

Greater Norwich Development Partnership Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 5 September 2016

Time: 3.30pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Norfolk County Council, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH

Board members:

Broadland District Council:

Cllr Ian Moncur, Cllr Andrew Proctor, Cllr Shaun Vincent

Norwich City Council:

Cllr Bert Bremner, Cllr Mike Stonard, Cllr Alan Waters

South Norfolk Council:

Cllr Colin Foulger, Cllr John Fuller, Cllr Lee Hornby

Norfolk County Council:

Cllr Stuart Clancy, Cllr Tim East, Cllr Martin Wilby

Broads Authority

Sir Peter Dixon

Officers in attendance: Adam Banham, Natalie Beale, Amy Broadhead, Mike Burrell, Phil Courtier, Angela Freeman, Ellen Goodwin, Tim Horspole, Dave Moorcroft, Phil Morris, Graham Nelson, Adam Nichols, Cally Smith

1. Welcome and Apologies

Mike Burrell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr Stonard, Sir Peter Dixon, Cllr Hornby, Cllr Bremner and Andrea Long.

2. **Nominations to the Position of Chair**

Cllr Proctor proposed Cllr Shaun Vincent, Broadland District Council, as the Chair., This was seconded by Cllr Moncur, and the motion passed.

Cllr Vincent took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Cllr Fuller proposed Cllr Waters, Norwich City Council, as vice-chair, which was seconded by Cllr Proctor.

3. **Greater Norwich Development Partnership Board Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference of the re-established Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) were presented by the Greater Norwich Planning Policy Manager, Mike Burrell. Members were asked to note that the terms of reference had been previously agreed by the constituent authorities.

Mike Burrell explained that the GNDP will oversee production of the Greater Norwich Local Plan, whilst the main focus of the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) is to oversee implementation of current plans. It was noted that the GNDP is not a decision-making body and the decision-making powers will remain with the constituent authorities.

Clarification was provided that previous GNDP meetings had been held in public.

AGREED Members agreed that the Terms of Reference must be clear that GNDP Board meetings will be held in public.

4. **Greater Norwich Local Plan**

The planning policy manager presented an introductory report on the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) covering: the work undertaken to date on the local plan; the establishment of the officer team; work undertaken on the evidence base and the forthcoming stakeholder forums.

The report recommended that members of the GNDP should:

- i) Note initial progress on the GNLP;
- ii) Give early consideration to key issues and themes for the GNLP;
- iii) Agree the next steps for plan preparation

As background to the report, the planning policy manager explained that:

- the timeframe of the Local Plan will be until 2036 to maintain at least a 15-year time horizon in plan-making and that the plan will include both strategic policies and site allocations;
- a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has already been completed for Central Norfolk, also including North Norfolk and Breckland districts. This wider geographical area than Greater Norwich reflects the nature of the local housing market. The SHMA provides the evidence base for the objectively assessed housing need (OAN) for the area.

The planning policy manager then highlighted the area's long track record of cooperation through the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and stated that the Government's recent focus on deliverability of development will be reflected in the GNLP. He also provided more detail on the re-establishment of the GNLP as the member forum to oversee plan production and on the establishment of a professional team containing seven FTE officers to produce the plan

The planning policy manager subsequently provided further detail on work undertaken to date on the plan, including the SHMA. The planning policy manager explained that the SHMA takes into account growth aspirations set out in the Greater Norwich City Deal and that the housing need for Greater Norwich equates to approximately a further 12,000 homes between 2012 and 2036 over and above those already built, permitted or allocated. He also explained that this is based on the current position. Future revisions to Government projections for population and household, and changes to the number of dwellings permitted, could result in increases or decreases in GNLP requirements. Based on current national policy and its interpretation, there will also be a need to include additional allocations to act as a buffer.

The Call for Sites process was then explained, which had been undertaken between May and July 2016. The planning policy manager stated that information is being collated on the sites submitted for reporting at the next GNLP meeting in November.

