

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 11th July 2019

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 11.15 a.m.

Present: Councillors: D Ambrose Smith, H Batchelor, I Bates (Chairman), D Connor, R Fuller, Cllr N Kavanagh, S Tierney, J Williams and T Wotherspoon (Vice Chairman)

Apologies: None

240. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

241. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

242. MINUTE ACTION LOG

The Minutes Action Log was noted.

243. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions or petitions were received by the deadline.

244. HIGHWAYS ENGLAND CONSULTATION ON A428 BLACK CAT TO CAXTON GIBBET IMPROVEMENTS

Following its announcement of the preferred route in February 2019, Highways England on 3rd June 2019 launched an eight week consultation closing on 28 July 2019 on its proposals to upgrade the A428 between the A1 at the Black Cat roundabout and the A1198 at the Caxton Gibbet roundabout. Highways England were planning to make an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate in early 2020 and would use the results of the Consultation to inform the further development of the scheme, prior to the submission of the DCO application.

A working draft response to the Consultation was appended to the report. As the Consultation timescales effectively meant that it had to be drafted two weeks into the eight week consultation period, a delegation was sought to the Executive Director, Place and Economy in consultation with the Chairman of the Economy and Environment Committee for authority to agree the final joint response with partners. The draft response provided comments in the following areas:

- Traffic Impacts
- Direct impacts on the transport network managed by Cambridgeshire County Council

- Environmental Impacts
- Construction impacts
- Public Health Impacts
- Cultural Heritage Impacts
- Mitigation and Legacy
- Ongoing work with Highways England through the scheme development and delivery programme.

It was highlighted that significant additional work was required on the impacts of the proposals to inform the DCO application. The draft response provided an initial officer commentary on the impacts and the areas where further information was required. County Council officers were currently discussing a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with Highways England to provide a framework for the management and funding of additional demands on County Council and partner resources, excepting those associated with the Council's statutory duties in relation to the DCO Application. Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils were doing the same for their areas of engagement. The intention was, far as possible, to agree County Council requirements for the scheme for inclusion in the DCO application.

As the A428 ran through parts of her electoral division, Councillor Smith the local member for Papworth and Swavesey spoke supporting the report recommendations and the need for an upgrade in the area, noting that while a great deal of work had already been undertaken, there was still a great deal to do. She hoped that local residents would take the opportunity to comment at the consultation stage.

Questions / issues raised and responses provided included:

- A request that in future lead officers / report authors should bring colour copies of the diagrams to the meeting where they had been lifted from other sources and were not clear for those not viewing the reports on their laptops, as the hard copy agenda reports were now only printed in black and white.
- A comment on the need to integrate the current proposals with transport improvements planned between Cambridge, St Neots and Bedfordshire.
- Supporting the officer response requiring an enhancement to the level of biodiversity than was currently being planned by Highways England, whose initial proposals were to only maintain the existing levels of bio-diversity.
- The Vice Chairman highlighting the need for the transport modelling to be completed before the DCO was agreed. He argued that the outputs from the modelling were crucial and asked for any details of the expected timescale for completion. In reply, officers understood that Highways England were working on the detailed scheme modelling and they would continue to press Highways England for the details.
- The Vice Chairman highlighted the concerns that the current traffic projections for the north of the Caxton Gibbet junction of the A1198 forecast as 27,000 vehicle movements exceeded the current capacity of 25,000, with paragraph 38 of the response making reference to the need to fundamentally rethink

pedestrian and cycle crossings due to the dangers with respect to the volume and speed of traffic. Officers confirmed that the levels of traffic predicted was significantly above current levels and that on 60 mph stretches it would not be safe for cyclists to cross and therefore segregation measures would be needed for both cyclists and pedestrians at crossing points at the Caxton Gibbet junction. The officers made the point that the initial modelling undertaken a year ago had not been validated, and that further, more detailed modelling could produce different figures.

