
From: Robert Craggs [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 June 2010 11:17
To: Phil Kirby
Cc: Chloe Smith MP; Simon Osborn Programme Officer JCS; Colin Bland; Joint Core Strategy; June Hunt; Malcolm Martins; Mollie Howes; Tony & Ann Stubbs; Marc & Kim & Pierce Allen
Subject: Re: GNDP's Joint Core Strategy

Dear Mr Kirby, Thank you for your letter:

I was aware that the Pre hearing meeting was to follow the Exploratory meeting - but the Exploratory meeting obviously could not ignore major issues that revealed the JCS to be clearly flawed and the Inspectors notes indicate this too. The sheer fact that the NDR was far from being yet being approved was a crucial precondition of the strategy spoke for itself and that there was no plan B was itself constituted a flawed strategy given the immensity of this development programme. The Inspector commented that he had not encountered anything like this before. You were complimented on the fact that the JCS reports were lucid but that is as far as any commendation went. Major issues touched upon such as public transport, water supply and sewage remained as imponderable issues indicating it was a flawed strategy and this meeting which went on all day did not reach it's natural conclusion but in fact was suspended. A questioner from the floor in fact asked if the next meeting was to be a continuation of this exploratory meeting. Irrespective of what the meeting is called the substance of the discussion was quite clear and it centred on a flawed strategy because the implications were inescapable - I do not understand how you refuse to accept this fact. Irrespective of how a meeting is titled or what procedural stage it represents, the subject matter is the key and the substance of this meeting was mainly to do with flaws in the strategy.

As for the analyses of the Public Consultation anyone who cares to dig this out will see that the "Comments" were largely points of opposition and when added to the "Opposition" points the stark fact is that a clear majority voted against the JCS. Where was the Feedback and discussion on the feedback that was originally promised? The number of people who were not even aware of this document is astonishing. Why it never got the coverage it deserved is a question still awaiting answers.

Given that there is such a large lobby against this strategy it would have been logical and economical to conduct a proper review of the analysis of the feedback before going ahead. To go ahead as you did by getting this JCS approved at an extraordinary General Meeting when Parish Councils were not even informed gives oxygen to the suspicion that you were just as you still are, determined to go ahead in spite of public opinion.

As for the consultation submissions , the joint and individual of mine and association representatives were not even considered or publicised as you know even though they were submitted in good time and correctly addressed. This begged the question how many other such letters of objection were not considered or published? The fact that I had to prove the existence of the documents I had submitted because GNDP and BDC could not find them made a nonsense of the statement by GNDP that my submissions was the only case of documents being omitted from the study,

Irrespective of this meeting there has been other meetings that were not called by BDC or GNDP but by other groups opposing this singular strategic option - but you and GNDP will not listen to any alternative strategy such as dispersal options.

The management of this process is as bad as I can ever recall. The consultation is a sham depicted by unheeding people pushing ever harder in the most autocratic way imaginable with a single flawed but uncompromising strategy. Your suggestion of appointing a Marketing and Media Manager is absolutely the wrong thing to do just as resorting to consultants to sort out problems people have raised. Your failure to listen and engage objectively with tax-payers whose objections are very relevant and sensitive to the environment, and your dogged persistence in the face of such objections is only going to result in more disapproving voices that increase in volume.

As the senior strategist you have presided over the creation of a major social grievance with democracy at local level and sadly as time has gone on your arrogance has further inflamed the situation.

Most breath taking of all was you stating in a public meeting that these were not the decisions of Officers but those of the Members. As for the statement that GNDP and BDC are forging ahead with this strategy regardless, this is not a personal perception by any means - the fact that you have openly denied this will I am sure rebound, just what do you think people see behind the Dakenham Barns green Offices application or the "Education now Training centre at Rackheath". This to most people clear evidence of trying to add more justification to an eco town - even if it is not an eco town.

This very idea of trying to urbanise Norwich into a city the size of Bristol or Nottingham is anathema to the vast majority of residents and flies in the face of a more sensible dispersal strategy in Norfolk where there is a need to maintain and sustain the county as a priority over congesting Norwich.