The planning policy manager added that the other key streams of work included reviewing the JCS-wide strategic and thematic policies; conducting Sustainability Appraisal work; and, undertaking assessment work under the Habitats Regulations Assessment legislation. The latter two tasks are being undertaken with consultants. The target date for adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan is December 2020.

A series of stakeholder workshops will be taking place during September and these events are to be informed by the Issues Paper presented to the GNLP Board. The outcome of these workshops will be reported to the GNLP in November. Under section 6 of the Issues Paper, the planning policy manager

emphasised the importance of evidence gathering during the preparation of the Greater Norwich Local Plan. Consultants are being engaged on topics including employment related issues, and development viability. However, an advantage for the new Plan is that much of the evidence from the Joint Core Strategy is still of relevance and able to be updated, such as the Water Cycle Study. Alongside the new Local Plan, a review of the Norwich Area Transport Strategy (NATS) is under preparation.

At this point Cllr Vincent opened up a general discussion on early consideration of the issues affecting the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

Cllr Proctor emphasised the importance of the need for a holistic approach to all development, and not just housing. He advocated the creation of an appropriate strapline for the Greater Norwich Local Plan which would convey the right messages and referenced the last plan's focus on jobs, infrastructure, and prosperity, as well as housing requirements. .

Cllr Fuller referenced his role chairing the Norfolk Duty to Cooperate Board, and the need to consider the role of Greater Norwich in the wider East Anglian area and the need to review the role of the Norwich Policy Area. Cllr Fuller used Diss as an example of a town in a key central location with scope to grow and expressed concern that growth potential could be restrained without a review of existing policy areas.

Cllr Fuller said a criteria-based approach to policy could be helpful in allowing other towns and villages to grow in Greater Norwich, stating that South Norfolk had been successful in linking housing growth with jobs and infrastructure. Similar challenges still applied for the new Local Plan. A western link between the A47 and the A1067 was supported and progress on it should be reflected in the Local Plan.

Cllr Fuller also talked about recent coverage concerning Green Belts and referred to Oxford as an example of an area where the Green Belt had contributed to exceptionally high property prices. He stated that Greater Norwich has existing policies in place which give protection to the countryside, important landscape views, and gaps between settlements. Cllr East also raised concerns about the negative impact of Green Belts and considered that policy approaches like strategic gaps and landscape protection zones were more appropriate.

Cllr Waters expressed his views on the economic geography of Greater Norwich, and how the jobs market crosses local authority boundaries. Cllr Waters spoke in favour of the current planning strategy, advocating growth in

close proximity to Norwich for the benefit to the economy, and protecting the countryside, stating that planning policy should try to minimise commuter miles. He also stressed the importance of sustainability, and not just focusing on housing and the economic perspectives. Cllr Waters said there was strength in maintaining some distinction between the urban area, and the respective rural parts of Broadland and South Norfolk.

Cllr Clancy observed how the discussion showed that scope existed for a balanced approach to plan-making. Cllr Clancy expressed support for a planning strategy that continued to focus the majority of the development in and around urban locations, whilst also allowing towns and villages to grow sustainably. He said that the current policy approach may need to be reviewed to allow some development in villages to prevent communities declining, with some new housing being vital to sustaining community facilities.

Cllr Proctor said he was keen that consideration be given to ensuring the economic growth of towns and villages is of an appropriate level. He used the examples of Blofield and Brundall to highlight the risks of levels of development being permitted, because of land supply issues, which were well in excess of that envisaged in the Joint Core Strategy. He considered that the Local Plan will need to try to ensure its growth proposals in service centres and villages are not significantly exceeded.

Cllr Vincent re-capped on the recommendations of the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- i) to Note initial progress on the GNLP;
- ii) Officers to consider the points raised on key issues and themes for the GNLP;
- iii) to agree the next steps for plan preparation as outlined in the report and presentation

In addition, Members requested that work on a strapline for communications on the Greater Norwich Local Plan should be undertaken by officers.

It was agreed that the next meeting would be in late November, with dates to be circulated.

The meeting closed at 16:10.