

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 25th November 2014

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 12.10 p.m.

Present: Councillors I Bates (Chairman), R Butcher, J Clark, E Cearns (Vice-Chairman), S Count (substituting for Cllr B Chapman), D Divine, D Harty, R Henson, D Jenkins, M Mason (substituting for Cllr J Hipkin), N Kavanagh, A Lay, J Schumann, M Shuter, A Walsh and J Williams.

Apologies: Councillors B Chapman and J Hipkin

At the commencement of the meeting the Chairman having paid tribute to his exemplary Council service of 33 years, asked all those present to stand for a minutes silence as a mark of respect for the memory of Councillor John Reynolds, whose sudden death had been announced the previous day.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Councillors declared non-statutory, disclosable interests in accordance with paragraph 10.1 of the Members' Code of Conduct:

Councillor Bates declared a personal interest as a local member in item 4 Local Transport Plan Development and the New Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Strategy.

Councillor Cearns declared a personal interest in item 7 'Reducing Re-offending Proposal' as a trustee of Michael House Centre in Cambridge which was referred to in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

69. MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on 11TH November 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

The Minutes Action Log Update was noted with all four actions subject to further action to be reported to the January meeting.

70. PETITIONS

None were received.

71. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN (LTP) DEVELOPMENT – NEW LTP LONG TERM TRANSPORT STRATEGY – REFRESHED LTP: POLICIES AND STRATEGY DOCUMENT NEW HUNTINGDON AND GODMANCHESTER MARKET TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY (MTTS)

This report sought to adopt the refreshed LTP: Policies and Strategy and the new LTP:

Long Term Transport Strategy as Core Documents of the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, and to adopt the new Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy as part of the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan.

The new documents:

- Supported the new and emerging Local Plans for the districts of Cambridgeshire.
- Reflected the adoption of and content within the Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.
- Reflected changes to the national programmes of road and rail improvements that impact on the County, including:
 - Highways Agency (HA) Route Strategies.
 - HA proposals to improve the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon.
 - Rail investment plans to 2019 and the Rail Prospectus for East Anglia.
- Reflected changes to the local transport funding environment, including:
 - Greater Cambridge City Deal.
 - Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Strategic Economic Plan.
 - Cuts to LTP capital funding and to County Council revenue funding by government.
- Reflected progress since 2011 and to ensure LTP3 remained current.

In terms of Refreshed LTP: Policies and Strategy a number of comments made in the consultation were incorporated in the LTP: Policies and Strategy document as detailed in section 2.4 of the officers report. Following the 21st October Committee meeting, changes were made to the Long Term Transport Strategy to reflect the recommendations of the Committee with regard to the treatment of measures to address the impact of development at Wyton Airfield and in the wider Huntingdon / St Ives area, and the provision of a link road between Wyton Airfield and the A14. Further changes to take account of the views expressed at the 11th November Committee meeting to remove specific inclusion of a link road between Wyton Airfield and the A14 from the LTTS, and to reflect the need for further work to identify the most sustainable way to provide for the anticipated transport demand from the development of Wyton Airfield, and mitigate impacts on St Ives, Huntingdon and surrounding villages.

Further changes reflected points of consistency with the Policies and Strategy document, and updates to reflect progress on funding and on scheme development (for example, in relation to the Ely Southern Bypass). Changes from the consultation draft of the LTP: Long Term Transport Strategy document were summarised in Appendix B of the officer report with changes requested by Committee on 11 November highlighted.

The following speakers spoke in relation to the revised wording added to reflect the need for further work to identify the most sustainable way to provide for the anticipated transport demand from the development of Wyton Airfield, and mitigate impacts on St Ives, Huntingdon and surrounding villages and included the following key points with the full text of their speeches included as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

- Councillor John Peters, speaking as the Chairman of Hemingford Abbots Council expressed their concerns at the way the Long Term Strategy was dealing with the problem of traffic generated by the Wyton Airfield development and the concern that the revised wording did not rule out the re-emergence of the Link Road

proposal. He highlighted that the Strategy offered no solution and no timescale for finding a solution. Their concern was that in the absence of timely planning, with the development in progress and traffic congestion critical, environmental sustainability would be sacrificed. In summing up the Committee was urged to request that officers start finding a sustainable solution now and to either rule out the possibility of a new road across the Ouse Valley anywhere between the existing river crossings at Godmanchester and St Ives, or at the very least, to change the words 'most sustainable way' to 'a sustainable way' in the Wyton Airfield scheme.