- In respect of flood risk, the aim should be to achieve 'betterment' wherever possible.
- The Chairman requested that the report response should be sent to other authorities / interested parties including Central Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire Borough Council, England's Economic Heartland, Oxon County Council Buckinghamshire County Council, Milton Keynes Council and Suffolk County Council. **Action: Jeremy Smith.** Officers confirmed that they were already in discussion with Central Bedfordshire about any issues they might have.
- The Vice Chairman made the point that the issues were not just about traffic on the A428, but the need to co-ordinate with wider transport planning and congestion alleviation, including projects such as East West Rail, Cambourne to Cambridge, the Cambridge Autonomous Metro. He emphasised the need to avoid more traffic congestion nearer to Cambridge.

Having commented on the proposed draft response

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Confirm the Council's support for the delivery of the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements
- b) Note that the Council is working with the Greater Cambridge Partnership, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, and Cambridge City Council on a joint response to the consultation.
- c) agree the appended draft response to the consultation.
- d) Delegate to the Executive Director Place and Economy, in consultation with the Chairman of the Economy and Environment Committee, the authority to agree the final joint response with partners.
- e) Support the completion of a Planning Performance Agreement between the Council and Highways England to formalise the Council's engagement on the project in preparation for the Development Consent Order process.

245. WELCOME GENOME CAMPUS OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION

The Committee received a report at its meeting of 14 March 2019 at which it approved the County Council's response to the Genome Campus planning application. The

purpose of the current report was to update the Committee on progress and changes to the Council's position in relation to Primary Education mitigation and Transport assessment consideration. Section 1.3 of the report set out the key Education considerations that had been considered when agreeing the original report.

Normally the starting point for assessing the primary education provision required on a site was to use the top end of the County Council's general multiplier. However since the last report the Education Service had received amended data from the research team highlighting that this development had unique aspects to it, including no affordable housing being included and the Housing mix including a higher ratio of studio/one bedroom properties than other developments. As a result, officers had re-assessed the requirements for primary school mitigation, having considered the potential pupil forecast arising from the development with the Eddington site in north-west Cambridge being identified as the closest comparable development in terms of assessing likely pupil numbers.

The report set out three scenarios in terms of mitigation to meet the demand for places. As a result of these scenarios, the Council was no longer seeking off-site contributions to increase capacity at the Duxford Primary school. Instead it was proposed to seek a contribution for a primary school with to 2 Forms of Entry capacity on a site provided within the Genome Campus. This would require the section 106 agreement to secure the provision of 2.3ha together with financial contributions.

Regarding transport, the Committee in March approved a holding objection on the grounds that there were a number of issues identified primarily concerning the development mix, trip generation, internalisation of trips, accident data and mode share, as well as a number of outstanding issues concerning the site strategy, off-site improvements and parameter plans requiring to be addressed. The County Council Transport Assessment and Highways Teams had since been involved in ongoing discussions with the Wellcome Trust and its agents 'Vectos'. Whilst good progress had been made in addressing some of the issues, other matter were still outstanding, and work on the impact assessment was ongoing with the report providing a progress update on the various issues. The transport holding objection remained in place until the full technical assessment had been included and the impacts were fully understood. Notwithstanding this, initial Heads of Terms had been offered by the developer.

In discussion:

- Members supported the proposal that the provision of the primary school should be within the Development, drawing on the experience from Girton and Eddington. It was important to ensure that the new school was not opened earlier than needed, to ensure it did not negatively impact on the Duxford primary school.
- In respect of the above, one Member suggested that as there were so many new developments around the County, Education officers needed a strategy / policy to deal with the impact of new schools in developments, to ensure that they did not impact on surrounding existing schools and that there was a co-ordinated approach. Officers explained that this was already in place, with the site having been visited by education officers who were taking the same approach as with the Wing development school, namely that the catchment area would be for

children living on the development.

