

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

6 MARCH 2017 - 2.30PM



PRESENT: Councillor Yeulett (Chairman), Councillor Mrs Hay (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Booth, Councillor Buckton, Councillor Mrs Davis, Councillor Mrs Laws, Councillor Mason and Councillor Mrs Mayor

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jane Bailey (Member Service and Governance), Rob Bridge (Corporate Director), Anna Goodall (Head of Legal and Governance), Nick Harding (Head of Shared Planning) and Carol Pilson (Corporate Director)

ALSO INATTENDANCE: Councillor Peter Hiller (Peterborough City Council - Portfolio Holder for Planning) and Simon Machen (Corporate Director - Peterborough City Council)

OSC38/16 2017 PLANNING SHARED SERVICE ANNUAL REVIEW

Councillor Yeulett opened the item and invited the guests from Peterborough City Council to introduce themselves to the panel.

Members considered the 2017 Planning Shared Service Annual Review Report presented by Councillor Sutton, he informed members that the report shows areas of success and those where more resources are required to improve. He stated that he hopes the Panel agrees that the Shared Planning Service is serving both authorities well. There have been challenges, mostly around recruitment and retention of staff, but this is a national problem. The new Government white paper allows us to increase fees for the first time in 5 years, but these must be used to resource the department; he confirmed that he will be signing the documents to accept this extra resource into the department. He added that the department was without a Development Manager (DM) in post for over 3 months of the year, this put a huge strain on both the Head of Service and Sheila Black who covered the work as well as their own daily work and offered thanks to them both and the rest of the team.

He stated that the Development Manager post was being filled by agency staff which was not ideal for the team, but we are pleased to have David Rowan employed into that position. He stated that Gavin Taylor was a big loss to the team but, following a recruitment process one of the Tech Team members has moved into that vacancy, and to promote from within is a good way forward.

Members asked questions made comments and received responses as follows:

1. Councillor Yeulett asked how the representatives from Peterborough feel about the shared arrangements. Councillor Hiller stated that the shared service arrangements are going particularly well and to the economic benefit of both authorities. He stated that there were fears initially around a 'takeover', but that was never the plan, we have the right people in the right place and the partnership is working well and long may it continue;
2. Councillor Yeulett asked what the key challenges are moving forward. Councillor Sutton stated that the biggest challenge is a national problem, and that is getting builders to build. We welcome the developments that come forward, but the challenge is to get them built;
3. Councillor Yeulett stated that he had read about proposals put forward by Shelter to local authorities to facilitate house building. Councillor Sutton confirmed that several authorities are looking into this kind of arrangement. The frustrating thing is that it has been hinted that there would still be a right to buy which will be a real challenge moving forward

with this kind of project;

4. Simon Machen stated that one of the benefits of the shared arrangements is that we can learn from one and other. He stated that he and Councillor Hiller are Directors of the new housing company set up by their authority last year which is proposed to deliver about 200 new homes a year; the initial investment has been £40m. He stated that the company sits arm's length from the authority and acts as a commercial developer with a focus on affordable housing in Peterborough but can deliver houses anywhere. Lots of individual councils are developing their own housing companies and suggested it would be good to all come together to see what the best solution is rather than each creating something different and added that Peterborough's housing company could work with Fenland to help to deliver growth;
5. Councillor Hiller confirmed that one of the reasons that Peterborough looked very seriously at setting up their own housing delivery company was because there were so many planning consents not being delivered by the developers and we have great difficulty bringing these sites forward;
6. Councillor Booth stated that the right to buy scheme could potentially bring extra capital into the housing delivery business which would allow investment to build more, so feels that there is positives to this. Councillor Sutton stated that there would be positives if you did not have to offer the discount. Councillor Booth stated that the discount is only offered if the Council receives the funds but if it is an arm's length company this would not be the case. Councillor Sutton stated that the situation is not as clear as that and that he would have doubts that it would be that straight forward;
7. Rob Bridge stated that it has been alluded to that the net might be widened of the right to buy which would then pick up some of these other elements. From members point of view that is about affordable housing but the idea of some of the property investment will be around creating income streams from private sector rental;
8. Councillor Mrs Davis asked that given the fact that one of the major issues is around staffing what are the plans moving forward and how can we make Fenland and Peterborough more attractive for planners to want to come to work for us. Councillor Sutton stated that it is not just a local problem it is a national problem, there is a national shortage of skilled people. Every other planning authority will be seeing extra income through increased fees so everybody will be in a better position to attract people into these roles. He added that we have always had a problem attracting people to work in Fenland and we are not sure why that is, our pay scales are better than some of the neighbouring authorities but that does not seem to be the deciding factor in most cases;
9. Councillor Mrs Davis asked if we have considered any form of training programme so that we can 'grow our own' planners and enforcement officers. Councillor Sutton confirmed that he mentioned earlier that we have recently recruited from the Tech Team. The Team also have to have the capacity to train but confirmed that we are looking at working with other areas to train people for these roles. Nick Harding stated that a group of Cambridgeshire local authorities used to contribute to a central pot and that was used to buy a number of training hours from the University of Chelmsford, however this year everybody's training budgets were squeezed and we were unable to devise a scheme with the university. In an effort to deliver cost effective training each authority is going to be running at least 2 training sessions that Council Officers from all of the districts within the County can attend;
10. Councillor Mrs Davis stated that the training being offered is just for existing officers, and she is suggesting bringing in young people and providing training for them to become planners, like an apprenticeship. Rob Bridge stated that from April we will be subject to an apprenticeship levy and so we will be making a contribution to that. We are in the process of putting together proposals that will be considered by CMT and then Staff Committee about what apprenticeship scheme we should have here which will include areas that apprenticeships would fit, planning is one of those areas;
11. Councillor Mrs Laws stated that she is concerned about the pressure on staff in the planning team here who are doing an admirable job. She asked if we have looked at candidates who are part qualified, with a view to continuing their training with us, with a clause in place that

