



thegreatert hetford development partnership

AGENDA

- Committee - **GREATER THETFORD
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP
COMMUNITY SUB-GROUP**
- Date & Time - **WEDNESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2019
AT 7.00 PM**
- Venue - **GUILDHALL COUNCIL CHAMBER,
MARKET PLACE, THETFORD**

	<u>Page(s) herewith</u>
1. <u>AGENDA</u>	3
2. <u>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</u>	4 - 7
3. <u>CHAIRMANS NOTES</u>	8 - 9
4. <u>SUE / TEP UPDATE</u>	10



GTDP Community Sub-Group Meeting

Wednesday 20th March 2019, 7–9pm,
Guildhall Council Chamber, Market Place, Thetford

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions

Including the new Independent Community Members of the Sub-Group, who have been selected following the recruitment process last year.

2. Approval of Minutes

Approval of the minutes from the previous Sub-Group meeting of 16th January 2019.

3. Announcements & Matters Arising

Announcements from the Chair; Matters arising from the minutes not covered in another item.

4. Election of new Sub-Group Chair and Vice-Chair

Recruitment of Independent Members to fill the two vacancies on the Sub-Group

5. Sustainable Urban Expansion, Thetford Enterprise Park, and Waterspace Updates

See separate paper for details.

6. Public Questions

Up to 15 minutes for questions and comments from members of the public.

7. Items to Note

Other items of public interest, which there will not necessarily be time to discuss at this meeting.

- (a) Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk Waste Partnership are running a SCRAP Fly-Tipping campaign to help reduce instances in the county. For details see <https://www.norfolkrecycles.com/fly-tipping-report/scrapflytipping/>.
- (b) Breckland District Council is consulting on changes that the Planning Inspector has asked for in its draft Local Plan. For details see <https://breckland.gov.uk/article/2956/Consultation>.
- (c) The Thetford & Brandon Times recently ran a survey of Thetford residents, with some interesting findings about people's views. The results are presented across three articles in the paper: <https://bit.ly/2XI0k9P>, <https://bit.ly/2XMqDvw>, and <https://bit.ly/2TqX3gv>.

8. Any Other Business

9. Meeting Summary

Members of the public are encouraged to attend and participate at the meeting. In addition to the time for public questions, members of the public have the opportunity to contribute during the remainder of the meeting at the invitation of the Chair. Further details and meeting papers are available online at <http://www.gtdp.org.uk/community-subgroup>. Minutes and papers are also available at the Town Council Offices in King's House and at Leaping Hare on King Street.

Minutes of The Greater Thetford Development Partnership Community Sub-Group Meeting

Held at Guildhall Council Chamber, Market Place, Thetford
on Wednesday 16th January 2019 , 7pm to 9pm

Chair: Mr Robert Whittaker

Minutes: Clare Higson

Sub-Group Members present: Mr Robert Whittaker (Independent Community Member),
Cllr Brenda Canham (Thetford Town Council), Cllr Doug Stephen (Croxton Parish Council).

Apologies: Cllr Rae Herries (Brettenham & Kilverstone Parish Council).

There were 7 members of the public present.

1. Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st November 2018 were approved, with no changes to the draft.

3. Announcements and Matters Arising

Railway Station Parking

Officers from Breckland District Council and Thetford Town Council were still looking at the possibility of finding alternative allotment space elsewhere in Thetford, so that some of the current allotment land near the station could be used for additional parking.

Cost of tickets bought on the train rather than at the station

The Board had now had a response from East Midlands Trains. They said that because their franchise was ending shortly, they were not prepared to look at the matter further at present. This was disappointing, but it was not clear what else we could do. It was agreed that the Sub-Group would ask the Board to write to the Secretary of State for Transport regarding the rules when ticketing facilities are available at a station but not fully accessible, and also to write to Greater Anglia (the Station franchise holder) to ask if a second ticket machine could be added on the northern platform.

Health Care Provision

The meeting heard anecdotal evidence that the GP practices in Thetford were struggling to see patients in a timely manner. It was not clear who had overall responsibility for GP provision. The Sub-Group agreed to ask the GTDP Board to write to the individual Practices asking about how they are coping and what, if anything, they need to improve their services.

Bus provision for Kingsfleet and and the bus route through the Joe Blunt's Lane underpass

Breckland's planning department have yet to respond to the Chair's enquires, but Cllr Chapman-Allen said the matters were still being investigated. Since there could be legal ramifications, he said it was important that any response was accurate. The meeting noted the media coverage in Thetford and Brandon Times: "Use of muddy railway underpass as bus route for 5,000 homes slammed by residents" (<https://bit.ly/2sByvBy>).

Cycling and Walking Report

A meeting between the Chair (who wrote the report) and Norfolk County Council officers to discuss the proposals in the report had yet to be arranged. Cllr Chapman-Allen reported that it was with Norfolk County Council to arrange. The Sub-Group provisionally agreed that Robert Whittaker could take on the consultation responsibility on this issue on behalf of the Sub-Group, even if he ceased to be a member of the Sub-Group.

