

Scrutiny Committee

16:30 to 18:30

17 September 2020

Present: Councillors Wright (chair), Ryan (vice chair), Carlo, Fulton-McAlister (M), Giles, Manning, McCartney-Gray, Oliver, Osborn, Sands (M) (substitute for Councillor Sands (S)), Stutely (substitute for Councillor Sarmezey) and Thomas (Vi)

Apologies: Councillor Sands (S) and Sarmezey

1. Public questions/petitions

There were no public questions or petitions

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2020.

(The chair agreed to amend the order of the agenda as there were invited guests and to consider the substantive items earlier in the meeting.)

4. New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

(Chris Starkie, chief executive, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and Lisa Roberts, head of strategy, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, and Councillor Alan Waters, leader of the council and the council's representative on the LEP, were admitted to the meeting for this item.)

The chair introduced Chris Starkie and Lisa Roberts, from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, to the meeting.

Chris Starkie gave a brief introduction the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and said that it was one of 38 local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) that operate across England which have a defined geographical area. The New Anglia LEP's coverage was Norfolk and Suffolk. It brought together partners from local government, private and voluntary sectors and education, who met as a board. The

board members were all volunteers who met 10 times a year. The overarching principle of the LEP was a strategic function to develop a blueprint for economic prosperity and growth across Norfolk and Suffolk. It also acted as an intermediary for government and European funding, but also to persuade and encourage investment from the private sector as well. In terms of delivery, the LEP: ran a growth hub to provide free at point of access support to businesses; operated a number of enterprise zones; ran a grant programmes to support businesses; worked in the skills-base around enterprise engagement and career support in schools, and a capital programme, which invested in key infrastructure, whether that was flood defence, broadband, roads or other connectivity infrastructure.

The chair then referred to the questions from members of the committee, that had been submitted to the LEP ahead of the meeting, and explained the procedure for members to ask questions. (A copy of the questions is appended to these minutes.)

Questions were asked by members of the committee. Members were also invited to ask a supplementary question.

During consideration of this item it was apparent that due to time constraints not all of the questions could be considered at this meeting. The chair proposed, with the agreement of the representatives of the LEP, and the consensus of the committee that written responses would be provided for questions 10, 12 -19, 22 and 23.

The following questions were considered at the meeting:

Business theme

- 1. Do you have an estimate of the number of businesses in the region in receipt of government loan schemes who will not be able to repay? What support will be available to businesses in managing debt repayments, in the months and years ahead?**

Chris Starkie explained that he could provide figures for the numbers of businesses who had recently received loans. Loans ranged in size from the minimum £2,000 that was available to tens of millions for multi-national corporations. The number of awards made to businesses in Norwich (based on the Parliamentary boundaries for Norwich North and Norwich South) was 160 businesses awarded Coronavirus Business Interruption Loans (CBILS), totalling £31.5 million; and 2,500 micro or smaller businesses had accessed the Coronavirus Bounce Back Loans, amounting to a total £75 million in loans ranging from £2,000 to £50,000. This made a total of just over £100 million awarded to businesses in Norwich in recent months. These were loans from banks guaranteed by the Treasury.

It was impossible to predict how many of these businesses would not be able to repay the loans. Banks, although there was up to an 80 percent payback guarantee from the Treasury, were lending CBILS and Bounce back loans based on the criteria used ordinarily. Criteria for Bounce Back loans could be more flexible and was less stringent. There was an expectation that the majority of businesses would be fine and could repay the loan, but it would be speculative to provide an estimate. There was support available for businesses from the growth hubs, as mentioned in the introduction to the work of the LEP above, which was a network of business advisors

on expansion, finance etc and also advice from local authorities such as the economic development team at the city council. There was also a range of money advice services, including the Money Advice Network, Small Business Commissioner and national debt line to provide support for small businesses.