- Regarding a question of cross boundary issues and their potential effect on education numbers, the Council were working closely with Suffolk, but recognition was needed that a school's popularity rose and fell depending on its perceived quality and teaching record, and that parental preferences still had to be taken into consideration, while still offering those in catchment, first choice. It was therefore difficult to calculate how many parents over the County border might seek places for their children. Regarding school transport costs, it was confirmed a contribution would be sought in such cases.
- In terms of transport, one Member while acknowledging that the Trust currently ran a superb network of buses, highlighted that they would need to be enhanced to ensure the Development did not have an impact on traffic as a result of people having to use cars. On this point the Member for Fulbourn clarified that the need was to lay on additional buses at different times to cater for ancillary staff who tended to work different work patterns, including starting work earlier than research staff. Currently their needs were not being met and many had no choice but to use cars to travel to work. Officers agreed to take this up with the Trust.
Action: Juliet Richardson.
- A question was raised on how the Education contribution had been calculated in the first place. This was on the basis of accommodating the estimated number of children determining the size of school and its cost to deliver.
- Was the Education contribution just for the cost of the new building? The Member who raised the issue highlighted that finance would also be required to pay for the new staff. It was confirmed that the contribution was only for the capital cost of building the school, as revenue costs were difficult to secure through the Section 106 process.
- With reference to paragraph 1.3 where it was stated that there was no need for a new secondary school, a question was raised on whether Sawston Village College had been consulted regarding the potential impact of the new development on them. Officers were working with the Granta Special School and Sawston Village College to ensure a holistic approach to meeting the education needs.
- Whether there were plans to ensure there was a safe cycle route for those pupils who would wish to attend Sawston Village College? A cycle route was part of the current discussions and the Authority was obliged to ensure there were safe routes to school.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Approve the Council's revised education response as set out in section 2 to the Report, amending the previous recommendation agreed at the 14th March Committee meeting, in order to seek land and a financial contribution for up to two forms of entry for primary education within the Genome Campus.

246. REVIEW OF RISK REGISTER FOR PLACE AND ECONOMY

In line with an audit requirement, prior to review at Committee every quarter, the Risk Register for Place and Economy was reviewed by officers and updated. The most up to date Register was attached at Appendix 1 to the report with Members' views sought.

In discussion:

- A Member highlighted that the first risk on page 86 did not have a title. Officers agreed that it should have had a title and was a financial related risk. This would be updated **Action: Andy Preston.**
- Page 88 - in respect of the Apprenticeship scheme - the Chairman asked how many there were in Place and Economy and where they were. Andy Preston was aware of two, one in civil engineering and one in project management, but would check and come back with the detail to the Chairman in writing. **Action Andy Preston**

It was resolved unanimously:

To note the Risk Register.

247. INTERNAL MEMBER ADVISORY GROUP FOR THE CLIMATE CHANGE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

At the request of the Leader of the Council, this report had been withdrawn and would be resubmitted to the 16th July General Purposes Committee as it was a Council-wide issue.

248. TO ESTABLISH A TRANSPORT STRATEGY HUNTINGDONSHIRE MEMBER STEERING GROUP AND APPOINT MEMBERS TO IT

The new District-wide transport strategies some of which had already been created supersede Market Town Transport Strategies (MTTS) including a greater focus on the more rural parts of the Districts that were not covered by the MTTSs. The Transport Strategy Huntingdonshire (TSH) while identifying Huntingdon, Ramsey St Neots and St Ives as the key towns, would consider the whole of the district transport needs to manage the future growth of Huntingdonshire identified in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan with the aim being to address all modes of transport within the district.

The report proposed that a Member Steering Group should be established to ensure Local Member involvement throughout the study, with the Terms of Reference to be presented to the Steering Group's first meeting and appointing to it two Cambridgeshire County Councillors and one substitute. The intention was that the Steering Group would make recommendations to the County Council's Economy and Environment Committee and to Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet. As an oral update following further discussion with the Chairman, it was proposed to amend the representation so that both the County Council and District Council appoint four members and two substitute members.

In discussion the following issues were raised:

- Did the proposals conflict with work already being undertaken with regard to the A141 Huntingdon and St Ives Study Strategy, as there was a need to ensure there was no duplication of work already being undertaken. It was explained that whilst there would be some overlap, the intention of the District Transport Strategy and new Group would be to build on and link together the work already undertaken.
- In terms of the proposed membership, the Chairman, having already spoken to Councillor Fuller, the relevant Cabinet member on the district council, was seeking a good geographical spread, hence the proposal to increase the membership from 2 to 4 for both the County Council and the District Council. He had already received an expression of interest from Councillor Criswell who suggested he would be able to provide a strategic overview from his other responsibilities to help link it with other local plans and as he had no affiliation with any of the market towns.
- At the meeting Councillors Sanderson and Fuller both expressed an interest to be nominated to the Group, with the Chairman also putting himself forward. For the two substitutes now proposed for the County Council, these would be sought following the meeting from any further expressions of interest received.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the establishment of the Transport Strategy Huntingdonshire Steering Group based on its draft Terms of Reference attached as appendix 1 to the officers' report.
- b) Agree the terms of reference subject to expanding the County Council membership of the Transport Strategy Huntingdonshire Steering Group from two elected members to four with two substitutes, the latter to be appointed following further discussions with the District Council and taking account of any further expressions of interest received.
- c) Appoint the following members to represent the County Council on the Transport Strategy Huntingdonshire Steering Group:
 - Councillor Ian Bates
 - Councillor Steve Criswell
 - Councillor Ryan Fuller
 - Councillor Tom Sanderson.
- d) Delegate to the Executive Director (Place and Economy) in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the authority to agree additional appointments and any future changes to the Steering Group.

