

MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2011

2.00 PM



PRESENT

Councillor Michael Cook Chairman

Councillor Bob Adams	Councillor Alan Parkin
Councillor Mark Ashberry	Councillor Nick Robins
Councillor Ray Auger	Councillor Graddon Rowlands
Councillor Jean Bevan	Councillor Bob Russell
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing	Councillor Bob Sampson
Councillor Pam Bosworth	Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Robert Broughton	Councillor Bob Sandall
Councillor Terl Bryant	Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Paul Carpenter	Councillor Jacky Smith
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright	Councillor John Smith
Councillor Ibis Channell	Councillor Mrs Judy Smith
Councillor Kelham Cooke	Councillor Peter Stephens
Councillor Paul Cosham	Councillor Judy Stevens
Councillor Nick Craft	Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Alan Davidson	Councillor Brenda A Sumner
Councillor Phil Dilks	Councillor Mike Taylor
Councillor Breda Griffin	Councillor Mrs Jean Taylor
Councillor Reginald Howard	Councillor Jeff Thompson
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown	Councillor Frank Turner
Councillor Vic Kerr	Councillor Bruce Wells
Councillor Michael King	Councillor Martin Wilkins
Councillor Charmaine Morgan	Councillor Paul Wood
Councillor David Nalson	Councillor Rosemary H Woolley
Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal	Councillor Raymond Wootten
Councillor John Nicholson	

OFFICERS

Chief Executive (Beverly Agass)
Strategic Director (Daren Turner, Tracey Blackwell, Ian Yates)
Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Lucy Youles)
Head of Development and Growth (Mark Williets)
Planning Policy Service Manager (Karen Sinclair)
Senior Planning Officer (Planning Policy)
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)

Assistant Director for Economy and Culture – Lincolnshire County Council (Jenny Gammon)

26. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

No requests to speak in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.2 were received.

Councillor Dilks stated that he would be declaring a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8, and asked whether the Chairman would use his discretion and allow him to speak on the issue as a member of the public,. The Chairman stated that Council Procedure Rule 10.2 would stand.

27. YOUNG ENTERPRISE – CLICHÉ

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder reported that an apology had been received from representatives from Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School, who were unable to attend the meeting because of unforeseen circumstances.

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chivers, Higgs, Jock Kerr, Powell, Scott, Shorrock, Adam Stokes and Wren.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- Councillor Dilks declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 (proposed site allocation policies and Grantham Area Action Plan development plan documents) because he was a trustee of Deeping St James United Charities.
- Councillor Bryant declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 because he canvassed against certain developments in Stamford in the 2011 election and was concerned there may be a perceived bias.
- Councillor Auger declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 because he was a trustee of Deeping St James United Charities.
- Councillor Jacky Smith declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda 8 because she had a financial interest in one of the sites.
- Councillor Woolley declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 as the clerk to Baston Parish Council; the village had been designated as a local service centre.
- Councillor Parkin declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 because two of the sites were in close proximity to his property.
- Councillor Rowlands declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 because he had pre-determined the issue, having campaigned against inappropriate development during the 2011 election, and representing voters immediately affected by the proposals.
- Councillor Nalson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8, having campaigned against inappropriate

development in the 2011 election and since, and thus being seen to have pre-determined the issue.

- Councillor Judy Stevens declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 as a trustee of Deeping St James United Charities.

30. MINUTES FROM 7 JULY 2011

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2011 be accepted as a correct record, subject to the clarification that Councillor **Judy** Stevens was appointed as the Council's representative on Deeping St James United Charities. This was put to the vote and carried.

31. COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS)

The Chairman made a statement on how the meeting would be run: speeches should be on the matter under discussion and last no longer than five minutes. Councillors would only be able to speak once on a proposal unless they had a right to reply in accordance with the Constitution (they were the proposer), they had a point of order or a personal explanation. Members would be able to speak once more on any amendment proposed. Amendments would be debated and fully dealt with before moving on to any other amendments. Motions that could be moved during debate were set out in the Constitution.

A list of the Chairman's engagements was circulated with the agenda; Members noted this.

