

Minutes of a meeting of the **Extraordinary Council** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Thursday 25 February 2010** at **7.00pm** when there were present:

Mrs J C Cottingham – Chairman

Mr P Balcombe	Mr J F Fisher	Mr A S Mallett
Mrs C H Bannock	Mr R R Foulger	Mr B A McGilvray
Mr S C Beadle	Mr I G Graham	Mr R R Nash
Mrs V M Beadle	Mr C A Green	Mrs S Peters
Mr J W Bracey	Mr D G Harrison	Mr A J Proctor
Mr P H Carrick	Mr B J M Iles	Mr J P Starling
Miss C Casimir	Mr J M Joyce	Mr C D Thompson
Mr S M Clancy	Mr K S Kelly	Mr S A Vincent
Mrs K Davis-Claydon	Mr R J Knowles	Mr J M Ward
Mr G E Debbage	Mr B S Kular	Mr S D Woodbridge
Mr D M Dewgarde	Mr K G Leggett	

Mr J Sadler, Member of the Standards Committee, also attended the meeting for its duration.

Mr M Jackson, Director of Environment, Transport and Development, Norfolk County Council also attended the meeting.

Also in attendance were the Chief Executive, Strategic Director and Chief Planner, Head of Corporate Services and Monitoring Officer and the Spatial and Community Planning Manager

157 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8

Member	Minute No & Heading	Nature of Interest
Mr Clancy, Mr Harrison, Mr Joyce, Mr Iles, Mr Proctor and Mr Ward	161 – Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Joint Core Strategy	Personal interest as a Norfolk County Councillor
Mr Fisher	161 – Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Joint Core Strategy	Personal interest as a Norwich City Councillor

Mr Mallett	161 – Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Joint Core Strategy	Personal interest as the Council's nominee to the Broads Authority who in turn had appointed him to serve on the Greater Norwich Development Partnership
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158 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Adams, Mr Carswell, Mr Dunn, Mr French, Mr Gasson, Mrs Gurney, Mrs Hayes, Mr Mackie, Mrs Rix, Mr Shaw, Mr Snowling and Mr Walker.

159 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

It was noted that there had been no questions received from the public in accordance with Procedural Rule 10.

160 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The following representations were made by the public

Mr T Davies

"I refer to the proposed submission of the Joint Core Strategy and wish to make representations regarding Ringland Village.

Ringland has been excluded from the plan and declassified as a village and in consequence we question whether (in this regard) the plan is sound i.e. justified, effective and consistent with National Policy.

Ringland is a medieval village and the negative consequences of declassification will include reduction of Local Accountability through the Parish Council, reduced opportunities of Grant Funding for local amenities including for example the village Green, possible future reduction in Public Services, and the total withdrawal of any housing opportunities necessary to meet local needs.

We contend that Policy 16 (Other Villages) is relevant to Ringland and that it should be reclassified in this category for the following reasons.

1) 6.61 states, "The 'Other Villages' have been defined as having a basic level of services/facilities. This is generally a primary school and village hall,

though regard will be had to the presence of a range of other services. These will normally be available within the defined settlement, though regard will also be had to their availability in other nearby settlements where there is good access particularly by foot or cycle.”

Ringland has a Village Hall and thriving Pub, and well supported 13th Century Church. Schooling from Primary to High School is available within 1 mile in Taverham and easily accessible by bicycle or foot, or school bus. A diverse range of shops, a Library and a Doctor’s Surgery are similarly available from Taverham 1 mile away, as is public transport to and from Norwich.

“Regard” to the criteria of availability of such facilities in nearby settlements is stated in policy 6.61 and there is considerable precedent for acceptance of this criteria in numerous villages detailed within the JCS document since classified as “Villages” or “Other Villages”.

2) Planning permission was recently granted for a significant Industrial Estate to be built in Ringland with car parking for 50 vehicles. Local labour (requiring housing) would reduce the number and frequency of anticipated car journeys to the Industrial Estate from other areas. Information of this most relevant recent development was not available during previous consultation stages of the JCS.

3) Limited infill or small-scale development is necessary to deliver the wishes and perceived rights of the younger members of families resident in Ringland over several generations, to continue to reside in Ringland.

4) An Independent Housing needs Survey was conducted in October 2006 by the Norfolk Rural Community Council which concluded: “There are currently a minimum of 5 households with local connection to Ringland in need of Housing”. The survey also stated “at least 5 family members have moved away from households in Ringland due to difficulties in finding suitably priced accommodation”.

Re categorising Ringland as a village as its status justifies will enable such issues to be considered fully by the Parish Council and Broadland District Council and enable them to take due account of local housing needs.

