
CABINET

Wednesday, 20th October, 2021

Present: Councillor Miles Parkinson OBE (in the Chair), Councillors Paul Cox (Vice Chair), Loraine Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP and Joyce Plummer

In Attendance: Councillors Peter Britcliffe, June Harrison, Marlene Haworth, Dave Parkins and Bernadette Parkinson

153 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence submitted on this occasion.

154 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no reported declarations of interest or dispensations.

155 Minutes of Cabinet

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15th September 2021 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Resolved - **That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.**

156 Minutes of Committees, Boards, Panels and Working Groups

The minutes of the following meeting were submitted:

- Cabinet Committee (Street Naming) – 15th September 2021

Resolved - **That the Minutes be received and noted.**

157 Reports of Cabinet Members

There were no verbal reports provided on this occasion.

158 Huncoat Garden Village - Masterplan Framework & Infrastructure Delivery Strategy

Councillor Loraine Cox, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Wellbeing, provided a report inviting the Cabinet to consider for approval the Huncoat Garden Village Masterplan Framework and Infrastructure Delivery Strategy.

Councillor L Cox provided a brief introduction to the report. The Framework and Strategy formed part of the Council's growth plans and its Corporate Strategy and was a major piece of work. The project would deliver a new garden community of around 1,500 high quality sustainable homes, largely on brownfield sites. Consultation had been undertaken with residents, land owners and developers at each stage of the planning process.

Key features included:

- Use of the former Huncoat Power Station site for housing;
- A reduction in the size of the individual development parcels of land, particularly in connection with the former colliery, in order to protect natural habitat;
- The creation of a new relief road to ease congestion;
- Proposed expansion of Huncoat Junior School.

This represented a once in a lifetime opportunity to provide a fabulous landscaped setting. The project was a game-changing development and would hopefully enable existing residents to acquire improved accommodation and attract new, economically active households into the Borough. The project would protect the environment through the application of rigorous housing standards. It would also protect, conserve and enhance local habitats around the existing woodlands and watercourses. The homes themselves would be of sustainable design and construction and would meet current decarbonisation priorities.

Councillor Miles Parkinson OBE, Leader of the Council, noted that it was only a few days away from the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, which would highlight the importance of the environment and natural habitats. The current Masterplan had evolved over many years with appropriate consultation at each stage. It represented a statement of intent to deliver cutting-edge housing and improve living standards locally. Members were proud of the work carried out by officers, landowners and the community to reach this stage. The Masterplan gave out a strong message and was a plan for beyond 2036.

Councillor Parkins indicated that Huncoat Junior School had recently indicated that they might wish to seek academy status next year, which could affect discussions around the school's potential expansion.

Councillor Marlene Haworth, Leader of the Opposition, spoke highly of the plan and thanked the officers for their work. She reiterated one concern expressed previously about the relief road, which relied on a grant being obtained from Homes England. Without that road, the development could be limited to only around 300-400 homes. Although some assurances had been received about the likelihood of receiving a grant, she enquired if there was a 'Plan B' in case the funding was not made available. The Leader responded that Homes England would provide some money to develop the bid for an additional £20-£25M of Government funding. The support of the MP would be useful in this regard. However, local politicians were already working cross-party to secure this and on other matters such as the Levelling Up Fund bid.

Councillor Britcliffe was in favour of the Masterplan and believed that this was a good time to submit bids of this kind to Government, which was keen on Levelling Up. Any new housing would be good for the local economy. He suggested that discussions take place with Northern (rail operator) about service improvements. Residents of the new homes might need to access Preston or Manchester for work. A direct link to Manchester would be beneficial, since 400 homes might result in 800 cars on the road. He was also pleased to see constructive cross-party working. The Leader responded that cross-party discussions were also taking place with Lancashire County Council, which included potential M65 Junction 8 improvements. This could unlock further potential in Huncoat, at Altham Industrial Estate and in neighbouring Simonstone. A park and ride scheme at Huncoat would be discussed, as there was sufficient land available there. Councillor Britcliffe acknowledged that the new leadership at LCC was more responsive to working with district councils and across political parties.

Councillor Harrison commented that the Labour Group locally had been lobbying hard for railway improvement for a number of years. The Leader acknowledged the ongoing work by Skipton East Lancs Rail Action Partnership (SELRAP) to reconnect East Lancashire, via Colne to Skipton.

Councillor Dad noted that the relief road was critical to the development. He also reported a good working relationship with his peers at Lancashire Council Council, including the new Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport.

