

# MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

THURSDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2012

2.30 PM



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## GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Charmaine Morgan  
Councillor John Nicholson (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Jean Taylor

Councillor Rosemary H Woolley  
Councillor Raymond Wootten

## OFFICERS

Strategic Director (Ian Yates)  
Property Development Manager (Neil  
Cucksey)  
Community Engagement and Policy  
Development Officer (Carol Drury)  
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)

## PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Councillor Teri Bryant (Good Housing)

## Other

1 member of the public  
1 member of the press

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## 22. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public, Mr Worth, put a question to the PDG. He asked whether, following the guidance note on wind energy from Lincolnshire County Council and the production of South Kesteven District Council's Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), the PDG would support the deferral of all wind energy applications until the SPD had been approved by Council.

PDG members noted that the document produced by Lincolnshire County Council was guidance only, as the county council was not a planning authority. At its last meeting the PDG had received a presentation on the production of the South Kesteven Wind Energy SPD. The proposed timeline would see the Cabinet considering the release of the draft document for public consultation in October 2012.

The PDG was advised that if an application was submitted and a decision not made in a timely fashion, the applicant could claim non-determination and the application would be determined by a planning inspector.

Councillors considered whether it would be appropriate to produce an SPD that

included all forms of renewable energy. Officers highlighted that all forms of renewable energy were covered in the Council's Core Strategy; the SPD was to provide additional guidance on applications on the form of renewable energy on which most applications were received. The guidance in the Core Strategy was sufficient for the Development Control Committee to consider applications. Referring to the meeting in Stamford, PDG members observed that a member of the public who spoke at that meeting highlighted a case where the council had successfully defended the decision to refuse an application for wind turbines.

### **23. MEMBERSHIP**

The PDG was notified that, for this meeting only, Councillor Woolley would be substituting for Councillor Cooke and Councillor Morgan would be substituting for Councillor Dilks.

### **24. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Griffin and Thompson. Apologies for absence were also received from the Portfolio Holders for Grow the Economy – Economic Development (Councillor Mrs Cartwright) and Clean, Green and Arts (Councillor Smith).

### **25. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

No interests were disclosed.

### **26. ACTION NOTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 19 JULY 2012**

The action notes from the meeting held on 19 July 2012 were agreed as a correct record and noted.

### **27. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING / FEEDBACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

In response to a question raised by a PDG member about housing ex-service personnel, the Good Housing Portfolio Holder explained that the Housing Allocations Policy was being revised. People applying for housing were given five points for each year they had lived in the district; so that their transient lifestyle did not disadvantage them, applications from ex-service personnel were being dealing with on a case-by-case basis.

### **28. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

The Property Development Manager gave members an update on the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE). Lincolnshire County Council had been advised by the Department for Transport that their application was currently projected for sign-off on 30 November 2012, meaning

the first date from which powers could potentially be used was 1 December 2012.

The County Council was rationalising and consolidating its parking Orders into one Compliance Order; district councils were undergoing a similar process. No comments had been received of SKDC's draft Orders, which were being presented to Council on 13 September 2012.

In preparation for implementation, Lincolnshire County Council had undertaken a procurement exercise to secure providers for enforcement and ticket processing. District councils were able to call-off services from those providers. Enforcement officers would not be subject to incentives or bonus payments based on the number of tickets issued. This was part of the contract with the provider and would remain in force for its duration (four years).

Enforcement officers would wear the insignia of the relevant enforcement authority, for example when enforcing on-street parking officers would wear Lincolnshire County Council's logo and when enforcing off-street parking, they would wear SKDC's logo. Tickets would also clearly indicate the enforcement authority.

The Council would receive cost-savings because current arrangements meant that SKDC paid enforcement officers as they travelled between car parks. As the same officers would be enforcing on-street parking for Lincolnshire County Council, enforcement officers' time would be charged to them as soon as they left any of SKDC's off-street parking. This would also mean the Council could optimise the use of hours bought from the provider.