The small amount of housing made available by the acceptance of limited and well regulated infill would have minimal impact on local services.”

Mr A Townley on behalf of the Thorpe End Garden Village Residents’ Association

“Madam Chairman, Members & Officers.

Our residents Association (TEGVRA) continues to object to these proposals.

Our residents association share and support our Parish Council view in objecting to the JCS, and this attempt to implement this SPD Supplementary planning document. There is no mention of the urgently awaited Link Road to the Postwick Hub.

These proposals are also contrary to the adopted local plan TSA3 section D which requires the link road from the C874 Plumstead Road to the Postwick Roundabout to be triggered when 85,000 sq metres of the current Business Park have been reached, that has now been reached.

I will cover the other areas of concern when I speak on behalf of our Gt & Lt Plumstead Parish Council.

Thank you for listening.”

Mr R Williams

“Here’s the Joint Core Strategy and here is my Parish Plan. These documents reflect two entirely different visions of our future. This one (JCS) prepared to an agenda forced on us by a controlling and autocratic Government and the other a result of genuine community debate. The parish council did the job properly.

The Joint Core Strategy on the other hand is not so much a spatial vision as a brochure. Like a holiday brochure, the fine words in the front and the price list at the back. Roughly £1.2 billion. There was never any other plan. Consultation was a farce. You just ignored the consultees and the wishes of the affected parishes. It is a nightmare and of seriously dubious precedence.

Remember, John Prescott told us how this was going to be, then Gordon Brown went to Sweden and returned like Moses. Suddenly we had eco towns. First the Department for Communities and Local Government told us we were going to build eco towns on Brownfield sites and then justified Rackheath. Even the eco model is flawed. Out of 17 sites only 4 remain. Why is that? Because it is not even viable and being developer led we have a vision that is being degraded already into just another huge development.

Then the Regional Government told us how many houses we needed to build. Was it ever really 113,000? We are going to get 10,000 or more in this growth triangle. Just exactly when were we asked. Never – only told.

This is just a land grab, justified on a flawed prospectus and fast tracked to get it through before the next election. Pushed through in yet another extraordinary meeting in spite of the warnings that it is unsound.

Broadland used to be a district council representing the local community not just doing the bidding of the government. What has changed? I think you have become morally, politically and financially bankrupt.”

Mr Newberry

“In the light of the latest employment figures and what is happening to economies, I cannot see the need for all this development. We are likely to have a change in government soon and this will probably alter all the thinking. Also how will this Unitary decision affect the plan. Which appears to me similar to what the city wanted.

They say we need more development of business parks, do we?

The Broadland Business Park is not being filled with new businesses but mainly just moving jobs from the city. Leaving large empty premises. Thus not a great deal of extra housing will be needed.

The new park and ride road layout is an accident black spot in the making. It is contrary to what the local councils it will affect have informed the highways department and Broadland Council especially the closure of the slip road to Thorpe.

If the planners will not listen to local knowledge and cannot even get this resolved what hope for the unnecessary ecotowns transport and sustainability, it will end up like Dussindale. Promised shops and services never delivered. Now further proposed development at Brook Farm and Laurel Farm to create further problems at the Plumstead Road and Sainsbury's junctions. Slums of the future with traffic chaos.

Would not the £60 million available (from where is this money coming as the government is broke) be better spent?

By using available brown field sites in the City and other towns, villages and hamlets and usage of empty properties, could fulfil our needs and help to keep these sustainable with local schools, post offices and small shops buying from local sources (farmers) etc not greedy supermarkets.

Updating existing properties, rather than removing desperately needed farmland, as highlighted by DEFRA saying it will be needed to get back to self sufficiency as we were before joining the Common Market as was.

Where are all the best practice principles and standards as laid down by Cabinet Office Code of Practice 2008.”

Mr Townley on behalf of Little Plumsted Parish Council

“Madam Chairman, Members & Officers

Our Parish Council continues to object to the current proposals of the JCS and the way these are being progressed.

Our objections are based on the unsoundness of these proposals, and we draw your attention to our letter dated 3rd December 2009, objecting to the JCS report of Oct 2009 where we have put forward alternative proposals, which we believe should be taken seriously considering that this proposed and unnecessary NDR cuts our Parish in two.

We have read the supplementary planning document for Old Catton, Sprowston, Rackheath and Thorpe St Andrew Growth triangle and nowhere is our Grt & Lt Plumstead Parish mentioned. We think that the outcome of the JCS consultation should be fed back and the findings considered before seeking to move ahead with an accelerated mechanism that this SPD approach seems to seek to do.