- Parish Councillor Bridget Flanagan on behalf of the Great Ouse Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Working Group while welcoming amendments to the LTTS made as a result of the discussion at the last Committee meeting was concerned that development creep would take place before the necessary transport infrastructure was identified or achieved and wished the Committee to stand by the commitment to only support sustainable development to by doing so safeguard the very special environment of the Ouse Valley between St Ives and Huntingdon and not allow any destruction of it by a new road crossing. She urged that a statement was included that provision for the anticipated transport demand could only be made so far as was compatible with environmental considerations.
- Councillor Paul Boothman from Houghton and Wyton Parish Council spoke and while welcoming some of the rewording contained in the document, such as removing the specific inclusion of a link road between Wyton Airfield and the A14; and acknowledgement that crossing the Ouse Valley would be among the most challenging in environmental terms; believed the County Council needed to adopt a stronger policy position on transport, and not risk misguiding District Council's in their creation of Local Plans. He believed the document should go further, specifically stating that it would withhold inclusion of a new road access scheme for Wyton Airfield within the LTTS until a truly sustainable scheme could be identified. He suggested that the revised text had subtly changed the Committee's requests for a sustainable transport solution by including wording reading including "the most" sustainable package of transport options' Their concern was that the word 'most' would technically allow for the least-worst option to be taken forward. He therefore requested that the Committee should amend the document to say that only "a truly sustainable transport solution" would be acceptable.

In relation to the points made by the last speaker, one Member sought clarification regarding whether there was still a flying licence at the Airfield, which was confirmed. In relation to a question from another Member regarding whether the parish council had made representations to the district council, it was explained that these would be made in relation to any planning application made, but that the representations were in relation to the County Council Transport Plan, as any scheme coming forward would be based on what was considered acceptable to the County Council.

Reference was also made to the following Local Member County Councillor Graham Wilson who although unable to attend had provided comments confirming that he was now content with the revised proposed wording in relation to Wyton Airfield.

In discussion:

- One Member raised the issue of whether a land swap was possible for any A14 proposed link road so that it could be created in a less environmentally sensitive area, which could also prove to be a cheaper option. In response to this and other queries regarding other options for an A14 link road at the Wyton Airfield proposed development, it was explained that a number of other options had been looked at which had modelled greater traffic congestion (e.g. A141 improvements, St Ives North bypass, A1096) but that officers would be looking at revisiting variations of options and that as it was at such an early stage, no option had been ruled out at the current time. Modelling would include environmentally and sustainable development models. It was also too early to say that a link road could not be provided in a sustainable way as the detailed work had not yet been undertaken.
- One Member suggested that more housing should not be supported without more locally created jobs being provided, in order to reduce the need to travel out of the area.
- The Committee agreed that any development should be sustainable with a balance between environmental and development needs and not just focussed on the latter. The majority consensus was that no further revised wording was required at the current time as the changes made were a considerable improvement on the previous text submitted.

The Chairman agreed to vote on recommendations a) and b) on the LTPP first, which on being put to the vote were agreed by a clear majority.

In respect of Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy details were set in paragraphs 2.10 - 2.13 of the report. Paragraphs 2.14 to 2.16 provided information on the refreshed Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment undertaken along with details of the Community Impact Assessment (CIA) of LTP3 which had been updated and included as Appendix C to the officer's report. Reference was made to comments provided by Councillor Sir Peter Brown who had been a part of the Member Steering Group which had developed the Strategy and who fully supported its endorsement by the Committee.

In a separate vote there was a clear majority in support of the Market Town Transport Strategy as set out.

It was resolved:

- a) to adopt the refreshed LTP: Policies and Strategy as a core document of the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, replacing the original document that was adopted in March 2011.
- b) to adopt the new LTP: Long Term Transport Strategy as a core document of the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan; and
- c) to adopt the new Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport

72. ELY SOUTHERN BYPASS PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOME AND PROCUREMENT

This report updated Members on the progress of the Ely Southern Bypass and sought approval to procure the detailed design and construction using an Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) two stage contract and approve project governance arrangements.

