

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2017

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GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2017

Present:

	Councillor C Smith	(Chair)
	Councillor J Windle	(Vice-Chair)
Councillor	S Boyle	Councillor R Smith
"	S Cornwell	" K Tait
"	A Powell	

Also Present

Helen Fairfax – Planning Policy Manager (Min No 439)
James Arnold – Assistant Director – Planning & Environmental Health (Min No 439)
Sue Veerman – Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Sarah Cottam – Senior Governance Officer (Acting)

436 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors C Cupit and B Rice.

437 Declarations of Interest

Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

There were no interest declared at this meeting.

438 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 1 December 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the inclusion of Councillor K Tait in the apologies for absence for that meeting.

439 Scrutiny Review

The Committee carried out several interviews as part of the Committee's review into the A61 corridor.

Helen Fairfax, Planning Policy Manager

Q1 What do you consider is your role in this project?

The Committee were advised that the Local Plan covered a wide range including transport infrastructure. Planning Policy had a keen interest in the

A61 corridor and worked with the Derbyshire County Council on the highways infrastructure. The main focus was on the south of the A61 and the District wanted to encourage the County to create a model for the infrastructure highways impact. The model would need to pinpoint the critical parts of the A61. The Committee were advised that Derbyshire County Council would only improve the highways from existing developments and the natural increase of usage to the highway. A strategy was needed and the A61 needed to be looked at in a joined up way. A working party had been set up with interested parties and the Group meets to discuss the A61 ongoing projects with Derbyshire County Council. The Committee were advised that a £16m package in total was available for A61 improvements with £3.2m of this earmarked in Section 106 Agreements.

Q2 What do you see as the Council's long-term objectives for the A61?

The Council's long-term objectives for the A61 from a planning perspective was the growth opportunities which could link into the Council's Growth Strategy. The A61 was a crucial road for the District and a lot of development had been earmarked on the A61.

Q3 How well do you think the Council is doing in this area?

The Committee were advised that better communication was needed with Derbyshire County Council as it was felt that they were not always on board with the improvements needed to the A61.

Q4 Do we have the necessary skills in house for a project of this nature?

The Committee were advised that the Council was well placed with the necessary skills in Planning and Economic Development. Derbyshire County Council also brought skills to the project. The Committee were advised that the Council has the skills, but maybe not the resource to carry out a project on this scale. The Committee were advised however, that Planning Policy were now fully resourced.

Q5 How do we ensure what we are doing is joined up with the work of our partners?

Cross boundary meetings took place and the A61 Strategy Group met on a regular basis. Duty to co-operate was also in place and the Council had to comply with other Authorities and have a clear consensus of approach to projects.

Q6 Are you aware of any measures to involve the public and raise awareness of the work being undertaken?

The Committee were advised that consultations with Members had been held and community consultations raised awareness of the work being undertaken.

Both of the consultation processes were Derbyshire County Council led. It was felt that maybe the public was not being told of the work going on to the A61 and it was advised that communication was important and a strategy had to be developed once the priority schemes were in place. It is important that the public should be made aware of any work being carried out. Projects needed to be shown to the public in a co-ordinated way and not on an ad-hoc basis.

Q7 How is the project being funded?

The Committee were advised that the project was being funded through developer contributions secured through the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Q8 What do you think are the challenges for the future?

The challenges for the future would be helping residents live with the implementation of the works happening on the A61 and the problems for commuters. Members of the public needed to be kept informed of what was going on and another key challenge would be future projects adding to the A61 network without contributing to it.

Q9 What improvements would you like to see?

The Planning Policy Manager would like to see improved communications put in place between the Highways at Derbyshire County Council and the Highways at Sheffield City Council. The Committee were also advised of the possible protection of land for a link road but as of yet no study had been carried out to see if this was an improvement to the network. This was identified in the Local Transport Plan.

Q10 Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

The Planning Policy Manager had nothing else to add.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Planning Policy Manager for attending the meeting and for contributing to the review.

James Arnold, Assistant Director – Planning and Environmental Health

Q1 What do you consider is your role in this project?

The Assistant Director – Planning and Environmental Health advised the Committee that he worked closely with the Planning Team and was also part of a working group that met once a month to discuss the South Section of the A61. The Committee were advised that he dealt with planning applications for sites and was working on getting access to the Avenue Site and also the main access to the Biwater Site from the A61.

Q2 What do you see as the Council's long-term objectives for the A61?

The A61 was the strategic corridor through the District. The role of the Working Group was to draw in on external funding to improve the network and also working in partnership with Derbyshire County Council to improve the infrastructure. It was advised that the A61 needed to link up with least effect on the road infrastructure and minimise the impact to residents. The two main sites on the A61 was the Biwater Site and the Avenue Site. The Committee were advised that serious consideration was being given to more train stations in the District. Park & Rides could also hold great potential.

Q3 How well do you think the Council is doing in this area?

The Council was on board with key projects taking place on the A61 and was a key partner of Derbyshire County Council, who were lead on the project.

Q4 Do we have the necessary skills in house for a project of this nature?

It was felt that Council officers held the necessary skills in house, but resources and capacity was currently an issue.

Q5 How do we ensure what we are doing is joined up with the work of our partners?

Derbyshire County Council were overseeing the A61 project and North East Derbyshire District Council was a partner.

It was advised that North East Derbyshire would have to consider if it had the capacity to support upcoming projects on the A61.

Q6 Are you aware of any measures to involve the public and raise awareness of the work being undertaken?

The individual projects had been consulted on by Derbyshire County council as they are the lead authority for the project. As far as the Assistant Director – Planning and Environmental Health was aware, the Strategic project had not been publicised enough by Derbyshire County Council.

Q7 How is the project being funded?

Funding would need to be sought for infrastructure work to be carried out. It was advised that link roads can cost millions.

Q8 What do you think are the challenges for the future?

The key challenges in the future would be managing the communication between the key project partners of the A61 and ensuring growth is delivered

for the strategic projects. The authorities needed to ensure the A61 was fit for purpose and that they were communicating positively with the public.

There could be challenges encountered through the Chesterfield Borough Council Devolution Deal.

Q9 What improvements would you like to see?

Improved communication between partners and also communicating positively with the public regarding projects taking place.

Q10 Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

The Assistant Director – Planning and Environmental Health felt that the Growth Scrutiny were looking at a good topic and advised that he could provide a Derbyshire County Council map of the A61 corridor pinpointing the critical areas.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Assistant Director – Planning and Environmental Health for attending the meeting and for contributing to the review.

Martyn Handley, Economic Development Project Officer

The Committee were advised that the Economic Development Project Officer was not available for this meeting and would attend the next meeting.

440 List of Key Decisions – Issue No 56

The Committee considered Issue No 56 of the List of Key Decisions which set out the major decisions being taken over the next few months.

RESOLVED – That the List of Key Decisions Issue No 56 be noted.

(Governance)

441 Work Programme

That the Committee considered its Work Programme for 2016/2017 which set out the items which the Committee would consider over the forthcoming year. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised the Committee that Members would carry out the final interviews at the next meeting and also the evidence collected would be triangulated. At the next meeting the Committee would also be considering the progress against the Action Plan for the Economic Development and Housing Strategy Action Plan.

RESOLVED – That the Growth Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for 2016-2017 be noted.

(Overview and Scrutiny Manager/Members)

442 Additional Urgent Items

There were no additional urgent items to be considered at this meeting.

443 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee would take place on Thursday 16 March 2017 at 2.00 pm.

Growth Scrutiny MINS 0126