Under the Executive summary, the Supplementary Planning Document states, Quote ‘The purpose of this report is to set out the benefits and disadvantages of the developing framework for the Growth triangle through the production of a supplementary Planning document (SPD) in preference to the detailed plan already underway and with the suggestion that the Area Action plan is dispensed with. We object to this departure from good practice and wish to keep to the essential detail of an Area Action Plan (AAP) and see things done thoroughly and in full consultation with Stakeholders as agreed.

We are deeply concerned by this supplementary mechanism (SPD), which clearly has been brought in to bypass any form of detailed planning which in its self flies in the face of a sensible and democratic approach and seeks to circumvent consultation and taxpayer involvement.

Sadly, this is déjà vu, when one looks back and observes the undemocratic way in which planning approval was granted by this Council for the Postwick hub & Broadland Gate Business Park. This is all part of the JCS consultation too, is it not? However, this has not been treated in the consultative manner promised and as taxpayers were lead to believe it would be this previous joint application on the Postwick Hub and rearranged road system predetermined the start of an NDR, a key part of the JCS in itself. Instead, taxpayers continue to express surprise that these joint applications have been approved without any Councillor objecting and while we are awaiting the feedback and results of the promised JCS consultation in which there was wide public participation. Worryingly we now find these matters being decided upon at an extraordinary General meeting that many people are unaware is taking place and we still have not had the feedback on the JCS consultation, which we

would have expected to have published before any meeting such as this.

Therefore, we would request our objections to that joint application be published in full along with those of others and see what the response to the consultation was.

We are in a credit crunch with serious financial implications yet you are racing ahead without fulfilling your obligation to open and meaningful stakeholder involvement, which besides being positively immoral it flies in the face of common sense.

In conclusion, what is being proposed is the circumvention of planning disciplines that further detracts from public consultation. Racing ahead with these changes and renegeing on your promise to consult and at a time of severe financial restraint is a recipe for disaster. What is needed now, is a comprehensive feedback on the JCS consultation before doing anything further.

Thank you for listening.”

Mr S Lindsay

(Whilst Mr Lindsay’s request had not been received the Chairman used her discretion to allow Mr Lindsay to speak)

“Thank madam chair, for the opportunity to speak.

Friends, Norfolkians and countrymen, lend me your ears....I have come here tonight not to praise the JCS but to sadly bury democracy...yes my friends, you have slain her...one of the keystones to modern civilisation....Democracy from the Greek; meaning government by the people and you have turned this chamber into politics; Greek meaning poly and ticks; blood-sucking insects...but to tonight’s tale; before you all stands the Joint Core Strategy or is it the Joke Core Strategy and maybe it’s the Giant Con Strategy...this epic tome with more ‘flaws’ than the empire state building, as unsound as a fart in a vacuum.....but of course you all know this...every one of you has read this (and its amendments) from cover to cover....and you are also aware of the GNDP meeting where Mr Kirby drew close attention to the ‘Barton-Wilmore’ document which was ‘discussed at great length’....this, of course, was from an ‘eminent’ counsel who specialises in planning, environmental and parliamentary matters and he has stated ‘taking all factors into account, the JCS should be withdrawn on the grounds of unsoundness and furthermore, he has considered whether it could be repaired at the next stage of progress and only minor changes could be made to the JCS and in his opinion, the GNDP must withdraw this document or else face an embarrassing and expensive examination which could lead only to one outcome....A finding by an independent Inspector that this JCS is unsound.....but you all know this and coupled with water concerns as well as many others....you are prepared

to even think of taking a risk to vote this....a risk with OUR money...not yours or the developers. You are summoned here tonight...and I use this word carefully, to be coerced into possibly voting this through under the 'pretence' of a time constraint...however Mr Rao likes to put it) it is not government pressure...but your own Portfolio Holders and officers and planners who have had years as well as millions of pounds of our money already and 'still', they can't make a 'deadline' (just like the bidding document excuse)...well, I say enough is enough ...tonight, this cavalier attitude has gone too far and you are all accountable not only to the public but to your own consciences..... 'man is the only animal that has a conscience but needs one'....Friends, Norfolkiens and countrymen, lend me your ears for I come here tonight to bury the Joint Core Strategy and Not to praise it....let the phoenix of democracy rise again from the ashes and we say No, No, No,...thank you madam chair."