they commit to work with the authority for a number of years following that training period. Rob Bridge stated that in respect of a 'golden handcuff' arrangement we have training agreements in place for staff undergoing training. He confirmed that we do support staff around training and people have completed training schemes through us to up-skill themselves. He stated that he understands Councillor Mrs Laws comments around concern for the team and confirmed that jobs in that area have been advertised twice and we have been working hard to secure the right candidates for those vacancies, but have struggled with recruitment for this team. Nick Harding stated that when we go out to recruitment he looks at the person specification, and has removed essential requirements in terms of what degree candidates have and is less fussy about insisting that they go onto a training course and does not think that it matters about specific qualifications if they are performing well and doing the job efficiently and effectively;

12. Councillor Booth asked if there is a minimum standard that has to be observed with regards to qualifications. Nick Harding confirmed that it is at the discretion of each local authority to define its person specification;
13. Councillor Mrs Mayor stated that agency staff cost a lot of money and asked if we are still using agency staff in the planning team. Rob Bridge confirmed that we still do have some agency staff. Our enforcement team has only agency staff, despite 2 attempts of recruitment into this team. We are at the point of going back out to advert as this is not a long term sustainable position. In respects of the planning team, one of the benefits of the shared arrangement is that we can buy and sell staff from each other. We currently have a member of the team who was recruited by Peterborough and came to us, we bought him directly from Peterborough at no additional cost other than his earnings. We also have a couple of agency staff filling maternity leave vacancies, we try not to have a situation where we are spending more money than we want to but with the increased number of applications coming in we need to have staffing levels to capacity. We recognise that we have an opportunity to increase our fees and we want to come to Staff Committee with a revision of the structure which will reflect and be appropriate for where we are now and then recruit to that structure, at the same time ensuring that we are delivering the elements of the Local Plan;
14. Councillor Mason stated that Nick Harding mentioned that staff do not have to be qualified as long as they are competent and have the necessary attributes. He asked if we have thought about recruiting at sixth form colleges. Nick Harding stated that generally speaking we do not have difficulties recruiting into the more junior positions, the struggle is with regards to recruiting senior and principal levels. When you get to those levels in the structure it is more difficult for candidates to move from one geographic area to another due to family commitments;
15. Councillor Mason asked what other plans are in place with regards to recruitment into the team. Rob Bridge stated that the market is going to get very challenging once authorities take up the planning fee increase and look to increase capacity in their teams, there will be some great opportunities for planners. He stated that our salaries are already very competitive so we need to think about the campaign and the opportunities we can offer, moving forward with devolution and being able to advertise around the shared arrangements that we have in place, there is a way to advertise that will entice people to apply. If you are in the planning profession the Garden Town proposals are exciting to be involved in and our local plan is very innovative compared to others, so recruitment pitched in the right way will make a difference;
16. Councillor Yeulett asked about the integration between Fenland and Peterborough. Simon Machen stated that from the Peterborough perspective there are no barriers, and some of the staff do not realise that we have the shared structure in place, for many of them nothing has changed. What we do know is that there is much more capacity and resilience across the shared service than there was by the 2 individual planning services previously. We thought we had a good planning service before but we have learnt some things from Fenland and we hope that Fenland have learnt things too. Councillor Hiller agreed, stating that he supports Simon Machen's comments, the relationship has been welcomed very