2. Do you have an estimate of the regional increase in unemployment following the end of the furlough scheme?

Chris Starkie said that the LEP had commissioned some external work to look at this. It was of significant concern. The furlough scheme had been used extensively by businesses in Norwich and the region. The LEP had figures on the percentages of the workforce. The modelling for economic recovery was based on three scenarios. The first was for a quick “L” shaped economic recovery which was considered unlikely. The middle case was a slow return to economic growth over a longer period, or “U” shaped recovery to full economic growth. The third scenario was a lingering cloud over economic growth. Modelling was based on what was known and predictions. None of the scenarios looked great. The potential peak in the first scenario was estimated at 50,000 people out of work at the end of the last quarter of 2020. The best case scenario therefore equated to the previous recession and was projected to reach 6.3 per cent unemployment by the quarter 4 of 2020 and to reach 4 per cent by the end of the last quarter of 2021, taking a year to get back to where we were. This scenario was the least likely. In the case of the mid-case scenario unemployment would increase sharply to 16 per cent in 2020 and remain above 10 per cent in quarter 4 of 2021. This was the level of unemployment last seen in the late 70s or early 80s. In the worst case scenario, the rate of unemployment would rise sharply to 26 per cent by quarter 4 of this year and remain at 20 per cent through to quarter 4 of 2021. The worst case scenario was based on there being no government interventions and worst case in terms of businesses performance. In context, members were advised that Norfolk had higher rates of unemployment than its counterparts in Suffolk. In the best case scenario in Norfolk, unemployment rates were projected as a median of 6.3 per cent in Norfolk, medium case 15.9 per cent in Norfolk and worst case 26 per cent in Norfolk. Overall the economy has responded overall in line with the rest of the UK economy in terms of universal credit and furloughing. The rate of people furloughed in the UK was 32 per cent and 31 per cent in Norwich (or around 20,000 employees).

A close eye was being kept on all of the statistics as the furlough scheme came to an end.

In reply to a supplementary question, Chris Starkie said that retail and hospitality were the sectors that would find it most difficult. The retail sector was undergoing change anyway before Covid. Sectors like insurance were relatively sheltered. Brexit was more likely to affect manufacturing. The cohort most affected would be young people as a sector of the workforce.

3. Can you please provide more detail on the aspiration to invest in re-skilling and will there be a particular focus on sectors which are facing greatest difficulty? Which employment sectors have been identified as having potential for economic growth and job creation?

Chris Starkie said that this cut to the heart of the next few weeks and months. The economic strategy, which builds on the Norwich 2040 vision, had identified a number of sectors for potential growth in future years. These were ICT and digital, clean energy and agri-food, all brought together under “a clean growth umbrella”. Covid had not affected this belief. There was significant growth and potential in Norwich for digi-tech in Norwich and earlier that day there had been the launch of Tech 100 in partnership with colleagues at Tech East. There was huge potential for green energy and agri-food. Other areas of focus would be the tourism and leisure sectors, working with Visit Norwich and including the culture sector. The third area of focus would be the health and social care which had hitherto been an unrecognised sector.

In conclusion, Chris Starkie said that the areas of focus in terms of facilitating support for training and reskilling and job creation would be the clean growth umbrella (digi-tech, clean energy and agri-food), tourism and leisure, and health and social care.

By way of a supplementary question, another member asked whether resources would be for reskilling people already working in those industries or people who wanted to work in them, and what support was there for the aviation sector. Chris Starkie said that it would be about opportunities and how those businesses could be taken forward. In the health and social care sector it was also about supporting businesses to be sustainable. There had been significant investment at City College Norwich and Eastern College to provide opportunities and skill training, particularly in the digital skills. Also the LEP would work with its partners such as Job Centre Plus and the Kick Start programme to provide opportunities for reskilling.

In relation to the aviation industry, Chris Starkie said that there was concern about the number of job losses at the airport and the LEP was in discussion with the Norwich Airport Ltd. Whilst not in the top four or five sectors of priority of focus, aviation was an important part of the local economy. The LEP had invested in the Aviation Skills Academy and it would want to see sustainability of jobs in that sector.

(The following questions relating to Covid economic recovery were taken as one question.)

4. & 5 What assessment has the LEP made of the impact of both Covid and Brexit on Norwich Research Park?

Could you detail what role, if any, the LEP is playing in the regeneration of East Norwich?

Chris Starkie said that there had been no specific work on the impact of Covid on the Norwich Research Park (NRP) but it had been looked at as part of the LEP’s wider Covid restart plan. In terms of jobs at the NRP, there was still reasonable funding for the types of jobs there, where people worked in the NHS at the hospital or at the Research Institute. There had been some downturn on businesses located at NRP but it had escaped relatively unscathed. South Norfolk Council and the LEP topped out a new building at NRP earlier that week. The impact of Brexit on NRP could be greater as it would affect scientific exchanges. The LEP had done some analysis of the impact of a “No Deal” or a “Deal” Brexit some time ago with a “Deal” being a better option.