Grazing of Ford Meadow

The eight Water Buffalo heifers have been moved to the larger pen on Ford Meadow following their escape from the smaller one. The public are now prevented from walking through the penned in areas.

4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair, and filling Vacancies

The interview process for the new independent members had been concluded, and the two candidates had been offered positions on the Sub-Group. As they had had little notice, and only two of the four places had been filled, it was decided to postpone the election of the Chair to the next meeting. Mr

Whittaker agreed to continue as Chair for this meeting and to make the arrangement for the next meeting.

After much discussion, the Sub-Group decided to try to recruit people to fill the two vacant independent member positions before the next Sub-Group meeting in two month's time. The GTDP Board Chair (who was present at the meeting) agreed to the plan, and would look at placing an advert in About Thetford magazine.

There was also some discussion of the Sub-Group's role, including how better to engage with the public and how to increase attendance at the Sub-Group's meetings. It was agreed to approach the Residents' Associations to encourage them to send representatives along. It was suggested that changing the Sub-Group's name to something more accessible and meaningful might also help. The meeting thought it would be useful to discuss these issues with the GTD Partnership Board.

5. SUE, TEP and Waterspace Updates

The meeting noted the various updates in the paper for this item, but there was no further discussion.

6. Public Questions

A member of the public asked about the traffic management study and whether this was part of Breckland's Market Towns Initiative. It was clarified that the traffic study, formally known as the "Network Improvement Strategy" was a different project by Norfolk County Council. This is looking and traffic flows (including motor vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists) within a number of Market Towns in the county, including Thetford. The study in Thetford had been ongoing for around a year, and the report is expected in the first quarter of 2019. More details can be found in the update paper from the November Board Meeting: <https://bit.ly/2DnRKF2>.

7. Items to Note

The meeting noted the two items included on the agenda, and two other items:

- The Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner is consulting on whether or not to raise the Police part of the Council Tax precept in order to prevent cuts to services, or adopt an even greater increase to allow additional investment. Details at <https://bit.ly/2FixxBG> ; deadline for responses 30th January 2019.
- The Shadwell Estate Company is re-submitting a previously refused planning application for around 100 new houses on land east of Arlington Way (reference 3PL/2017/0578/O). View and comment online at <https://bit.ly/2Rhemj8>.
- The local referendum on the Joint Neighbourhood Plan for the parishes of Croxton, Brettenham and Kilverstone had recently taken place. Residents had voted in favour of the Plan being adopted. The formal decision will be taken by Breckland Council at an upcoming meeting. For more details see <https://bit.ly/2DnR1nh>.
- Breckland Council will be hosting a “Prospective Councillors' Evening” on Tuesday 12th February for those interested in becoming a local councillor. Further details can be found at <https://bit.ly/2W8aZKe>.

8. Any Other Business

The question of expenses incurred by Sub-Group members when printing copies of the meeting papers for the public was raised. The GTDP Board Chair thought that it should be possible for one of the councils to arrange something here.

The next meeting is scheduled for the Wednesday 20th March 2019 (being the third Wednesday of the month).

Item 3: Chairman's Notes

Robert Whittaker

GTDP Community Sub-Group Meeting, 20th March 2019

1 GTDP Board Meetings

Since the previous Sub-Group meeting on 16th January 2019, the GTDP Board will have met once on the 20th March (the same day as this Sub-Group meeting). The agenda and papers for the meeting were not available at time of writing, but should appear shortly on the website at <https://bit.ly/2EZiUmq>.

2 Answers and Updates to Public Questions and Concerns

Various issues have been raised by the public at previous Sub-Group meetings, and we have attempted to investigate and provide updates.

Railway Station Access Issues and Parking. Various issues with the station have been raised at different Community Sub-Group meetings, including the poor accessibility of the footbridge and the lack of car parking. The Board wrote to Greater Anglia back in March, but have yet to make any significant progress with them.

No further updates have been received since the last Sub-Group meeting.

Cost of Purchasing Train Tickets on the Train. At the November 2017 Sub-Group meeting, an issue was raised about passengers being charged more when buying tickets on the train compared with buying them at the station. In almost all cases, this shouldn't happen. The main exception is those travelling with East Midlands Trains, who do not give railcard discounts on the train if ticketing facilities are available at the station.

The Board wrote to East Midlands Trains about this issue in April, and have got some initial positive engagement from the company. It was reported by Sam Chapman-Allen at the January 2019 Sub-Group meeting that East Midlands Trains had now said they were not prepared to examine their ticketing policies at the moment as their current franchise would be coming to an end shortly (August 2019). The Sub-Group agreed to ask the Board to consider raising the matter with the Secretary of State for Transport. In particular, to ask that the rules about not giving railcard discounts on trains should only be applied when there are ticketing facilities at the station that have accessible access from the Boarding platform.

Health-Care Provision Concern had been expressed at various Community Sub-Group meetings about the lack of planning for expanded health-care provision for the new SUE residents. Further discussion of this matter took place at the January 2019 Sub-Group meeting. It was agreed to ask the Board to approach the GP practices in the town to enquire about the current provision and what facilities and resources they might need to improve services for patients.

