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BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

GREATER THETFORD DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Held on Monday, 9 April 2018 at 10.00 am in
The Charles Burrell Centre, Staniforth Road, Thetford IP24 3LH

PRESENT

Mr S. H. Chapman-Allen
(Chairman) (SCA)
Mr T. J. Jermy (TJ)
Mr A. M. Poulter (TP)

Mr R. F. W. Brame (RB)
Mr I. Andrew (substitute member) (IA)
Mr R Whittaker (RWh)

In Attendance

Rob Walker (RW)
Richard Doleman (RD)

Roberta Willner (R Willner)
Leanne Neave

- Executive Director Place
- Development and Planning Transport Team Leader. Chairman of Officer Group
- Inward Investment Officer
- Democratic Services Officer

Action By

19/18 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Robert King, Tina Cunnell, Jan Munn and Robert Campbell.

20/18 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2018 were agreed as a correct record subject to;

- a) Comments referred to in the minutes by BK should be RK (Robert King)
- b) Robert Whittaker was inadvertently omitted from being in attendance
- c) Tina Cunnell be referred to as TC and not DC
- d) Under minute number 5/18 RWh asked that his objection to writing in support of the Heritage Fund as he didn't think it was appropriate was noted.

Actions from previous meeting.

- a) Thetford Transport Network Improvement Strategy – Minute Number 3/18.
 - i. RWh advised the action included in the minutes had been completed.

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b) Educational Standards – Minute Number 4/18

- i. it was confirmed the briefing note had been received by Members of the group.
- ii. RD gave an update on the action for Officers included in the minutes. A Partnership Officer had been allocated and would be meeting schools. An outline timescale would be agreed in the summer term and brought back to the Board in the Autumn.
- iii. RD gave an update on the action for JM included in the minutes regarding the withdrawal of the local bus service. JM had spoken with passenger transport colleagues who advised the bus was still in service and no proposal had been made to cancel this service.
RWh suggested this should be followed up as there was some discrepancy in fact, NCC advised the service remained but report from Councillor Hollis stated it had been withdrawn.

ACTION: County Councillors to follow up and give verbal update at the next meeting.

RB/TJ

- iv. RW confirmed the Heritage Lottery bid could be viewed by the Sub- group but not publically. RWh advised the Sub-group had some feedback and considering the number of concerns the Sub-group had he did not feel the Board should support the bid in its current state but if amendments were made he would support it.

The Chairman confirmed the Town Councillors were in support

TJ stated he was concerned the process was being rushed and Councillors and Community groups were not being communicated with. Heritage Lottery would notice this and the communities should be in support of it.

ACTION: TJ take the matter back to the Town Council.

TJ

RW advised the timescale was earlier than first thought and he had noted points of feedback and would pick up community engagement points.

c) Little Ouse Waterspace Study – Minute number 6/18

- i. RWh confirmed TC had given a presentation to the Sub-group.

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- ii. The open letter had been written in support of the Little Ouse and received by the Town Council.
- iii. An invitation to attend a Board meeting to Highways England had been sent.

d) Improvements to Thetford Railway Station

- i. The report was on Page 13. As no comments had been received it was taken that all members were happy with it. A letter had been sent to Greater Anglia.

e) Governance

- i. Officers Group – The Terms of Reference was an agenda item moving forward.
- ii. Sub-Group – RWh said the minutes were not clear as to the make up of the Sub-group. It was confirmed the members were the Board's Chairman and representatives from Thetford Town Council, Brettenham and Kilverstone Parish Council and Croxton Parish Council.

f) LEP Representation

- i. It was confirmed that LEP had been asked for a member to sit on the Officer Group and the Board.

g) Communities Sub Group

- i. RWH confirmed a letter had been sent to East Midlands Trains. He queried if the actions could be published on the GTDP website to show people the group was engaged and taking action. RW advised it wasn't best practice but the theme of the letter could be uploaded. RWh suggested not all letters should be published but felt the initial letter sent should be.

ACTION : The Chairman advised he would investigate what could be published.

SCA

21/18 COMMUNITIES SUB-GROUP UPDATE

RWh presented the report from the Community Sub-Group.

Public Concerns

Recycling Centres - The Sub-group had concerns regarding the new charges for disposing of DIY waste at Recycling centres and requested the Board consider writing formally to Breckland and Norfolk County Council to express the public's concern.

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RW confirmed the new policy at Recycling Centres was a concern shared by Breckland and this matter would be dealt with through discussions with Norfolk County Council colleagues.

The Chairman confirmed the Board would not write to Norfolk County Council but would ask County Councillors to look into waste matters.

TJ queried if the sub-group asked why the board had decided not to send letter what reason would be given.

The Chairman advised it was the Boards role to raise a concern.

The Breckland portfolio concerned had a representative on the Board so was best placed to answer.