The LEP was a partner of in the East Norwich Partnership. It had been an unofficial partner for several years working with Graham Nelson (director of place) and Homes England. The LEP would be an active partner of the partnership. It chaired a group comprising Network Rail, Broadland District Council and the city council to specifically look at issues surrounding the Trowse rail bridge. The director of place was seeking funding from the Norfolk Strategic Fund to take this piece of work forward.

In reply to a supplementary question, Chris Starkie said that they would secure funding from the Norfolk Strategic Fund through the core business rates fund to support the regeneration of the economy post Covid. In terms of funding, new rail infrastructure takes time and Network Rail understood the need for a new rail bridge and the partnership needed to build the case for it.

6. What sustainability assessments did the LEP conduct before deciding to award £1m to the Honingham food enterprise park?

Chris Starkie said that he assumed that the question was on the infrastructure funding to kick start the food enterprise park. All capital projects were subject to the necessary planning permissions and an environment impact assessment would be part of that process. The LEP did not do a separate environment impact assessment as that would be duplication and not good use of public funding. Part of the infrastructure required on this site was for water storage. Previously under old licences, Colmans had emptied water straight into the river. In moving the production of drinks and mustard to the new site, the environmental mitigation was to provide water storage that complied with higher standards and was an environmental benefit of the scheme. The scheme also retained the dry milling of condiments in the county which could have been lost to other regions of the UK or the world. The only other mustard milling facilities in the world were in Canada. It enabled local mint and mustard growers to continue to supply the production of condiments.

In reply to a supplementary question, Chris Starkie said that the building at Honingham food enterprise park was an exemplar of environmental credentials. It would attract “cottage” industries, where a business was being run out of people’s kitchens, and encourage and nurture these businesses as how to best serve the local Greater Norwich area. There would be some relocation of larger businesses, but this would be about how they improved the use of electricity and water in their production. The emphasis was on smaller food producers making better use of fuel and water, and reducing food miles. It was not a “bog standard” industrial estate on the edge of the city.

7. What is the benefit to local people from Enterprise Zones? (specific reference was made to jobs lost in the gas, oil and aviation sectors and what would be done to help these people.)

Chris Starkie said that there were a number of enterprise zones in Norfolk and Suffolk. Critics of business parks in the 1980s were that business would have grown without support and there was no benefit of the local economy. This was not the case now. One hundred per cent of business rates from enterprise zones were retained for local investment. In Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft the LEP was looking to utilise the skills of the gas/oil and aviation sectors in the retro-fitting of buildings,

renewable energy or hydrogen. There were big opportunities in renewables and the first cohort of two to three businesses in Norwich was part of that. Norwich Research Park was an enterprise zone and sought to retain and encourage businesses to stay in Norwich and not to be attracted to Cambridge and elsewhere.

As a supplementary question, the member said that she was pleased about retrofitting and the use of transferrable skills. She referred to the opportunities for tidal power and asked whether Hitachi would pull out of Sizewell. Chris Starkie said that it was a decision for EDF to make around Sizewell. There were aspirations to look at tidal power, though the South West was better placed for this. There were also aspirations to look at hydrogen and retrofitting. The creation of pathways so that young people could enter these new careers was as important as the creation of jobs.

Business theme – concluding question. This related to question 2 and the projections of figures of unemployment and whether the expectation was that these would be distributed evenly across the county or whether Norwich would take the biggest hit, and secondly what would be the impact of a second lockdown on the local economy?

Chris Starkie answered the last part of the question first and said that a second lockdown had been factored into the worst case scenario. In relation to the projected unemployment figures, unemployment was spread fairly evenly across the county. Broadland and South Norfolk had been more badly affected than Norwich. He did not consider that Norwich would be particularly badly hit.

Covid Recovery and Social Equality

8. & 9. The LEP Covid recovery plan talks about “Working with DWP, Job Centre plus and professional services to ensure employers and employees are aware of and have access to available support programmes at the earliest point”. That “earliest point” is usually Universal Credit, which means a 5-week wait for many without any access to support. What is being done to work with employers to prevent people being made destitute for that time? And how are people accessing that support?

There seems to be a great focus on creating jobs as a general strategy for growth in the region, for example through the Town Deal bid and through the LEP’s economic strategy. What is being done to ensure that the effects of job creation are beneficial for social mobility?

