



Moving Thetford Forward

***The Local Delivery Vehicle for Thetford
Growth Point***

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD

Held on Thursday, 6 August 2009 at 10.00 a.m. at Level 8, Breckland House, St.

Nicholas Street, Thetford

Present (Voting Members)

Cllr Jennifer Chamberlin (JC)
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen (SCA)
Cllr Paul Claussen (PDC)
John Connolly (JCo)
Cllr Daniel Cox (DC)
Laura Handford (substitute)
Cllr Brian Iles (BI)
Cllr Bob King (BK)
Cllr Robert Kybird (RGK)
Cllr Ian Mackie (IM)
David Napier (DN) (Observer Role)
Jo Pearson (JP)
Andrew Egerton-Smith (AES)
Jim Smith (JS)
Cllr Ann Steward (AS)
Neil Stott (NS)
Alec Witton (AW)

Representing

Norfolk County Council
Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Thetford Business Forum
Norfolk County Council
Flagship Housing
Norfolk County Council
Croxton Parish Council
Thetford Town Council
Norfolk County Council
Chairman, MTF Officer Group
Local Business
NHS Norfolk
Forestry Commission
Breckland Council
Keystone Development Trust
Land Representative (non-conflicting)

Present (Non-Voting Members)

Natalie Beal (NB)
Ed Chambers (EC)
Phil Daines (PD)
Tim Edmunds (TE)
Trevor Holden (TH)
Susan Glossop (SG)
Martin Peckitt (MP)
David Spencer (DS)
Mark Stanton (MSt)
Mark Stokes (MS)
Margaret Bailey (MB)

Capita Symonds for Breckland Council
Thetford Town Council
Capita Symonds for Breckland Council
Norfolk County Council
Breckland Council
Thetford Town Council
Breckland Council
Capita Symonds for Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Breckland Council

In attendance

Anita Brennan (AB)
Cllr Mike Brindle (MB)
Cllr Marion Chapman-Allen (MCA)

Samantha Goodwin (Sgo)
Owain Jones (OJ)
Rob Leigh (RL)
Elaine Wilkes (EW)

Breckland Council
Norfolk County Council (Observer)
Norfolk County, Breckland & Thetford Town Councils
(Observer)
Breckland Council – Growth Point Team
Norfolk County Council (Observer)
Breckland Council (Marketing & Communications)
Breckland Council (Committee Services)

Apologies for Absence Received

Owen Burnett-Jenkins
Mike Goulding
Cllr William Nunn
Cllr Tony Poulter
David Potter

Norfolk County Council
Homes & Communities Agency
Breckland Council
Brettenham & Kilverstone Parish Council
Inspire East

Cllr Paul Claussen – Vice-Chairman, in the Chair

Action by

30/09 INTRODUCTIONS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and introductions were given.

Members were informed that Mark Stokes had been appointed as Deputy Chief Executive at Breckland Council and would be leading the MTF Officer Group.

No declarations of interest were made.

31/09 MINUTES AND ACTIONS (AGENDA ITEM 2)

(a) Board Meeting – 14 May 2009

(i) Thetford New Bus Interchange (Minute No. 27/09)

TH sought a correction to this minute and explained that at the last meeting, it was recalled that RK had made the point that a 'green book appraisal' would be required for this project but this was not recorded in the minute. Ratification of the minute had been made by the Breckland Cabinet, as the accountable body in this case.

Not all members recalled the mention of the need for a green book appraisal at the last meeting but accepted that if it was necessary for the proper governance of the project, then it should be done.

In answer to a question, it was confirmed that the green book appraisal would not cause the project to be delayed.

TH also informed the meeting that the joint meeting of the three tiers of authorities to determine the issue of financial commitments to the project had not yet taken place. In view of the Government's announcement of the reduction in Growth Point funding, arrangements for the meeting would be pursued as a matter of urgency.

AGREED that for the proper governance of the project,

(1) the in principle decision contained in Minute 27/09 be amended to provide that the project is also subject to a 'green book appraisal', on the understanding that such appraisal will not delay the project;

(2) a joint meeting of the authorities be arranged as a matter of urgency to consider the question of financial commitments to the project.

