

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 1st October 2019

PRESENT: Councillor D B Dew – Chairman.

Councillors B S Chapman, S J Corney, J W Davies, Mrs A Dickinson, Dr P L R Gaskin, M S Grice and J E White.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J C Cooper-Marsh, J P Morris and D J Wells.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Mrs M L Beuttell, R Fuller, Mrs P A Jordan and R J West.

28 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

30 NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st October 2019 to 31st January 2020.

31 CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY'S LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN POST-CONSULTATION NEXT STEPS PRESENTATION

Mr Rowland Potter, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, and Mr Steven Bishop, Steer, gave a presentation to the Panel on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA) Local Transport Plan (LTP) Post-Consultation Next Steps.

During the presentation, the Panel was informed that the LTP consultation closed at 6pm the previous Friday (27th September). In addition it was noted that the LTP is a statutory document and has four functions. It also supports elements other than transport including economic, social and environmental aims. It was recognised that the main challenge of the LTP is to support the three economic areas of Cambridgeshire; Greater Cambridge Economy, Peterborough Economy and the rural economy.

In outlining the consultation feedback Mr Bishop stated that the common themes were as follows: wanting good bus provision, achieving net zero carbon emissions, Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM), support for East-West rail, better walking routes and recognising the importance of Local Plans.

Councillor B S Chapman questioned how the LTP links in with Market Towns Masterplans, in particular the St Neots Masterplan. Mr Bishop stated that the transport elements of the masterplans have been taken and developed within the LTP but that now that the consultation has finish it would be an ideal time to link together and align plans.

Parking at transport hubs was raised by Councillor B S Chapman. Mr Potter responded by stated that the LTP aims to look at the public transport links to the hubs and not just parking.

When asked why the development of the CAM would start in Cambridge and not from the fringes inwards to Cambridge, the Panel was informed that the CAM has to be developed in a way that can encourage investment. It was recognised that there would be complexities to the Cambridge end of CAM but there would also be complexities to other parts of the network.

Councillor B S Chapman stated that he believed that the East-West rail line should come through the biggest population centres of South Cambridgeshire, namely Cambourne and St Neots. Mr Bishop stated that those views were echoed by the St Neots' residents but that it is now up to Central Government to determine the route.

When questioned on land acquisition for the CAM project, Members were informed that ideally there would be integrated transport before first occupancy instead of relying on modal shift. However, there is a statutory process to follow in order to show all options have been considered.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs A Dickinson on whether the Combined Authority are working with bus companies, the Panel was informed that there is a Strategic Bus Review and that the Combined Authority are looking at what the bus service would look like going forward. It is anticipated there would be a blended service.

The Chairman asked what was being done for Huntingdonshire as the District sits across the three economies of the region. Mr Potter stated that the District is a mirror of the region as a whole but that in order to prosper, an infrastructure needs to be created which encourages people to stay in the area to work, live and play.

32 ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLANDS - OUTLINE TRANSPORT STRATEGY: FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGEMENT

With the aid of a report by Planning Service Manager – Growth (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) England's Economic Heartlands – Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement was presented to the Panel. It was noted that the England's Economic Heartlands consultation focuses on similar issues to the consultation for the Local Transport Plan, however with this consultation there is a mention of freight.

Councillor B S Chapman asked a question regarding the roll out of broadband network to the market towns. In response the Panel was informed that Connecting Cambridgeshire aims to bring areas up to a certain standard of broadband. There are also plans to fit digital infrastructure alongside highway schemes.

(At 7.49pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor R J West left the meeting.)

(At 7.56pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor R J West entered the meeting.)

33 ACCELERATING THE DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT

With the aid of a report by the Accelerating the Delivery of Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book), the Panel received the Group's final findings.

In introducing the report Councillor S J Corney informed the Panel that Rural Exception Sites (RES) is an important and valuable mechanism in delivering affordable housing, however it can't be used to accelerate the delivery. In addition Councillor Corney stated that the Group would like to encourage Members representing rural wards to bring forward potential RES for consideration.

The Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development thanked the Task and Finish Group for the study and accepts the recommendations as outlined within the report. In addition, the Executive Councillor stated that Overview and Scrutiny is welcome to get involved and assist with policy development.

The Panel agreed that the Cabinet should endorse the recommendations.

34 ESTABLISHMENT OF EMPLOYMENT COMPANY

Having noted that this item would be withdrawn, it was

RESOLVED

that this item be not determined.

35 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book), the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

A discussion ensued around the area of Skills. The Panel was informed that the plan is to liaise with the Combined Authority, however their Skills Committee is yet to meet. Members agreed to revisit the topic in January 2020.

It was stated that the Panel would have a report on the topic of Wider Economic Environment at either the November meeting or December meeting. The report will likely be an options paper and the Panel would have to make a decision on what to work on.

The Panel discussed the possibility of further scrutiny on the implementation of the Car Parking Strategy. It was noted that the roll out hasn't been completed and any scrutiny before completion would be premature. In addressing the concerns of car park reclassification, the Managing Director stated that no reclassification has occurred. It was agreed that the review of the Car Parking Strategy would be carried out once the changes have been fully rolled out and those changes have had time to bed in, unless sufficient evidence emphasising the need for urgent scrutiny is presented.

(At 8.05pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillors Mrs P A Jordan and R J West left the meeting and did not return.)

36 MR CLIVE MASON

The Chairman read out a statement prepared by Mr Clive Mason. In it, Mr Mason explained he would be leaving the Council on Friday 11th October and that he thanks Members for the help and support over the past few years and he wishes everyone the best for the future.

Chairman