(Whilst asking the questions, the member also suggested that in terms of social mobility there was a potential “K” shape model of the economy, where some sectors will go up and others will go down.)

Chris Starkie said there were a large number of programmes that the government had made available to support businesses. LEP recognised that there was a lot of help available and tried to encourage and ensure that businesses look at other options before they consider making people redundant through its Job Support programme. It was a two strand programme (<https://newanglia.co.uk/>). The first

strand was engagement with employers, to reach out to companies to explain the options that were available, for instance, how do they get involved with the Kick Start programme or how can they consider more flexible pay and other options before changing people's lives irrevocably by making them redundant. As well as information for employers, there was a web based triage scheme for people concerned about redundancy who had not yet been made redundant or who had been made redundant, providing information about careers advice, information on mental health support and alternatives if made redundant such as becoming self-employed or apprenticeships. The Job Support programme brought these strands together, with the full backing of the DWP and partners, including the city council. The LEP was keen to promote this opportunity. Also on the website was the Employment Opportunities page for people looking for work. Over 300 businesses had promoted vacancies with 23,000 people having viewed the site since its launch summer. The Job Support programme was launched in September and in its first week 500 people had used the service.

Regarding social mobility, the LEP's economic strategy had two pillars: one around clean growth and the other around inclusive growth. A "K" recovery would be a disaster. A significant cohort was young people who should not be left behind. As a supplementary question, the member asked what specific actions could ward councillors take to support social mobility. Chris Starkie referred to the Growing Business fund where there had been investment of £2 million in Norwich, creating 100 jobs, in recent years. When considering this investment consideration should be made as to how low social mobility attainment could be addressed at the same time as creating jobs. The LEP, through the Norwich Opportunity Area, worked with schools and enterprise advisors, and businesses to "bridge the gap" in understanding.

Accountability

20. Question to Councillor Waters – as a member of the LEP Board, how do you ensure accountability to the public for your role on the board and how do you gather the views of members on Norwich City Council for helping to shape NALEP policy/programmes/funding and reporting back?

Councillor Waters said that he was one of 6 local authority representatives appointed to the LEP (which included the "permanent four: the leader of Ipswich Borough Council and both the leaders of Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils; and two other district councillors, one each from Norfolk from Suffolk). The LEPs had been established under the Coalition government in 2010 and replaced regional government offices and the regional assemblies of the 1990s. He regularly attended meetings of the investment board, and considered that he was a credible member, and was a member of the board, with its wider remit. The LEP's broad strategies around social mobility, investment, supporting people to gain skills and issues, surrounding carbon neutrality, were ones that the city council was particularly concerned about. There was an opportunity to reflect those issues and others through the prism of the policies agreed collectively as a council. The city council had a corporate plan that was approved at council and considered at the scrutiny committee, audit committee and cabinet, and the wider piece of work on Norwich 2040, where every party was represented on that broad partnership of stakeholders

and other partner organisations. When attending LEP meetings, he sought to reflect the things that he had been charged with through the democratic process in his contribution to the LEP board and the development of LEP policies and initiatives. He explained that the LEP had a focus on place, important key sectors that it collectively wanted to strengthen and enhance, but there was also an economic social and political dynamic to make sure that voices were heard, which both he and David Ellesmere, leader of Ipswich Borough Council, ensured that urban areas got the recognition they deserved as important drivers of the economy. In terms of partnership, he met Chris Starkie and other LEP Board members on any number of partnerships that met in the city, including the Business Improvement District and the Good Economy Commission, and shared and contributed to the LEPs ambitions for carbon neutrality. As a representative of the council on the LEP, he had brought to the table the Living Wage and good employment practices. The LEP board accepted that when investing public money there was an understanding about what kind of jobs that were being funded. It was important that people had good job opportunities. He was working with Chris Starkie to set up a trade union round table as it was important that workers were represented. The council was therefore not just represented on the board but was part of the partnership.

In terms of accountability, Councillor Waters said that he often circulated key documents produced by the LEP to colleagues and officers and pointed out that the LEP website was comprehensive. Meetings like this were an opportunity for the scrutiny committee to ask about the work of the LEP and its thinking, and reports were made to cabinet and full council. That was how he considered his accountability. Fundamentally it was bringing to the LEP table policies and strategies that had been developed and issues engaged and shaped, not just by the administration, but by consultation and engagement with other members of the council and its partners.

