



Rutland County Council

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Minutes of the **MEETING of the GROWTH, INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham on Thursday, 12th September, 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Miss G Waller (Chair)
Mr N Begy
Mrs J Fox
Miss M Jones
Ms K Payne
Mr M Oxley
Mr N Woodley

OFFICERS PRESENT:	Mr P Horsfield	Monitoring Officer
	Mr R Harbour	Deputy Director for Places
	Mrs J Morley	Governance Officer

IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr O Hemsley	Leader and Portfolio Holder for Rutland One Public Estate & Growth, tourism & Economic Developments, Communications and Resources
	Mr G Brown	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment, Planning, Property and Finance
	Mr D Blanksby	Ward Member for Barleythorpe

213 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Della Rocca, Strategic Director for Resources who had asked Mr Horsfield to attend in his absence.

214 RECORD OF MEETING

The minutes of the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 13 June 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

215 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest had been received.

216 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

The following question had been received from Mr Cliff Bacon:

It has been suggested that Cabinet may be considering changes to the Spatial Strategy for Development in Rutland ahead of the other revisions in the Local Plan Review. I refer in particular to Core Strategy Policy CS2 in the Adopted Local Plan and also to policies CS1 and CS3 and CS6.

I think it would be correct to say that these four policies are probably the most important strategic policies within the Rutland Local Plan.

If the Cabinet approve for consultation any changes to any of these policies, will the “approved” changes be submitted to full Council for their consideration at the next Full Council meeting following the Cabinet approval?

Following this Full Council Meeting, will the changes “approved” by Cabinet be published for public consultation very shortly after Full Council consideration and before the next full consultation version of the Local Plan Review is published for consultation?

In her response the Chairman gave the following information:

- Prior to consideration by Cabinet, all the various elements of the Local Plan would come before the Committee for scrutiny. This would enable Members to pass on their feedback and comments to Cabinet.
- After consideration by Cabinet, the Local Plan would be sent to Council for final approval before going out for public consultation. The Council were required to undertake this second stage of the consultation process under regulation 19 of the Planning Act 2012.
- The agendas and reports for any Council committees were published and put in the public domain at least a week in advance of any meeting date.
- The Deputy Director for Places would follow up on Mr Bacon’s question and provide him with a written response. This would also be circulated to all Committee members.

217 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No questions with notice had been received from Members.

218 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS

No notices of motion had been received from Members.

219 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 Committee for a decision in relation to a call-in of a decision in accordance with Procedure Rule 206.

220 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE

Cllr Fox and Cllr Oxley were both nominated for the position of Vice Chairman. A vote was then taken by Committee members which saw Cllr Fox receive four votes and Cllr Oxley two votes.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Fox be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

221 LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

A verbal update was received from Cllr G Brown, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Planning, Property and Finance.

The verbal update mirrored the one given at Council on Monday night and a written copy had previously been provided to Members. The key points of the update included the following:

- Work continued on the sustainability appraisals for the different sites put forward, with the two larger sites, St George's Barracks(SGB) and Woolfax undergoing a more detailed assessment to assess their viability and the developer's ability to deliver the homes promised during the Plan period.
- The Council was still awaiting a decision from Government on the Housing Infrastructure (HIF) bid for SGB. The evolving masterplan had assessed that without the £30 million HIF funding the project in its current form would not be viable.
- The Council was continuing to lobby Government so that it could decide whether SGB could be considered as part of the Local Plan or not.
- It was still the Council's intention to commence the Pre-submission consultation on all elements of the Plan, including the Spatial Strategy, proposed policies and allocated sites, in early 2020. This would be subject to input from the Scrutiny Committee and the approval of the Pre-submission by Cabinet and Council, all of which would probably necessitate additional specific meetings.

During discussions the following points were made:

- At the time the Council would have to make the decision about the Local Plan, all the information held relating to the Woolfox site would be reviewed
- In the event that the HIF bid was unsuccessful it would be up to the Ministry of Defence to consider the viability of the St Georges site and whether to increase the proposed number of houses.
- The statement of common ground document for the Stamford North project had been reviewed and rejected and very detailed comments had been sent back to South Kesteven District Council (SKDC). A revised document was expected back within the next 10 days.
- The Council also had concerns about the Stamford North memorandum of understanding (MOI) between Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) South Kesteven District Council (SKDC), the landowners and itself. One of the particular concerns the Council had was about the rate of development and avoiding a situation where one half of the site was developed but the rest was not completed for another 10

years. RCC was holding meetings with the landowners Burghley, their agent Savills, and the developers Larkfleet, in order to ensure that the housing and the associated development (eg. schooling) ran in tandem.

