

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE,  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD,  
ON WEDNESDAY, 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008,  
STARTING AT 7 P.M.

Present:

Councillor R G Kybird, Chairman  
The Mayor, Councillor J A Harding

Councillors:

G P Balaam  
R F W Brame  
T J Jermy  
T J Lamb  
D G Mortimer

A Paines  
P J Pearson  
Mrs P P Quadling  
Mrs P A Spencer  
S N H Wright

In attendance (for item 163/08):

Councillor Daniel Cox, Leader of Norfolk County Council  
Mike Jackson, Director of Planning & Transportation, Norfolk County Council  
Debbie Bartlett, Head of Policy & Performance, Norfolk County Council

Note:

Item 163/08 was dealt with first, with the Mayor chairing the discussion with the Norfolk County Council representatives.

161/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Committee Chairman, Councillor R G Kybird, declared a prejudicial interest in items 164/08 (b) and (c) owing to his Earls Street property interests. He was not present for the discussion or vote, with Councillor Mrs P A Spencer taking the chair in the absence of the Committee Vice-Chairman

162/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs M P Chapman-Allen, S H Chapman-Allen, Mrs T I Paines and M G Spencer.

163/08 DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR UNITARY LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NORFOLK

The Mayor welcomed the Norfolk County Council representatives and a lengthy discussion ensued, covering a range of issues (*Note: only some of these are referred to below*), the aim being to provide town councillors with a clear understanding of the 'view from County Hall' ahead of the next Town Council meeting, which would take place two days before the comment deadline set by the Boundary Committee. There would be an agenda item at that meeting, providing a final opportunity for the Town Council to agree on a corporate view.

Councillor Cox first confirmed the Boundary Committee's brief: the status quo was not an option and a unitary solution must be found.

Much of the discussion that followed centred on the role, composition and democratic accountability of the 'Community Partnership Boards', proposed by the County Council. Councillor Cox appreciated that many people in the respective communities were expressing surprise at the inclusion of Thetford and Watton in the same CPB area. He wanted to make it clear that, if CPBs proved to be an acceptable way forward, then the proposed boundaries to Board areas could be subject to re-examination in light of comments received.

Mr Jackson emphasised the important role that 'Economic Development Boards' could have, with Thetford identified as one of the four locations in Norfolk meriting a strong economic voice. It was envisaged that any Thetford EDB could build on the work of the Moving Thetford Forward Board, which was already making its mark in terms of developing the Growth Point agenda.

The issue of council tax was touched on, with Councillor Cox confirming that financial projections carried out by the County Council had been based on the current levels of tax in King's Lynn & West Norfolk, identified as the second lowest in the county.

At the end of the discussion with elected members, the Mayor adjourned the meeting to permit members of the public present to ask questions.

Following this, it was restated that no 'Town Council view' would result from that evening's discussion pending further discussion at the full Council meeting the following week.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Cox and his senior officers for their attendance.

164/08            PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED that the following Observations be reported to the planning authority (Breckland Council):

*Note: Owing to comment deadlines, the Chairman agreed to consider items c), d) and e) as additional items. These were not included in the published agenda, but have been added below in Plan numerical order.*

- |    |                      |   |
|----|----------------------|---|
| a) | <u>Plan No. 0976</u> | Full Application  |
|    | <u>Description</u>   | Application by Mr Jegan for erection of 2 new shops on ground floor 2 flats on first floor following demolition of existing timber buildings at The Candy Shop, 8-10 Station Road                             |
|    | <u>Observation</u>   | The Committee had commented on the revised design and choice of materials at its 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2008 meeting (minute 100/08k referred), but had not commented then on the proposed take-away operation. |

It did not consider the location to be suited to such a venture and asked for this supplementary comment to be reported.

- b) Plan No. 1185 Full Application
- Description Application by Norfolk NHS Primary Care Trust for demolition of Thetford Cottage Hospital, residential redevelopment of site
- Observation The Committee was adamant that the building be retained as a public building
- c) Plan No. 1186 Conservation Area
- Description Application by Norfolk NHS Primary Care Trust for demolition of redundant Thetford Cottage Hospital, residential redevelopment of site
- Observation The Committee was adamant that the building be retained as a public building
- d) Plan No. 1280 Full Application
- Description Application by Mr Gary Bissett for alterations & front extension to dwelling including conversion of garage to living accommodation at 5 Admirals Way
- Observation No objection
- e) Plan No. 1294 Full Application
- Description Application by Mr C Riches for extension & conversion of dwelling into bed sits at 47 Chester Way
- Observation The Committee deemed the parking provision inadequate and expressed doubts about the efficacy of sound-proofing measures within the converted property
- f) Plan No. 1313 Full Application
- Description Application by Ms A Blows for change of use ground floor to mix of A1/A2, basement flat to café, erection of bin store & cycle stand at 55 Earls Street

Observation

Owing to evident site constraints, the Committee deemed the proposals wholly unsuited to this residential area. There would also be major concerns about customer parking provision, were this to go ahead.

Chairman