It was very clear at that very positive Inspectors' Exploratory Meeting that sound advice was coming out of public discussion, one very good comment referred to re-engaging the public in consultation on alternatives. Obvious to me would be referring the public to where we left off with the analysis of the Joint Core Strategy Consultation and where it has been seen to be flawed and re-examining things on that basis or are you maintaining that this JCS is not flawed?

Yours sincerely

Bob Craggs

On 26 Jun 2010, at 02:21, Phil Kirby wrote:

Dear Mr Craggs

I note the correspondence below. I am aware that Simon Osborn has replied to you explaining the purpose of the Exploratory Meeting which as you will note, was not to consider the soundness of the Joint Core Strategy. This will come later at the Examination in Public which is now scheduled for October. As such, I need to correct your comment that

'The Exploratory Meeting was a ringing endorsement of these criticisms serving to point out that the strategy was seriously flawed requiring fundamental reconsideration'

as clearly this was not the case. The Exploratory Meeting did conclude on the day and the Inspectors have subsequently written to the GNDP setting out the additional information they are seeking in order to assist their consideration of the JCS at the re-scheduled Examination. I can assure you that I, nor my colleagues in the GNDP are ignoring the guidance of the Inspectors and are working to provide the additional information as requested. I would also refute your claim that we have ignored the comments from the public in terms of the consultation responses to the JCS, as can be seen by viewing the reports that were presented to the constituent Councils, when they resolved to submit the JCS to the Secretary of State in March 2010.

Some issues on which further work is required, will be the subject of further consultation in the summer, so again it is incorrect to say that the GNDP is 'forging ahead regardless'.

Full details of the process that is being followed are set out on the GNDP website www.gndp.org.uk and I would be happy to assist you with an explanation of any matters which remain unclear.

Phil Kirby
Strategic Director and Chief Planner
Broadland District Council

From: Phil Kirby [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 June 2010 02:22
To: Robert Craggs; Chloe Smith MP
Cc: Simon Osborn Programme Officer JCS; Colin Bland; Joint Core Strategy; June Hunt; Malcolm Martins; Mollie Howes; Tony & Ann Stubbs; Marc & Kim & Pierce Allen
Subject: RE: GNDP's Joint Core Strategy

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Full details of the process that is being followed are set out on the GNDP website www.gndp.org.uk and I would be happy to assist you with an explanation of any matters which remain unclear.

Phil Kirby
Strategic Director and Chief Planner
Broadland District Council

From: Robert Craggs [REDACTED]
Sent: Mon 21/06/2010 12:45
To: Chloe Smith MP
Cc: Simon Osborn Programme Officer JCS; Colin Bland; Phil Kirby; Sandra Easthaugh; June Hunt; Malcolm Martins; Mollie Howes; Tony & Ann Stubbs; Marc & Kim & Pierce Allen
Subject: Fwd: GNDP's Joint Core Strategy

Dear Chloe,
I trust that the attached correspondence is self explanatory.

I am not so much confused about the purpose of this Inspectors' Exploratory Meeting that I attended as I am concerned and I suspect that I am one of many.

At the commencement it was clear that this Exploratory Meeting was looking into the soundness of the JCS which was something that the public had been invited to comment on in previous months in the JCS consultation and many objective comments were lodged criticising the soundness of 'the plan'. The Exploratory Meeting was a ringing endorsement of these criticisms serving to point out that the strategy was seriously flawed requiring fundamental reconsideration that Phil Kirby and GNDP colleagues appeared to accept judging from their replies to many questions put to them. In fact this Exploratory Meeting

28/06/2010

never finished because it was, for all intents and purposes suspended because this JCS was appearing more and more unsustainable as the meeting went on such that the "next" meeting was being progressively put back from July, to September at the earliest then eventually to October. It was not made clear whether this "next" meeting would be the Pre-Hearing meeting or whether it would be a continuation of the Exploratory Meeting; indeed a precise question on this matter was put to Inspector Foster seeking a specific answer but this question was not answered.

However the only real conclusion that I can now reach following this Exploratory Meeting is that Phil Kirby and the GNDP are treating this Exploratory Meeting in exactly the same way that they treated the public consultation on the JCS and that is they are ignoring the guidance of the Inspectors just as they ignored the comments made by the public about the soundness (and legality) of the strategy.

Consultation with the public came up several times during the course of the inspectors' EM - including the need to re-engage in public consultation on necessary alternatives to the JCS but instead of this happening the GNDP are forging ahead regardless.

