



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PANEL

9.30am to 11.35am

25 January 2012

Present: Councillors Bremner (chair), Carlo (vice chair), Brociek-Coulton, Gayton (substitute for Councillor Sands (M)), Grenville, Jeraj (substitute for Councillor Little), Lubbock, Stammers

Apologies: Councillors Little and Sands (M)

### 1. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2011.

### 2. “PV FOR FREE” – QUESTION TO COUNCIL

The director of regeneration and development referred to the report and said that since the council meeting in October, the Friends of the Earth had advised the council that it wanted to submit an independent challenge. A letter had been sent to the government on behalf of the council requesting that the implementation date for the tariff change be delayed. He also reported that the contractor had withdrawn from the council's tendering process for the scheme to put photovoltaic panels on 3,000 local authority properties at no cost to the council. He concurred with Councillor Lubbock that an announcement on a judicial review on the government's changes to the feed-in tariff was due later that day but considered that it was unlikely that the feed-in tariff would be reinstated.

Discussion ensued in which the director of regeneration and development introduced the investment team leader and advised members of other schemes and options currently being considered to provide renewable energy schemes for the benefit of the council's tenants, including a solar powered hot water heating scheme. Members considered that the government's “PV for free” scheme had been over subscribed.

**RESOLVED** to note the director of regeneration and development's update on the government's scheme “PV for free”.

### **3. EVIDENCE UPDATE FOR SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS (DPDS)**

The principal planner (transport) presented the draft transport DPD, and together with the head of planning services and the planning team leader (policy), answered members' questions.

During discussion members considered the importance of retaining the vitality of the city centre and how this was supported by policies, for instance, park and ride, travel plans and car clubs. Members also discussed changing trends in retail habits, including the rise in internet shopping and that convenience stores had revitalised district centres. It was noted that the development management policies DPDs related to new developments and were part of a wider policy framework including the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy and the Joint Core Strategy. The council's emerging DPDs were drafted as far as possible but were awaiting the implications of the adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Discussion ensued on car parking and that new car parks, eg The Forum and Chapelfield, were replacements of other car parks and that the number of car park spaces available had been capped and had reduced from 10,005 in 1995 and 9,700 in 2012. The cap had reduced the propensity to drive but other measures such as the introduction of on street parking, park and ride and provision for cyclists had also contributed to this reduction.

The planning team leader (policy) presented the draft retail topic paper, part of the evidence base for the development management and site allocations DPDs, and referred to the revised table 1 which had been circulated. The proposals were evidence based and were compatible with the draft NPPF. It was also noted that there were anomalies in tables 3 and 4 which needed to be addressed.

During discussion members referred to the success of the city centre as a regional retail centre. Members noted that out of town business parks lacked the sustainable transport links of the city and were less attractive places to work. It was suggested that Riverside had potential for office space and had good transport links. Discussion also ensued on the economic downturn and it was pointed out that this was addressed in the retail study for the Joint Core Strategy which was carried out in 2007.

**RESOLVED** to note the evidence update within this report and that the development management policies DPDs are drafts and there is an opportunity for further comment.

### **4. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER (LDO)**

The head of planning services presented the report and together with the planner (policy) answered members' questions.

During discussion members welcomed the proposal as it removed bureaucracy and addressed the issue of inequalities, eg, a house that was divided to flats and semi-detached to a single residency and the flat owners required planning permission and the neighbouring house owner did not. Flats in conservation areas and on the

emerging local list would be excluded from the LDO. It was estimated that around 1,000 properties would be affected by the LDO.

Members considered the proposed conditions and the draft consultation documents. The head of planning services said that processing planning applications in respect of window replacements cost the council more than the fees received. He pointed out that if the LDO was implemented it would apply to the council's window replacement programme for council owned properties. Members discussed lowering the percentage of windows required for windows in a particular elevation being of the same material, colour and style. Members agreed to be guided by the officers and leave it at 80%. The head of planning services said that the condition was to preserve some uniformity and protect residential amenity but it was not possible to achieve 100% where individual leaseholders had replaced windows.

The head of planning services said that as the consultation covered the whole of the city council's area, it was intended to launch the consultation in the March edition of the "Citizen" which was due to be delivered to all households from 5 to 9 March 2012 and that the consultation would end on 6 April 2012.

In response to a question the head of planning services said that conservation areas were regularly reviewed and the introduction of Article 4 directives could also protect buildings of aesthetic value.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) endorse the principle of preparing a Local Development Order to allow windows and doors in flat to be replaced in flats without the need for planning permission (subject to the conditions and exclusions as set out in the report); and
- (2) recommend that cabinet approves the publication of the draft Local Development Order and the Statement of Reasons for public consultation.

**5. NORWICH CONNECT 2**

The design, conservation and landscape manager presented the report with the aid of plans, and together with the city growth and development programme co-ordinator and answered members' questions. Members were advised that discrete elements of the scheme would be considered by the Norwich Highways Agency committee.

During discussion members were advised that negotiations with Sustrans had resulted in the retention of as much funding as possible for a scheme that could be completed by the end of March 2013. The Sustrans funding was matched with S106 and local transport plan funding.

Discussion ensued on the need to identify further schemes to be prepared for opportunities for funding. Members also considered that the cycle network map, which would be available in spring 2012, should be available as a mobile phone application and noted that consistent signage was proposed for the cycle network route. Members were advised that Mousehold Heath Conservators was keen to ensure that signage on the heath was in keeping with the environment.

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

**6. PV PROJECT AT CITY HALL**

**RESOLVED** having considered the report of the environmental strategy manager to note the report.

CHAIR