positively and we were very keen to be involved with Fenland District Council. He added that he has been a member of the Planning Committee at Peterborough for 9 years and the membership has changed over the years but the attitude of the Committee is one of collaboration and partnership. Councillor Sutton stated that he shares the views of his Peterborough colleagues, the partnership is going very well and we made the right decision with regards to the appointment of the Head of the Planning Shared Service;

17. Councillor Booth stated that he had been trying to get back to a Planning Officer who nobody knew of. After some time that person was tracked down to Peterborough, he stated that the practicalities around the officers understanding who works at what site need to be clearer and suggested that a directory would be useful for staff. Rob Bridge agreed to update the current contact list to include both sites and suggested that they discuss the issue further following the meeting as from a public point of view this service should be seamless and it should not matter where people are based but just that the planning application or query is dealt with;
18. Councillor Mason stated that the report states that £137,000 savings have been achieved; he congratulated officers on this saving. He stated that he feels that some of the savings could have been achieved without the shared service arrangements i.e. the pre-application charges which were introduced bring in additional funds and there has been some restructuring too. He asked what the plans are moving forward into the second year to maintain the level of savings through the shared services while maintaining the efficiency. Councillor Sutton confirmed that the savings are year on year. Councillor Mason asked if we are confident that we will maintain that level. Rob Bridge confirmed that the pre-application income is separate from the saving of £137,000 and we were moving forward with those charges whether we entered into the shared arrangement or not. The £137,000 saving is from changing the structure, sharing the Head of Service, sharing the Tech Team Manager and changing some of the elements of the overall structure. Going into the 2017/18 budget the £137,000 is still saved even though there may be some tweaking following Staff Committee and recognising that the additional planning fees will help to compensate for any additional spend. He reiterated that the pre-application money is separate, we have always been cautious about how much income we can expect and only put £25,000 into the budget figures, at the time this report was written we had £28,500 and we now have £32,000 and we have not yet got to the end of the year. The positive impact of pre applications are that they filter applications and help to deal with the impact of the capacity on the team;
19. Councillor Mason thanked Rob Bridge for the explanation stating that the report implies that part of the savings were made through the pre-application charges and staff structure;
20. Councillor Mrs Hay referring to the report asked about the differences between the number of enquiries and the amount of income. Councillor Sutton stated that there are tiered rates in place, so the income depends on the application submitted and Peterborough have had some bigger applications than Fenland;
21. Councillor Mrs Davis asked with reference to the total savings made, we have saved £137,000 but we have also had to employ some temporary staff and asked if we have still saved £137,000 notwithstanding those costs. Rob Bridge stated that the budget for 2016/17 has been reduced by £137,000, and is still reduced by that amount going into 2017/18. If we are incurring more costs it has been absorbed within the overall underspend, we want to move to a point where we have a structure in place that we can recruit to and do not have additional costs. The £137,000 will remain that amount as the income we get from the additional 20% fees will compensate for the additional cost of staff, there are still some calculations to be done but it will not impact on that figure in a way that will concern members;
22. Simon Machen stated that Peterborough have saved £15m this financial year, and still have some big savings to make, he added that we look at the planning service in the same way that Fenland District Council do which is around income generation and not about cuts. What the planning services does is to contribute in a very positive way to the growth agenda which generates business rate income, we see it as an investment. The challenge is not how much are we going to save but how much are we going to earn;