Accountability – additional question

Having looked at information available on line and looking at recent minutes of available on the LEP website, the member asked whether local authority members were represented on the panel that determined applications for loans and grants. He asked whether local authority members had a say on where funds go? From the minutes it looked like decisions had been made on a small grant scheme and represented only by the private sector, where a £100,000 had been provided. Were these decisions ratified anywhere for approval? Do board members have a say?

Chris Starkie said that the board was the ultimate decision making body of the LEP and had a number of sub-boards within. The main decision making on funding was the investment appraisal committee. It was chaired by David Ellesmere, with Alan Waters as a member, and had the same configuration as the main board, comprising private and public sector members. The scheme of delegation was available on the LEP website. All investment decisions were therefore taken by the board or the investment appraisal committee unless there were particular funding streams. The investment appraisal committee had delegated authority to fund schemes up to £500,000. Anything over £500,000 was submitted to the investment appraisal committee for consideration and recommendation to the board. There were two delegated grant schemes for small grants which were determined under delegated

powers. Decisions were notified to the investment appraisal committee which had oversight of that and then through the main board. The small grant scheme was funded by EU funding and had to be signed off by central government as well as the LEP. The same applied to the business fund which was determined by a panel comprising of private sector members making recommendations to the investment appraisal committee. Details were available on the website.

Councillor Waters commented that the investment appraisal committee looked very thoroughly at requests for investment from developers, particularly of greenfield sites without social housing. The main board did not have the capacity to give applications the scrutiny that the committee did. Andrew Proctor, leader of the county council was also a member of this committee.

21. What monitoring of its policies/programmes/funding does NALEP carry out, with a view to understanding their impact on sustainable development? (relates also to questions 12,13,14)

Chris Starkie said that like any organisations LEP published its policies on its website. There was an internal process where the officers monitored policies on a weekly basis. Reports were provided on performance and funding to every board and investment appraisal committee for formal consideration.

Environment

11. Is it the intention of the Clean Growth Taskforce to set a target for carbon neutrality and what plans are there to engage civil society, unions, and the public in the development and delivery of the Clean Growth Taskforce?

(The member requested that he asked question 11 instead of questions 22 and 23 where a written response would be acceptable. In asking the question he questioned how the targets recommended by the Tyndall Centre would be met, where was the funding for the retrofit programme that the LEP was supporting, and questioning the support for clean growth whilst still supporting the aviation industry which was one of the biggest users of fossil fuels.)

Lisa Roberts said the intention is not to develop any targets. The establishment of the Clean Growth Taskforce had been delayed given the distractions in responding to the Covid-19 response. The Clean Growth Taskforce was very important to them to meet the standards of a UK Clean Growth region. Arrangements were in place to get it started by the end of this year. They would not be looking at setting targets as organisations had set their own targets. The taskforce was identifying two to three themes that would make a big impact across Norfolk and Suffolk and then would develop its own targets. This included working with the big emitters to work with them collectively to bring down emissions. Chris Starkie said that the LEP believed in a number of tangible actions rather than getting distracted by setting targets which organisations had other ways of measuring.

By way of a supplementary question, the member said that there was no need to debate the targets as there was a national target and referred to the Tyndall Centre analysis sector by sector targets. He said that he did not see that the actions at a

regional level would meet requirements of a national 2050 target rather than a sooner one that both Norfolk and Suffolk had set. He asked for an action plan to see how carbon neutrality would be achieved. In response Chris Starkie said that it was a fair challenge and the truth was that they had not been able to do as much work on this as they would have liked to do over the last 3 to 5 months because they were dealing with the worst economic crisis since the 1930s. He referred to the challenges going forward that would be the need to create jobs and create clean growth jobs, at the same time. He accepted the point that just doing a few things was ignoring the problem and that what was needed was some significant bold action but the feeling was that it needed to have popular support from businesses or the public, as the wrong direction could be taken. The LEP's approach therefore was to work with businesses or the industries. The gas fired power station at Great Yarmouth was one of the largest emitters in the area. The production of hydrogen could offset this. The strategy to promote electric vehicles across Norfolk and Suffolk would reduce carbon emissions because in a rural community it was necessary for people to drive to get about. This was the challenge in how to square those circles whilst realising that doing a little was not enough. The member referred to the recession and said that it was also an opportunity to make the system changes to move to a fairer and cleaner society with those environmental targets in mind, to which Chris Starkie agreed.