249. GROWING OUR GREEN SPACES – SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTY’S GREEN SPACES

The National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF), the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the National Trust recently launched the Future Parks Accelerator (FPA), a UK-wide £10 million strategic initiative to run over two years (ending in June 2021) to secure a sustainable future for Parks and Green spaces across the Country. It combined a minimum £5m NHLF grant funding with a further £5m of ‘in kind’ expertise support from the National Trust. The Committee congratulated Officers on their success in being one of the areas chosen following the County Council leading a partnership of local authorities, conservation organisations, private sector and community groups to be awarded £716k funding (original bid £2.3m). Cambridgeshire and Peterborough being one of only 8 locations chosen across the Country.

The Project would collaborate with local charities, developers and businesses to explore new management and funding solutions in order to create a strategy for the delivery of high quality green spaces across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It would link with the Combined Authority’s non statutory spatial framework (Phases 1 and 2) and the desire to increase the amount of green space in the County), the Council’s forthcoming Environment and Climate Change Strategy and The County Council’s legal duty to conserve and enhance its own green space sites for biodiversity and people. The first phase of the Project was primarily focussed on research and evidence gathering and any decisions sought were unlikely until late 2020/2021.

The delivery of the project was to be governed by a Project Executive Board with the County Council being the lead partner and the Chief Executive the Project Sponsor and chair of the Executive Board. Representatives from the participating partners were listed in paragraph 2.1 of the report. To add value to the Project they would contribute officer time in kind up to a value of £1m. To ensure close political involvement, a Members Reference Group was also being set up and each local authority involved was being asked nominate one Member to serve on it. On a day to day basis, the Project would be overseen by a Project Management Team of local authority and other partner organisations officers. A diagrammatical explanation of the proposed governance arrangements was tabled at the meeting. It was pointed out that it had omitted South Cambridgeshire District Council and also already included Councillor Bates as the named Council representative. As the launch had already taken place, Councillor Bates, as the Chairman of the Committee, had acted as representative for the Council in the interim. The proposal was that he was formally endorsed as the Council representative.

In further discussion:

- Several Members expressed concern regarding whether the setting up of the Project would delay plans already in progress for green spaces in the County e.g. Hinchbrook Country Park. The lead officer clarified that district councils should continue with their park open spaces improvements as the Project was looking beyond current schemes and would not impact on their existing, agreed plans. The project was looking ahead at strategic proposals for the next 25 years to seek to achieve general standards / models of sustainability / enhancement.

- A question was raised regarding what the National Trust's in kind contribution was going to be in addition to any financial contribution. The lead officer stated that this unfortunately had not been ascertained yet, but they had model tools for example, that would be of assistance and which the Project would wish to access.
- A Member expressed concern that the level of formal bureaucracy proposed for the governance arrangements could leave little money from what was a very modest grant award to carry out the actual project. Several Members expressed concerns regarding the ultimate value of a project that would be taking up a considerable amount of time of highly paid officers, as well as that of senior Members, with it being suggested and seconded that the report back to the Committee with recommendations should also include details of any member review to ascertain its value to the County and help determine whether the Council should be involved in any similar future projects. It was clarified that there would be Member involvement via the Member Reference Group which would pick up the issues of concern. Each organisation represented, would need to report back to its own parent body. In terms of the time commitment concerns, the Executive Board's duration would be restricted to an hour.