23. Councillor Yeulett asked what arrangements are in place to sell the service out to other authorities. Councillor Sutton stated that Peterborough have been undertaking external work for a number of years, and we have previously purchased some policy work from them. There are opportunities coming through but because of the increase in both areas in terms of applications, the teams are working to capacity. Councillor Hiller stated that we look at all opportunities and we are good at selling our services and expertise, income generation is critical, we are looking towards being self-funding and have to create income streams moving forward;
24. Rob Bridge stated that one aspect that would be attractive to other authorities is the Technical Team. We need to look at how we can make that more of a shared environment between the Councils, at the moment we share a manager and had hoped to share more but we have not been able to achieve that yet, mainly due to the technology platforms. This is a very transactional element of the planning service and if we could have the technology working properly it could be a very easily tradable service;
25. Councillor Booth stated that we have said that the savings are £137,000 but we do not seem to have a line by line breakdown of where those savings have been made. Rob Bridge confirmed that when the structure went forward we lost a Technical Team Leader, we have half a Technical Team Manager, we have Half a Head of Planning, we lost an Enforcement Officer, and when we looked at the structure at the time we had 4 senior Development Officers and 2 Development Officers. For Fenland that was unbalanced in terms of senior officers so we changed it to 3 Senior Officers and 3 Officers and those 5 elements add up to £137,000. He reiterated that the budgets came down by that amount;
26. Councillor Booth asked for clarification around the ICT issues, has that meant that we have not delivered the amount of savings that we were expecting to there as it has not delivered. Rob Bridge confirmed that we never built in a saving for the shared Tech Team because we were not sure when it would come forward. Nick Harding stated that if Fenland District Council wanted to be convinced that it was possible to co-locate the 2 Technical Service Teams into one place we would need to be sure that the technology works, we have carried out several rounds of ICT testing and we found that during the day the system got slower and slower and it was not fit for purpose. There is one element of testing that we cannot do yet as there is no spare capacity on the Peterborough network to provide a secure link back to Fenland. Peterborough is committed to changing its back office software to a web based version and that would overcome these issues;
27. Councillor Buckton stated that we have a Shared Head of Service and a Planning Team in Fenland and a Planning Team in Peterborough and we buy each other's services, he asked why do we not go for a full integration as surely there must be greater savings and efficiencies to be achieved. Councillor Sutton stated that he is not sure that it would be acceptable to members to have a central Planning Team and Committee. It was never on the agenda to do that as politically there was a lot of fear and it was alluded to earlier, that Fenland was being taken over by Peterborough, which was never the case. He stated that he does not see at any point in the future where a fully integrated service would be acceptable to elected members. Councillor Hiller stated that he agrees with Councillor Sutton, we share a service and expertise, but the actual mechanics of the service and applications received would make it unworkable, and from a political point of view would be unacceptable. What we have at the moment is success. Rob Bridge stated that it is a very relevant question, adding that the Technical Team idea of being in one location was not universally accepted by members, and that he would not underestimate the reaction by members to a fully integrated services;
28. Councillor Mrs Hay asked what the specific savings associated with no longer sending paper copies of planning applications to Town and Parish Councils, and was the decision influenced by how Peterborough operate. Councillor Sutton stated that the savings are estimated at around £5,000 - £6,000. Nick Harding stated that Peterborough does not have as many Parish Councils and does not have any Town Councils so the number of organisations is not as high, he added that some were consulted electronically and others by paper but they found that it was more difficult dealing with the paper side of consultations

and therefore at the same time as writing to Towns and Parishes in Fenland they did the same at Peterborough;

