



Rutland County Council

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Minutes of the **MEETING of the GROWTH, INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham on Thursday, 22nd March, 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present: Mr J Lammie (Chair)

Mr E Baines

Mr W Cross

Mr A Mann

Mr M Oxley (Substitute for Mr Arnold)

Apologies Mr I Arnold

Mr O Bird

In

attendance:

Mr N Begy

Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for
Planning Policy & Planning Operations,
Highways & Transportation and
Communications

Mr G Brown

Portfolio Holder for Regulatory
Services, Waste Management,
Property Services, Culture & Leisure,
Finance including Revenues & Benefits
and Internal Audit

Mr A Lowe

Ward Member for Oakham South East

Miss G Waller

Ward Member for Normanton

Mr C Wade

Independent Chair of Oakham Task
and Finish Group

Officers
present:

Mr D Brown

Director for Places

Mr N Hodgett

Principal Planning Officer

Mrs A Wylie

Head of Legal and Corporate
Governance

Mrs N Taylor

Governance Team Manager

707 RECORD OF MEETING

The record of the meeting of the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on 15 February 2018 were confirmed, subject to the change noted below, and signed by the Chairman.

The Panel agreed that the wording at minute number 605 discussion point ii) be amended to read "It was suggested that Mr Tim Norton be named as a representative on the Task and Finish Group".

708 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr E Baines	Item 7	Mr and Mrs Clough and Mr Norton were known to him
Mr M Oxley	Item 7	Holiday let in Uppingham

709 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No petitions or questions had been received.

Deputations being made by those expressing an interest in becoming a member of the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group would be heard at item 7 of the agenda.

710 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No questions with notice had been received from Members.

711 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS

No notices of motion had been received from Members.

712 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE PANEL FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO CALL IN OF A DECISION

No matter had been referred to the Panel for a decision in relation to call-in of a decision in accordance with Procedure Rule 206.

713 OAKHAM TOWN TASK AND FINISH GROUP - TERMS OF REFERENCES

Mr Lammie, Chairman of Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to obtain endorsement of the Terms of Reference for the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group including appointment of one additional member.

Mr Lammie confirmed that three expressions of interest had been put forward for the 11th place on the task and finish group. Each of the organisations had been invited to make representations to the Scrutiny Panel and the Chair invited them in turn to speak to the Panel:

Discover Rutland

The Discover Rutland Representative was unable to attend the meeting, but had sent some text to be shared with members, which the Chair read out to the panel:

Nominating a Discover Rutland Tourism Committee representative, Helen Sugden, for Oakham Task & Finish Group.

As the official body that is responsible for promoting the county of Rutland, Discover Rutland sees the importance of taking careful consideration over any development in the area. Rutland attracted over 1.8 million visitors in 2016 (STEAM), with shopping being one of the main economic growth areas. We recognise Oakham as being one of the main jewels in the county's crown, however we see that there is a lot of potential and necessity for improving the appeal and functionality to both residents and visitors.

The Discover Rutland Tourism Committee would greatly appreciate the opportunity to be part of the decision making process to help Oakham progress into the future, whilst ensuring the elements of the past are highlighted and celebrated. We see shopping as a key area of focus for future marketing and would like to help stimulate Oakham's economy through future improvements.

The representative we are proposing from the committee is Helen Sugden, a successful marketing professional, being Company Director of Unsworth Sugden Group. She previously ran a self-catering property in Hambleton and is now also a director of Otters Deli on Mill Street. Helen is passionate about helping Oakham unlock its potential and becoming a more alluring asset of the county as a whole.

Unfortunately Helen is unable to attend the meeting today due to a prior work commitment in Leeds, but is keen to be involved and hopes to work with the Oakham Task & Finish Group forward.

Oakham Residents Group

Mrs J Clough provided a statement as follows:

As the nominated representative for the Oakham Residents Group, I am requesting our inclusion on the Task and Finish Group, confident that we fulfil all the necessary criteria. On his election as Leader of Rutland County Council, Oliver Hemsley assured us that the council would be better at working together with the communities it served. We welcome this and are keen to co-operate with the council in this new initiative to regenerate our County Town.

My name is Joy Clough. I have lived in Oakham for 44 years, and raised a family here. I am a qualified teacher, and have worked in Market Research. Here in Oakham I have worked at Oakham Castle, and for the local newspaper. I have supported the voluntary sector in the County through Scouting and Guiding, as leader of the Rutland Venture Scout/Ranger Guide Unit.

