

Sustainable development panel**09:30 to 11:00****24 February 2016**

Present: Councillors Bremner (chair), Herries (vice chair), Bogelein (from item 3 below), Grahame, Jackson, Lubbock, Thomas (Va) and Woollard

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2016.

3. One Planet Norwich Festival 2016

(Councillor Bogelein joined the meeting during this item.)

The environmental communications coordinator presented the report and, together with the environmental strategy manager, referred to the report and answered members' questions. The panel was advised that additional information about the event was available on the council's website.

During discussion the role of councillors at the event was considered. Members made suggestions on how councillors could be involved, such as handing out surveys and signposting visitors to the various activities. A member said that he would be attending the event and that it was not his intention to use the event as a political platform but that it was an opportunity for councillors to be seen promoting the objectives of the festival. It was noted that members had asked for more involvement after last year's event. The environmental strategy manager undertook to obtain clarification on the role of councillors in council organised events and the chair noted the comments made by members, but said that the arrangements were too far advanced to be altered at this stage.

The environmental strategy manager advised the panel of the list of councillors who had been invited to attend the Norwich and Norfolk Eco Awards ceremony. The county council would be represented this year by the councillors who were both city and county councillors.

Discussion ensued in which the environmental communications coordinator explained the arrangements for the fashion jam. The environmental strategy manager said that it had not been practical to hold the fashion show in The Forum on the Sunday because the catwalk would be a large structure which would impede the other activities. Also there were benefits in holding the fashion show at Norwich

Castle, as the organisers worked at the museum and it pushed out the message of recycling out to a different audience.

Members joined with the chair in congratulating the environmental communications coordinator for the idea of linking the festival with Norwich Fashion Week.

RESOLVED to note the report.

4. Local Development Scheme 2016-17

The planning team leader (policy) gave a detailed presentation of the report and together with the head of planning services and the planner (policy) answered members' questions.

During discussion the panel commented on working with other councils to produce the Greater Norwich Local Plan, which would replace the Joint Core Strategy and would go forward to 2036, and the Norfolk Strategic Framework. Members noted that the benefit of working with other councils was that it would reduce the cost of producing evidence. Members expressed concern that there could be dissent between councils across the county but noted that local authorities had a duty to co-operate.

Discussion ensued on the statutory requirement for registers of brownfield sites and self-build and custom build housing register. The government had yet to provide further guidance, but local planning authorities would need to demonstrate that land had been allocated to meet the demand for self/custom build. Members expressed concern that the government would require councils to reallocate sites currently allocated for council housing. The panel noted that there was greater demand for self or custom build in rural areas. The panel would be updated on the progress of these work streams.

The panel noted that the as government reduced the powers of local planning authorities it was necessary to strengthen other powers. The city centre strategy sought to protect the city's retail position against outer town developments.

Members also commented on the expiry of the Northern City Centre Area action plan at the end of the month. The panel noted that the recession had prevented the redevelopment of Anglia Square and sought clarification on the affect that the expiry of the action plan would have on the five year housing land supply. Members were advised that sites could be brought forward that had existing planning consent and that the brownfield register would be the best approach to incorporate sites which would no longer have an allocation.

Discussion ensued on the government definition of affordable housing and the issue of starter homes. Assurance was given to the panel that it would be consulted as appropriate and that further clarification on the government's proposals could be provided to members outside the meeting.

RESOLVED to agree the Local Development Scheme and recommend that cabinet approves it for publication under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by Section 111 of the Localism Act, 2011).

5. River Wensum Strategy update

(Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for resources and income generation, and chair of the River Wensum Strategy Partnership board, attended the meeting for this item.)

The planning policy team leader (projects) presented the report answered members' questions.

Councillor Stonard praised the work of the officers in producing the draft strategy.

During discussion the panel noted the governance arrangements for the project board and project team. A database of stakeholders for wider consultation had been compiled last year and members were welcome to look at it and suggest the inclusion of organisations that they considered appropriate. A member pointed out that the Friends of Train Wood had not been informed of the outcome of the consultation. The panel noted that the consultation document was in the public domain and that some individual groups would be contacted as appropriate when detailed plans came forward for specific projects.

Discussion ensued on activities that could be promoted to encourage river use. The panel considered the popularity of outdoor swimming and whether there were parts of the river where it would be safe and practical to do so. The river was treacherous and a life guard would need to be available if swimming was to be promoted. Members also suggested events to provide funding for projects.

Members considered that there could be potential for hydro-power electricity generation at New Mills.

RESOLVED note the progress of the River Wensum Strategy.

CHAIR