29. Councillor Buckton referring to the speed of validation performance table, stated that the report says that there has been a significant decrease in performance compared to the previous years, he stated that the significant decrease in performance has coincided with the implementation of the shared planning service. The bullet points below the table show the circumstances which have affected the service, 2 of which are Peterborough City Council (PCC) issues. Another is an increase in the number of applications being received, but when referring to table 3 there has been an increase at Peterborough but not at Fenland. He stated that at face value it would appear that our performance is being impacted upon because of issues at Peterborough, and asked for reassurance that this partnership is working for us as well as it is working for Peterborough. Councillor Sutton reassured members that there are 2 separate teams; he reiterated that the wording in the report refers to unsuccessful recruitment and long term sickness at PCC and we had some ICT problems here. He stated that it is vitally important that we get the work through the system and to the officers, a few years ago these systems needed to be improved on and this has improved. He confirmed that he checks the weekly lists and if there are any issues he comes in to speak to the team to find out what is happening. It is important to process this work in a timely manner and confirmed that performance has improved;
30. Councillor Buckton asked for clarification that the performance has picked up. Councillor Sutton confirmed that performance has picked up and stated that he does not feel that the shared arrangements have affected the performance at Fenland;
31. Councillor Buckton referred to table 3, and stated that this reflects 10 months of applications and if we extrapolate that to 12 months, Fenland would be around 1275 applications, which is not an increase. For Peterborough it would be 2575 which is an increase. The overall increase is attributable to Peterborough and not Fenland. Councillor Sutton stated that the number of applications have increased although that does not seem to be reflected correctly in the table. Councillor Booth asked if we have seasonal variances when applications are received and would that explain the figures in this table. Rob Bridge confirmed that there are not seasonal variances and Nick Harding agreed to check the figures and feedback to members;
32. Councillor Sutton stated that from 1 January until today we have received 201 applications compared to the same period last year when we had received 182. He stated that when the team is working at capacity a 10% rise in applications is an increased workload;
33. Councillor Buckton referred to the senior management within the planning function, we have gone from 2 full time Heads of Planning to 1, so we have lost 50% capacity, and we have also taken out other senior officers. We have reduced overall capacity in some key positions and asked what has had to change to accommodate this. Councillor Sutton stated that we had been without a Development Manager for 3 months and the team below Nick Harding are doing more. Councillor Buckton asked if this has impacted on their capacity to process planning applications. Councillor Sutton stated that without the Development Manager in place that could have been true, but now that post has been filled it has made a huge difference;
34. Simon Machen stated that having appointed Nick Harding to the role of Shared Head of Planning where he spends 50% of his time at each authority, this has given people the opportunity to flourish, the Development Manager is approached by members for day to day operational matters and he manages the team. With a full time Head of Service in a relatively small Council, everybody expects that person to do everything, and hopefully this provides a better balance;
35. Councillor Mrs Laws referring to process times stated that she is pleased to see that we are meeting targets, but she is concerned that delegated decisions have increased and asked how many applications are coming through but not going to Committee. Simon Machen stated that this Council has in its favour in terms of decision making, an up to date local plan, before that more applications would have come to Committee. Councillor Sutton stated that before the PAS review we were regularly having 14 or 16 applications at Planning

Committee and one of the recommendations was that this was not good use of resources and this is also why we are seeing less now at Committee;

36. Councillor Booth stated that he has heard comments from developers around the culture of closing applications down at the 8 week period, he stated that he understands that the time period can be extended with agreement. Examples he has been given are that people have had applications refused because additional information was not provided, but was only requested 24 hours beforehand. He asked if there is a culture to ensure that the team hits the 8 week deadline and is that impacting on how applications are being dealt with. Councillor Sutton stated that we do use extensions of time, but that is a 2 way agreement, and can benefit both the developers and the planners. Rob Bridge stated that we are now capturing the reasons for the extensions of times which started at the beginning of this year and in future meetings these will be reflected on. He added that we do not want to be at the point where we cannot meet a performance standard but we also do not want last minute approach to the extension of time, and if there are examples we would like to know about that so that we can talk to the team and learn from those situations as this is not the culture we want in the team;
37. Councillor Yeulett asked if enforcement process is fit for purpose. Councillor Sutton stated that there are challenges, we are looking to recruit again to this team, there are agency staff currently in place, but there is no easy answer;
38. Councillor Yeulett asked if there is a common policy across the shared service with regards to enforcement and do Peterborough experience similar problems. Simon Machen stated that several years ago Peterborough had a major caseload backlog, we went through the cases and cleared them, and we have been fortunate enough to have a stable Enforcement Team for a number of years now. Although Peterborough are fairly comfortable with regards to enforcement they have no spare capacity;
39. Councillor Mrs Davis asked that if we are happy with the salary levels offered can we add benefits to make working in Fenland more attractive. Simon Machen stated that this is a bigger strategic issue that the combined authority will look at around how we tackle the skills deficit in this area;
40. Councillor Mrs Hay stated that table 6 is confusing as data is provided as percentages and numbers it would have been better to have been consistent. She also asked about the appeals that were committee over turns, is the difference between the 2 figures the number of delegated decisions. Nick Harding stated that the number in brackets is all appeals, committee and delegated;
41. Councillor Mrs Hay stated that she would have been interested to see how many appeals that were allowed and dismissed were down to delegated decisions and how many went to Committee. She stated that she is also concerned that although relatively small are increasing each year, whereas at Peterborough they decreased. Councillor Sutton stated that both figures are very small and to have 6 appeals from the total number of applications is good. Nick Harding stated that the number of appeals that we get is low and therefore a decision either way on an application makes quite a large difference in terms of percentage score, and 70% performance is way in excess of what the Government target is;
42. Councillor Hiller stated that regarding the comments on the number of applications that come through as officer decisions or to committee. He stated that the less applications that come to Committee the better, as to have too many applications is difficult to manage effectively. He added that Peterborough try to look carefully at applications and if we are going against an officers recommendation there has to be a very good reason to do that;
43. Councillor Booth asked are there any aspects of the Local Plan that the inspectors are overturning or is it a range of appeals, are there any policy issues that we need to look at. Councillor Sutton stated that we have not lost an appeal on policy, the areas we might lose an appeal is for something that is subjective like visual impact;
44. Councillor Booth stated that given the nature of our Local Plan which is fairly loose compared to others, it is much more open to interpretation, he asked are there any elements where the inspector has come up with a different view to ours based on our own policy. Nick Harding confirmed that he could not think of a time this had happened, but an appeal