32. BROADBAND DELIVERY UK (BDUK)

The Strategic Director (Mr Turner) introduced a presentation from Lincolnshire County Council on the provision of broadband in rural areas. He highlighted that the availability of broadband could inhibit economic growth. These concerns were echoed across the county, which had one of the lowest signal strengths in the country. The Communities Policy Development Group had worked to keep the issue high on the Council's agenda. The limitations of broadband in rural areas were also recognized on a national level; the government aimed that the UK had Europe's best superfast broadband by 2015 and had made funding available to achieve this. Broadband Delivery UK was responsible for delivering this on behalf of the government and allocating funding. Upper tier authorities were invited to bid for funding, and Lincolnshire County Council, supported by South Kesteven District Council, submitted a bid that had been successful. Jenny Gammon, Lincolnshire County Council's Assistant Director for Economy and Culture, had been invited to the meeting to explain more about the project.

Ms Gammon explained that the government had ring-fenced £530m (for the whole of the UK) to deliver superfast broadband to 90% premises by 2015, with all premises having a minimum of 2mb. The main way of achieving this was investing in fibre optic cables. Maps showed those areas of the county that did and did not have 2mb. Some areas, including

Grantham, were serviced by the cable network. The County Council was preparing a business plan to combine and develop public sector funding and implementation proposals. It would then go to the market to procure necessary services and support.

A bid was submitted to BDUK in July 2011; funding of £14m was allocated to the county. Lincolnshire County Council had agreed in principle to contribute £10m towards the project, however additional match-funding was required. Approaches had been made to other public sector organizations in the county, including the health service and district councils. The County Council was also hoping to secure funding from the European Regional Development Fund. However, current restrictions meant that funding could not be used for broadband; lobbying was being undertaken to change this.

The public sector was only allowed to intervene in areas of market failure. This meant funding could only be used in areas where broadband was not available.

Lincolnshire's rural nature and settlement patterns made the county unappealing to providers. The County Council's aim was to get superfast broadband to as many places as possible as quickly as possible. This process included raising awareness and demonstrating the level of support in the county. The website www.onlincolnshire.org was set up, through which communities in Lincolnshire were being encouraged to register their interest.

Local broadband availability was put in a national context. Across the UK, 9% of premises did not have 2mb, while in South Kesteven 17% of premises did not have 2mb. To progress work in Lincolnshire, the County Council was working with BDUK to agree their plan. Expertise would then need securing from industry and approaches would be made to suppliers. It was anticipated the main rollout would take place between 2012-13.

Ms Gammon stated that website, which contained lots of information, had received a lot of promotion through SK Today and parish councils. There were three ways in which people could register their support: visiting to the website from private PCs or public network computers in libraries, or through Lincolnshire County Council's switchboard.

The Chairman invited questions from Councillors. Members recognized the importance of a good broadband network for economic development and asked about building broadband infrastructure into development proposals. Ms Gammon explained that broadband was considered part of essential infrastructure. Grantham was covered within Virgin's network, while Stamford and Market Deeping benefitted from recent investment from BT. Some concern was expressed this investment, which made them ineligible for investment with funding from BDUK, would disadvantage communities living in those areas. The County Council was working with a variety of partners to ensure the best possible outcome for communities across

Lincolnshire.

In response to a question about the options that were being explored in respect of service providers, Ms Gammon confirmed the County Council was working with national and local companies. The County Council had to find the right balance between giving as many premises access to superfast broadband, while ensuring the remainder of premises had a 2mb speed. In some areas this could be delivered through local solutions provided by local companies.

Responding to questions about achieving minimum speeds of 2mb and whether relay technology was able to sufficiently boost the signal between the exchange and point of delivery, Ms Gammon explained that limitations were caused by copper cables. Investing in fibre optic cables would ensure high speeds from the exchange to the user, however this would be expensive because the whole copper network would need replacing.

The Chairman thanked Ms Gammon for her presentation and answering Councillors' questions.

14:53-15:10 The meeting adjourned.

Following the adjournment, Councillors Auger, Bryant, Dilks, Nalson, Parkin, Rowlands and Jacky Smith did not re-enter the meeting, having declared personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item 8.