161 BROADLAND, NORWICH AND SOUTH NORFOLK JOINT CORE STRATEGY

The Strategic Director and Chief Planner advised the Council as follows:

"We have reached that point when you have to decide whether we have produced a spatial strategy for Broadland, that is firmly based on evidence, is legally sound, and given the requirements placed upon us, and the acknowledged constraints, sets out a vision for the area, which as the local planning authority you are prepared to enable to happen, in a proactive and managed way.

The Joint Core Strategy has been 3 years in preparation, has been the subject of wide ranging consultation, with the public, service providers, local strategic partnerships, statutory bodies and stakeholders, and involved a new way of working, with our partners in Norwich City, South Norfolk, Norfolk County Councils and the Broads Authority.

Once adopted the JCS will set the overall spatial vision, objectives and high level policies that will shape the future of our area, delivering significant growth of homes and jobs, whilst tackling current deficiencies, enhancing the environment and quality of life, and ensuring development and change is sustainable.

When Council considered the strategy last October it was satisfied that enough had been done at that stage to publish the pre-submission version and invited public representations on the 'soundness' of the JCS.

Over 560 representations were received from around 260 people and organisations within the consultation period. In comparison with other Core Strategies this would appear to be about par for the course. In terms of the representations, some were supportive of the strategy and certain aspects

of it, others objected and raised a number of challenges which are listed in paragraph 5 of the report. An officer response to these challenges is set out in Appendix 5.

Clearly the representations made are significant to the people that made them, however the majority of issues raised have been considered by Members before, and none are considered to undermine the soundness of the strategy.

We are able to respond to the representations by making editing changes to improve legibility or make sure the document is up to date, and the full schedule of proposed minor changes is set out in the amended Appendix 2 on pages 64-74.

The process is that subject to Council approval, the list of minor changes is submitted to the Secretary of State, alongside the JCS, together with the extensive supporting evidence and copies of all representations received.

The Planning Inspectorate will hold an Examination into the strategy, where the evidence and soundness of the strategy will be tested in public, along with the opportunity being given to those who have made representation and indicated a desire to be heard, to do so.

The Planning Inspector's report is binding on the Council and once adopted will become part of the corporate policy framework.

Of the challenges raised, and these are summarised in paragraph 5 of the report, and in respect of item 8, I would also draw your attention to the written submission from Mr Belton, in relation to Felthorpe, and his concerns regarding the settlement hierarchy, also covered by Mr Davies in his presentation – which will be an issue for discussion at the examination.

The GNDP Policy Group at its meeting in January recommended that the constituent councils agree to submit the JCS subject to further consideration of the final report on the Water Cycle Study and any views on it from the key stakeholders, in addition to the final report on the Appropriate Assessment and any comments on it from Natural England. This information is now available and I will address this in due course.

I would however, first draw your attention to the counsel's opinion which was sought on behalf of a number of interested parties and was received in response to the pre-submission consultation, and this is referred to in paragraph 9. The opinion is concerned with legal and procedural aspects and the evidence in support of the favoured strategy, particularly in relation to South Norfolk. The opinion seeks to cast doubt on the soundness of the JCS and demands that it must be withdrawn.

Legal advisors to the GNDP, which are the same as this Council's legal advisor, points out that Members have previously considered the balance between managing risks to soundness with the need to make progress on the strategy, and striking a balance is a matter of judgement for Members, whilst also being mindful of the potential risks to soundness. In coming to a judgement Members need to bear in mind as set out in PPS12, that it is government policy to make progress on core strategies in a timely and efficient manner, and in PPS3, the recognition of the need to deliver housing.

I will now turn to the issues of water and appropriate assessment.

The Greater Norwich Water Cycle Study stage 2b has now been completed, and position statements obtained from the key stakeholders in the process, which are set out in Appendix 3. Uncertainties remain in relation to:

- the Environment Agency's review of consents (for water abstraction) and what this means for the availability of water resources; and
- the infrastructure, phasing and funding of measures, including a review of technologies currently available to protect water quality.

A resolution of these uncertainties requires guidance at a national level, which a delay in submission of the JCS will not help to resolve. Conversely, moving ahead with the strategy will add urgency to the resolution in the knowledge that development is constrained until solutions are agreed.

With respect to the Appropriate Assessment of the JCS, which has been undertaken in accordance with the regulations, in order to give consideration to the potential effects of the JCS on internationally important habitats sites. The AA has concluded that with the suggested revisions to JCS policies and the inclusion of specific mitigation measures it is highly unlikely that the JCS policies alone would have a significant direct or indirect impact on designated sites. However, when taken in combination with other plans in the region, such effects are 'uncertain'. The concerns relate to visitor pressures and issues of water quality. Natural England's response to the AA is set out on pages 62-63 and whilst their comments relate mainly to the review of Regional Spatial Strategy through to 2031, they seek detailed commitments to deliver green infrastructure and water infrastructure, which I believe the JCS policies provide the right strategic framework to deliver the infrastructure through more detailed local development framework documents and detailed development proposals.