It was reported that the planning application had been unanimously approved by the County Council's Planning Committee on the 8th of September 2014 and on the 25th September the Secretary of State confirmed that the application should be determined at local level and lifted a holding direction that he had issued which allowed the Committee's decision to be implemented. As an oral update it was reported that the six week challenge period for judicial review had expired the previous day with no challenge having been made.

The next stage in the delivery of the scheme was now to procure detailed engineering design and construction plans with section 2 of the report setting out the various contractual arrangements that could be used to deliver the scheme, and along with the advantages and disadvantages of each. In recommending the most appropriate arrangement, officers had taken into account specific factors relating to the scheme, including the type of infrastructure, the stage that the project was in its development, the level of risk in the project and the appetite to accept or transfer it to a contractor.

On the basis of advice taken from a contractual expert and lessons learned from the Guided Busway Delivery review, a two stage ECI Design and Build Contract with target price was being recommended to ensure reasonable level of cost certainty and to apportion the risk appropriately. As the contract would require expertise and advice in its preparation and as this advice was normally provided by a company who were also keen to tender, it was recommended that the service was commissioned through other framework contracts available to the County Council. Section four of the report set out a provisional programme with section 5 setting out details of cost and sources of funding.

As strong project governance would be necessary to oversee the continued development and delivery of the scheme and provide a forum for key issues to be considered, it was also proposed to re-establish a Project Board comprising stakeholders of County and District Members to report to the Economy and Environment Committee and it was suggested that it should comprise of Senior Financial, Technical and Operational officers from the County Council, appropriate senior officers from East Cambridgeshire District Council, key stakeholders, e.g. Network Rail and at least one Member from both County and District Councils.

In order to ensure that the impact of the bypass scheme was considered in a broader transport and development context, it was also proposed that regular updates should be given to the Joint East Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council Member and Officer Steering Group for Planning and Transport.

Comments / issues raised by Members included:

- The Chairman proposing that as it was understood that East Cambridgeshire District

Council were seeking to appoint two Members to the Project Board that two County Council Members should also be appointed, with the Vice Chairman suggesting that one should be a local Member and one a non-local Member.

- In an ensuing discussion including the need to learn from the experience of the Guided Busway contract an additional recommendation was moved by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Mason which was supported by the whole Committee that in addition to the current proposals for appointments onto the Project Board, an external expert, independent of the client and contractor should be appointed in addition to the Project Manager to both assist in monitoring progress and to be a source of independent technical advice and assurance.

It was resolved:

- a) to note the planning approval and current position in relation to the Ely Southern Bypass;
- b) to approve procurement of the detailed design and construction of the Ely Southern Bypass through an Early Contractor Involvement Design and Build Contract as detailed in section 2.9 and 2.10 of the officers report,
- c) to approve the establishment of a Project Board as detailed in section 3.1 of the report,
- d) to agree the appointment of two Members to the Project Board, one to be a local member to be agreed between the Executive Director Economy, Transport and Environment, the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, and
- e) To commission independent technical advice to the Project Board and delegate to the Executive Director in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee the development of Terms of Reference and procurement of the adviser.

73. REVIEW OF FEES FOR MONITORING AND MANAGING SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS

This report provided details of the progress in establishing fees to cover the cost of managing and monitoring Section 106 agreements and to seek approval of proposed changes to the fees to help ensure that costs of the service could be covered.

It was explained that in April 2014, the County Council had approved the introduction of charges to recover the administrative cost of managing and monitoring developer's contributions to new facilities such as transport and schools, known as Section 106 (S106) agreement contributions. Cabinet had approved the fees as detailed in Section 1.1 of the report agreed on the basis that they would be subject to regular review.

Following Cabinet approval to charge fees, the District Councils were informed of the proposed charges and that the County Council would be seeking their inclusion in agreements. In response a number of the District Councils had raised concerns with key among them that such additional fees might lead to challenge by developers

regarding the totality of fees and their justification. More detail of the concerns raised were provided in section 1.3 of the report relating to issues of viability, limited flexibility and whether they could be seen as double funding, particularly as most Districts already charged for monitoring. There was also issues raised regarding the ambiguity of some of the wording.

As a result of these concerns, a review had been undertaken with partners and changes were proposed to the schedule including charging only now taking place at the implementation stage (to avoid having to return money where developments did not proceed) and introducing a cap of £60K as well as removing some of the current ambiguous wording. The proposals were as follows *italics showing new wording*.

