

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PANEL 1

**Held on Tuesday, 18 December 2007 at 10.00 am in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr J.D. Rogers (Chairman)	Mr P.J. Duigan
Mrs M.P. Chapman-Allen	Mr A.P. Joel (Vice-Chairman)
Mr R.P. Childerhouse	Mr K. Martin

In Attendance

Mark Broughton	- Scrutiny Officer
Jason Elliott	- GIS Officer
Paul Harris	- Planning Policy Officer
Andrea Long	- Environmental Planning Manager
David Spencer	- Principal Planning Policy Officer
Elaine Wilkes	- Senior Committee Officer

80/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

81/07 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. P. Spencer and Mrs. L. Turner.

82/07 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Mr. J.D. Rogers declared personal interests in respect of agenda item 6, as a member of Norfolk County Council, agenda item 7 as Ward Member for Carbrooke and agenda item 9 in respect of LDF matters relating to Carbrooke as Ward Member and with business interests.

83/07 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING

The following members were in attendance:

- Mrs D. Irving
- Mr. W. Borrett
- Mr. S.G. Bambridge

84/07 FLEXI BUS SERVICES IN BRECKLAND (AGENDA ITEM 6)

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Chris Limbach of Norfolk County Council to the meeting, who was attending at the Panel's invitation to advise members on the Flexibus scheme.

Leaflets giving details of the Flexibus services for the Wayland and Wymondham areas were circulated for members' information.

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Mr. Limbach explained that the Flexibus scheme had been developed over the last few years to meet the needs of the rural areas and to fill the gaps left by the withdrawal of or changes to certain other bus services. The Flexibus scheme offered facilities for journeys to work, school and college and was available between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. for demand response travel, i.e. people could ring and book a journey in advance, thus offering the areas served the opportunity to travel five days a week and connections to other bus and rail services.

Following the recent changes to the First Bus X3 and X4 services, National Express had agreed to join the concessionary bus fares scheme to cover the X4 route and this new service was settling down and running well. Seats were subject to availability.

Funding for the Flexibus scheme was met by the transfer of funding from the withdrawn services and for the school contract from the Education budget.

It was worthy of note that, including school and college travel, the Wayland Flexibus scheme had passed 1000 passengers and the numbers of people using the service was steadily increasing.

During the following discussion, members highlighted areas of the District where rural villages were very poorly served by public transport and where services were needed, particularly for old and young people. The lack of evening bus services was also a problem, particularly for young people.

Mr. Limbach explained that the scale of need across the County meant there were limits on what could be achieved in the short term. The County Council was looking to introduce three new Flexibus schemes during 2008 (including one covering the area around North Walsham and one covering the Fakenham/Holt area) and North Norfolk was also a key action area. In the Breckland District, the East Harling was a potential area for a future scheme but it was unlikely that could be achieved in the next financial year.

So far as evening transport for young people was concerned, the County Council was currently running various Leisure and Learning Link schemes in a number of centres. Funding for these schemes was due to run out at Easter 2008 and therefore most of these were unlikely to continue. However, the possibility of extending the scheme at Dereham was being considered, as this was one of the most successful and funding was being investigated for this. The scheme at Watton had been very under-used.

Bus operators were also being encouraged to offer reduced fares to the 16 – 19 year age group and one operator offered this, which had been well taken up.

Mr. Limbach agreed that rural villages were ideally suited to Flexibus schemes. He thought that over the next five years or so, people would see more schemes developed to meet need but it needed to be recognised that this was a large undertaking dependent on funding.

Mr. Limbach confirmed he was happy to accept invitations to come and talk on the matter at Parish Council meetings.

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The Chairman thanked Mr. Limbach for attending and hoped that it would be possible to collaborate further to improve rural bus services in the future.

**85/07 STREET NAMING & NUMBERING - POLICY AND PROCESSES
(AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Environmental Planning Manager presented the report, which provided information in respect of recent issues raised about the street naming and numbering of properties in the Carbooke/Griston area and gave details of new procedures being introduced to prevent such problems from re-occurring.

