MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY GROUP
WEDNESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2023

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford
and live streamed on Rushcliffe Borough Council's YouTube channel

PRESENT:
Councillors R Walker (Chair), L Way (Vice-Chair), R Butler, K Chewings, C Grocock, D Soloman, G Wheeler and N Regan

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

C Evans	Service Manager - Economic Growth and Property
R Mapletoft	Planning Policy Manager
T Coop	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:
Councillors J Cottee, S Dellar and P Matthews

7   **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest reported.

8   **Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 July 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

9   **Development and Infrastructure**

The Chair reminded the Group that Councillor Clarke had submitted a Scrutiny Matrix topic 'how the Borough works with partners to plan for the infrastructure required to support growth' which was approved by the Corporate Overview Group to be discussed by the Growth and development Scrutiny Group.

The Planning Policy Manager delivered a presentation to explain how the Council works with infrastructure and service providers to identify and deliver infrastructure to support the delivery of new housing and growth.

The Group were advised that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that new development should be supported by appropriate infrastructure to deliver sustainable developments and that Local Plans need early ongoing and effective engagement between plan-makers and the infrastructure

providers and operators.

The Group noted that new infrastructure is only justified to mitigate the impact of otherwise unacceptable development and is subject to three statutory tests:

necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
directly related to the development; and
fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

The Planning Policy Manager explained that an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is a significant part of Local plan preparation as it identifies what infrastructure is required, when it's required and how it will be funded and delivered to support a development. The Group were advised that an IDP involves extensive engagement with infrastructure providers/operators, including Nottinghamshire County Council, National Highways, healthcare providers and emergency services and in turn the IDP outcomes inform Local Plan policies and proposals.

In respect of planning applications and Section 106 agreements the Planning Policy Manager advised that there is extensive engagement with infrastructure providers and operators at the pre-application and planning application stages where required and the 'what, when and how' for new infrastructure is established in a Section 106 legal agreement between the developer and the Council.

With regard to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), this was introduced in October 2019 and is a financial charge levied on most new developments above 100sqm and on new dwellings. CIL is used to fund certain pre-defined infrastructure requirements, for example off-site secondary education. The group were advised that when preparing CIL infrastructure providers and operators also engage with the Council.

A specific question was asked with regard to the rational of the CIL levy charges and zones as illustrated in the officer's presentation. The Planning Policy Manager explained the charges were calculated on a sliding scale and takes into account land values and affordability. It was noted that the site at Fairham is not paying any CIL as this was approved before CIL had been adopted by the Council in October 2019.

The Group noted that a session specifically relating to CIL and S106 has been scheduled into the Councillor training program for 11 October 2023 and suggested more detailed explanations around CIL zones and charges and how these affect infrastructure improvements be covered in the training.

With regards to stakeholder engagement the Group asked whether Town and Parish Councils are contacted to provide their view on infrastructure needs, particularly when there has already been a large number of housing developments within a community and additional development comes forward creating a cumulative effect. Members of the Group expressed their frustrations at not having the understanding of infrastructure triggers, providing examples at Newton/Bingham and Cotgrave where variations to planning applications have been agreed with multiple developers and why a footbridge to connect

the two communities at Bingham and Newton and one in Cotgrave over the canal have not been built or agreements changed. The Group suggested a more transparent approach with some kind of tracking or enforcement process to ensure developers deliver the infrastructure required. The Planning Policy Manager explained that Parishes are consulted at the local plan stage, then more specific requirements are agreed at the planning application stage, with planning officers engaging with relevant bodies such as the highway authority. With regards to tracking and enforcement the Group were advised that the Council does already have a system in place which is monitored by the Officers.

The Chairman asked whether the Council's current system had the flexibility to adapt to change, whereby some planning applications are approved so far in advance of the development being built that circumstances and community needs have change, for example housing developments outside the local plan or fluctuations in population/birth rates increasing pressure on local schools. The Planning Policy Manager explained that the process is responsive to change in accordance to what is in the Local Plan, providing an example at Radcliffe on Trent where the provision of a new primary school was identified but is now no longer required. The Planning Policy Manager advised that the Council is not aware of detailed schemes until an application is received or the timing of delivery of housing, adding that infrastructure, such as a new school would not be built until there is a potential number of pupils identified.

The Group were advised that their comments would be fed back to planning officers for comment and a further item on infrastructure delivery be brought forward for a future meeting of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group considered the contents of the report and whether there are further related matters that the Group wished to be considered at a future meeting.

10 Review of Growth Boards

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property delivered a presentation on the Review of the Growth Boards a process which presented findings from surveys and work completed and considerations and options for the future of the Growth Boards. The report and presentation focussed on the review itself and some proposed models for the Boards going forward.

The Group were provided with a brief background of the Boards from when they were established in 2015, reviewed in 2017 and 2019 and what the Boards had delivered during this period.

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property advised the group of more recent additional areas of work to provide broader context on economic growth related activity delivered by the Council.