- Fees charged at 1% of the value of the *County Council contributions which total less than £2M*, or at 0.5% *of the value of County Council contributions which total more than £2M, subject to a cap of £60K* ~~for agreements valued above this~~;
- The following obligations will be charged at a sum of £100:
 - 1. *Any non-monetary planning obligation contained in the Section 106 agreement; or*
 - 2. *Where the value of the County Council contributions total less than £10,000 (Ten Thousand Pounds);*
- charges to be payable on ~~signing~~ *commencement* of the ~~agreement~~ *development*;
- *to delegate to the Executive Director Economy Transport and Environment in consultation with the Chair of the Economy and Environment Committee the authority to:*
 - 1. Undertake regular reviews to ensure fees adequately cover the costs of S106 managing and monitoring service;
 - 2. *In exceptional cases and only where it is deemed appropriate to do so agree an alternative charge by negotiation with the developer.*

Issues raised included:

- Concern from one Member of a general nature that in relation to responding to District Council Section 106 planning applications there did not appear to be one point of contact at the County Council.
- Concern regarding the cap of £60k and whether this was sufficient to cover costs in relation to large proposed developments such as Northstowe. In reply it was clarified that the work was undertaken in conjunction with partners and as the district council was also charging fees, the County Council could not justify higher charges and that the cap was considered to be reasonable to cover officer costs on the basis that they would be reviewed on a regular basis and could be recommended for uplift to take account of cost increases. In addition, in relation to Northstowe joint officer monitoring teams had been set up with the South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- One Member suggested the wording was still ambiguous as one of the thresholds

appeared more favourable and suggested developers would always choose to go below the threshold. Revised wording was suggested in relation to the fees proposed by Councillor Count and seconded by Councillor Henson which was supported which changed the emphasis to a threshold contribution being “up to £2m” and that the value of County Council contributions which were over £2m should be at 0.5% with a cap of £60K applying. It was also suggested and agreed that there should be review in a year’s time. On being put to the vote

It was unanimously resolved:

- a) to approve the revised County Council’s Fees for Monitoring and Managing S106 Agreements as set out below;
 - Fees charged at 1% of the value of the County Council contributions **up to £2m**, and where the value of County Council contributions are over £2m, 1% on the initial £2m and 0.5% thereafter, subject to a cap of £60K;
 - The following obligations will be charged at a sum of £100:
 1. Any non-monetary planning obligation contained in the Section 106 agreement; or
 2. Where the value of the County Council contributions total less than £10,000 (Ten Thousand Pounds);
 - charges to be payable on commencement of the development;
- b) to delegate to the Executive Director Economy Transport and Environment in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Economy and Environment Committee the authority to:
 1. undertake regular reviews to ensure fees adequately cover the costs of S106 managing and monitoring service **with an initial review in a year’s time**;
 2. in exceptional cases and only where it is deemed appropriate to do so, agree an alternative charge by negotiation with the developer.

74. REDUCING REOFFENDING PROPOSAL

This report set out details of the outcomes of Cambridgeshire County Council’s overview and scrutiny review which had looked at and made recommendations on the Council’s potential role in supporting reducing re-offending through the potential for increasing their employment opportunities. The report provided an update in relation to some of the proposed actions following consideration and endorsement at the Cabinet meeting in April This included the action taken on the ‘ban the box campaign” by Human Resources who had now removed from the County Council’s on-line application form the requirement for people to disclose information on criminal convictions unless they became, at a later stage, the preferred candidate.. The report, which was supported by the Vice Chairman who had led on the original review, recommended setting up a

small cross party working group to take forward the recommendations. He made the point that he considered that insufficient progress had been made since April and that the publication of the latest report had already led to local radio media interest.

In discussion:

- Some Members suggested that it was not the County Council's role to lead on reducing re-offending and finding ex-offenders employment was more appropriately undertaken by the Judiciary and the local Police Commissioner. The point was also made by one Member that appointments to jobs should be based on the merit of the individual and not take into account other factors unless working with vulnerable people.
- One member queried whether the issue of funding had been resolved as referred to in the Cabinet response to recommendation 6 which at the time of that meeting was still under review. As the lead officer was not at the meeting an update could not be provided. *(Note the response had included the following wording “..the prime bidders for the Community Rehabilitation companies have yet to complete the tender process, which is not likely to be completed until the middle of the year”. No details were provided in the cover report)*
- The Leader of the Council who had been the Chairman of Cabinet drew attention to the fact that the way the report was presented reproduced the original recommendations from overview and scrutiny committee which suggested that all the recommendations should be actioned. He also highlighted that there was only one small paragraph referencing the Cabinet meeting with the original report to Cabinet and the minutes attached as appendices. This was misleading, as on reading the appendices, it was clear that Cabinet had not fully endorsed all the recommendations as some were not within the County Council's remit and was why no action had been taken on some of them.