33. SITE ALLOCATION AND POLICIES AND GRANTHAM AREA ACTION PLAN - DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS PUBLICATION AND SUBMISSION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Decision:

- 1) That the publication for the receipt of representations relating to the Grantham Area Action Plan and Site Allocation and Policy Development Plan Documents (DPDs), attached to report number PLA909 as appendix A and B, and the changes to proposals, attached as appendix C, are approved.***
- 2) That subject to there being no representations which raise fundamental issues on soundness, the Grantham Area Action Plan and Site Allocation and Policies DPDs be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.***
- 3) That authority is delegated to the Head of Development and Growth in consultation with the Economic Development Portfolio Holder to make any necessary changes to the DPDs associated with publication and subsequent processes.***
- 4) That representations received after the end of the six-week representation period are not accepted as duly made.***

The Planning Policy Service Manager introduced the site allocation and policies, and Grantham area action plan development plan documents for

publication and submission to the Secretary of State. She explained the presentation of these documents was the culmination of several years' work. The proposals had regard to the levels of need (both housing and employment), identified within the Core Strategy. The Council had carried out extensive community engagement in preparing the documents.

If approved by Council, the documents would be published, giving anyone with concerns about the nature or wording of policies or individual sites, the opportunity to put forward their concerns. These would be considered by an independent Planning Inspector during the formal examination phase. The Inspector would be able to challenge site assessments. The Planning Policy Service Manager stated that in her professional opinion, she believed the process undertaken by the Council was robust and consistent and that the sites could be justified.

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder moved the recommendations in report PLA 909, stating the documents followed many years work, during which the Planning Policy Team considered specialist reports, feedback from parish councils and local communities and worked with a Members' working group, to which all Councillors had been invited. The presentation given during a briefing for Members that explained the preparation of the documents was available to Councillors on request. She stated the documents would strengthen the case to ensure sustainable development in the district. The proposition was seconded.

An amendment to the motion was proposed and seconded:

"That we [the Council] defer any decisions regarding the Site Allocation and Policies and Grantham area action plan Development Plan documents publication and submission to the Secretary of State to allow time to review recent correspondence from the people of Stamford, and further detail regarding the development proposed in the north and south quadrants of Grantham. Other key issues also need to be addressed."

Supporters of the proposal to defer expressed concerns about the site designated in Stamford and commented on the amount of correspondence received, which they felt demonstrated strong local feeling and opposition to the proposals. They suggested that other sites in Stamford would provide better access to infrastructure and would have less visual impact on the town, protecting its appeal and heritage. Officers explained that evidence demonstrated sites within the vicinity of the A1 were more attractive for potential development. There were also facilities on the western side of the town, which people from a development on that site could access.

Members opposing the amendment commented on the consultation that had taken place and that members of the public had a number of opportunities over several years to submit their views. In respect of proposed sites in Stamford, it was reported that Stamford Town Council was consulted and did agree the proposals. They also highlighted that,

when the documents had been published, members of the public would have a further opportunity to make representations, which would be considered by the independent Planning Inspector. Concerns were also expressed that deferring a decision would mean the Council was unable to meet requirements established in the Core Strategy.

The Chairman re-read the amendment and prepared to move to a vote. There was a request for a recorded vote. However, failing to receive the support of ten Members as per Council Procedure rule 16.4, the request was refused. On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

The proposition as initially moved was debated. In response to a question on the implications for sites not allocated, officers explained that allocating sites established a general principle for the future development of that site, directing growth to locations it thought could most appropriately accommodate it. Applications could still be submitted for sites that had not been allocated. Allocating sites would allow refusal of applications not considered appropriate; they would not prevent the granting of applications that met criteria in development policies.

A question was also asked on development timescales in relation to the production of character assessments to identify heritage assets. Officers could not guarantee development would not begin before the list was completed. However, Members were reassured that buildings that were listed had statutory protections that would have to be taken into account.

General support was given to proposals for Grantham, however discussion ensued after it was suggested that provision should be made for a bypass in Stamford. The suggestion received support from several members. The proposed level of development in Stamford would not achieve sufficient funding to build a bypass. In Grantham there had been a long-established desire to see a relief road, and there were economic reasons why it would be successful; it would be supported with monies from development. Lincolnshire County Council, as the highway authority had also stated that a relief road for Grantham was a priority.

