

Minutes of a meeting of the EAP Climate Change Environment & Growth
Held at 9.30 am on Wednesday 18th May 2022 as a Remote Meeting via Zoom

Present:-

Members

Councillor Harriet Pentland (Chair)
Councillor Tim Allebone
Councillor Jennie Bone
Councillor Dez Dell

Councillor Anne Lee
Councillor Jan O'Hara

Officers

Emma Arklay
George Candler
Rob Harbour
Raj Sohal
Jonathan Waterworth

Senior Development Officer
Executive Director – Place and Economy
Assistant Director of Growth and Regeneration
Democratic Services Officer
Assistant Director of Assets and Environment

Also in attendance – Councillor Graham Lawman

54 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

55 Members' Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

56 Minutes from Meeting held on 27 April 2022

RESOLVED that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022 were approved as a correct record.

57 River Ise Strategic Plan

The EAP considered a report by the Senior Development Officer, which outlined the Ise Valley Strategic Plan.

During discussion, the principal points were noted:

- Regarding the poor water quality of the lower River Ise, members queried whether any plans had been formulated to improve the quality of water.
- One member queried whether the objective of the linear park was to work along the entire length of the Ise, from Corby to Wellingborough.

- Members queried whether the strategic plan, once adopted, would inform planning policy in North Northamptonshire.
- One member queried what the purpose of the 'habitat opportunity map', outlined in the report, was.
- Members queried how informal access, detailed within the plan, would become formalised.
- Members queried how Hanwood Park would enhance the local environment.

In response, the Senior Development Officer clarified that:

- There existed several projects within the strategic plan, which were focused on improving the water quality of the lower Ise. Water quality remained a key focus for local authority officers. The Senior Development Officer assured members that she would request more technical detail from The Environment Agency.
- The objective of the linear park was to work along the entire length of the Ise, from Corby to Wellingborough.
- Officers hoped to take the strategic plan to the Executive Committee, so that the local authority could then pass it on to development management officers, for consideration when making planning decisions. The Senior Development Officer acknowledged that awareness-raising activity around the strategic plan would need to be carried out and hoped that it could inform supplementary planning documents..
- The habitat opportunity map consisted of geographical mapping, through which the local authority had assessed potential habitat opportunities against constraints and mapped the whole of North Northamptonshire.
- There would be a requirement for formal identifications of pathways, in order for them to be properly mapped. Officers would work with highways to recognise these paths, as forming the Ise Valley Way.
- Through Section 106 payments the local authority would assess which habitats could be enhanced through the open spaces of Hanwood park.

Regarding water quality, one member posited that despite certain persistent issues, the water quality of the River Ise had improved. The member explained that sewage was less frequently pumped into rivers, since it had increasingly become utilised in agriculture, in the form of bio solids and chemicals.

RESOLVED that:

The EAP noted the report.

58 Community Asset Transfer Policy

The EAP considered a report by the Assistant Director of Assets and Environment, which introduced the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy and supporting processes.

During discussion, the principal points were noted:

- Members acknowledged that the policy outlined in the report was an updated policy for North Northamptonshire Council, similar to those that were adopted by the previous legacy Northamptonshire authorities. They queried how these policies had operated in the past.
- One member queried what would happen if a piece of land, as a community asset, was transferred and terms were breached. They illustrated the example of if a private sports organisation was to potentially take over a field and secure the area, restricting access to the general public.

In response, the Assistant Director of Assets and Environment clarified that:

- There had existed a variety of different policies for the previous legacy authorities however, the local authority wished to assure the EAP that it had been consistent with its considerations. Other arrangements in the past had, for example, devolved community centres to community groups and allowed parish councils to operate a number of services. There would be opportunity to devolve services to town councils going forward, to provide an improved outcome for local residents.
- The local authority would seek to maintain open spaces. The policy had been aimed at improving community access, not limiting it. Any transfer of assets would be governed by the lease, to take action against any breaches of service agreements. Nevertheless, there would exist a route to take action, were breaches of service agreements to occur. The Assistant Director explained that there would be a balance between how much control over assets the local authority would retain and how much would be given to those taking over.

RESOLVED that:

The EAP noted the report.

59 Asset of Community Value Policy

The EAP considered a report by the Assistant Director of Assets and Environment, which outlined the Community Right to Bid (Assets of Community Value) policy.

RESOLVED that:

The EAP noted the report.

60 Close of Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Climate Change, Environment and Growth Executive Advisory Panel would be held virtually, via Zoom, on Monday 11th July 2022 at 2:00pm.