I am here this evening to represent more than 500 people, from young families through to retired residents, who like me, share a love and a passion for Oakham. The time has come to stop the steady decline and turn our town around, not with bells and whistles but with good sound workable cost-effective proposals, based on a clear vision of the future and how we can achieve it.

We have formed the Oakham Residents Group. This group has grown rapidly and currently has some 540 members. People joining our group have been asked to express their concerns, resulting in a valuable dossier of information with a diversity of ideas. The one thread that runs through many of their comments highlights that the

Residents of Oakham, long-established and newcomers alike, share a common vision of a vibrant and thriving historic rural Market Town, full of character yet meeting the modern needs of those who live and work in it, and between us we have a wide range of skills and experience which can be brought to bear to help bring this about.

Our members have strengths, knowledge and resources to bring to the table. We are a willing vital resource and have so much to offer.

We know the task may not be easy, but we have an established line of communication to all our members. Our ethos is that a successful community is one that is fully involved in a consultative process, kept clearly informed of developments, and given the chance to participate in the choices, to arrive at positive and mutually acceptable solutions.

The Residents Group has the enthusiasm and support to play an active and productive role in this Task and Finish process. Our steering group has already begun to look at the consultative material available with a view to identifying the challenges ahead. Members are ready to undertake enquiry and research, and there are more than 500 adults and young people across the town ready and waiting to be consulted.

And we are reaching out to offer that opportunity to many more. Our membership will grow in numbers and in demographic range, particularly in response to our posters and forthcoming Facebook page.

Above all, it is us, the people who live and work in the town who have the greatest claim to participate in its development.

Members raised the following points:

- i. Mr Oxley asked how members were communicating their membership to the group. Mrs Clough confirmed that letters had been written to all Oakham residents asking for comments and feedback. Some people wanted to be kept informed through email, while others wanted to take an active part in the work of the group;
- ii. Mr Oxley asked how Oakham Residents Group would enhance the existing membership. Mrs Clough believed that the channels of communication between residents and the residents group were more effective than those between residents and elected members;
- iii. Mr Baines asked whether Mrs Clough felt that the views of the residents of Oakham had been represented. Mrs Clough responded that the views she put forward were not her own, but rather drawn from the comments and feedback the group had received and people had expressed that imbalance infrastructure, lack of confidence and lack of consultation were the main issues; and
- iv. Following a question from Mr Baines regarding availability, Mrs Clough confirmed that she would make herself available for the meetings of the Task and Finish Group.

Rutland Youth Council

Miss A Seymour provided a statement as follows:

Rutland Youth Council is an elected body of up to 24 young people aged 11-19 (up to 25 SEND) who live or go to school within Rutland County. It is a formal decision making and discussions group which focus on issues that affect young people.

We currently have 19 members; we are an inclusive group from all schools, including, young carers and a care leaver.

Elections are held bi-annually across Rutland through a formal process requiring nominations from three proposers with successful candidates attending a training weekend. We are a formal group that meets monthly as a full council and in smaller groups with partners as agreed and invited.

Our full meetings are recorded and these are published on our public Facebook page.

The type of work includes peer consultation, delivering presentations at conferences, meeting with cabinet members, planning local campaigns as well as sitting on external groups such as Healthwatch and Rutland Fairtrade.

We also give awards to children who have done amazing things.

We feed in to the Local Safeguarding Board Business Plan and also they review and comment on relevant documents that go to Children's Scrutiny Panel and the Children's Trust Board. Most recently reviewing and commenting on the Transforming Children and Young People's mental health provision paper.

The Youth Council work on a bi annual campaign on an issue highlighted by their Rutland peers based on the British Youth Councils Make Your Mark ballot. The ballot took place late last year (achieving nearly 2000 ballots in Rutland).

The localised results are used to shape our campaign. This year our focus is 'Curriculum for Life'.

Why be involved in Oakham Town T & F group?

As Oakham undergoes regeneration we feel that it is important to seek the views of young people. As elected young people we are a representative body committed to consulting with our peers and influencing the community that we live in.

Our focus is to listen to and represent young people, particularly excluded young people, and those not confident enough to speak for themselves and as such we feel that we are able to bring an important voice to this task and finish group. We want a seat on this group as we are the strongest youth voice in this county and we believe our contribution will bring a different perspective. We are able to consult widely with our peers to ensure that any regeneration considers the needs and views of the younger population and therefore our representation in this group will be invaluable. Young people are needed in this task and finish group as we will be affected by the regeneration and we will be the ones growing up in Rutland and if we want young people to stay and live within the county then it needs to be appealing to young people.

