

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Policy Committee held in in the Council Chambers, Tedder Hall, Manby Park, Louth on Thursday, 10th November, 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Councillor Tom Ashton (Chairman)

Councillors Mark Dannatt, Carleen Dickinson, Will Grover, Tony Howard, Daniel McNally, Phyll Smith, Alex Hall, Terry Aldridge and Neil Jones.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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| Simon Milson | - Planning Policy and Research Service Manager |
| Ann Good | - Democratic Services Manager |
| Elaine Speed | - Democratic Services Officer |

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

It was noted that in accordance with Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, notice had been given that Councillors Alex Hall, Terry Aldridge and Neil Jones had been appointed to the Committee in place of Councillors Tom Kemp, Steve McMillan and Helen Matthews for this Meeting only.

18. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):

At this point in the meeting, Members were invited to declare any relevant interests. None were received.

19. MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 October 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

20. ACTIONS:

The actions were noted as complete or in hand.

21. LOCAL LIST UPDATE:

Members received a briefing paper that provided an update on the progress of the Local List project, page 13 of the Agenda refers.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager advised Members that the paper contained information to provide an update on the project to create a Local List across East Lindsey and Lincolnshire.

Members were informed that to date, there was a high number of potential buildings and properties that had been put forward as nominations. The Chairman considered that this highlighted just how passionate East Lindsey was about this matter and given that this was a Lincolnshire-wide project was very pleased to see that East Lindsey had submitted half of the nominations.

The Chairman highlighted that when the original Local Plan was being written there was a profound gap between the statutory listing process which in many cases was particularly onerous for the owners of the buildings to do anything with and also building construction that did not qualify for Grade 2 or higher listing but still needed a value and protection putting on them and he was keen to see this changed.

22. GYPSY/TRAVELLER NEEDS ASSESSMENT (GTNA):

The Planning Policy and Research Manager presented Members with a report that provided a summary on the Gypsy/Traveller Needs Assessment (GTNA), pages 15 to 22 of the Agenda refer and highlighted key information contained within Paragraph 1.

Members were advised that the Policy Team had worked with consultants to produce the GTNA and the final draft had now been received and was attached at Appendix A, pages 23 to 84 of the Agenda refer.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member highlighted that the consultant's report had identified that there was no need for gypsy and traveller sites, Section 7.32, Figure 4, page 64 of the Agenda refers and whilst largely based on interviews conducted, in relation to the survey of Travelling Communities commented that none had been undertaken. It was further highlighted that Paragraph 6.4 referred to interviews with gypsies and travellers in bricks and mortar where one household had been identified for interview, however this was not reflected in the tables and disputed how detailed the survey had been.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager informed Members that the data referred to interviews that the consultants had actually carried out and in Section 6, Paragraph 6.3, the bottom of Figure 2 and referred Members to 9 interviews being undertaken with travellers and show people, page 57 of the Agenda refers.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager added that there were very few of the settled permanent population and the sites detailed in the table were for the majority of sites that the Council had provided to the consultants.

A Member responded that there was a large population of those people who fitted the definition as they had previously travelled but no longer did, where some of those in households may wish to go back on the road but currently found the transition too difficult.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager advised Members that the survey had been undertaken by Opinion Research Services (ORS) who carried out many surveys across the country and its methodologies had been tested countless times at appeal and

examinations. However, he was happy to go back to ORS to query the methodology behind the survey work that was undertaken, although advised that it was a standard approach applied across the country.

N.B. Councillor Will Grover joined the Meeting at 18:17pm.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager requested that if Members were aware of any additional sites and population of that type within the district to inform him. Whilst acknowledging that gypsies and travellers were a hidden community and it was difficult to track them down to open up communication routes there was still an opportunity at this stage to feed information into the work.

The Chairman commented that as the work went through its final stages he believed that the methodology and everything behind this was as robust as it could be. The conclusions that the report had arrived at from ELDC's perspective in terms of producing and delivering a Local Plan was that it could be challenging and contentious with communities to deliver further pitches. Furthermore, there was a huge cost with delivering sites and the site at Burgh Le Marsh was highlighted as an example.