It was moved by Councillor Count as an amendment to the recommendations and seconded by Councillor Walsh that the report should be deferred so that some of the issues raised could be addressed in a revised report. The amendment on being put to the vote was carried by a clear majority.

It was resolved;

To defer the report.

75. SERVICE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN

The following updates were orally provided:

13th January Meeting

Additions - Non Key decision reports:

Surface Water Management Plan - Countywide Update 2014

Surface Water Management Plan - Histon and Impington Pre-Project Appraisal Report

Surface Water Management Plan - March Pre-Project Appraisal Report

Moving from 13th January to 10th March meeting:

Mobilising Local Energy Investment Project (MLEI) – Risk Report
MLEI – Scope of a Cambridgeshire Energy Company

Addition for the April Committee:

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Annual Update 2015

It was resolved unanimously:

- a) To note the Agenda Plan as updated.
- b) To agree that an updated Plan should be circulated to the Committee Members after the meeting.

76. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 10 A.M. 13th JANUARY 2015

Noted.

Chairman
13TH January 2015

TEXT PROVIDED BY OUTSIDE SPEAKERS IN RELATION TO LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN (LTP) DEVELOPMENT – NEW LTP LONG TERM TRANSPORT STRATEGY (MINUTE 71).

a) Councillor John Peters, speaking as the Chairman of Hemingford Abbotts Council

The way in which the Long Term Strategy is dealing with the problem of traffic generated by the Wyton Airfield development still causes us concern.

At the last meeting a significant majority of Members of this Committee considered that building a new Link Road across the Ouse Valley meadows with the consequent destruction of SSSIs, County Wildlife Sites and Nature Reserves was wholly unsustainable and appeared to be set against the proposal. Whilst specific reference to this Link Road has now been removed from the Strategy, the new wording, that is, “to identify the most sustainable way to provide for the anticipated transport”, unfortunately, does not rule out the re-emergence of the Link Road proposal.

Our second related concern is over another change of wording.

With regard to new road capacity around St Ives, including testing 2 proposed roads across the Ouse Valley, Page B4 of the April 2014 Consultation Document states quite categorically that

“...**none of the options** tested provided significant improvements in modelled traffic conditions overall in the St Ives area”

However, the Long Term Transport Strategy now states at page B4

“The **only options** that provided significant improvements in modelled traffic conditions in the St Ives area were the **two new road options** between Wyton Airfield and the A14.....”

We are concerned as to why these words have been changed in this way.

The Strategy forecasts (page B3) that by 2036 there could be 8500 new dwellings at the Alconbury and Wyton developments. The District Council’s Plan is for 5000 at Alconbury and 3750 at Wyton. Now, however, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation have announced they will build 4500 dwellings at Wyton, a new town almost 2/3 the size of nearby St Ives. The traffic from the Wyton development will now be 25% greater than is anticipated by this Long Term Transport Strategy - equating to more than 1000 additional cars or vans.

The Committee will be aware that the Defence Infrastructure Organisation has already appointed a Partner to build the 4500 dwellings at Wyton. This major development is clearly up and running **now**. They expect to submit a planning application in early 2016 so development will start long before the late 2020s early 2030s anticipated by this Strategy. St Ives is already congested, a solution for Wyton traffic needs to be found now before development commences not in 15 years time. At present the Strategy offers no solution and

no timescale for finding a solution or indeed for finding out that a sustainable solution does not exist. Our concern is that, in the absence of timely planning, with the development in progress and traffic congestion critical, environmental sustainability will go 'out the window', sacrificed to urgency and the rejected Link Road proposal will re-emerge.