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Covid recovery plan

The final question to the LEP was from a member referred to page 22 of the LEP report and said that he was interested the launch of the Peer to Peer programme next summer and asked how it would work and help Norwich.

Chris Starkie said that the government had awarded funding to all LEPS to develop a Peer to Peer network. The NALEP had been awarded £300,000 and was in the process of developing the network which would commence next month. (The report was out of date and government had made funding available sooner than originally anticipated.) The LEP would work with 250 businesses, divided into cohorts of eleven businesses. The objective of the scheme was for businesses to support each other through the challenges that we faced, which included decarbonisation and the green economy, Brexit and loans. The cohorts would comprise a range of businesses in terms of sector and size. The LEP was currently developing the scheme and recruiting businesses and facilitators to run the programme.

In reply to a supplementary question from the member, Chris Starkie said that some businesses had contacted the LEP and details were available on the website. Other businesses would be encouraged to participate in this scheme or if appropriate the Fit for Offshore Programme through the growth hubs. It was not a case of first come first served. There was no cost to businesses participating but they would need to spend time. The scheme would provide free advice and training, but did not provide direct funding to businesses. Members were reminded that there was a range of grant programmes available.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) thank Chris Starkie and Lisa Roberts, of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and Councillor Alan Waters for attending the meeting and answering questions on the LEP;
- (2) ask Lisa Roberts of the LEP to provide responses to questions 10, 12 - 19, 22 and 23 (as set out in the appendix);
- (3) consider the information received at this meeting, together with the responses to the outstanding questions at the next meeting of the committee, with a view to making recommendations to cabinet;
- (4) ask members to promote the LEP's Job Support Programme to residents and local businesses.

5. Report of the Scrutiny Select Committee for Short Term Lets

(Carole Jowett, revenues and benefits operations manager, and David Parkin, area development manager (inner) attended the meeting for this item.)

The chair thanked the select committee for the work they had done to produce an excellent report.

Councillor Carlo paid tribute to the other members of the select committee and the officers who had assisted them, and introduced the report. The research indicated an increase in the number of whole properties let on a short term basis in Norwich and this had fallen below the radar of the council, and its impact on neighbours and the housing supply, whether properties comply with health and safety regulations and to what extent they were a benefit or a drain on the council's finances. The council does not have any policies on short term lets because the development management plans were adopted before short term lets took off. The lack of policies was raised by a letter from a member of the public. She referred to the recommendation that a policy should be taken into consideration as part of the review of the council's development management plan and that the director of place would comment on this.

Councillor Giles referred to the report and said that the common thread was the deregulated nature of the short term lets and until the government established a licensing scheme under which short term lettings could operate, there was a reliance on planning law to set up a separate use class and nothing would change. The government appeared to be set on the deregulation of the planning system and therefore he was not hopeful that the issues set out in the report would be resolved anytime soon. There were some concrete recommendations to the city council (cabinet) which could be reflected on.

Councillor McCartney-Gray said that since the select committee had first met, the impact of Covid had put further constraints on resources identified in the report on page 78 of the agenda papers, but there were recommendations in the report that cabinet could take forward.

Discussion ensued on the recommendations to write to the Norwich MPs and the timing of this in the context of the government's consultation on the planning white

paper. The director of place explained that, as alluded to by Councillor Carlo, the council reaffirmed its intention to review its development management policies plan next year as set out in our local development scheme. The government white paper sets out to simplify the local plan process so that a single map based zonal planning system replaced the plans and policies that comprise development management plans. This would erode the ability of councils to introduce a policy as proposed by the select committee. The sustainable development panel would be considering the council's draft response to the government white paper at its meeting on 1 October and would provide an opportunity for members to consider whether the issue of short term lets was adequately addressed before it was presented to cabinet.

The chair pointed out that the recommendations would also be presented to cabinet as well as the recommendations of the sustainable development panel on the white paper and could be considered in the round. A member said that he would be interested that the local MPs' views were sought and with a consensus the recommendation was amended. It was also noted that the sustainable development panel was an advisory subcommittee to cabinet and could recommend rather than make a decision.