It seems to me that there is a fundamental democratic deficiency here that Parliament needs to examine.

Perhaps Simon Osborn the Program Officer can indicate how many other similar concerns have been expressed.

There is no implied criticism into the conduct of this Exploratory Meeting, in fact I would compliment Inspector Foster and his colleague Ass.t Inspector Fox on a thorough and democratically conducted examination but it all seems to have been a waste of time and expense.

Would you please look into this matter from a point of democratic injustice?

If I can be of any further assistance in looking into this important matter I am at your disposal.

Yours sincerely,
Robert Craggs

From: Robert Craggs [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 June 2010 10:40
To: POServices
Cc: 'Chloe Smith MP'; 'Colin Bland'; 'Phil Kirby'; Joint Core Strategy; 'June Hunt'; 'Malcolm Martins'; 'Mollie Howes'; 'Tony & Ann Stubbs'; 'Marc & Kim & Pierce Allen'
Subject: Re: GNDP's Joint Core Strategy

Dear Simon,

Thank you kindly for clarifying these points. I did read the Guidance Notes for the Examination into the Joint Core Strategy and I confess to being unsure how the Exploratory Meeting differed from the Pre-Hearing meeting in terms of substance because the key issues discussed clearly impacted on the soundness of the plan. Key points raised such as there not being a Plan B and the Strategy being dependent upon the NDR which was far from certain to be approved or the proposed length of it being approved; the issues on transport and infra-structure were not just concerns to be overcome but were fundamental concerns discussed within the context of the soundness of the strategy. Even on reading the Inspectors' notes of 24th May on the Exploratory Meeting by implication what is being scrutinised and examined in terms of viability; constraints; credibility etc are discussed in fundamental terms and in the context of the soundness of the strategy. The report itself describes such points in terms of soundness.

Trying to avoid semantics or justify my ignorance in any way, what was crystal clear from that meeting was that a considerable amount of work was needed including the production of alternative strategies that obviously required re-engagement with the public in terms of consultation. What I perceive happening is the GNDP pushing ahead with issues as if the fundamental points discussed at the EM are being ignored and after all where is there any evidence of alternatives being considered?

I do thank you for your reply and I trust that any misunderstanding or lack of understanding I have helps others to understand this process better.

What clearly has heightened suspicion and distrust is the way GNDP have gone about the lip service consultation and the use of unannounced Extraordinary General Meetings to seek or secure finance and approve the JCS in spite of widespread public opposition that is being badly managed.

Thank you once again.

Regards

Bob Craggs

On 21 Jun 2010, at 13:31, POServices wrote:

Dear Mr Craggs,

Please be aware that the Exploratory Meeting held last month was not to look into the soundness of the JCS. The whole Examination process to look in to the soundness of the JCS begins when the GNDP submits the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State and finishes when the appointed Inspector submits his binding report to the GNDP.

The purpose of the Exploratory Meeting was to flag up some initial concerns that the Inspectors had and to suggest ways in which GNDP might address those concerns. The Inspectors agreed to invite comments from the floor to help their own decision making process.

As a result of the response given by GNDP to the Inspectors initial concerns, and to what they heard at the meeting, the Inspectors have taken the view that the hearing sessions should

proceed in the autumn. It is unlikely that the Inspectors will reach a conclusion on the soundness of the Core Strategy until after the hearing sessions have finished and all the evidence has been given and discussions have taken place.

Please also be aware that the only reason that the Inspectors are currently minded not to have a Pre-Hearing Meeting is that most of the information given out at a Pre-Hearing Meeting has already been included in the guidance notes that I prepared and circulated prior to the Exploratory Meeting. To organise another meeting to cover procedural matters already covered could well have been construed as a waste of council tax paters money.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours

Simon Osborn

POServices

Programme Officer

From: Robert Craggs

Sent: 21 June 2010 12:46

To: Chloe Smith MP

Cc: Simon Osborn Programme Officer JCS; Colin Bland; Phil Kirby; Sandra Easthaugh; June Hunt; Malcolm Martins; Mollie Howes; Tony & Ann Stubbs; Marc & Kim & Pierce Allen

Subject: Fwd: GNDP's Joint Core Strategy

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Robert Craggs

Begin forwarded message: