

## Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee



Date	2 April 2009
Venue	Town Hall, St Annes
Committee members	Councillor Kevin Eastham (Chairman) Councillor Ben Aitken (Vice-Chairman)  Michael Cornah, John Bennett, Maxine Chew, Barbara Douglas
Other Councillors	None
Officers	Paul Walker, Tony Donnelly, Paul Drinnan, Mark Sims, Stephen Smith, Lyndsey Lacey
Others	Michael Gage( Accredited Peer Member)

### 1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

### 2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12 February as a correct record for signature by the chairman.

### 3. Substitute members

None

### 4. Regional Strategy for England's North West

Tony Donnelly, Head of Planning (Policy) reported that the Government had recently published draft legislation to enable all regions to produce a Single Integrated Regional Strategy to replace the Regional Economic Strategy, Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Housing Strategy. He added that the Northwest region had agreed to begin work on this immediately.

The report set out the background, preparation process and transitional arrangements.

Mr Donnelly stated that the strategy would set a 20 year vision and related goals, and a 3-5 year investment and implementation plan. It would ensure that decisions and investment were helping the region move towards the agreed goals.

Members were advised that the strategy work was being jointly led by the NWDA and 4NW (the Regional Leader's Forum) and assisted by an advisory group of 50 regional organisations. The Principles and Issues Paper had been published to stimulate debate within the region about the issues that the region were likely to face over the longer term future and the principles that should underpin the strategy. Mr Donnelly stated that the consultation period concluded on 30th April.

The comprehensive report outlined the timetable for the preparation of the strategy and detailed the consultation questions contained in the document. The questions were divided into a series of sections including: Strategy Assumptions; Strategy Focus and Outcomes; Northwest England's Uniqueness; Regional Challenges and Issues. The report also included suggested responses to the questions raised.

The Chairman asked for confirmation as to whether all the work would be funded and carried out by the region. Mr Donnelly confirmed that the work was being led by NWDA and 4NW.

Councillor Chew made reference to the economic downturn and the associated implications for the strategy. Mr Donnelly stated that at this stage the consultation acknowledged the current recession but was essentially seeking information on the important long term issues/matters that the Council felt needed to be addressed in the proposed strategy.

The Chairman asked the committee to consider whether there was anything different about the Fylde area compared to the North Western region that it particularly wished to emphasise e.g. coastal issues.

With regard to the strategy assumptions, the Chairman enquired whether the aged/ageing population with particular reference to the Fylde area was getting higher. Mr Donnelly confirmed this to be the case.

The Chairman commented about the apparent conflict between paragraphs item 13 (bullet point 2) and 14 (bullet point 8) in the report. Mr Donnelly addressed this matter.

Following detailed consideration of this matter the Committee RESOLVED:

1. To note the timetable for preparation and the transitional arrangements
2. To recommend that the Portfolio Holder agree and submit the responses as outlined in the report subject to the following modifications:

Include at the end of paragraph 12:

- Rural economy and farming

Include at the end of paragraph 14:

- Empty shops in towns

Include at the end of the response to Question 1:

Nethertheless, it is important that the attractive areas of the North West are maintained if quality employers are to be attracted and retained.

Include at the end of the response to question K:

If greenbelts are to be reviewed strategically consideration should be given to prioritising green wedges between communities and major settlements.

#### 5. Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Development Framework

Mark Sims, Principal Planning Officer (Policy) reported that the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document had been adopted by the three Joint Authorities of Blackpool Council (21 January 2009), Blackburn with Darwen Council (29 January 2009) and Lancashire County Council (26 February 2009). He stated that the document was applicable to all development within the Joint Planning Area. It set out policies which would guide minerals and waste planning in the area to 2021. Mr Sims added that as part of the Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework, the Core Strategy formed part of the statutory development plan and is applicable to all three authority areas.

It was further reported that the Development Plan Document had been considered by an Independent Inspector. The Document as presented incorporated the binding recommendations of the Inspector.

The report made reference to Spatial Vision for Minerals and Waste in Lancashire (this was presented under Appendix A of the report). It indicated that eleven objectives had been identified which set out how the vision was to be achieved. The report also identified nine issues which were proposed to be addressed by the nine policies contained in the Core Strategy.

Members were advised that the report indicated that the Core Strategy was to be supported by a Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD which would identify locations where mineral extraction might take place, and where future waste management facilities would be provided. Work on this DPD had already begun and consultations on it were expected to take place in the autumn.

Members commented on issues associated with radioactive waste and future proposals for the incineration of waste.