The area development manager (inner) said that he was concerned about the resource implications of some the recommendations going forward in terms of monitoring. The monitoring of health and safety and the suggestion that planning investigates those could not be done on its own because they did not enforce those standards. They would need to co-opt the services of other services and potentially the fire service.

The revenues and benefits operations manager said that from her service's perspective the major problem was identification and any system that could be put in place would be welcome as there was no planning policy. She explained that they only became aware of properties when the council tax premium on empty properties was removed. The property was put under business rates where it had to be available to rent out 140 days a year, but in practice there were often reasons for it not to be rented out for even one day, which was frustrating and made it difficult to administer it properly.

A member of the select committee said that the report talked about limited resources and suggested the insertion of "where city council and partner resources were available". The chair said that as the sustainable development panel was advisory to the cabinet, so was the scrutiny committee and that in making these and any recommendations the resource implications were a matter for the cabinet suggesting that the recommendations should be made as presented for consideration at cabinet on 14 October 2020.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) thank the members of the short term lets select committee; Councillors Carlo, Giles, McCartney-Gray and Oliver, and the following officers:

Emma Webster, scrutiny liaison officer
Carole Jowett, revenues and benefits operations manager
David Parkin, area development manager (inner)

Adam Clark, strategy manager.

- (2) submit the recommendations as set out in the report to cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 14 October;
- (3) ask the chair to write to both Norwich MPs with a copy of the report to seek their views on the subject;
- (4) ask the scrutiny liaison officer to draft a full response to the comments made by a member of the public to the scrutiny select committee for sign off by the select committee.

6. Scrutiny committee work programme 2020- 21

The chair proposed that the consideration of the written responses and continuation of the scrutiny of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (as agreed earlier in the meeting) be added to the work programme for the next meeting of the committee. A member suggested that this was restricted to half an hour. The chair agreed as they were essentially at the recommendation stage. The chair said that he was in discussion on the scoping of the rough sleeping item for the November meeting and hoped to share this with members at this at the next meeting. The report for the next meeting on community development had already been prepared. The corporate leadership team was taking an active interest in the work of the scrutiny committee by considering the scrutiny work programme at its weekly meetings.

During discussion two members asked about taking forward the select committees on fly tipping and antisocial behaviour. A member of the public had recommended scrutiny of these issues. The chair suggested that interested members contacted the scrutiny liaison officer.

A member asked about the other three substantive items voted through at the July meeting and asked how to progress the three topics to the one that had received the most votes, suggesting that the March meeting had capacity. The chair said that there was scope to another topic at the February meeting, as it was further scrutiny of the budget, giving capacity for two of the three meetings could be added to the work programme. The scrutiny liaison officer said that she was looking at the four items voted through at the last meeting and would make recommendations in the work programme report as to which of the four should be considered at its February meeting. The performance framework was likely to move to January rather than December. A member asked that consideration should be taken of the capacity within teams when considering the topics. The topic given the most priority by the committee might not have capacity within the relevant teams which should be taken into account.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the inclusion of New Anglia LEP on the work programme for the October meeting;

- (2) ask the scrutiny liaison officer to email members of the committee to gauge interest in serving on select committees for fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour;
- (3) ask the scrutiny liaison officer to review the topics voted on at the July meeting and make recommendations to the committee at its next meeting as to which topics to select.

7. Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update

Councillor McCartney-Gray agreed to circulate a written report on the subjects considered at the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny committee she had attended. The committee had considered the Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group, a new commissioning organisation and its recovery plan for Covid; dentistry; end of life care and the NSFT recovery plan. Councillor Oliver thanked Councillor McCartney-Gray for attending a meeting in her place at short notice due to technical problems.

(Councillor Giles said that he had not received any information on the Community Safety Partnership. The scrutiny liaison officer said that she would make enquiries and get back to him.)

RESOLVED to note.

CHAIR

APPENDIX

Questions submitted to the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership in advance of the meeting

Business theme lines of enquiry

1. Do you have an estimate of the number of businesses in the region in receipt of Government loans who will not be able to repay? What support will be available to businesses in managing debt repayments?
2. Do you have an estimate of the regional increase in unemployment following the end of the furlough scheme?
3. Can you please provide more detail on the aspiration to invest in re-skilling and will there be a particular focus on sectors which are facing greatest difficulty? Which employment sectors have been identified as having potential for economic growth and job creation?
4. What assessment has the LEP made of the impact of both Covid and Brexit on Norwich Research Park?
5. Could you detail what role, if any, the LEP is playing in the regeneration of East Norwich?
6. What sustainability assessments did the LEP conduct before deciding to award £1m to the Honingham food enterprise park?
7. What is the benefit to local people from Enterprise Zones?

