

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee** held in Meeting Room 1, South Holland District Council, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE11 2XE on Monday, 1st July, 2024 at 11.54 am.

Present:

Boston Borough Council:

Councillors Peter Bedford, David Middleton (Vice-Chairman) and David Scoot.

South Holland District Council:

Councillors Bryan Alcock, James Avery (Chairman) and Henry Bingham.

In attendance:

Boston Borough Council:

Substitute Councillors Alison Austin and John Baxter.

South Holland District Council:

Substitute Councillors Allan Beal and Sophie Hutchinson.

Officers:

Assistant Director – Planning & Strategic Infrastructure, Senior Planning Lawyer, Planning Policy Officer (Boston Borough Council), Planning Consultant, Planning Policy Officer (Lincolnshire County Council) and Democratic Services Team Leader (Boston Borough Council).

1 Election of Chairman

Nominations were requested for the position of Chairman.

The Chairman was proposed by Councillor Henry Bingham and seconded by Councillor David Scoot.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor James Avery be appointed Chairman for the municipal year.

2 Election of Vice-Chairman

The Chairman requested nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman, whom was required to be from a different authority from the Chairman.

The Vice-Chairman was proposed by Councillor David Scoot and seconded by Councillor Henry Bingham.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor David Middleton be appointed Vice-Chairman for the municipal year.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anne Dorrian (Boston Borough Council), Ian Fleetwood (Lincolnshire County Council) and Rob Gibson (Lincolnshire County Council).

4 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

5 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 Introductions and general update

The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure provided members with an introduction in respect of what had happened within the last five years since the Committee had last met in 2019. There had been a significant change in membership and the officer core since that time.

The Steering Group had met earlier that morning in order to go through the same material to ensure all members and substitute members attending were provided with the same information.

Councillor Alison Austin queried why no substitutions were in attendance from Lincolnshire County Council. The Democratic Services Team Leader advised that no substitutions had been appointed by the County Council at their Annual Meeting.

7 South East Lincolnshire Local Plan Review

The Planning Consultant provided members with a presentation on the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan Review, a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix A. The presentation covered the following points:

- Historic Perspective
- Need for Review
- Catriona Riddle – Advice
- Basis of the Review
- Part 1 Review
- The Big Picture
- Other Considerations
- The Evidence Base
- Part 1 Conclusions
- Part 2 Report
- Policy Monitoring
- Policy Findings
- Part 2 Conclusions
- Overall Conclusions

Councillor John Baxter queried whether the report would also need to go through other Council meetings. The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure clarified that the Joint Strategic Committee was the Local Planning Authority for planning making purposes, which sat outside of the individual Council processes.

Councillor John Baxter queried whether there was a communications strategy in place. The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure advised that the committee papers were published on the website. He added that any other relevant information would be publicised, as required.

Councillor Peter Bedford requested that the Environment Agency be invited to any future meetings of the committee to ensure they were all working together. The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure agreed that there was an opportunity to include their input in meetings.

Councillor Bryan Alcock advised that the public should be made aware of the potential longer timescale for the work to be carried out as a result of resourcing issues. He added that the quality of development was now more important than the quantity.

Councillor Alison Austin referred to the quality of development design in the Boston area. The Planning Consultant advised that the quality of development was good in comparison to others throughout the country, considering the period of financial pressure. The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure added that they could look into implementing a design code. He referred to the South Holland Development Management Committee which had a design policy, and the national design code.

The Planning Consultant stated that most of the appeals lost, jointly between the authorities, were around the areas of 'quality not meeting the policy' which the Inspector had not agreed with. The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure advised that some work could be done to create a joint design code. The Planning Policy Officer confirmed that the policy had been written in the way that it was because they were not allowed to dictate. Therefore, the policy was written to invite members to consider the reasons.

Councillor Henry Bingham suggested that members should be aware of their wording when referring to developments.

Councillor Austin referred to the settlement boundaries and queried whether there should be some flexibility in them. The Planning Consultant advised that it was the choice of the Development Management Committees and that the Local Plan was there as a material consideration that should be adhered to unless other material considerations indicated otherwise. The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure added that with reviewing the Local Plan they would also be looking at settlement boundaries as part of the spatial strategy.

Councillor Hutchinson referred to the third recommendation regarding a new Local Development Scheme (LDS) and queried what the review mechanism would be for the LDS. The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure clarified that the LDS would be the review mechanism for the required work. He added that the Joint Committee would need to meet more regularly than it had been.

The Assistant Director – Planning and Strategic Infrastructure advised members that the approach taken was not without risk, given that an incoming government could make significant changes to the planning system. However, these were currently unknown.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Peter Bedford and seconded by Councillor Henry Bingham.

RESOLVED:

That the 5-year review of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP) had been completed;

That, based on the review that had taken place, there was no requirement to update the Local Plan at this time;

That within 12 months a further report be considered setting out a new Local Development Scheme (LDS) addressing the work areas identified within the report and any other matters that arose during the meeting, and seeking to agree the resources that would be required to implement it;

That it be noted that the Review of the Retail Evidence Base had taken place as required, that the requirements of that part of the Plan had been complied with, and that no further action was necessary; and

That the amended monitoring approach, as set out within the monitoring reports produced since adoption of the Local Plan, be confirmed.

8 Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

There was no other business.

The Meeting ended at 12.30 pm.