Bus Provision for Kingsfleet (SUE) A member of the public raised a query about Bus provision for the new houses in the SUE at Sub-Group's May 2018 meeting, and this came up again as a correction to the draft minutes at the September 2018 meeting. As result I looked into the planning policies and provisions currently being made. It appears that Breckland's own planning policy (TAAP TH26) requires bus services to operate from

the first day of occupation of the SUE, but Breckland has not enforced this policy on the developer. There is also a question over whether the intended use of the Joe Blunt's Lane underpass for buses is consistent with another planning policy (TAAP TH11).

I asked Breckland's planning department to confirm and explain these apparent discrepancies (on 10th October and 5th November 2018), but received no response. I raised the issue at the GTDP Board Meeting on 27th November 2018, where Rob Walker (Breckland Executive Director of Place) promised to take up the matter. I asked for an update from Sam Chapman-Allen and Rob Walker before our January 2019 meeting, but none was forthcoming. However, Sam Chapman-Allen was present at that meeting and said that for legal reasons the Council was still considering its response. At time of writing I have still not received a response to the queries.

Pedestrian Access to and from Kingsfleet At the November 2018 Sub-Group meeting, a member of the public raised the issue that there appeared to be no hard-surfaced footpaths being provided to link the first phase of new houses in the Kingsfleet development to the rest of the town. This will cause difficulties for those with mobility problems. I raised the matter at the November 2018 Board meeting, and was told that officers were already aware of the issue and were looking in to what could be done. As above, no update was forthcoming for the January 2019 meeting, and I have still not had a response on this matter.

3 Community Sub-Group Cycling and Walking Report

The Sub Group's Cycling and Walking report got a positive response from the Board at its meeting in June 2018. The full report is available online at <http://www.gtdp.org.uk/cycling-walking>. The Board wanted to the relevant council officers to look at the recommendations in more detail before considering actions, and it was requested that I meet with the Officers to discuss things further.

Despite raising this several times at the Board and in emails to the Board officers, I have still not heard anything from Norfolk County Council about such a meeting.

Nevertheless, it seems that progress is being made by Norfolk County Council's "Market Town Transport Network Improvement Strategy" work, which includes looking at some walking and cycling routes in the town, in addition to considering motor vehicle congestion and connectivity issues. More details can be found in a report for the Council's Environment, Development and Transport Committee on 8th March: <https://bit.ly/2EWrf9h>. The report lists three cycle routes that are being investigated and for which high-level costings will be produced:

- Route A: London Road, from commercial area at the west of the town to the town centre
- Route B: Croxton Road, connecting the Thetford Urban Extension (west), existing residential areas, the Thetford Academy and town centre
- Route C: Kilverstone, connecting the Thetford Urban Extension (east), Kilverstone, other residential areas and the town centre.

The establishment of Routes A and B was highlighted as a priority in the Sub-Group's Cycling and Walking report. Route C may refer in part to Green Lane through the Cloverfields Estate. The need for surface improvement works on this route was included in the Sub-Group's report.

Item 5: SUE, TEP and Waterspace Updates

GTDP Community Sub-Group Meeting, 20th March 2019

1 SUE Phase 1A Progress

Construction work is continuing on the first new houses on the Sustainable Urban Expansion (SUE) — also known as Kingsfleet. Phase 1A is being built by Hopkins Homes, on land inside the A11 between the A1075 Norwich Road and the Railway. As residents will probably have noticed, the A1075 is currently closed to traffic leaving Thetford. This partial closure is to aid construction work a new road junction to serve the development, and is expected to last until late summer 2019. Details about the closure can be found at <https://bit.ly/2HcZdtB>. Further information about the first phase of the development can be found at <https://bit.ly/2RKMcfX>.

2 Thetford Enterprise Park

The new roundabout is now complete. It was reported by the Thetford and Brandon Times at the end of January (<https://bit.ly/2Hrkq2k>) that further public money would be allocated to help develop the site, though the new roundabout had still not led to any firm interest from business in the form of pre-planning applications. The additional funding referred to in the article (£75k from Norfolk County Council's Business Rates Pool and £75k from Breckland District Council's Growth and Investment Fund) was approved by Breckland's Cabinet on 8th February 2019 (<https://bit.ly/2EQU9HU>).

3 River Thet Re-Routing

Erosion of the river bank at Ford Meadow during Summer 2018 has resulted in the main flow of the River Thet being diverted from its historic course under the Coffee Mill. The main flow now follows what was a smaller drainage channel. This passes under the middle bridge of Nuns' Bridges, before joining the Little Ouse just below the Thetford Pulp Mill Sluice. The old course between Ford Meadow and the Tricorn bridge by the Riverside development now has a lower water level, and is almost stagnant with very little flow.

The Environment Agency and Town Council are working together on a solution, but as of 5th March, the Town Council say that there is nothing to report on this yet. For further details and background, see <https://bit.ly/2MwtJX8>.

There may be further updates on some of these topics in the papers for the GTDP Board meeting which will take place on the same day as this Sub-Group meeting. The papers will be uploaded to <https://bit.ly/2J5rggn> about a week in advance of the meeting.