recently was in relation to checking that a settlement had reached its threshold in terms of growth. Another one was because as we mentioned we do not have settlement boundaries, and we have said that we believe that something is not well connected to a settlement and it has been argued contrary to that, we have won the vast majority of the appeals, so feel confident that we are making the right decisions;

45. Councillor Yeulett asked with regards to the Government white paper will the proposals be acceptable for local authorities, and what are the challenges. Councillor Sutton stated that he intends to sign the papers and to increase our fees by 20%, he added that he has doubts about some of the aspects of the proposals and he is not sure how much it will help with the delivery of building. Rob Bridge stated that the one that concerns him is the new housing delivery test, for an area like Fenland it is around land supply and the fact that we are processing more applications. We need the developers to build, and if there is a housing delivery test which checks that you have built what you said you would build, this could be a problem as it is not down to us to do the building but we are reliant on the developers at that stage. If there are implications for not meeting those tests that is not in our control. Simon Machen stated that housing is a market commodity, and people will manipulate the market as well as the value of it. He added that he does not see the white paper making any difference to that. The system penalises authorities like Fenland and Peterborough which are wholly behind economic growth. Councillor Hiller agreed stating that the developer has the upper hand until we have the ability to financially penalise developers for not bringing forward developments;
46. Councillor Booth stated that there was some 'flowery' language used in the report around the delivery and asked if the report is balanced. Councillor Sutton stated that we could have tried to hide things but we are here to show you everything and expect some tough questions from the panel, it is a balanced report;
47. Councillor Yeulett asked if the shared service is adding value. Councillor Sutton stated that the arrangements are going well, and better than we thought, if we can get members to accept that the Tech Team would eventually work better as one unit then there are areas to have further savings and improved service. Members have shown resistance to this in the past;
48. Councillor Hiller stated that it is still early days but the shared arrangement is working well. The combined planning service that we have can only be strengthened by attitude, it is important that members look at this shared arrangement as a benefit to the Council as they do in Peterborough;
49. Councillor Yeulett asked what challenges the combined authority might bring. Simon Machen stated that it is an opportunity, there is a degree of wariness around it, the areas where collaborating works are around creating a single vision. Working together we will better understand each other's needs. Rob Bridge agreed that it is a good opportunity, and the opportunity around extra housing money is something that will be positive for Fenland and the whole of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough;
50. Councillor Booth asked if members could have some information forwarded to them with regards to officer's caseloads. Rob Bridge stated that there are some statistics in the report for Peterborough and Fenland but have not been able to get any statistics from neighbouring authorities;

Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

- Utilising opportunities further in the district to promote the area for more engaging recruitment campaigns;
- to further explore opportunities to grow our own staff, around specific schemes, in relation to training and development and career opportunities and ensuring they are transparent so that people know what their progress might be once they are employed with us;
- To understand the reasons for staff leaving us and to build that into schemes so that we are learning potential lessons;
- To work with the combined authority proactively to address the skills gap in North Cambridgeshire;

- To continue to utilise extensions of time appropriately and to further explore those;
- To proactively communicate and manage expectations regarding the validation timescales, particularly if they are variable;
- To continue to work collectively and collaboratively with developers in order that sites and development continues;
- To update the Development Team Contact Details to include Planning Officers at both sites.

Councillor Yeulett thanked everybody for their attendance at the meeting.

4.20pm

Chairman