Change of use Planning Application - The Sub-group reported the public's uneasiness at the change of use application for three empty units near to the Cinema, a change of use application had been submitted to transform the units into a gym. The Sub-group had agreed to write to Breckland Council with a list of specific questions about this matter.

RW was in disagreement regarding the Sub-group writing to Breckland Council. His understanding was the Board members were given an opportunity to deal with a matter and District and County Councillors were representatives on the Board and should be given an opportunity to answer/action first from the Sub-group before the Sub-group write directly to the Organisation.

RB shared the understanding. He questioned if the Sub-group took action on the issues on their own then what was the purpose of the Board. He agreed the cinema ideas had changed but looking broadly at the gym proposal it would create footfall, bring in revenue, three units would be let and the facility would provide the community with exercise and getting people into town and he struggled to see the objection to the application.

RWh confirmed the Sub-group did not object to the application, they had some questions to gain more information on the application that they would like answered.

RW suggested the questions came to him and the Chairman and they get answers and report back to the group.

Action: RW and SCA to be sent list of Sub-groups questions and report back to the Board with answers.

RW/SCA

Potholes - There was some public concern regarding repairs to potholes in the town being of a poor standard.

TJ requested the sub-group encourage the public to copy in their County Councillor to any highways correspondence. The report it function online was the correct route for the public to use however if it was an unsatisfactory service the County Councillors needed to know about it.

Action: TJ to give RWh direct contact details.

TJ

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Communication

It was confirmed the Communication paper would be brought to the next Board meeting.

Cycling and Walking routes report

Board members and the public were encouraged to give feedback on the report available at <http://www.gtdp.org.uk/cycling-walking> a meeting was to be arranged with David Cumming from NCC Highways to discuss available resources.

The Chairman looked forward to an update from the sub-group following the meeting with David.

22/18 CEMETERY PROVISION

TP advised a plot for cemetery provision had been identified. There was now a need to decide how that site would be managed. An outline suggestion was for it to be managed by a company to do burials. The provision did not sit within a section 106 so would have to be managed by a commercial enterprise or by one of the Councils.

RB asked if this could be pursued further. He felt it should be an ongoing agenda item that looked at the management of the site. The Chairman confirmed Councillor Poulter was comfortable with the position currently at which the allocated land TP confirmed he was.

Action: The Board requested TP take this item further and report back with more information regarding the management of the site when it became available to him.

TP

23/18 MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Roberta Willner, Inward investment officer at Norfolk County Council presented the report.

TP believed more could be made of National connectivity of Thetford. Not only to Stansted airport and Birmingham but to the growing port at Yarmouth and connectivity with Felixstowe. RWillner advised proximity to ports, airports and rail links would need a visual aid. A digital advert would best show those connectivity links.

RWh thought the report was positive. He asked what discussions had been held with Thetford Business Forum and Tourist Information.

RWillner advised those discussions would follow. The initial objective was to present a proposal to the board.

RWh highlighted affordable housing as an issue, if Thetford was to

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be actively promoted as a place to live affordable houses had to be available.

RWillner agreed and advised using digital marketing a lot of data was available so the campaign would be targeted to different demographics.

TJ thought the house pricing was interesting, he said there were two halves to Thetford, a four bed house could be purchased for approximately £105,000 on the Abbey Estate but the other side of Thetford house prices were not as affordable. He was therefore nervous about quoting average prices and would not want to pin the campaign on house prices as they changed frequently. He advised he had spent a lot of time talking to people about why they moved to Thetford. People gave history and environment as the two main factors. Connectivity links could be shown from many different towns across East Anglia, so he would want the campaign focus to be on the history and environment of Thetford. Many groups champion Thetford and he hoped the campaign would work with these groups to promote positives. The proposal highlighted Tourism and as a Board he believed they needed to support funding for tourism.

RB believed this was one of the better pieces of work presented to the Board and hoped they would support it. He advised that as the next Mayor of Thetford he was holding a reception and had requested local companies to attend to display their work. The whole event would promote the town. He requested contact details of other businesses to invite.

Action: R Willner to send contact details to RB.

R Willner

A member of the public advised of a campaign at the Business forum "attract, train and retain". He stated they had started to attract individuals and had a great reputation for training but the retaining was based on houses. The report mentioned Thetford was a feeder town for other main economic centres, Bury St Edmunds, Cambridge and Norwich and people could take advantage of low cost housing in Thetford. He did not wish to encourage Thetford as a dormitory town.

RWillner explained the marketing strategy was two-fold. One side was trying to attract high earners, there was a large business base in Thetford but not on the same scale as Bury St Edmunds, Cambridge and Norwich. For Thetford if the aim was to fill 5000 homes you would aim to attract people to live there and commute to work elsewhere and attract people to live and work in Thetford but to attract higher skilled people there would have to be a significant pool of job opportunities in the area.

