CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 23 May 2016 at 4.30 p.m.

Members Present:

Cabinet: Councillors J Fuller (Chairman) Y Bendle, M Edney, L Hornby, K Mason Billig and M Wilby


Officers in Attendance: The Chief Executive (S Dinneen), the Director of Business Development (D Lorimer), the Director of Community Services (P Boyce), the Director of Growth and Localism (T Horspole), the Management Accountant (J Holland) and the Senior Planning Officer (S Marjoram)

2462 SOUTH NORFOLK LOCAL PLAN – ADOPTON OF LONG STRATTON AREA ACTION PLAN

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which requested that Cabinet recommend to Council the adoption of the Long Stratton Area Action Plan (AAP) as part of the Local Plan for South Norfolk.
Following a brief introduction by the Chairman, who was pleased to announce that the Long Stratton Area Action Plan had been found to be sound and legally compliant by the Inspector, the Senior Planning Officer outlined the key points in the report. Cabinet was advised that the adoption of the AAP would give greater certainty regarding how and where the bypass and the associated housing and employment land would be developed, and would enable the pace of discussions with developers to be intensified as well as allowing any funding bids for infrastructure monies to be made on a more secure basis.

Cllr M Gray expressed his concerns regarding the possibility of increased traffic between Long Stratton and Norwich once the houses had been built, and the adverse impact this might have on the A140 side roads, in particular the Hempnall junction, if road improvement were not made before commencement of the development. Cllr M Wilby was pleased to inform Cabinet that plans had been agreed for a roundabout to be built to alleviate traffic at the Hempnall junction, and that it was intended that this be in place before commencement of the development in Long Stratton. The Director of Growth and Localism advised members that one of the aims of the Area Action Plan was to achieve a higher level of self-containment within Long Stratton through employment development which would enable more people to live and work within the village. The Chairman added that the focus of the Plan was not just housing but economic growth and investment.

The Chairman, (on behalf on Cllr A Thomas who was unable to attend the meeting), and Cllr Worsley, speaking as Local Member, thanked officers for their steadfast work in developing the Plan.

The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL
1. Notes the Inspector’s Report (Appendix 1), including the Schedule of Main Modifications recommended by the Inspector (Appendix A to the Inspector’s Report);
2. Adopts, with effect from 26 May 2016, the Long Stratton Area Action Plan as modified by the Inspector’s Report and with Additional (minor) Modifications (Appendix 2);
3. Delegates authority to the Director of Growth and Localism to make any minor factual updates, corrections and formatting and layout changes required to the AAP; and
4. Delegates authority to the Director of Growth and Localism to undertake all necessary post-adoption legal and procedural steps.
The Reasons for the Decision

To create a real change to the local economy, in terms of housing, jobs, growth and prosperity.

Other Options Considered

None

2463 NORWICH RESEARCH PARK ENTERPRISE ZONE

The Subject of the Decision

The Chairman introduced the report of the Chief Executive, reminding members that in March 2016, Cabinet had agreed to support the proposed Enterprise Zone for Norwich Research Park (NRP) given its potential to drive growth and investment and to create a real step change in the local economy, generating new businesses and employment in South Norfolk.

The Director of Growth and Localism summarised the report and updated Cabinet on the progress achieved towards a final deal. Members were advised that, in order to fund the necessary infrastructure work, the Council would be required to borrow externally and was required to set aside revenue in its budget to fund the costs of its borrowing. It was requested that Cabinet authorise the completion of the necessary deal documents, agree the financial borrowing model to deliver the expected economic and financial benefits from the Enterprise Zone, and to recommend that Full Council adopt the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

Members discussed the proposals, agreeing that that the development of infrastructure would need to progress quickly to enable the Council to attract inward investment and to obtain a rental income from business rate returns, enabling repayment of the investment. Cabinet supported the recommendations and agreed that, although bold and ambitious, the deal would potentially pave the way for higher gain for the long-term benefit of the Council, cement the role of the NRP for higher quality jobs for local people, and put Norwich on a global platform which would result in higher dividend returns.
The Decision

RESOLVED:

To:

1. Authorise the Chief Executive to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Communities and Local Government and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership to determine the rules for operating the Norwich Research Park Enterprise Zone;

2. Authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council to enter into a Legal Agreement with New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and Norfolk County Council to determine the funding terms of the Norwich Research Park Enterprise Zone;

3. Authorise the s.151 Officer to borrow up to £12.54m to fund the necessary infrastructure work on the NRP Enterprise Zone site, and the construction of an investment building on the Enterprise Zone site;

4. Authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council to proceed with the development of a new building on the NRP which would be owned and managed by the Council in partnership with New Anglia LEP to provide an revenue income stream for both the Council and New Anglia LEP;

5. RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL adopts that the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy detailed at Appendix 2 of the report;

6. Agree that subject to legal advice identifying there are no significant additional risks or issues arising within the Partner Developer Contracts and Partnership Agreement which would have a detrimental impact to the Council, to authorise the Chief Executive to enter into the Partner Developer Contracts and Partnership Agreement.
The Reasons for the Decision

To achieve higher gains for the long-term benefit of the Council, cement the role of the NRP for higher quality jobs for local people, to attract inward investment and long-term revenue income streams for the Council, and to put Norwich on a global platform.

Other Options Considered

None.

(The meeting concluded at 5.00 p.m.)

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Chairman