Parking enforcement officers would be mobile and their movement would not be predictable so motorists could not predict when an enforcement officer might be in the area.

Councillors highlighted current difficulties enforcing parking and police jurisdiction. Lincolnshire Police would still have responsibility for enforcing moving traffic offences, of which obstruction was one. Councillors felt that under new arrangements the relevant enforcement agency should be clear to members of the public.

Further discussion ensued on residents' parking schemes. Lincolnshire County Council had previously said that they would not progress any applications for residents' parking schemes until all Parking Orders were consolidated. The district council would be the promoter and administrator for any scheme, which would have to go through the county's Road Traffic Regulation Order process before confirmation and implementation. As South Kesteven was the only district authority looking to introduce residents' parking schemes, officers had worked with county to establish a turnaround time of approximately 29 weeks. Before the introduction of any scheme, on-street work would need undertaking together with a survey of residents in interested areas. A majority of residents

would need to have to want a scheme and be prepared to pay the fee. Consultation with residents in Stamford had begun. Residents' parking schemes could also be of benefit to some areas in Grantham. It was noted that a previous scheme in Grantham fell after its first year of operation.

In preparation for the introduction of CPE and to undertake some initial work on a residents' parking scheme for Stamford, it was proposed that a firm should be commissioned to undertake on-street work (determining occupancy, turnover, capacity, potential displacement, etc). This was supported by the PDG. A similar piece of work would be required before the proposition of any schemes in Grantham.

***Recommendation:***

***That £9,300 from the Communities PDG support budget be used to commission on-street research work in preparation for proposing residents parking schemes for Stamford.***

**29. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Community Engagement and Policy Development Officer summarised arrangements that had been put in place to help the PDGs run more smoothly. This incorporated a series of meetings to determine each PDGs forward work programmes and agendas. This work was to be undertaken by the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the PDGs and members of the Cabinet. One member sitting on the PDG expressed concern that there was no Labour group representation because they did not hold any chairmanships or vice-chairmanships. The proposed structure was based on previously constituted arrangements.

**30. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, DECIDES IS URGENT**

**InterCity East Coast Franchise Replacement: Consultation**

The Chairman had agreed to accept the InterCity East Coast Franchise Replacement Consultation as urgent business, because the deadline for responses was 18 September 2012. The consultation document included a number of questions, for which draft responses were circulated. PDG members suggested additional areas for inclusion in the response:

- If revenue from fares exceeds the costs of the franchise, why were fares put up in excess of the rate of inflation?
- The hub-to-hub approach meant passengers had to change trains which affected the passenger experience, it also made travelling difficult for people with accessibility problems. Generally customers do not link changing trains.
- Current services calling at Grantham seemed geared round commuters

with decreased provision at the weekend, particularly on a Saturday. Improved availability could support the economic development objective.

- The objectives for the franchise should include being responsible for the enhancement and maintenance of the stations. There should also be an additional objective around safety.
- Conditions of the franchise could include compensation at earlier trigger points when trains were delayed,. This would provide an incentive to limit the late-running of trains.
- There should be a direct train link between Grantham and Lincoln.
- Smart ticketing options should not be used as replacements for staff on railway stations.
- Customer experience questionnaires should give details of assistance available for completing questionnaires. Providing different methods for feedback could also increase participation.
- The franchisee should be encouraged to work with local community groups, e.g. friends of stations
- Car parking that is secure and affordable (with banded rates) should be offered.
- Working in partnership with, and making information available about, British Transport Police could help improve safety and security. People would also know how to report any incidents.
- Customer announcements on stations should provide clear updates when trains are delayed and cancelled.
- Anecdotal evidence suggested it was difficult to take a bicycle onto a train; the franchisee should investigate ease of access and secure storage (both at stations and on trains)
- The franchisee should work with Network Rail to improve safety at level crossings – Tallington level crossing was specifically highlighted.
- Train services should connect with other modes of transport (buses)

### **31. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting was closed at 16:43.