- In relation to Section 7.38, DLUHC Traveller Caravan Count, page 66 of the Agenda refers, a Member highlighted that data showed that there had been no unauthorised caravans recorded on land not owned by travellers in recent years and asked what period of time this referred to.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager informed Members that the Annual National Survey was undertaken bi-annually by Planning Policy Officers who visited and surveyed sites to see whether any caravans were on a site or whether there were any unauthorised encampments, rather than undertaking interviews. It was however, acknowledged that this was a snapshot in time and as such, the findings on that one day had to be reported which may not show the true picture.

- A Member commented that he was not happy with the findings in the report and queried whether there could be a cross check with information from the Census to see whether the figures were correct. It was further considered that if there were no allocated sites, then there would be no people available to interview.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager responded that Paragraph 3.22 of the report stated that the 2011 Census recorded just 24 households that identified as either Gypsies or Irish Travellers who lived in a house or bungalow in East Lindsey and two who lived in a flat or maisonette, page 41 of the Agenda refers. This was part of the methodology used by ORS and reiterated that it was making contact and engaging in open dialogue that was

difficult. Members were advised that data from the 2021 Census was published but not available down to that level of detail and before information was fed into the Local Plan review ORS would be asked to undertake a refresh of the data in case there were any changes.

- A Member highlighted the term 'negotiated stopping', detailed at Paragraph 7.47, page 67 of the Agenda refers for the agreed short-term provision for gypsy and traveller caravans and queried where these sites were located in East Lindsey. It was highlighted that Queens Park Car Park, Seacroft Bus Park in Mablethorpe and Furlongs Field in Sutton on Sea were not regarded as negotiated stopping sites, however people did turn up and stop on these sites and prior to Covid there were five separate occasions when a considerable number of people pitched up on these non-negotiated sites. It was considered that a number of appropriate sites with appropriate amenities would reduce future problems.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager advised Members that to provide negotiated stopping places was a proposal in the report and was not something that was currently in place to accommodate the transit population. It was highlighted that there was already a permanent gypsy and traveller population in the district and the transit travellers would still pass through even if there were no sites available and the policy team strived to capture the information, however it was never going to be a perfect science.

Members were advised that in relation to the transit population the report recommended to have a joined-up approach with Lincolnshire County Council working closely with its Enforcement and Licensing Teams to assess patterns of travel across the district and this would feed in to how the Council monitored and enforced this moving forward.

- The Chairman queried whether a view on the assessment had been received from the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service. The Planning Policy and Research Manager responded that no direct response had been received and there was no direct letter of endorsement, however engagement had been made throughout the process for the creation of the report from both officers and the consultants. Following which, the Chairman requested that the final copy of the ELDC Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Report be forwarded to the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service for comment.
- A Member queried whether the Mablethorpe Ward Member had in mind any sites to put forward, following which the Ward Member queried why the Gypsy Council were not being asked directly for information as it would be able to find people to put forward. The Planning Policy and Research Manager advised that as any stakeholder, the Gypsy Council would have been consulted during

the process and ORS were involved with many organisations and bodies that represented the different gypsies, travellers and show people communities. The Planning Policy and Research Manager added that he was comfortable with the tendering process that was undertaken and assured Members that ORS had experience and expertise to be awarded the contract.

No further comments or questions were received.

Following which, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Gypsy, Traveller Needs Assessment be noted by Members as forming part of the evidence base for the Local Plan review.

23. AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2021-2022:

The Planning Policy and Research Manager presented Members with a report in relation to the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2021-22, pages 85 to 92 of the Agenda refer. A copy of the AMR report was attached at Appendix A, pages 93 to 210 of the Agenda refer.

Members were advised that the Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required Local Authorities to publish an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) on an annual basis. The Local Planning Regulations 2012 set out various items of information that should be included in an AMR.

The AMR covered the period March 2021 to February 2022 and contained an update of the position of the Council in relation to various national indicators, including employment, wages and house prices. It also included a suite of monitoring indicators designed to show how the Local Plan policies were performing. The AMR was in final draft form and subject to only design and formatting changes and the information mentioned below.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager referred Members to Paragraph 3.6, page 88 of the Agenda refers that reported there had been a delay in securing data for affordable housing to enter into the AMR. As this data was still not available, the Planning Policy and Research Manager asked with Members' agreement that authority be delegated to the Chairman of Planning Policy Committee to allow the information to be inserted into the AMR once confirmed.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager also then highlighted to Members that there were several pieces of information not contained within the report presented as follows:

- With regards to the section that looked at the number of applications approved at Committee contrary to officer

recommendation there was a total of 6, an increase of 3 from the previous year and a decrease from the year before that.