Councillor Aitken suggested that there was no differentiation in the report between household waste and commercial waste. In addition, Lancashire County Council had not introduced a commercial waste policy and as such had not published figures relating to the recycling of commercial waste. Mr Sims confirmed that he would take up these issues.

The Chairman commented that it should be acknowledged that Fylde was unique in Lancashire due to its sustainable supply of sand on the beach available for extraction being infinite.

Councillor Chew enquired whether the area of Thistleton had been identified as site for mineral gravels. Mr Sims stated that as far as he was aware the site had not been identified.

The Committee RESOLVED to note the report.

#### 6. St Annes Building Refurbishment Programme 2001- 2009 - A Review

Paul Drinnan, Head of Planning (Regeneration) and Stephen Smith (Principal Regeneration Officer) gave a slide presentation on the Building and Refurbishment programme that had been in operation in St Annes since 2001. The report included a summary of the main achievements and a review of some of the lessons learned during its operation.

Mr Drinnan made particular reference to the successful implementation of the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) St Annes and the subsequent Conservation Area Restoration Scheme (CARS) Scheme.

The presentation covered the background and economic justification for the programme; overall approach to the work; the role of the council and its partners and the latest update on outputs and outcomes. The slides also depicted before and after replacement buildings/shop fronts.

The Chairman asked about the funding arrangements for the public realm improvements in St Annes i.e. private v public spend. Mr Drinnan confirmed that the ratio was 7 to 1.

Councillor Bennett enquired about claw back for reinvestment. Mr Smith stated that within the HERS/CARS scheme there was a 3 year claw back period which was set by case law.

Councillor Chew expressed her disappointment with regard to the on going maintenance arrangements within the town centre and made particular reference to the planting. She asked whether the council set aside monies for this purpose. Mr Drinnan explained that this was a corporate issue and it was the team's intention in preparation for 2012 golf to seek a meeting of departmental representatives in an attempt to resolve the matter.

Councillor Chew also added that in recognition of the town's conservation area status, none of the conservation areas had a management plan. In view of this, priority should be given to the employ of a Conservation Officer. Mr Walker addressed this point.

Councillor Cornah asked about the number of commercial premises that were currently vacant in the town centre. Mr Smith confirmed that the survey that had been undertaken in late 2008 confirmed there to be 6.6% which was well below the national average.

The Chairman enquired about the feasibility of transferring garden operatives currently assigned to Ashton Gardens to work on the maintenance of the town centre. Mr Walker confirmed that as a result on the Ashton Gardens project there had been an opportunity to transfer operatives to solely work in the town centre. He added that the Public Open Spaces Strategy acknowledged the need to invest in the maintenance of the town centre

Following a full discussion the committee RESOLVED:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To convey the Committee's thanks and appreciation for the excellent work the Regeneration Team have carried out over the years in relation to the successful implementation of the HERS/CARS scheme.
3. To recommend to the Portfolio Holder that officers engage with external funding agencies to ascertain where that are further funding initiatives and opportunities that might be appropriate to the borough and in this regard report back in due course with relevant information.
4. To note and acknowledge the economic achievements and expertise gained through the implementation of the scheme as referred to in the report and replace that whether future building refurbishment schemes that experience gained through the operation of HERS in respect of protocol and procedures be embodied in the operation of such future schemes.
5. To recommend to the Portfolio Holder that officers provide a periodic review for the committee to monitor schemes as they progress and to instruct officers to identify through future regeneration action plans the scope for grant aid scheme and consider opportunities for external funding to support the relevant elements of the action plans.
6. To ensure that the commitment given to the on going maintenance of the St Annes Town centre redevelopment scheme since inception is implemented so that standards achieved could be maintained.

7. Regeneration Projects Update

Paul Drinnan, Head of Planning (Regeneration) presented a resume on a number of key regeneration and economic development issues.

The appendix to the report set out series of projects and issues that were actively being pursued as part of the Council regeneration activity including: the Rural Development Programme for England, Kirkham Building Enhancement Programme, Visitor Economy Pilot, 2012 Investment Framework, Regeneration Framework, Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Park, Lytham Town Centre Health Check, Tourist Board Project, St Annes CARS scheme, Shaping the Place, Station Road, Conservation Areas and Partnership Working.

Following consideration of this matter the committee RESOLVED:

1. To recommend to the Portfolio Holder that priority be given to the progression of the Station Road, Lytham scheme.
2. To recommend to the Portfolio Holder that the Local Strategic Partnership (Environment Group) via the LSP Action Plan be asked to help progress the work on Conservation Areas.

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