Again, this is not considered to be sufficient reason to delay submission of the JCS and indeed the issues raised will be covered during the public examination process.

The final issue is in relation to the Northern Distributor Route, given that delivery of the JCS and those elements particularly relating to Broadland are

critical on its delivery. When Council last considered the JCS in October, a government decision on 'programme entry' and 'funding' was still outstanding, however with the positive announcements in December this uncertainty and risk has been mitigated. However, Members will be aware that the government's announcement is only in relation to the NDR extending as far as the A140, yet the JCS will continue to promote the route through to A1067. As Council requested in October the implications of this are covered in a separate paper which is set out on pages 54-61."

Norfolk County Council's Director of Environment, Transport and Development reminded the meeting that the County Council had been progressing the case for a NDR for approximately 10 years, primarily to address the issues of rat running, relieving congestion in the centre of Norwich and to provide a range of measures to improve public transport etc. The scheme had been driven by NATS and the value for money case had been justified by programme entry status. He expressed his disappointment over the level of funding received to date which would only support the completion of a route between Postwick and the Airport, but the County Council remained committed to the completion of the NDR in its entirety. It was stressed that the NDR was a distributor road and was not a bypass. The partial build would address some of the current issues but these would not be completely addressed until such time as the total scheme was constructed.

The Strategic Director and Chief Planner concluded by stating "that there remain areas of risk and uncertainty around the JCS which may have implications for the soundness of the plan, and along with those I have referred to in some detail already, are fully explained in paragraph 24 of the report. However I am satisfied that as we move towards the examination, some of these risks will be mitigated by further progress and those remaining will benefit from being tested through the examination process, such that I am confident that there is no reason to delay.

Indeed, the longer we delay, the increased risk we run with development proposals coming forward in locations not supported by the strategy, and not delivering the supporting infrastructure which is accepted as being necessary.

I can report that South Norfolk Council agreed the recommendations as set out on page 1 at its meeting on Monday, and this will similarly be considered by Norwich City Council at its meeting next Tuesday. All 3 councils need to agree to submit the JCS and in respect of Broadland, I recommend that you do so."

The portfolio holder commented as follows:

"My starting point is to say that the principle of growth plans both in Broadland and the wider area were accepted by this council some years ago. The housing numbers we are talking about are not new. The way development is

proposed to be allocated for the long term through the joint core strategy is also not new.

There has been considerable work by members and officers at Broadland, especially over the past 3 years since I have been portfolio holder, to get to where we are now. There's still more to be done, we all recognise that, but Broadland members and officers have made a key contribution to the joint working to produce a joint core strategy. I wish to express my thanks to Phil Kirby and his team.

Our own SPAB meetings have covered all the issues in detail over those 3 years. The last meeting on 16th February was very positive and no member said then this joint core strategy should not be submitted.

The joint core strategy is a key element of Broadland's local development framework – it's a development plan document. It's a policy framework and joint plan for Broadland, Norwich & South Norfolk.

It sets out the high level policies for managing development. Its focus is on sustainable development, tackling climate change, high standards of design and protecting the environment. It also emphasises the need for development to be underpinned by appropriate infrastructure.

It's exactly what it says on the tin – a strategy for the future. It's not a planning application – they will come much later in the process in line with the strategy.

The main agenda papers pages 1-48 are common to us, Norwich and South Norfolk. Each separate authority as the local planning authority is being asked to consider the same recommendation with the same background and same issues.

I'm not suggesting this is a perfect plan. However, that doesn't mean to say that it's not legally compliant or unsound.

The key points are – have the 3 authorities got the major growth allocations in the right place according to the evidence? Can the plans be delivered over the plan period? Are there constraints to development that have been highlighted? Other issues, supporting comments and contrary views will all be part of the detailed examination once the plan gets in front of an inspector.

There are constraints to development that have been identified. But that doesn't make the plan unsound and I'd like to address them.

The NDR – page 152 of the “purple book” defines it as “a dual carriageway road proposed to the north of Norwich, linking the A47 to the south east of the

city with the A1067 in the north west”.

Council in October asked for a paper about the implications of the NDR once a decision had been made on it by the Department of Transport. We have that paper summarising the impact of where we are compared to where we ideally want to be. Major progress has been made and it's the County Council's intention to work up a planning application to the A1067. It's not just a road we are talking about but an opportunity to release much needed road space for public transport improvements, reduce traffic congestion and provide better access for businesses, residents and visitors. Page 49 of the “purple book” covers this in more detail.

