

Minutes of a meeting of the **Place Shaping Panel** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Monday 6 January 2020** at **6.00pm** when there were present:

	Mrs L H Hemsall – Chairman	
Mr N J Brennan	Mr G K Nurden	Mr D M Thomas
Mr S M Clancy	Mrs L A Starling	Mr J M Ward

Mrs J Copplestone, Mrs J Leggett, Mr M Murrell, Mr D Roper, Mrs K Vincent and Mr S Vincent also attended the meeting for its duration.

Also in attendance were the Director of Place, Assistant Director Planning, Spatial Planning Manager and Committee Officer (JO).

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Miss Lawn, Ms Neesam and Miss Thomas.

12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT CHARGING FOR PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

The report proposed the introduction of a range of charges for pre-application planning advice, which was a non-statutory service that the Council currently provided for free.

The Feasibility Study had identified that the pre-application service was an area that had the potential to generate income as Broadland was one of the only planning authorities in Norfolk that did not charge for pre-application advice.

Engagement with customers particularly agents had confirmed that they value the benefits of pre-application advice and it was proposed that initial high-level advice and permitted development advice would still be available to customers free of charge, both on the phone and in person in the office. However, charges could be made for providing a more comprehensive response that involved further research or input from a range of officers.

The key benefit of a more in-depth service would be to speed up the planning application process for the customer by ensuring that the correct information was provided from the beginning and any officer concerns were addressed before the application was submitted. It would also be an opportunity to recover some of the Council's costs and could generate additional revenue of £280,627 phased over four years.

The proposed charges would begin at £60 for Householder enquiries and go up to £3,800 for developments of 200 dwellings or more. It was considered that these were reasonable and offered good value to customers.

The Chairman noted that applicants would still be able to use the Planning Portal for free, which remained an excellent resource for planning advice.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that charging for pre-application advice would not place additional pressures on planning officers, as they were already doing much of this work. Introducing charging would simply allow the Council to recover some of its costs for this service.

Members were also advised that customers were accustomed to paying for pre-application advice at South Norfolk Council and there was a lot of commonality between that service and the one provided at Broadland.

The Committee was informed that if adopted, the service would be monitored and could be reviewed in 12 months, if required.

It was also confirmed that charging for the service would not affect the 20 percent increase in planning fees that was adopted by the Council in 2018, to enhance planning delivery.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

To introduce charging for pre-application advice, as outlined in the report, from 1 April 2020.

Cllr Nurden left the meeting at 6.55pm

14 GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION

The report proposed that the draft Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) go out for consultation from 29 January to 16 March 2020. In addition, the approval of a Communications Plan for the consultation was sought, as well as a revised timetable for the production of the Local Plan and consequential amendments to the Local Development Scheme.

The consultation draft GNLP was made up of two documents: the GNLP Strategy document, which contained the planning strategy for growth in Greater Norwich from 2018 to 2038 and the GNLP sites document, which

contained the policies for the sites that were proposed to be allocated for development to help deliver the GNLP.

The consultation would be part of the informal 'Regulation 18' stage of evidence gathering for the production of the Local Plan, so would be subject to change as a consequence of representations received.

The draft GNLP Strategy was made up of the following seven policies:

Policy 1 The Growth Strategy – outlined the broad strategic approach to growth and housing.

Policy 2 Sustainable Communities – detailed 10 strategic issues which all developments must be designed to address to be sustainable

Policy 3 Environmental Protection and Enhancement – addressed the requirements for conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment and heritage.

Policy 4 Strategic Infrastructure – identified how growth in Greater Norwich would be supported and delivered through necessary infrastructure improvements.

Policy 5 Homes – provided detail on how new homes must address different housing needs including affordable homes, homes for older people, and student accommodation.

Policy 6 The Economy (including retail) – set out details of the main strategic employment areas, the key business sectors, and additional jobs needed up to 2038.

Policy 7 Strategy for the Areas of Growth – specified where new housing growth would be distributed, and any specific policies linked to each location.

When completed the GNLP would become part of the Development Plan, and would replace the current Joint Core Strategy and Site Allocations plans.

Members were advised that residential allocations for 'Village Clusters in South Norfolk were not included in the GNLP but would be addressed through a separate local plan, specifically for these, which will be produced in tandem with the GNLP.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that although there was a proposed policy that would allow small scale windfall market housing outside the development boundary it would be for no more than a total of three dwellings within each parish during the lifetime of the Plan.

Members were advised that a GNLP briefing for parish and town councils was being held on 22 January 2020, which should hopefully dispel any misunderstandings about the Plan.

In response to a question about the enforceability of affordable housing the Committee was advised that a key issue with this was viability.

Whilst, thirty three percent affordable housing remained an aspiration of the Council it was recognised that developers could encounter problems, such as contaminated land, which could increase costs significantly and threaten the viability of the development if the affordable housing requirement was not reduced.

Similarly, circumstances could also cause development to stall if land was held by an agent and not the final developer

The Panel were advised that the Greater Norwich Development Partnership had considered the draft GNLP earlier today and had recommended that it be approved for consultation, subject to some factual corrections.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

To approve

1. the proposed contents of the draft GNLP for public consultation with finalisation of the draft including any minor factual or typographical changes delegated to the Director of Place in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder;
2. the proposed engagement process for the consultation;
3. the revised timetable for the production of the Local Plan and consequent amendments to the Council's local development scheme. as set out in the GNLP reports.

The meeting closed at 7.49pm.