- LCC only wanted to be included in the document from a highways perspective as they were not a housing authority and could not be seen to be involved with any development.
- The design statement document could not be completed until a traffic modelling piece of work had been done.
- The current design brief for Stamford North stated that although it was not a requirement, the site could facilitate a GP surgery if this was decided by the CCG.
- In the design brief there was a requirement to have a new school. Money would also be available to Stamford Welland Academy and Casterton College to aid their expansion.
- It would be preferable to bring all three documents together (the SCG, the MOI and the design statement) for Scrutiny and Cabinet to review.
- The budget for planning policy was expected to be higher next year to account for the timing and delay to the Local Plan.

RESOLVED

That the Committee **NOTED** the update.

222 PROPOSED ENVIRONMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Chair introduced the proposed Environment Task and Finish Group agenda item.

During discussion the following points were made:

- Councillors needed to commit to the task and undertake the majority of the work, otherwise the project would not meet its objectives.
- The Task and Finish group had generated a lot of interest across the whole of the Council, not just from within the Scrutiny committee members, and therefore although it should report back to the Committee, the group could include Members from the larger Council.
- It would be preferential to have the Chairman drawn from the scrutiny committee members.
- The environment was too large a topic to undertake unless the project was focused and the Committee had given a very clear steer on expected outcomes.
- To have three groups running simultaneously looking at the three proposed strategies of environmental enforcement, biodiversity and corporate sustainability, was not feasible as there was not enough officer capacity to support them.
- Members felt that biodiversity was the most pressing issue, especially in light of the new developments coming through.
- Councillor Brown, Portfolio Holder for Environment, felt that there had been a lack of communication with Cabinet Members by some of the previous task and finish groups and that any new group should ensure that conversations took place with the Executive. The Government's new scrutiny guidance suggested that "conversations would help scrutiny members better understand how their work could be designed to align with the best opportunities to influence the authority's wider work".

- Members suggested that 'environmental impact' could be a sub heading of all future Council reports.
- Councillor Powell had sent an email to the Chair stressing the need for the terms of reference to be significantly tightened up in order for the task and finish group to be effective and focused.
- There was unanimous agreement that given the interest expressed in joining the group, that 9 Members should be nominated; 6 members of the Committee and the 3 external Members that had contacted the Chair before the meeting.
- Members of the Committee unanimously agreed that Councillor J Fox be appointed as Chair of the Task and Finish group.

RESOLVED

The Committee;

1. **RECOMMENDED** the Environment Task and Finish Group to Council for approval with the following specific proposals:
 - a. that there should be 9 members of the Task and Finish group.
 - b. that membership of the Task and Finish Group should be as follows:
Committee members: Cllr N Begy, Cllr J Fox, Cllr M Jones, Cllr M Oxley, Cllr K Payne, Cllr N Woodley and Members Cllr D Blanksby, Cllr J Burrows and Cllr A Brown.
 - c. that Cllr J Fox should be nominated as Chairman
 - d. that the Task and Finish Group conduct their review over a period of 3-4 months to coincide with the start of the growing season.
 - e. that the Task and Finish Group should report back at regular intervals to the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Committee and that the final report would be approved by the Committee before recommendation to Cabinet.

223 REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN AND ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2018-19

During discussion of the Annual Work Plan and review of the current Forward Plan the following comments were noted:

- In response to a request from the Monitoring officer that a more specific focus be given for some of the suggested agenda topic, Members gave further explanation on what they sought from reports.
- The housing association agenda item would need to include a review of housing associations customer service policies and how they dealt with complaints. In addition it would be useful for Members to understand the process of rent setting and the housing associations' charging policies.
- A report on road work works would need to give an explanation of the process involved for the scheduling and co-ordination of road works.
- Included in the report on the Return on investment on Council properties should be an assessment of RCC properties and which of those were profitable so that it could better inform new investments going forward.

224 QUARTER 1 FINANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No.114/2019 was received from the Director for Resources, for information only.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

225 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No other urgent business was received.

226 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 14 November at 7pm.

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Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40pm.

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