Water supply, drainage and sewage disposal – these problems are not unique to this area, other parts of Norfolk or much of the country. Solutions will need to be found otherwise development cannot proceed – that's the constraint on development. Given the scale of the problem it's more likely than not that solutions will be found. The work being done in this area is of national significance with a view to successfully alleviating problems here and in other parts of the country. The pot money we got means we can undertake a water cycle study with significant input from the Environment Agency.

The appropriate assessment – there is an element of uncertainty I agree referred to on page 5 of the report, sections 16 to 20. However, it doesn't mean to say the plan is unsound. These and other issues raised will be covered in the public examination process.

There is also counsel's opinion referred to on pages 3-4 to take into consideration. Because this is said does it make the plan unsound? The views expressed will also be a matter of judgement for the inspector in the examination phase.

These are not unknown matters – they are, I agree, things that must be dealt with but are they issues that should prevent going forward with submission of the joint core strategy? If anything submitting the JCS will draw out solutions and the examination process will clearly scrutinise these and other issues raised in significant detail.

Have we got the growth distribution plans right across the whole GNDP area? Some would say not. However, the underlying evidence says the right approach is to go for a major growth area in Broadland, underpinned by proper masterplanning. That in turn will leverage improved infrastructure and facilities. I go back to what I said about the internal processes that this council has followed and that approach has not been an issue in those forums.

Is this scale of development actually warranted? Locally and nationally there is a proven housing need and whilst that alone justifies growth plans this is not just about housing. We want to see the economy grow and see more jobs

created – the joint core strategy as a development plan document helps us to do just that.

Protecting the environment and addressing climate change is a key policy aim and having part of the major growth area in Broadland as an eco community must surely support that approach not go against it.

There's a growing interest in the area because of the eco community and that will be one of the drivers for economic growth.

It's well recognised that the way we live and travel will need to change in the longer term. The car will not be ditched overnight. The cultural change is to reduce dependency on the car over time rather than consign it to a large crusher. Other advances in technology will help as time goes on.

It's said that if there's a change of government the housing numbers won't be the same. The targets may well go but please don't think that a new government would look to stop future development. Why should they when it's a way to promote economic generation and bring in more tax revenues? There will be growth and there will be development but it needs to be managed and that's exactly what development plan documents are designed to do.

What if Norwich becomes a unitary authority in 2011? Firstly that's a pretty big if – the whole thing may go down the drain before an election but a change of government certainly would pull the plug. Whatever happens, a Norwich council will still be the local planning authority. They will still need to be part of the GNDP and work with other authorities – that's the joint in joint core strategy.

I've mentioned the GNDP. This is the body through which joint work has been done but it has no executive powers. Each local planning authority in it has to make its own decision as to whether the joint core strategy is legally compliant and sound to be submitted for examination. In effect this has happened in stages already, one stage being the decision that council took in October 2009.

In the past Broadland has been criticised for permitting major development such as Thorpe Marriott or Dussindale when it has not been accompanied by the necessary infrastructure.

There is a clear commitment from the GNDP and its partner bodies that development will not be implemented without the supporting infrastructure. There are a number of references to that on pages 92-93 of the purple book. I'll quote from one: "it is not the intention of this JCS to permit housing growth to outstrip and be developed in advance of supporting employment and a full range of hard and soft infrastructure".

We have learnt from past experience and have an absolute commitment to get this strategy right so that it is as perfect as it can be.

This means the joint core strategy is about building new communities for the future with schools, community and medical facilities, better public transport. I could go on but these all make up the package and this commitment.

The plan that has been developed is for the future to ensure that the local planning authorities will be leading on what can be developed and where through a development management structure. Do we want to see situations where it is effectively planning by appeal? That's already happened and there is the risk it could happen again as mentioned on page 7 para 26.

There is still a long way to go once the JCS gets into the examination phase. That's where the judgment call for members comes in today based on what we have and what we have heard to agree to take it forward.

Ultimately the strategy before us today is not a plan for today but a plan for tomorrow and further forward than that. We may not be the beneficiaries but our children and grandchildren certainly will.

In conclusion I formally move the recommendation on the papers."

