

Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Plan Task Force held on 11 January 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Joycelyn Redsell (Chair), Martin Kerin (Vice-Chair), Alex Anderson, Andrew Jefferies and Gerard Rice

Apologies: Councillors Luke Spillman

In attendance: Ben Smith, Arup Representative
Lizzey Williams, Arup Representative
Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection
Sean Nethercott, Strategic Lead of Strategic Services
Wendy Le, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

17. Minutes

The minutes of the Local Development Plan Task Force held on 2 November 2020 were approved as a true and correct record.

18. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

19. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

20. Thurrock Climate Change Strategy

A presentation was given by Ben Smith.

The Chair sought more detail on the organisations 'Drax', 'SSE Thermal' and 'Uni Per'. Ben Smith explained that Arup was working on energy strategies in Thurrock and also on Project Cavendish which brought all these organisations together. These organisations were investing into proposals of blue hydrogen and had brought it to Members' attention so it could be considered how this would form part of Thurrock's Local Plan process.

Going through the presentation, the Chair commented that the reduction of carbon emissions needed to be considered such as using the river for

transport. She went on to say that trees had been planted around the Borough and that developers needed to incorporate more green spaces into plans. She mentioned flooding issues in Tilbury and wondered whether this was due to overdevelopment in the area. Ben Smith commented that current lockdown restrictions had highlighted the importance of green spaces and that the right data helped in the Local Plan process.

Councillor Rice said that he sat on the Flood Risk Committee and that flood gates had been improved so Tilbury was well protected. Same as Purfleet-on-Thames which had new flood barriers installed. He commented on central government's requirement that domestic homes to remove gas central heating and combination boilers by a certain date. He pointed out that some people would not be able to afford to do this. Ben Smith said that central government's recent plans showed an emphasis on removing residual gases from homes as part of their plans to decarbonise the country but there were other things that could be done in the home before that to make it more energy efficient. He went on to say that Arup was working on a government pilot scheme 'High for Heat' for hydrogen homes.

Leigh Nicholson commented that climate change needed to be embedded in the Local Plan process as it was about conscious decision making. The Local Plan was the blueprint for sustainable growth and ensuring the right infrastructure was in place through the location of homes, businesses, green spaces and other assets such as electric vehicle charging points. Strategies worked together which formed part of the Local Plan process and could not be seen in isolation.

The Task Force discussed electric vehicles and noted that central government aimed to stop the use of internal combustion vehicles by 2030. It was said that these were not affordable for some people so it was important that people were not overcharged for these. It was highlighted that Thurrock needed strategic electric vehicle charging points to ensure it was accessible and that new developments should incorporate these into their plans. Ben Smith highlighted the importance of cycling and walking where possible and that the use of cars should be reduced. He said that electric vehicles still had some environmental impacts. Leigh Nicholson said that a report on electric vehicle charging points had been brought to the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2020 and would be circulated to Members. He said that the Planning Department had been imposing electric vehicle charging points in planning conditions for new developments and that there was a positive shifting change in developer's attitudes towards these.

21. Work Programme

Members asked for a further update report on the White Paper Planning Reforms for the next meeting. Officers explained that this would depend on when the response from government was received. Members would be updated as soon a response was received.

The Chair questioned on when the Sports Facilities – Grays Athletic FC report would come. This would be discussed with Officers.

The following reports were added for the next meeting on 8 March 2021:

1. Overview of the Local Plan work programme
2. Update on Design Charrettes
3. Transport Strategy Update
4. Parking Strategy and Parking Standards

The meeting finished at 7.58 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

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