TH

(ii) Adoption

Subject to (i) above, the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2009 were confirmed as a correct record.

Action by

(b) Officer Group Meeting – 11 June 2009

The minutes of the Officer Group meeting held on 22 April 2009 were received and noted.

DN highlighted pressures being brought by the principle landowners regarding the major development proposals under the TAAP.

TH explained that while there would need to be necessary consultation and negotiation with the three principle landowners concerned, all decisions would be ultimately be made having regard to overall governance requirements and needs and no one body's interests would be given any undue influence above the needs of the whole.

32/09 MTF PROJECT REVIEW AND UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 3)

A presentation was given on a review of the MTF project. MStA explained the background to the review, which was necessary to cover the transition from project planning to project delivery.

MP gave an update on projects.

Bus Interchange & College Forum - So far as the key projects of the Bus Interchange and College Forum were concerned, TE advised that the issues of land assembly were reaching a critical path if the projects were not to slip.

TH advised that the land assembly negotiations were progressing and RJ would be returning to continue work in this area. In the meantime, the necessary authority to proceed with a CPO was in place should it ultimately prove necessary. The green book appraisal was still to be concluded but could be done relatively quickly but was not critical to the issue of land assembly.

The key issue concerned the timetable for the submission of the funding bid for the College Forum project, which needed to be done by December 2009. Critical to the College Forum project was the release of land. If the Board had to resort to the use of CPO, that would delay the project by a year. The timing for the Bus Interchange project was less critical and was planned to open by September 2011.

It was noted that the CPO was part of a twin track approach and it was hoped would not be needed. It was also clear that if the submission of the funding bid was not achieved this year, there would not be any further opportunity for such funding in subsequent years.

Work towards the submission of the necessary planning application for the College Forum project was progressing well.

TH made the point that the currently identified site for the bus interchange was not the only option and if the land could not be secured within the necessary time available, then there was an alternative site which could be used.

Butten Island – This project was due to commence at the end of the month and included some enhancement works at Spring Walk.

Action by

Croxton Road Access Improvements – Two schemes were being considered. Funding was to be sourced through the MTF Board and Local Transport Plan. Further consultations with the Town Council and schools were due to take place.

Financial Report - MB then reported on the budget position and the arrangements being made for due governance, monitoring and financial assurance processes. Projects would be subject to appropriate appraisal to support decisions.

TE stated that once the three lead authorities had met to consider their financial commitments, the capital funding picture would change and MB noted that would help to demonstrate added value being obtained from the CLG funding.

So far as projects were concerned, it was noted that, subject to confirmation, some revenue and capital funding was still available for projects. Some candidate projects had already been identified but these needed to be firmed up or added to the programme and other match funding also needed to be identified.

AGREED that

- (1) Board members be canvassed for potential projects for inclusion in the programme should funding be available;
- (2) project and budget updates be given at the next meeting, together with potential projects per (1) above.

Governance Structure – MP outlined proposed changes to the MTF governance structure.

Instead of 'Breckland Council' as stated at the top of the structure chart, it was agreed this should more appropriately read **Accountable Body**, to reflect the fact that different partner authorities acted as the accountable body for different projects.

Changes to the structure were aimed at assisting the move from the project planning stage to the delivery stage.

The existing MTF Officer Group was proposed to be replaced by an MTF Delivery Board, supported by MTF Project Delivery Groups.

In discussing the new model structure, it was clarified that the MTF Board would be the strategic body, with the officer group (the MTF Delivery Board) being charged to deliver and manage projects. It was suggested the name of the latter should be changed from "Board" to "Group".

It was confirmed that, subject to consultation with the individuals concerned, membership of the MTF Programme Delivery Group would be drawn from existing Officer Group members.

The lead officer for the MTF Programme Delivery Group would be Mark Stokes.

