project aimed at re-using disused railways as cycling, walking and biodiversity corridors. The model for these is the Marriott's Way.*

*The Action Plan should be developed through close joint working with the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership and the soon to be reconstituted Local Nature Partnership as an important part of a 25 Year Environment Plan for Norfolk.*