In responding the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group commented that he had consistently questioned the scale of development proposed, the environmental sustainability of the project, water supply issues, drainage issues and the green credentials of the development. As a result it was considered that the time was right to rethink the Strategy which had not taken into account the impact of the economic recession, the anticipated pattern of future economic growth and the extreme stringency in local government finance. He also made reference to previous experiences when during difficult economic times the infrastructure to support major development proposals was often the first thing to be stripped out to reduce costs. He also made reference to a recent Editorial in the Eastern Daily Press which drew comparisons with the proposed development and the difficulties experienced and lessons learnt from previous major schemes at Dussindale and Thorpe Marriott.

The following comments were made:

Mr Balcombe supported the view that the JCS could not be delivered without the full delivery of the NATS improvements which included the NDR. The partial funding of the scheme had already compromised this position. He had consistently backed a full NDR scheme and he considered that any reduction in the length of the route should result in a similar reduction in the level of growth provided. The shortened route would particularly disadvantage residents of Hellesdon, Drayton and Taverham. The existing congestion

difficulties could and would worsen as a result of development North East of Norwich. Whilst supporting some of the proposals within the JCS, he considered that the scale of development proposed was unsustainable, the views of residents should be listened to and as a result the JCS should be rejected.

Mr McGilvray responded to the portfolioholder's address by commenting that if the JCS was approved the people of tomorrow would be failed. There was a massive potential for large scale development to be provided without any guarantee that the supporting infrastructure would be provided. The current infrastructure was inadequate to support the level of development proposed. Furthermore it was felt that the construction of a NDR would not solve the existing problems let alone serve the new developments. Concerns were expressed over the future provision of education in the Rackheath area and comment was made that Rackheath and Salhouse Primary Schools were currently full with any new provision not scheduled until 2021. Fear was also expressed over whether housing could be built without triggering the necessary improvement in education and medical services. A view was expressed that children should not receive a sub standard education. Likewise the elderly needed health care provision in an area which was isolated from the care needed. Finally reference was made to the loss of a large area of open countryside and the adverse visual impact on the landscape.

Mr Fisher commented that as one of the Thorpe St Andrew ward Members he had supported the Dussindale development but accepted that lessons had been learnt from the experiences. Whilst he had some doubts over the proposed scheme these had proved to be unfounded. The general view was that residents like living there and he was sure that in 20 years time the residents of the new development at Rackheath would share a similar view. In commenting on the JCS, Mr Fisher supported the view being expressed that the risk to soundness was outweighed by the risks associated with delay. Attention was drawn to the problems experienced in South Norfolk where applications for major developments in Hethersett and Wymondham had been submitted without compliance with the higher environmental standards required, providing sufficient affordable housing or contributing to strategic infrastructure.

Mrs Beadle expressed her concerns over the water supply and drainage provision and made reference to a recent major fire incident when there had been inadequate water supply available locally. Reference was also made to the need to work closely with Anglian Water to ensure that strategic sewers would be provided ahead of the dates set out in the Water Cycle Study, which would delay provision until 2020 and therefore jeopardise timely housing delivery. Attention was also drawn to the concerns raised by the Broads Authority over water quality and in particular the capacity of the treatment works at Acle, Reepham and Belaugh. Particular concern was expressed over the reference in the Water Cycle Study that compliance at the Acle treatment

works was currently beyond Best Available Technology Not Entailing Excessive Cost. In addition there was no certainty that the Habitats Regulations could be complied with. Reference was also made to jobs under threat in the Broads area primarily in the tourism related industry. She expressed her support to the first public speaker as there was a similar position in Felthorpe. Finally a comment was made over what the impact would be on local roads if the NDR was not completed until 2031.

Mr Starling commented that the A47 was the main gateway to Norfolk and the main benefit of the NDR was to keep vehicles out of Norwich. Only providing a partial route would not be of any benefit to tourists and LGV drivers, many of whom were from overseas, who would use short cuts through the fringe parishes to rejoin the A47. Comment was made that traffic levels had increased dramatically over recent years and continued to increase year on year. The location of the eco town was seen as being in the wrong place and a view was expressed that the views of residents were being ignored. The earlier concerns expressed about water supplies were reiterated and needed to be addressed as part of the water cycle study to ensure that adequate sewage disposal facilities were in place and to avoid actions like water restrictions being imposed through measures such as hose pipe bans and reduced water pressure levels.

Mr Clancy responded to the earlier criticisms concerning Thorpe Marriott and Dussindale. With regard to Thorpe Marriott, whilst he accepted that the development was not perfect it was considered to be a good development which worked for those people who lived there. People needed homes, medical facilities, pubs, schools and community facilities. He reaffirmed his long standing view that the NDR needed to be provided but accepted that full funding was to be a major issue. Public finances were considered to be in a mess the GDP deficit was the highest in the western world and road building would be likely to be cut with any new Government. Reference was made to safeguards in the JCS to manage the delivery of infrastructure. He stressed his previous view that if the infrastructure was not provided then there would be no jobs and no housing. The NDR was critical to helping to relieve traffic problems in the short, medium and longer term and without this scheme the existing problems would only worsen.