The additional work includes:

- Newton Community Partnership Board focusing on the Newton Strategic Urban Extension (SUE)

- Sharphill Stakeholder meetings focusing on the Sharphill development at Edwalton
- Fairham Growth Board
- Ratcliffe on Soar Parish Forum
- UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funding
- Rushcliffe Business Partnership
- High Street and Town Centre Forums
- Bingham Car Parking Stakeholder meetings
- Big Business Carbon Club to support larger businesses to reduce their carbon emissions

It was noted the UK Shared Prosperity Funding has enabled additional business support activity and a comprehensive business support offer commissioned by the Council for businesses across the Borough.

With regards to the Growth Board surveys the Group were advised that Growth Board Members, Councillors and 2500 businesses were approached.

The result of responses were 14 responses from existing Growth Board members and Councillors and 69 responses from local businesses, resulting in the following feedback in descending order of priorities:

- Business support (28)
- Inward Investment (12)
- Sustainability/green growth (11)
- Employment and skills (11)
- High Street/town centres (11)
- Other (6)
- Accessibility (4)
- Tourism/place marketing (2)

Other feedback from the surveys included the following:

- Good at bringing organisations together and getting updates on big projects/key priorities in an area
- Need to review strategic objectives
- Need to engage with businesses more

Overall, it was noted the Growth Boards had some value, but based on the identified priorities and considering other areas of work it may be time to reconsider what are the right objectives and membership.

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property provided an illustrative example of the preferred option with the Strategic Growth Board overseeing three other threads of Groups/Work:

1. Development Boards at Fairham, Bingham, Newton, Sharphill and Gamston
2. Task and Finish Groups/Work e.g. high street forums, landlord engagement, inward investment, area focused activity
3. Meetings with the 6 largest Town/Parish Councils at Bingham, Cotgrave

Radcliffe on Trent, Ruddington, Keyworth and East Leake and WB local area forum

The Group were advised that the current Growth Boards would no longer meet as outlined above as issues or opportunities arise could be dealt with via more focussed groups for example, the soon to be established Bingham Car Parking Group supported by the Borough Council.

Councillor Wheeler as a member of the West Bridgford Growth Board expressed concern with regards to over ambitious and over promising ideas which were deemed unrealistic, unaffordable or would take a long time to deliver. This was echoed by other members of the Group.

The Group felt the review was taking an improved approach and appeared to be heading in the right direction. Questions were asked about the Council's role and the involvement of Town and Parish Council's and businesses and other private stakeholders. Comments were provided on including smaller parishes in some of the dialogue as these communities are affected by development and growth in their larger neighbouring communities.

The Chair asked whether there is a distinction between housing delivery and economic growth and how this might shape the Growth Board at Fairham which is predominantly housing. Councillor Grocock commented that both housing and economic need to exist within the structure of the Growth Boards, utilising Task and Finish Groups with additional expertise for more narrowed approach on specific tasks.

Members of the Group asked for more clarity around the new Development Boards and Task and Finish Groups and how these are distinguished from each other and where they sit in relation to the Strategic Growth Board. The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property explained that there would be crossover and some flexibility would be required to respond to particular issues when they arise this could be health, education or parish lead as examples.

In conclusion the Group accepted the options being proposed but wanted the work streams to be clear on what was to be achieved by way of outcomes. The Group suggested more engagement with private external landlords and businesses, also the involvement of ward councillors and parish councillors where applicable.

It was noted that the structure of the Boards, Finish and Task Groups and Town and Parish meetings would be fluid and there is likely to be some cross over of work streams. Most important to the structure was to get the right people around the table to support businesses, growth and local communities.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Growth and development Group

a) Considered the priorities, contained in the report (paragraph 4.20), for any future Boards and suggest areas of focus and any additional priorities

b) Based on the preferred option (from paragraph 4.27) set out in the report the Group made a recommendation to Cabinet for the new structure of the

Growth Boards

11   Work Programme

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property presented the Work Programme report which detailed the proposed Growth and development Scrutiny items for 2024. The Group noted that a representative from Nottinghamshire County Council and Severn Trent Water would attend the meeting in January to support the Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge item.

The Service Manger proposed the infrastructure delivery item and possibly Economic Growth Strategy be discussed at the meeting in March to be discussed and agreed by Corporate Overview Group at its meeting in November.

Councillor Way commented on her visit to Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium stating how she was apprehensive about the visit but came away with a better knowledge of the facility and expressed what a beautiful place it was and complimented the team. She also encouraged members to go and take a look at the facility for themselves the team would welcome and encourage it.

Councillor Chewings reminded officers of members expectations in respect of Rushcliffe Oaks business plan and the request for clarification on cost by the meeting in July when an update on the facilities progress will be discussed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Work Programme detailed below be approved by Growth and Development Scrutiny Group.

3 January 2024

- Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe
- Management of Open Spaces
- Work Programme

6 March 2024

- Infrastructure Delivery (TBC by Corporate Overview Group)
- Work Programme

Action Table – 4 October 2023

Min No.	Action	Officer Responsible
9	Member requested further detail in respect of the infrastructure triggers within a development and what measures are in place to track and enforce developers to deliver the infrastructure agreed when the application was approved.	Planning Policy Manager

The meeting closed at 8.57 pm.   CHAIR