

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL** held in Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 25 July 2017 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

A R Woolf (Chairman)

J R Astill
F Biggadike
H Drury
L J Eldridge

A Harrison
J L King
A M Newton
J L Reynolds

E J Sneath
J Tyrrell

In Attendance: The South Holland Place Manager, the Development Manager and the Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors M D Booth and R Clark.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Policy Development Panel held on 9 May 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

At a meeting on 28 February 2017, where the Panel had received an update on the current situation around empty homes, members had requested that they be provided with a list of empty homes within their wards in order that they could provide officers with any local knowledge. At the time it had been stated that officers would first confirm if there were any data protection issues with regard to sharing this information, but members would either be provided with these details or at least numbers of properties per ward. This information had not been received, and was again requested.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

In relation to the discussion around HMOs at agenda item 10, Councillor Drury informed the meeting that in the interests of transparency, he wished it to be recorded that he had a pecuniary interest in a number of licensed HMOs. He remained in the meeting during discussion of this item.

3. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 6

There were no questions asked under Standing Order 6.

Action By

MC, PS,
CM

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4. TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no tracking of recommendations to consider.

**5. ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE PERFORMANCE MONITORING
PANEL**

There were no items referred from the Performance Monitoring Panel.

6. KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan published on 17 July 2017.

AGREED:

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

7. POLICY REGISTER

The Panel gave consideration to the Policy Register that was dated 23 June 2017.

It was noted that the register had been improved by the inclusion of each policy's cycle, and it was laid out in order of approved date.

Member's raised the following issues:

- What was the position with the Safeguarding Policy, as there was no approved date against this item?
 - This policy was currently being reviewed. Members would be advised of the cycle of the review and why an approved date had not been added.
- The Modern Slavery Statement was to be considered at Council on 26 July – should this be added to the Policy Register?
 - In due course it would be reviewed, most probably in 3 years time, and would be added to the Policy Register.
- A large number of properties were not numbered – could the Authority at least ensure that its own council homes were clearly numbered?
 - This issue was not covered by the Street Naming and Numbering Policy however, the numbering of

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properties could possibly be considered when the Policy was reviewed.

- Some of the policies were statutory and out of date (e.g. South Holland Common Housing Allocations Policy, Health and Safety Policy), showing as high risk and that they were being reviewed. Was this sufficient?
 - Another column had to be added showing an anticipated date for completion. Information from various work planners needed to be included on the Register.

CP

AGREED:

That the Policy Register be noted.

8. PLANNING DESIGN AND DERELICT AND DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Place which responded to a request from the Panel for more information on Planning Design and Derelict and Dilapidated Buildings, in order that the Panel could decide whether or not to set up a Task Group on these topics.

Planning Design was considered first. The South Holland Local Plan 2006 remained the adopted development plan and Policy SG14 was the main design policy. The relevant sections of these were detailed within the report. Also detailed was Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework around required good design.

Although currently having limited weight in the determination of current planning applications, the proposed design policy framework in the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, recently submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, was included for information.

The Panel considered the information provided, and the following points were raised regarding design:

- Aesthetics should be considered as part of design
- There was little variation in the general style of housing available throughout the District – more variation was needed. There should be more detail in design.
- The positioning of housing types within larger developments was important in order to build social cohesion.
- Density of housing – was there any way of influencing this?

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Officers responded with a number of points:

- There was not a specific style of housing typical of the fen landscape, other than the traditional fen cottage vernacular, and more generic styles of housing had been built within the last 50 or so years.
- The emerging Local Plan took on some of the design issues raised. However, a policy that was too prescriptive would not be workable or be supported by the Inspectorate.
- An area that members may wish to consider as part of a Task Group was whether there were enough controls in the design policies, or whether they needed expanding. Did they provide enough scope to build on in the future? Were policies broad enough that there was confidence they would be delivered well within the next 30-40 years?
- Policies for the future were required. Recent builds should be considered rather than older ones to identify what worked and what didn't, and whether policies affecting the new builds were satisfactory to deliver for the future
- Timing of a Task Group should be considered. Reviewing newer builds and how they worked should be done over a period of time, and would be a large undertaking. The Local Plan was currently undergoing an examination period and it was suggested that a Task Group be set up once this process was concluded.
- This area of work fell under the remit of the Planning Policy Team, and would need to fit in with the Local Plan process.

The Place Manager provided the Panel with an update on derelict and dilapidated buildings. He stated that the street scene, Pride in South Holland and derelict and dilapidated buildings sat under the same umbrella, and each were very different issues in their own right. The main issues centred around what the site looked like and what its consequences were (e.g. anti social behaviour).

There had been some notable successes with some sites over the last few years e.g. The New Inn at Pode Hole and the Chatterton Water Tower, and there had been some issues dealt with and some improvements made at others, including the Bull and Monkie site in Spalding. Ultimately, a Task Group looking at derelict and dilapidated sites would be ineffective as conclusions would be very difficult to come to due to each site being uniquely different.

A report was due to be presented to the Cabinet in September updating on the situation around street scene and untidy sites, and how the restructure of the Place Team would work to

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approach enforcement through one central, cohesive team.

AGREED:

- a) That the report of the Director of Place, and the update provided by the Place Manager be noted; and
- b) That a Task Group to look at Planning Design, with membership to be confirmed at a later date, be added to the Panel's Work Programme, and that work commence in 2018 following the end of the examination period of the Local Plan.

CM

(The Planning Development Manager left the meeting following discussion of this item.)

9. POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager – Governance, which set out the Work Programme of the Policy Development Panel. The Work Programme consisted of two separate sections, the first setting out the dates of the future Panel meetings along with proposed items for consideration, and the second setting out the Task Groups that had been identified by the Panel.

Alongside consideration of this item, the Panel was asked to consider its Work Programme, how it could be progressed, and issues the Panel or its Task Groups should be involved in scrutinising. The Place Manager was in attendance to facilitate the discussion.

Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and homelessness were areas suggested for consideration, and the following points were raised:

- A review looking into unlicensed HMOs, and the policy around how these were dealt with, was the main area of concern – these HMOs were the most likely to be unsafe or have antisocial behaviour issues.
- Licensing of HMOs in general could be reviewed.
- Were there problems with HMOs and if so, how could they be addressed?
- A Task Group would need to be clear about its scope, and the nature of the perceived problem – previously, consideration had been given to this issue from a planning perspective rather than a behavioural one.
- Homelessness could be an outcome associated with unlicensed HMOs and may be an issue for a future Task

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Group to consider.

It was agreed that a member of the Private Sector Housing Team be invited to a Panel meeting in December to explain processes and issues around HMOs in order to assist the Panel in forming a clear terms of reference for a Task Group. The Task Group would start its work after the Task Group set up to look at Planning Design, as considered in the previous minute.

Councillor Drury stated that due to his line of work, he may not be able to be a member of the Task Group however, he had a lot of knowledge in this area and would like to contribute in some way.

AGREED:

- a) That both sections of the Panel's Work Programme, as set out in the report of the Executive Manager Governance, be noted; and
- b) That a member of the Private Sector Housing Team be invited to the Panel meeting in December to explain processes and issues around HMOs in order to assist the Panel in forming a clear terms of reference for a Task Group, which would commence its work following completion of the Task Group looking at Planning Design.

CM

(Councillors Newton and King left the meeting during discussion of the above item.)

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT.

There were no urgent items.

(The meeting ended at 8.10 pm)

(End of minutes)