Members welcomed the opportunity to review procedures and in addition to the options outlined in the report, felt that the opportunity should also be taken to transfer the whole function to Environmental Planning which would ensure that a more efficient, comprehensive and co-ordinated approach could be achieved.

It was noted that the aim was to align the street naming and numbering function with the Council's Geographic Information System and Local Land and Property Gazetteer so that proposed developments were plotted in at the earliest point in the planning application process.

It was noted that the Council had no existing specific policy covering this function and Members welcomed the proposal to review procedures and establish a formal policy. A number of examples of existing problems were cited by Members that they felt needed resolving.

The Panel therefore

RECOMMEND to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission that

- (1) Cabinet be recommended to approve the integration of the street naming and numbering function with the Local Land and Property Gazetteer managed by the Environmental Planning Team; and
- (2) authorise the Panel to undertake a full review of the policies and procedures for the street naming and numbering function.

86/07 WORK PROGRAMME (AGENDA ITEM 8)

Subject to the agreement of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, the issue of street naming and numbering was agreed for incorporation into the work programme. The timing of future items was to be agreed.

**87/07 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: URBAN CAPACITY STUDY
(AGENDA ITEM 9)**

The Principal Planning Policy Officer presented the report and explained that the Urban Capacity Study (UCS) had been developed to form part of the evidence base for the Preferred Options Consultation on the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

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(DPD) of the Local Development Framework (LDF).

The UCS 2004 study methodology had been utilised and the findings updated in light of permissions secured since the previous survey base date to include any known new sites in the intervening period. The study found that an expected capacity of 1772 dwellings could be provided on previously unidentified brownfield land in the five market towns and proposed Local Service Centres in the period up to 2021.

During discussion and in answer to various questions, the following points were highlighted:

- The study was a required evidence document for the purposes of the LDF. It had to contain robustly sourced information, based on national guidance, but was not a policy document.
- The sites identified in the study were estimations of potential capacity only, not proposals, of sites which might or might not come forward at some future point during the life of the LDF. It was not unheard of, for example, an existing amenity site, such as a public house, to come forward for development. Identified sites were those rolled forward from the existing Local Plan and informed by extensive dialogue with the Development Control team who, in turn, have knowledge from developers. So far as smaller sites were concerned, these were identified from the perspective that they met basic criteria although landowners' intentions were unknown.
- It was recognised that there were tensions with other policy objectives. Hence, it was important that the policies in the LDF were robust. Therefore, some sites would ultimately fall against other policies. The UCS was a technical document. There was no guarantee that any sites would gain planning permission.
- The UCS identified sites which could potentially accommodate dwellings of five or more. Smaller sites were not identified.
- The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) would further define land for housing potential in a much more rigorous way and would look at land, both greenfield and brownfield, outside the defined settlement boundaries of towns and villages.
- The data collected in the UCS would provide the basis for the wider SHLAA study to be produced in 2008 and on which there would be further consultation to test the deliverability and development capability of sites.
- The inclusion of sites in the UCS was not based in any way on representations from individuals.
- There would be further opportunities for public consultation before the LDF Core Strategy was submitted in 2008.

The report was noted.

88/07 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2006-07 (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Planning Policy Officer presented the report and explained that this was the 3rd Local Development Framework (LDF) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to be prepared by the Council since the implementation of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

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The AMR outlined the Council's performance against a number of Core Output indicators set out in best practice guidance and monitored the progression of the LDF against the Council's adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS).

It was noted that the information in the AMR covered the period since 1999 and therefore the figures on renewable energy did not include Fibrothetford. It was agreed to include an amendment to show a running total that could include the figures for Fibrothetford.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and an amendment made to give a running total on renewable energy.

89/07 NEXT MEETING

Future meeting dates were agreed as follows:

- 5th February 2008
- 11th March 2008
- 1st April 2008

All start times 10.00 a.m. Venues subject to confirmation.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm

CHAIRMAN