Members raised the following points:

- i. Mr Mann asked how the Youth Council had been motivated and mobilised for taking part in this task and finish group. Miss Seymour confirmed that they had

- conducted a small consultation to ask young people what facilities they would like to see in Oakham;
- ii. Mr Baines highlighted that the Youth Council could provide expert witness to the group and asked how being a permanent member would be more beneficial. Miss Seymour confirmed that providing evidence to the group would be valuable, but being a permanent member would allow the council to contribute to discussions and represent the views of young people. The main thing was to ensure that the voices of young people were heard; and
 - iii. Mr Lammie asked for confirmation that attendance at evening meetings would not cause a problem and Miss Seymour confirmed a representative would be available.

During discussion of the additional member of Oakham Town Task and Finish Group the following points were noted:

- i. Mr Oxley confirmed that he held regular surgeries in Uppingham and that the members of his community had the opportunity to communicate with him regularly, but he was aware that there were complaints in some areas regarding communication between the Council and residents. Mr Oxley encouraged communication and engagement with Ward Members who had been democratically elected to represent their views;
- ii. Mr Baines accepted that there had been issues regarding communication leading to a breakdown in trust, but that it was time to look to the future in a positive way in order to achieve the aims of the Council to create an attractive place for residents and visitors;
- iii. Mr Baines felt that the Youth Council could provide valuable input through providing evidence, but that the Residents Group had already gained a significant amount of support from residents which would be important to the process;
- iv. Mr Lammie read from an email which had been provided by Mr Bird who had been unable to attend the meeting:
"I have to give my apologies for tonight's meeting as I am still in recovery from surgery however I am planning to return more actively to my duties next week. I would wish to endorse the opinion of the task and finish group that the views of the residents should be channelled through the various Ward Cllrs after all that is what we are here for. It is all too easy for opinions to become subjective and individual for example the often expressed view of "I am against a one way system because there will be more traffic passing my house". Or "There should be more parking in the Town Centre because I do not want to be made to use the car parks". Rather than adopting a view towards the greater good for the community whether it be the business or resident community. For this reason my preference for an additional member of the group would be someone from "Discover Rutland" this could also allay concerns that a wider demographic group has not been consulted."
- v. Miss Waller hoped this would provide an opportunity to move forward and for people to work together in order to agree a conclusion;
- vi. Mr Lowe confirmed that no-one should be excluded from this process, everyone wishing to do so should be allowed to contribute, even if they were not actual members of the group; and
- vii. Mr Lammie confirmed that the groups who were not successful as being appointed members and any other interested groups and organisations would be encouraged to contribute to the work of the task and finish group.

AGREED

That Mrs Joy Clough be appointed to represent the Oakham Residents Group on the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group.

Mr Lammie invited Mr Wade, Independent Chairman of the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group, to introduce the terms of reference.

Mr Wade provided a brief introduction confirming his professional background, experience and involvement in a range of organisations in the regeneration of small towns, including currently working with the Local Government Association on a Town Centre event being held in May. Mr Wade welcomed the public interest and acknowledged the need to build confidence and trust. He thanked those that had stepped forward as members of the Task and Finish Group and welcomed Oakham Residents Group and emphasised that Rutland Youth Council and Discover Rutland would be invited to provide input in due course. There was a lot of work to do and the group would look to involve as many people as possible to assist with this. There would be a discussion regarding engagement at the next meeting and Mr Wade was also willing to meet with people who were interested in the work of the group. The Terms of Reference were agreed by the task and finish group in order to ensure that the group had guidelines to work to, once approved the group could then commence its work based on these guidelines.