RB believed there was a great opportunity in the land surrounding Thetford. He suggested that by building factories on this land would attract people to live and work in Thetford. He gave the example of Cambridge, a factory there would attract workers however as house prices were so high 3000 new factory workers could not afford to live there. If factories were built local to Thetford with affordable housing in close proximity there was the

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opportunity to offer Thetford as the place to live, work and play. RWillner agreed these were fantastic points, looking at the connectivity in Thetford, it could be the ideal low cost base.

The Chairman thanked Roberta for the paper, it showed true partnership working by recommending the Board take the lead.

The two recommendations were taken en-bloc and agreed.

24/18 FORWARD PLAN AND WORKSHOP

Richard Doleman Chairman of Officer Group presented the report.

RB supported this piece of work. A forward plan was the best way to connect all projects. He felt having a workshop was a brilliant idea as it would determine a destination for the Board and direction to move forward in the correct way.

RWh did not see the need for the workshop to be private and was concerned if it replaced the next Board meeting. He suggested the next meeting was held as normal with the workshop following it.

TJ advised he always supported a forward plan process. As this was his final meeting he would not be at the workshop but he encouraged members to look at communication and engagement, there was a need to look at how the Board and Sub-group promoted the work they did and it was important marketing and communication was done correctly.

TP believed a plan was absolutely essential and a separate workshop to develop it was the right way forward. He agreed with Roberts point about meeting dates and the workshop should be in addition to and not replace the next meeting.

The Chairman confirmed a forward plan set the beat and instructed Officers. One of the pieces discussed was a delivery plan but there was no real delivery plan for Thetford however at end of 2018-2019 there could be which the Board could pull together at the end of the calendar year.

He thanked Terry for the suggested items to look at in the workshop and added cemetery and utilities to them in addition to the other items already programmed to come before the Board

The recommendations on page 31 of the Agenda were taken en-bloc and agreed.

RWh advised that Rob Walker had advised previously that the communication paper would be brought to next Board meeting. RW confirmed it was a subject to consider, it could be picked up as part of the workshop discussion and brought to Septembers meeting.

Action By

25/18 GOVERNANCE

(a) Terms of reference for the new GTDP Officer Group

Officer Terms of Reference.

Following a discussion at the previous Board meeting it was agreed the revised Officer group should look at the Terms of Reference. Taking on Board comments made at the last meeting regarding the themes of what the Terms of Reference should be the group had prepared a new Terms of Reference.

The Planning and Projects Sub-group and the Inward Investment Sub-group had merged into one and had a small group of Officers who looked at and identified areas for the Board, if an area was outside the skill set of the group experts would be invited in and would report to the Board.

Appendix one of the Agenda detailed the revised Terms of Reference. There was a recommendation that the Board agree them.

TP advised if the Board were working towards a forward plan he felt the Board needed to own the plan and the Officer group would support it.

RWh believed it would be nice to have clarity on who the members of the group were. Either as part of the Terms of Reference or on the website, he stated not necessarily names of Officers but the job titles of those on the group.

RW advised against this as when Officers changed the Terms of Reference would have to be amended. The details of the Chairman and their contact details would be on the website. RWh said he would like to see more than just the Chairman on the website.

The Chairman stated he was solely interested in knowing that the representative was doing what they could and should be doing on the group.

RWh stated that unlike Board members, members of public were not aware of individual Officers and contact details for them. The Chairman explained that there was the expectation that members of the public would not lobby individual members of the Officer group and they should approach Members of the Board.

RB believed that providing the general public knew there was a representative from the Town Council, the County Council and the District Council on the GTDP Board the public should contact them and not the Officers who were there to work on our behalf.

RWh stated that Board members contact details were not on the website.

TP queried if the Officer group brought in a specialist how would that effect the make up of the group.

RW confirmed that at the discretion of the Chairman an expert

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from that area would be called in to do the work and move onto next item. He felt it was no coincidence that since the Officer group had been meeting the agenda items for the Board had improved.

He advised Richard Doleman should be highlighted as Chairman for the Officer Group and was the point of contact.

The recommendation was agreed by the Board.

(b) Recruitment of Independent community Sub-Group members

Rob Walker presented the report on behalf of Robert Campbell.

TJ queried section two. He said there was no detail in the report as why that decision was made. He questioned the benefits of changing it as one thing discussed when the Sub-group was created was for ordinary members of the community who didn't already have an avenue to lobby could apply to join the Sub-group.

RW explained the aim was to get a balance. Initially it was for enthusiastic motivated members of the community that were not already associated with another group. For the Officer group there was a benefit to having people that are connected within the town. Individuals were still welcome to apply but as a collective they may benefit more by having someone that was already connected to community groups.

