

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMY AND GROWTH) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 8th September 2016.

PRESENT: Councillor D B Dew – Chairman.
Councillors Mrs B E Boddington, R Fuller,
I D Gardener, L George, B Hyland,
D R Underwood and D Watt.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors E R Butler, D J Mead and K D Wainwright.

19. MINUTES

The minutes for the meeting of the Panel held on 7th July 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

20. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor D R Underwood declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Minute Number 23 as a land owner, with planning consent to develop on the land, who was approached by the Council to ask when the consent would be completed.

21. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st September 2016 to 31st December 2016.

22. HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN TO 2036 AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING UPDATES

With the aid of a report by the Head of Development (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Huntingdonshire Local To 2036 and Infrastructure Planning Update was presented to the Panel. Members were reminded that in July 2016, representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council attended a Panel meeting and confirmed that the Cambridge Sub-Region Model (CSRM) would be ready by the end of July 2016 however at the time of the meeting it was not ready.

The Panel was informed that progress has been made in the areas of: Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Highways and Transport Infrastructure Projects. However a final date for the flood risk assessment has not been set with an estimate of early 2017 being given.

Following a question asking will there be more meetings with the

County Council in order to keep the pressure on regarding the revalidation of the CSRM, it was confirmed that there will be and that a huge amount of work has been completed by the County Council.

In response to concerns regarding the slippage of timescales for the A428 project, the Panel were informed that the Council are reliant on Highways England to begin construction in 2020. Members wanted assurance that the Council will continue to keep the pressure on Highways England so that the commencement date does not slip.

The Panel believes that the A428 needs to be a priority for the Council so that economic opportunities can be realised. Concern was raised that the housing development at Wintringham Park would be built before work begins on the A428 therefore leading to more congestion.

Following the discussion regarding the securing of services of consultants in order to carry out work on the Local Plan, the Panel want to emphasise to Cabinet that if needed, additional resources should be allocated in order to secure the services of consultants.

Members requested more detail on the A1: M25 to Peterborough road improvements and in particular the Baldock to Brampton section, however were informed that the questions could be answered better by the Council's transportation specialist and that they should be invited to a future Panel meeting.

Members were reminded that if the Council does not develop the Local Plan then that would have a negative economic impact on the District. The Panel agreed that the Local Plan to 2036 is the number one priority and that resources should not be diverted from the project.

The Panel recommended to Cabinet that the Council's representatives on the Growth and Infrastructure Group should be as follows: the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy, Housing and Infrastructure, two Members from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) and one Member from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities and Environment).

23. ANNUAL ACTUAL HOUSING COMPLETIONS COMPARED TO PROJECTED HOUSING COMPLETIONS SINCE 2011/12

With the aid of the report by Head of Development (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Annual Actual Housing Completions Compared to Projected Housing Completions since 2011/12 report was presented to the Panel.

Members noted that during the last five years the Council has been accurate when projecting housing completions which gives the Council confidence that the District has a five year land supply. The Panel was told that the Council works out its projections by writing to every person with planning permission and asking them when are they planning to develop and how quickly.

Following a question regarding the five year land supply, Members were given more detail of the five year land supply and why it is

important that the Council is able to demonstrate it has such a supply. If the Council does not have a five year land supply then it loses the control to refuse planning applications unless the negatives of the application significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

24. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel received and noted a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Communities and Environment and Performance and Customers.

Members expressed that they would like to have early involvement with the Housing Strategy before it comes back to the Panel. In addition, the Panel expressed that they would like to closely scrutinise the Registered Social Providers and their development plans within the District.

The Commercial Investment Strategy was discussed by Members with the Panel deciding that they would like to invite the Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources to a future Panel meeting to discuss the strategy and how it can assist with growth within the District.

Members noted that there is £100m on offer through the devolution deal in order to deliver housing in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.

25. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROGRESS

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Panel reviewed the progress of its activities since the last meeting.

Chairman