Further reference was made to the level of correspondence sent to Councillors by residents from Stamford. One Member investigated some concerns about suitable infrastructure. The school that would be affected by the proposed site had capacity an additional hundred pupils with sufficient space to expand and the land to provide facilities. It was also suggested that with sensitive design and construction, the visual impact of any development could be minimised.

In summing up the proposal, the Economic Development Portfolio Holder answered a question on the development of brownfield sites. The majority of sites developed over the past five years, both for housing and employment, had been brownfield sites.

There was a request for a recorded vote. However, failing to receive the

support of ten Members as per Council Procedure rule 16.4, the request was refused. The proposal was put to the vote and carried.

Councillors Selby and Morgan requested their votes against the motion be recorded.

16:01 Councillors Auger, Bryant, Dilks, Nalson, Parkin, Rowlands and Jacky Smith returned to the meeting.

34. NOTICES OF MOTION GIVEN UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12:

Decision:

That the Council rejects the motion: "The Leader of the Council and the other Executive Portfolio holders must be accountable, both to other members of South Kesteven District Council, and to the people of South Kesteven as a whole. Therefore, a period of 30 minutes shall be set aside near the beginning of all full meetings of the Council for elected members to ask questions of the Leader of the Council and Executive Portfolio holders."

Councillor Davidson proposed his motion, stating it would increase openness and transparency, while demonstrating how and why decisions were taken. He referred to national proposals to make Cabinet members more accountable. The proposer highlighted historical arrangements that required Cabinet members to make statements on the work they had undertaken and gave Members of the Council the chance to directly question Cabinet members; current arrangements saw the referral of questions to Policy Development Groups. He also referred to the Members Code of Conduct, which said Councillors should be open and transparent to the public. It was also suggested that the direct questioning of Cabinet members could increase interest and attendance by members of the public at meetings. The motion was seconded.

Several Members spoke in favour of the motion, supporting the arguments made by the proposer. Councillors also felt that such a session would show members of the public that the Cabinet was being held accountable for their decisions and publicly demonstrating leadership of the Council.

In speaking against the motion, concern was expressed that meetings would experience political tit-for-tat with the pressing of political ideologies. Attention was drawn to the public open forum, which gave members of the public the opportunity to directly question Councillors.

In summing up his motion, the proposer responded to concerns about political tit-for-tat, suggesting this would be controlled by the chairman. He commented that the public were sceptical, and that such a session could help generate interest in full Council meetings.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.4, this request needed the support of ten Members. A show of hands indicated more than ten Members supported the request.

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Councillor Mark Ashberry	Councillor Bob Adams	
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing	Councillor Ray Auger	
Councillor Bob Broughton	Councillor Jean Bevan	
Councillor Miss Ibis Channell	Councillor Mrs Pam Bosworth	
Councillor Alan Davidson	Councillor Teri Bryant	
Councillor Phil Dilks	Councillor Paul Carpenter	
Councillor Reg Howard	Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright	
Councillor Vic Kerr	Councillor Mike Cook	
Councillor Charmaine Morgan	Councillor Kelham Cooke	
Councilor Bob Sampson	Councilor Paul Cosham	
Councillor Bob Sandall	Councillor Nick Craft	
Councillor Susan Sandall	Councillor Breda Griffin	
Councilor Ian Selby	Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown	
Councillor Judy Stevens	Councillor Michael King	
Councillor Bruce Wells	Councillor David Nalson	
Councillor Paull Wood	Councillor Mrs Linda Neal	
	Councillor John Nicholson	
	Councillor Alan Parkin	
	Councillor Nick Robins	
	Councillor Graddon Rowlands	
	Councillor Bob Russell	
	Councillor Jacky Smith	
	Councillor John Smith	
	Councillor Mrs Judy Smith	
	Councillor Peter Stephens	
	Councillor Ian Stokes	
	Councillor Brenda Sumner	
	Councillor Mrs Jean Taylor	
	Councillor Mike Taylor	
	Councillor Jeff Thompson	
	Councillor Frank Turner	
	Councillor Martin Wilkins	
	Councillor Rosemary Woolley	
	Councillor Ray Wootten	
16	34	0

35. COUNCILLORS' IT PROVISION

Councillor Carpenter said that he had sent a letter to all Councillors asking for feedback about IT provision. He encouraged Members to return their

responses to the IT department for the attention of Andy Nix.

36. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed at 16:28.