TJ understood the aim however he believed the group was in danger of going too far the other way and only have people that are already involved in a community group. With a selection panel in place he could not understand the rationale for restricting applications. He suggested the advert be worded "preferred candidates are likely to be actively involved in existing community work within Greater Thetford" and not as currently proposed.

RW confirmed he was happy with the amendment of "group" to "work".

RWh suggested deleting the amended line altogether as he believed it would put people off who were not part of community group.

The Chairman echoed the proposal from TJ to change the wording which was agreed by the Board.

RWh advised he had several issues with the report. He felt it rather odd that the Sub-group were not consulted with regarding the advert. He also felt the advert itself needed improving. He stated it gave applicants little idea of what the role involved, there was no link to the website to show applicants the work of the Sub-group, there was no information regarding the selection process, no mention that a meeting would be held during the selection process timeframe that candidates might wish to

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attend. He agreed with Terry that the balance should not swing the other way and therefore believed that line should be removed from the advert. He also stated it would be useful for the Sub-group to have sight of the application form before the advert was published.

RW confirmed he was more than happy to share the application form. The advert was aimed to be short and more information would be given within the application pack. He agreed with Terry's proposal to change the word "group" to "work". He confirmed the Sub-group had been approached several times to address recruitment but the Sub-group did not forward a proposal the Board was happy with and subsequently the Officer group were asked to do it.

RWh advised the matter was discussed at the Sub-group and he had written a report to the Board, this report was not discussed at the Board meeting and at the following meeting the Officer group brought a paper which the Sub-group wasn't given a prior opportunity to discuss, the Board discussed the Officer group proposal and agreed how to proceed. There had been no instruction from the Board for either the Sub-group or the Officer group to produce paper.

The Chairman was frustrated that the Board spent a great deal of meeting time discussing the governance of the Sub-group and the Board. He pointed out that this was Terry Jermy's last meeting as a representative and by the next meeting neither himself nor Roy Brame may be present as District and County representative. Through the previous six months the Board had been in a state of flux about regarding the governance of the Board and Sub-group are whether both were fit for purpose. The Officer suggestions made he believed were sound and maybe in 2019 the Board and Sub-group would be assessed again to ensure they were still fit for purpose.

Action: RW to speak to RWh regarding application form and selection process. RW

RB suggested the advert be sent to all Chairman of Resident groups for them to publish on their website so the relevant people can see the advert through the relevant group they belong to.

RW agreed with this suggestion.

RWh suggested the advert should also appear in the About Thetford magazine.

SCA confirmed the Board were happy that he as Chairman and the 3 representatives from the Sub-group work on the advert and selection process.

The Board were happy with that proposal.

Action By

26/18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

RWh thought that "Communication Strategy" should be an agenda item going forward.

It was noted that the website was not currently up to date.

Action: RW and RD to amend the website.

RW/RD

The Director of Public Health was scheduled to come to this meeting but now just appeared on the forward plan. The Chairman advised the forward plan showed people scheduled to come to Board meetings and formed part of the agenda.

RWh queried the Project Officer position, there had been some discussion and the Town Council or County Council were going to be looked at by the officer group regarding funding. RW advised there was no financial commitment coming forward but commitment had been given to the Officer group.

RWh believed the Community Governance Review was something the Board should at least take note of. The Chairman advised that as Breckland District Council representative he would request the relevant Officer to forward details of their last meeting to the Board.

The Chairman highlighted page 14 of the agenda for Member to note regarding the railway station car park, there was an updated note from the Town Council as to the work they are continuing with.

The Chairman gave a vote of thanks to Terry Jermy as this was his last meeting as Town Council representative. He had worked tirelessly for 8 years. On behalf of the Board and Chairman thank you very much.

27/18 SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS AND REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Agreed Actions

- Look at a coherent marketing and promotion campaign
- The Board will hold a workshop to develop a forward plan
- Agreed Terms of Reference for Officer group (governance and process)
- Land allocation for cemetery, moving forward gain more information as to what it looks like and how it will be managed
- Advert for recruitment of Independent Community Sub-Group members

TP queried when health would be on the Agenda. The Chairman confirmed this would be on the Forward Plan

for September.

28/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Democratic Services to look to book the next meeting for June with a workshop to be held on the same day. It was noted that Full Council at Norfolk County Council was also held on a Monday.

Action By

The meeting closed at 12:00

CHAIRMAN



Board Meeting held on Monday 9th April 2018

Highlight Report

- Options for location of a new cemetery were presented. It was agreed that further work is done to look at the merits of the sites.
- Partners will work together to develop a Marketing and Promotion campaign with an emphasis on attracting skilled workers and talent.
- A forward plan of work to be developed with board members prior to the next board meeting.
- A health representative to be invited to the next meeting.
- Recruitment for community sub group members to be advertised.