Another Member asked where the money would come from to carry out the physical improvements? It was clarified that no capital monies were available through this Fund and the Project was not about making physical improvements. The main aim of the Project and the financing that had been made available was to review current approaches to suggest changes going forward via recommendations / a strategy, in such areas funding and financing, sustainable business models and the planning system to help improve the current and future standard and quality of green space. The Government was part financing the Project with the aim of rolling out any general principles / options / models identified on a national basis.

- Coming back on the above response,

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) To note the award of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant and confirm the new County Council representative for the Future Parks Accelerator Project as Councillor Bates.
- b) To receive a review report at the conclusion of the two year initiative.

250. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – END OF MAY 2019

The Committee received the above report in order to be provided with the opportunity to comment on the current budget position for Place and Economy as it affected those areas within the Committee's remit.

The main issues highlighted were:

Revenue - Place and Economy as a whole was forecasting a bottom line underspend of £1.3m mainly due to Bus Lane Enforcement and Highways Development Management again forecasting that they would over-achieve their income. Any variations in the forecast would be reported as they become known. In addition, there was a forecast underspend on Concessionary Fares which would offset the Community Transport pressure.

Capital - The revised Capital Budget for 2019/20 reflected the carry-forwards of funding from 2018/19 and the re-phasing of schemes as detailed in Appendix 6 of the report subject to the approval of General Purposes Committee (GPC). The assumed Capital Programme Variation had reduced the level of borrowing required.

Performance - Of the seven performance indicators, two, the % of Freedom of Information Requests (FOI) answered within 20 days and % complaints responded to within 10 days were reported on and were both shown as being red (failing to meet target) on the Red, Amber and Green (RAG) rating. Measures were in place to return them to target.

The Local Highways Improvement scheme (LHI) data, the tree data, and the vacancy data were all shown within Appendix A.

In discussion, under capital expenditure on Page 129 - Huntingdon West of Town Centre Link Road – reading:

“The 19/20 budget of £891k is currently anticipated to be on budget. Expenditure on the scheme now relates to land compensation claims and negotiations which are currently underway. The timescales for resolution of such claims is uncertain as claims for compensation are often significantly higher than the County Council’s evaluation and negotiations can become protracted”

the Chairman asked for an update on negotiations. The negotiations had been extended to October when it was hoped a conclusion would be reached.

Having reviewed and commented on the report it was unanimously resolved to:

note the report.

251. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN, TRAINING PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES PARTNERSHIP LIAISON AND ADVISORY BODIES

This report reviewed the Committee’s agenda plan, training requirements and appointments to outside bodies, internal advisory groups and panels. Attention was drawn to the following:

Appendix 1 Agenda Plan - setting out the current agenda plan. As there were no reports that had been identified requiring to go to the Reserve meeting in August, it was proposed to cancel it.

Training Plan - The current Training Programme document, having been reported as completed at the last two meetings, was not included. Members were invited to consider whether the Committee had any further training requirements within the areas of responsibility of the Committee. While no additional suggestions were made at the meeting, should any Committee Members subsequently identify a particular training need, they were asked to contact Democratic Services outside of the meeting.

As there was a new Executive Director, it was agreed to refresh the previous delegation to agree in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman urgent appointments to outside bodies / working groups that could not wait until the next Committee meeting.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the agenda plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report and agree to the cancellation of the reserve date in August. *(Post meeting Note - since the meeting, a report is now required to be considered before September so the August meeting will now go ahead)*
- b) Note that the Training Plan has been completed and any Members wishing to make suggestions for further Committee related training should contact Democratic Services.
- c) Note that no appointments to outside bodies or Internal Advisory Groups and Panels were required to be brought to the attention of the Committee.
- d) Agree a delegation on a permanent basis to the Executive Director Place and Economy in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee to appoint representatives to any outside bodies, internal or external groups, panels or partnership liaison and advisory groups within the remit of the Economy and Environment Committee, where an appointment was required to be made before the next scheduled Committee meeting.

252. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING AGREED AT MEETING AS 10 A.M. THURSDAY 19th SEPTEMBER 2019 (POST MEETING NOTE: CHANGED BACK TO 15TH AUGUST AS AN URGENT REPORT FOR DECISION WAS REQUIRED TO BE CONSIDERED)

**Chairman:
15th August 2019**