- In relation to S106 Agreements, the Council entered into 17 new agreements in the reporting period which achieved a total of £1.994m against 286 affordable housing units delivered under the terms of those agreements.
- With regards to expenditure, a total of £787k had been received and £27k spent.

This information would be included in the final copy of the AMR, together with the affordable housing data.

Members were invited to put their comments and questions forward.

- A Member referred to the Table relating to employment land vacancy rates at Paragraph 7.24, page 122 of the Agenda refers. A query was raised why there was a considerable variation in the numbers reported and provided Louth and North Somercotes as an example. The Planning Policy and Research Manager advised Members that he was unable to account for the variation for North Somercotes and would take this away and provide a response after the meeting.

With regards to Louth, it was highlighted that the industrial estate was a large site, had a lot of variation on it and a 10% vacancy rate with a higher turnover in the smaller units and starter units for small businesses. The Planning Policy and Research Manager advised Members that he would check all of the figures in the table referred for accuracy.

- A Member commented that he had asked for clarification on the extension to the industrial estate at the previous meeting, however was provided with a plan with what land was currently available. It was queried whether the extension referred to was under the Council's ownership or whether it was run by the Lincolnshire Enterprise Partnership, for example.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager advised Members that his understanding was that the plan outlined land to the north in red as part of the Council's ownership where basic services and facilities had been put in prior to being sold or rented, depending on what business model the Council wished to use, however was not aware there had been any progress on this land to date. A Member thanked the Planning Policy and Research Manager for the information and asked whether further information could be provided for the northern part of the site.

- A Member asked for clarification on the coastal commitments, in particular for affordable housing that had been delivered and how many was allocated to market housing.
- A Member referred to the affordable dwellings completion and whilst acknowledging that the data referred to the period 2011 to 2019 asked for clarification as to what was classed as an affordable dwelling, for example whether it included shared ownership, discounted housing or social rented properties.

The Planning Policy and Research Manager advised Members that the affordable housing figures were broken down to distinguish the coastal housing and affordable coastal housing. With regards to the type of an affordable dwelling, this should include anything that was affordable from a planning point of view. The data for this was provided by the Council's Housing Team. A Member commented that he would be interested to see whether the discounted first-time buyers housing had started to take over social rented housing, following which the Planning Policy and Research Manager advised Members that he hoped to be able to achieve more of a breakdown.

- A Member referred to Paragraph 7.12, Table 'Employee Jobs in East Lindsey', pages 118 to 119 of the Agenda refer which included meaningful face emojis, however could not understand why they had been included in Paragraph 9 'Significant Effects/Contextual Indicators, pages 130 to 139 of the Agenda refers. The Planning Policy and Research Manager explained that these were also indicators with a target and baseline and were included to provide a visual indicator as to whether the data was better, worse or the same, however was happy to delete them if Members considered they brought nothing meaningful to the report.

No further comments or questions were received.

In conclusion, the Chairman considered that due to the difficult times over the last couple of years, East Lindsey was a good place to work and live. Rents, including market rents were still favourable compared to other parts of Lincolnshire and across the country and the Council continued to see houses delivered and were meeting set housing targets. There was also a continued increase in employment in tourism and revenue.

In terms of the six planning applications that Planning Committee approved against officer recommendation, the Chairman added that he was completely relaxed with decisions made by the Committee and the Council had not lost an appeal on a major application in the last six to seven years.

The Chairman advised Members that once the affordable housing data had been entered into the AMR he would ensure that this was circulated to all Members.

Following which, it was

RESOLVED:

- That authority be delegated to the Chairman of Planning Policy Committee to allow the affordable housing data to be inserted into the AMR once confirmed.
- That the contents of the Authority Monitoring Report 2021-2022 be noted.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The date of the next Meeting was confirmed as Thursday 5 January 2023 commencing at 6.00pm.

The meeting closed at 7.06 pm.