MP

MP

MP

MP

Action by

There was a little concern that an unnecessary tier was being introduced into the structure. TH explained that it was felt this was felt to be the most effective structure. However, should experience warrant it, the position could be reviewed at a later date.

It was noted that Cllr Brian Iles would be replacing Cllr Dorrington as member champion for NCC on the Transport Project Group.

DN suggested he would wish to take up membership on the Learning/Regeneration Project Group.

It was also suggested that existing Compacts between the authorities needed to be reviewed to bring them up to date where appropriate to provide for third (voluntary) sector engagement.

AGREED that

(1) subject to the following amendments, the new governance structure be endorsed:

- 'Breckland Council' to be changed to 'Accountable Body'
- MTF Programme Delivery Board (replacing the MTF Officer Group) be renamed MTF Programme Delivery Group
- Membership of the MTF Programme Delivery Group be confirmed through individual consultation with existing Officer Group members
- Changes in members of Project Groups be as noted above

(2) a review of existing Compacts be undertaken.

Next Steps – MStA outlined the next steps for the MTF covering the areas of:

- Business Planning
- Project Planning
- Production of a Future Delivery Options Report
- MTF Vision
- Local Investment Plan / Integrated Delivery Plan

33/09 THETFORD AREA ACTION PLAN – PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION (AGENDA ITEM 3)

NB gave a presentation on the TAAP Preferred Options Consultation, which provided a summary of the comments received to the public consultation and suggested ways forward.

DS emphasised the TAAP was a key document within the LDF process. The LDF Core Strategy was close to being finalised following the public examination in July, with some issues remaining to be clarified in regard

MP

RW

Action by

to overall numbers of housing and jobs, and sustainability of strategic urban growth areas. The Inspectors' report was due towards the end of September/early October and their decision would impact on the TAAP.

The TAAP consultation had been a very helpful exercise, with a lot of local involvement. The next step was to feedback the findings to all contributors and the Board's approval to publish the document was sought for that purpose.

In answer to a question, it was explained that those responses submitted online could be viewed on the website. Other written responses could be inspected from the office files.

DN asked about the current position regarding the impact of the Buffer Zone on the proposals for the relocation of the Charles Burrell High School.

DS answered that the Buffer Zone would be determined by the Inspectors when they reported on the public examination of the LDF Core Strategy. The Inspectors were also looking at the Thetford evidence in relation to the proposals to relocate the High School. The policy relating to the stone curlews had also been amended by the Council to make it clear that development proposals could be considered where exceptionally it can be demonstrated that a development would have no significant adverse affect on the area.

DN highlighted the importance of the needs of this issue, bearing in mind the importance of the school to some of the most deprived wards in the town and for the overall balance of education in the town.

JC welcomed the depth of engagement with children in the consultation and also the inclusion of the area of heritage and culture in the proposals.

NS drew members' attention to the Study published by Flagship housing covering the West Thetford Estates.

AGREED that the TAAP Preferred Options Consultation document be agreed for publication.

NB

34/09 PRESENTATION – 'THETFORD PROSPECTUS' (ADDITIONAL ITEM)

A presentation was given by Steve Walker (Director) and Jane Manning (Associate) of Urban Practitioners on the promotion of the 'Thetford Prospectus'.

Following the presentation, the Board discussed the merits of such promotional work and the costs of such.

JC stated that a procurement process should be undertaken to ensure the Board received a competitive quote to ensure value for money.

AGREED that

- (1) a promotional project along the lines proposed be endorsed in principle;

MSta

- (2) the MTF Programme Delivery Group be authorised to invite competitive quotations and to make recommendations on the acceptance of a proposal.

Action by

35/09 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

In answer to a question on new employment prospects from BK, it was advised that expressions of interests from developers had been received but that they were pending final completion of the TEP agreement with Crown Estates.

36/09 NEXT MEETING

The time and venue of the next meeting on 17 September 2009 were to be confirmed. Level 8 at Breckland House would no longer be available as a meeting venue and to assist a member with a clash of meetings on that date, it was agreed to look at possibly moving the meeting to the afternoon.

SGo

The meeting closed at 12.50pm