During discussion of the Terms of Reference for the Oakham Town Task and Finish group the following points were noted:

- i. Mr Baines referred to the timetable and enquired whether additional meetings may be required to meet the tight timescales. Mr Wade confirmed that the meetings would steer the process and keep it on track, but there would also be significant work being done by members between the meetings;
- ii. Mr Cross raised that a motion had been put at Full Council on 15 January 2018 to remove the word “centre” from the description of the work on regeneration by the task and finish group. He was concerned that the word “centre” now appeared in the terms of reference. Mr Cross felt that it was very important to ensure that the review looked at the town as a whole and that the word “centre” should be removed. Mr Wade confirmed that the review would look at the impact on the wider community and surrounding villages;
- iii. Mr Baines highlighted that the task and finish group should decide how the review proceeds, but that the final report would come back to Full Council for approval which provided a safeguard;
- iv. Mr Cross did not think that that the scope should be narrowed, but rather the timescales should be increased;
- v. Mr Lammie highlighted the need for the task and finish group to have some freedom in the wording of the terms of reference so that they were able to come back with some valid recommendations, but noted that the panel had expressed the view that the scope in the terms of reference was narrower than the Full Council motion where the word “centre” had been removed;
- vi. Miss Waller also felt that the Town Centre should not be taken in isolation and highlighted that under Scope the first bullet point gave the Geographical Scope as “Definition of the town centre as the area of direct focus for the action plan whilst bringing benefits to the wider town and surrounding villages”;
- vii. Mr Wade expressed that it was necessary for the group to start their focus in a specific area, but that the group’s membership would ensure that the wider

impact was addressed with reference to the Neighbourhood Plan and Town Council. Part of the work of the group involved changing the culture of engagement and bringing people together. There were many interrelated and far reaching issues and there was no desire to isolate this to the High Street; and

- viii. Mr Oxley thought that the task and finish group was a valuable opportunity for the different groups and organisations to improve communications and work together. Some actions may be best achieved through the Neighbourhood Plan for example.

AGREED

The panel provided feedback as noted above.

The panel **ENDORSED** the Terms of Reference for the Oakham Town Task and Finish Group (Appendix A of Report No. 61/2018).

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The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8.29pm

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The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 8.32pm

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714 THE CONVERSION OF DUTCH BARNs TO DWELLINGS

Report No. 60/2018 was received from the Director for Places (Environment, Planning and Transport).

Mr N Hodgett, Principle Planning Officer, introduced the report the purpose of which was to review the Council's approach to interpreting the regulations on the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings (Class Q of Part 3, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and in particular in relation to open sided Dutch barns. In addition, to consider whether a supplementary planning document is required on the conversion of Dutch barns.

During his introduction, Mr Hodgett confirmed that when the legislation had been introduced four years ago it was poorly drafted and there was no additional guidance. In 2015 the Government issued some guidance and case law had further clarified the position. These were not planning applications and as such a policy was not required, Officers were interpreting these cases in line with the legislation and precedents set by case law. Further to this, Supplementary Planning Documents could only be prepared for the purposes of expanding on an existing Local Plan Policy and these types of applications were not covered by the Local Plan.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i. Mr Baines referred to section 2.7 of the report and stated that this clearly set out the Council's position;
- ii. Miss Waller felt that it would be useful to provide a brief summary on the website to give members of the public some guidance. Officers confirmed that as the guidance and case law developed the advice altered and that to ensure

- members of the public got the most up to date and relevant advice, it would be preferable to request a pre-application enquiry on specific sites; and
- iii. A discussion would be had regarding the best way to communicate advice in this area.

AGREED

The Panel **ENDORSED** the Council's current position in relation to applications to convert Dutch barns to dwellings and that there was no need to prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance.

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Mr N Hodgett left the meeting and did not return.

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715 SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2017/18 & REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN

Miss Waller requested that the Signs Policy report should come to the Panel before being presented to Cabinet. Mr D Brown confirmed that the panel had already seen the policy on 7 December 2018 and that no changes had been made since then.

Mr Cross highlighted the recent St George's Barracks – Potential Acquisition and Development of the Officers Mess Report that had been considered by Cabinet on 20 March. Mr Lammie confirmed that the St George's Project would need to be incorporated into the Scrutiny timetable.

Mr G Brown asked the Chair to clarify the position on the Localism Working Group that had been established by the Panel and that if it was decided to delay the progress of this working group that the Chair would confirm that he could go ahead with some agreed actions in relation to grass cutting contracts.

Mr Lammie confirmed that the Oakham Town Task and Finish group would involve increased workload for members and officers and that the Localism Working Group should be put on hold until that work was complete. Mr G Brown could take forward the outstanding work in relation to the Localism Group.

716 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was no other urgent business.

717 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 12 April 2018 at 7pm

Items to include:

- Business Support Review Update
- Local Transport Plan
(Mr D Brown noted that the Local Transport Plan was connected to the Local Plan and that should the timetable for the Local Plan move the Local Transport Plan dates would also change).

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Chairman closed the meeting at 9.14 pm.

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