Mr Green commented that the Council had to find spaces for new employment opportunities. The JCS was a package to deliver a range of opportunities across the whole of the GNDP area. In challenging the JCS there were two main options for delivery. The dispersal option could not work as there would be a major impact on existing infrastructure. A concentrated option was the preferred option which would enable the delivery of infrastructure to support the development. In addressing a number of technical concerns raised reference was made to the opportunities to investigate new innovative engineering techniques. Members were reminded that NATS was not solely the NDR but provided a range of smaller but equally as important improvement schemes. Comment was made that there were

few brownfield sites left in Broadland. Wroxham had been identified as a key service centre but there were traffic concerns that needed to be addressed. Reference was also made to the 3,500 applicants on the housing register and the need to provide accommodation. A further comment was made that all strategies carried risks. He considered that the JCS as presented was sound and deliverable if properly managed. Whilst he accepted that the representations made were important to those making them, none of the details undermined the soundness or deliverability.

Mr Beadle also expressed his concern over drinking water and sewerage issues. He reminded the Council that drinking water in the Norwich area was extracted from the River Wensum at the Norwich waterworks. Reepham Town Council had supported further development within the town but there was a issue as to the sewage disposal. It was suggested that the JCS referred to sewage being disposed straight into the River Wensum.

Mr Dewgarde supported the view that there should be no major development without the supporting infrastructure. Drawing on his experiences of the position prior to the construction of the Southern Bypass, he supported the construction of a total NDR. Taking into account the increasing patterns of heavy rainfall adequate drainage needed to be provided to serve the level of development proposed. He supported the development of an eco town if it provided the community with facilities and opportunities for enjoyment.

Mr Iles reminded the Council that the NDR project had been under consideration for around 10 years and he questioned that if the JCS was not submitted where it would leave the Council.

Mr Foulger also made reference to the Council's consistent support to a full NDR. Whilst accepting that funding had only been provided to construct part of the route the priority facing the relevant authorities was to complete the full route as failure to do so would put an intolerable burden on a number of parish communities.

Mr Kular stressed the need for road improvements to be carried out as failure to do so would result in the loss of business and job opportunities. He expressed the view that the Government should be held to ransom to provide sufficient funding to allow the infrastructure to be put in place first to maintain and increase economic development of the area.

Mr Mallett also supported the full NDR scheme. He considered the JCS was an enabling document. Within that document were a number of areas of concern for the Broads Authority who were engaged in looking for solutions. Mr Mallett shared the view that the development on the scale proposed could not be provided without the NDR. He also stressed the importance of the JCS as an effective tool in opposing piecemeal developments without any guarantee of major infrastructure being provided.

Mr Vincent expressed a major reservation over the proposed junction at Postwick and stated his preference for this junction to be constructed further east off the Brundall roundabout, thereby minimising any impact on residents in the Little Plumstead/Thorpe End area. That aside he accepted the needs for controls to be in place to control future development which the JCS would achieve.

Mr Woodbridge reminded the Council that there were 3,500 people on the housing register in Broadland, 700 of whom were homeless. The figures for the other GNDP partners were significantly higher than this, with the levels increasing annually.

In accordance with Procedural Rule 17.4 a recorded vote was requested.

For – 22

Mrs Bannock, Mr Bracey, Mr Carrick, Mr Clancy, Mrs Cottingham, Mrs Davis Claydon, Mr Debbage, Mr Fisher, Mr Foulger, Mr Graham, Mr Green, Mr Iles, Mr Kelly, Mr Knowles, Mr Leggett, Mr Mallett, Mr Nash, Mr Proctor, Mr C Thompson, Mr Vincent, Mr Ward and Mr Woodbridge

Against – 8

Mr Balcombe, Mr Beadle, Mrs Beadle, Mr Harrison, Mr Joyce, Mr Kular, Mr McGilvray and Mr Starling

Abstentions – 2

Mr Dewgarde and Mrs Peters

RESOLVED:

to

- (1) agree that the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk: Proposed Submission document (November 2009) as amended by the schedule of proposed minor changes is legally compliant and sound
- (2) submit those documents together with the revisions to previously adopted local plan proposals maps and all necessary supporting documents to the Secretary of State under Regulation 30 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2004 (as amended).

The meeting closed at 8.52pm.