We urge you to start finding a sustainable solution now and to either add a clause to this Strategy specifically ruling out the possibility of a new road across the Ouse Valley anywhere between the existing river crossings at Godmanchester and St Ives or at the very least to change the words 'most sustainable way' to 'a sustainable way' in the Wyton Airfield scheme.

b) Parish Councillor Bridget Flanagan on behalf of the Great Ouse Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Working Group

On behalf of the AONB Working Group, I welcome amendments to the LTTS that have been made as a result of this committee's last meeting on 11th November. I am very pleased that the Strategy now uses the term sustainable. We all understand that sustainable development is essential, and I trust that this committee and Officers will strive to ensure they achieve this.

However I think the LTTS needs to say more. The words relating to the Link Road may have been expunged, but the option has not been.

The proposed development at RAF Wyton – now trumpeted on Crest Nicholson's website – will undoubtedly put immense pressure on an already congested area between Huntingdon and St Ives.

When the 4500 houses are built, people will want to get out of them - not just to work and shop, but also for amenity and leisure. The Ouse Valley meadows are the only area of open green space with footpaths, cycle paths etc in the area. As I described to you at the last meeting it is a beautiful area of countryside as well as a very important and increasingly rare natural habitat. It is also an invaluable resource for people as well as wildlife. It must be protected.

I ask CCC to take a strong, responsible lead in relation to this proposed development at RAF Wyton. So please make your intentions crystal clear in the LTTS. The detail is vital - because I am sure you would not wish any ambiguity of words to allow through a fudge of 'least worst' option. The future of the Ouse Valley is in your hands.

Your Officers have already said the transport solutions for the Wyton development are 'challenging'. Therefore:

1. I trust you will not allow development creep before the necessary transport infrastructure has been identified or achieved.
2. I trust you adhere to your stated commitment of sustainable development.

3. And in so doing, I trust you will safeguard the very special environment of the Ouse Valley between St Ives and Huntingdon and not allow any destruction of it by a new road crossing.
4. Therefore, to clarify and strengthen the above, I urge you to include the following statement in the LTTS:

“Provision for the anticipated transport demand can only be made so far as is compatible with environmental considerations in particular”.

c) Councillor Paul Boothman from Houghton and Wyton Parish Council

Thank you for listening to the concerns of Houghton & Wyton Parish Council at your meeting 2 weeks ago, and for recommending that changes were made to the Long Term Transport Strategy.

We welcome some of the rewording contained in the document, such as removing the specific inclusion of a link road between Wyton Airfield and the A14; acknowledgement that crossing the Ouse Valley would be among the most challenging in environmental terms; as well as the need for further work in this area, including a robust environmental assessment of major schemes, in accordance with statutory guidance.

However, we believe the County Council needs to adopt a stronger policy position on transport here, and not risk misguiding District Council's in their creation of Local Plans.

Hence we believe the document should go further, specifically stating that it will withhold inclusion of a new road access scheme for Wyton Airfield within the LTTS until a truly sustainable scheme can be identified.

The minutes of this committee meeting from 2 weeks ago, and which you have just signed off, clearly state:

*“.....not every development being suggested in a District Plan should be supported as part of a County Council Transport Policy.
Officers in response suggested that it would be possible to amend the Plan and remove specific reference to the Link Road **on the basis of including wording to consider looking further at a sustainable transport package** in order to enable development at RAF Wyton to be undertaken on **a sustainable** basis.*

*The concern of the County Council officers would be if a Planning Inspector allowed the development to go ahead **without a sustainable transport solution**.* “

Importantly, the text now appearing throughout the document (in Chapter 4 as well as Appendix B) subtly changes your definitive calls for **a sustainable** transport solution to now read ‘Further work is needed to identify **the most** sustainable package of transport options’

Our concern is that the word ‘**most**’ is a comparative form of wording, which technically would allow for the least-worst option to be taken forward by this policy.

We believe that a strong Council Policy, would not leave this amount of room for doubt and interpretation, and would either rule a scheme sustainable or not. This is what we think you meant when referring to **a sustainable** solution in the minutes.

We also believe that when it comes to it, Councillors also meant that such a sustainable solution for this highly sensitive area, would take into account the true value of the environment, together with the impact upon quality of life for existing residents, and not have these sustainability factors automatically trumped by what may amount to only marginal perceived economic and transport benefits.

Hence we request the Council amend the document to reflect this sentiment and your minutes to say that only **a truly sustainable** transport solution will be acceptable.