Covid recovery and social equality lines of enquiry

8. The LEP covid recovery plan talks about “Working with DWP, Job Centre plus and professional services to ensure employers and employees are aware of and have access to available support programmes at the earliest point”. That “earliest point” is usually Universal Credit, which means a 5-week wait for many without any access to support. What is being done to work with employers to prevent people being made destitute for that time? And how are people accessing that support?
9. There seems to be a great focus on creating jobs as a general strategy for growth in the region, for example through the Town Deal bid and through the LEP’s economic strategy. What is being done to ensure that the effects of job creation are beneficial for social mobility?

The environment lines of enquiry

10. What impact do you think Covid will have on the timescale for achieving a net-zero carbon economy?
11. Is it the intention of the Clean Growth Taskforce to set a target for carbon neutrality and what plans are there to engage civil society, unions, and the public in the development and delivery of the Clean Growth Taskforce?
12. What practical contributions have the LEP made to reducing global carbon emissions and to reversing biodiversity loss (actual measures implemented rather than a list of strategies/ policies)?
13. In what ways has the LEP contributed to increases in carbon emissions and biodiversity loss through its policies/programmes/funding and what are the measurable impacts of LEP’s policies/programmes/funding on carbon and biodiversity?
14. To what extent do the LEP policies/programmes/funding have an overall net benefit on reducing carbon and increasing biodiversity or a net disbenefit?

15. The LEP's Clean Growth Action Plan (Feb 2020) reported an increase in transport's share of CO2 emissions in the region from 29% in 2005 to 38% today. At the same time the Clean Growth Action Plan proposes business as usual, ('On-going work on the road network to reduce congestion/improve air quality'). The LEP Green Recovery Plan states that it will deliver the existing portfolio of infrastructure priorities to support the local construction sector. This would further increase transport's share of carbon emissions and entrench car use. The trend for more flexible working patterns and greater home working underlines a need to switch money from road building to broadband and digital. Will LEP re-evaluate its whole approach to transport infrastructure, travel and development?
16. A [January 2020 report](#) on decarbonisation for the East of England found that in order to meet targets of being carbon-neutral by 2030, approximately 1.3 million homes in the region would need to have their energy efficiency upgraded to the highest standard, beginning with 156,000 homes insulated in 2020. In addition, 1.5 million homes would need to have air- or ground-source heat pumps installed to transition away from fossil fuels. What is the LEP doing to meet that requirement?

17. The Local Energy East (LEE) Strategy, which does not have any target for carbon neutrality and was adopted before targets were set by national and local governments, supports the potential for new gas extraction. The LEP's Economic Strategy includes a commitment to supporting the Bacton Gas Terminal until 2048. Do you agree that continued expansion of and long-term support for gas is incompatible with carbon neutrality targets and will the energy strategy and economic strategy be revised to take account of that?
18. The LEE Strategy also references the Government ambition to transform DNOs into DSOs by 2030. Given the potential of decentralising the grid in supporting decarbonisation and local renewable energy production and the necessity of doing so in order to meet the requirements for increased electrification of transport, are there plans to accelerate the decentralisation of the energy system? If so, how will community energy groups be included in the process?
19. Recently a project has been launched to get landowners to devote at least 20% of their land to nature, in order to halt and reverse species extinction. Is this something the LEP supports?

Accountability theme lines of questioning

20. Question to Councillor Waters – as a member of the LEP Board, how do you ensure accountability to the public for your role on the board and how do you gather the views of members on Norwich City Council for helping to shape NALEP policy/programmes/funding and reporting back?
21. What monitoring of its policies/programmes/funding does NALEP carry out, with a view to understanding their impact on sustainable development?

Voluntary sector engagement lines of enquiry

22. Given the changes likely to working patterns, have unions been consulted on the LEP's Covid recovery plan, 2020-21 Delivery Plan, and Economic Strategy?
23. Page 8 of the Covid recovery document highlights the impacts on mental health and wellbeing, and talks of the role of the voluntary, community and

social enterprise organisations in supporting workplace wellbeing. Will funding for VCSE organisations be available to support this work? Will there also be support for those who are no longer working and for young people?