Councillor P Cox indicated that he was impressed that the project was taking on board environmental issues, low carbon emissions and sustainable housing. These would become aspirational homes to encourage residents to stay in the Borough. The new homes would complement the Council's wider environmental work, such as electric vehicles and charging points, as the Council put its green agenda into practice.

The Leader indicated that the next phase would involve a bid to the Infrastructure Fund early in the New Year. The Government was keen for any monies to be spent within the current Parliamentary term. The Council had previously delivered smaller environmentally friendly schemes, but this was on a much larger scale.

Approval of the report was not deemed a key decision.

Reasons for Decision

The full reasons were set out in the main report, which included information on the progress so far and the key components promoted by the Masterplan over the next 15 years, as follows:

- 1,504 new homes plus an additional 312 safeguarded for the next plan period beyond 2036.
- A new residential relief/distributor road linking Huncoat Garden Village directly with the A56.
- Provision to expand Huncoat Junior School (subject to some further work including discussions with Lancashire County Council and the Huncoat Junior School)
- A new village centre to be located at the junction of Lower Gate Road, Altham Lane and Station Road. This will link the "old" Huncoat with the Garden Village area and will provide local shops, community buildings and car parking within walking distance of the new neighbourhoods as well as existing residential areas.
- Railway Station improvements including car parking facilities and cycling storage, improved access arrangements, live train information and increased security.
- Circa 40 hectares of improved open space including 24 hectares of safeguarded land for a potential Biological Heritage Site.
- In addition to the existing football / sport pitches off Bolton Avenue, a new state of the art 11 a side 4G pitch with flood lighting and a 9 a-side grass pitch
- 7 formal play areas and 7 informal play areas

Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

Six options had been developed and tested prior to finalising the preferred Masterplan option. The initial three options (Options 1-3) had included a mix of residential uses but all three were rejected because the employment uses were found to have a detrimental impact on the Masterplan and to be not viable, and with very little support from local resident consultation.

A further three residential only options had been developed and tested:

- Option 4 – Small growth option (497 new homes)
- Option 5 – Medium growth option (1,110 new homes)
- Option 6 – Transformational growth option (1,793 new homes)

Option 4 had been rejected because it did not satisfy the emerging Local Plan housing numbers to be delivered in Huncoat. A 'hybrid' of Option 5 and 6 had been selected to satisfy the emerging Local Plan housing numbers and, following detailed testing, to produce a deliverable Masterplan framework.

Detailed analysis of option development and testing was provided within the Stage 2 Option Testing and Development Report.

Resolved - **That Cabinet notes and approves the Huncoat Garden Village Masterplan Framework and Infrastructure Delivery Strategy as per the final document (access to which is provided by website links in the report).**

159 Healthy Weight Declaration

Councillor Bernadette Parkinson introduced a report of Councillor Jenny Molineux, Chair of the Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which included recommendations which fell within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Wellbeing. The report provided information on the Council's current actions which supported obesity prevention and the Healthy Weight Declaration and a recommend a course of action.

Councillor B Parkinson highlighted the recommendations of the Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 8th September 2021 regarding childhood obesity and the Healthy Weight Declaration. Obesity was a growing concern. Hyndburn was above the national average with some 22.8% of 10-11 year olds obese. This was the highest rate in Pennine Lancashire. Work was ongoing under the Healthier Place Healthier Future Programme to improve the situation across East Lancashire authorities. Although Hyndburn Borough Council was not the lead authority for health in the locality it did have a role to play in its policies which affected the wider determinants of health.

Covid-19 had brought some additional pressure on local authorities and it would be difficult at this time to meet all of the core commitments of the Healthy Weight Declaration within existing resources. Accordingly, a more realistic set of actions had been proposed.

Councillors Britcliffe and Dad both spoke in favour of the proposals and respectively highlighted the importance of education and warned of the negative effects of overreliance on takeaways.

Approval of the report was not deemed a key decision.

Reasons for Decision

Obesity was increasing, with a rise in obesity prevalence in the UK from 15% in 1993 to 29% in 2017). Nearly two thirds of adults in England were overweight or obese (64%), (Public Health England, 2017)

There was no single cause of being overweight and obesity, it was down to a multitude of factors, including (but not limited to) access to healthy food; proximity to fast food outlets; advertising and marketing of unhealthy, calorie dense food and drink; and opportunities for physical activity. Therefore, healthy weight needed to be 'everybody's business,' and all local government departments had a role to play. Having strong support across portfolios and wards could help to drive change, ensuring that healthy weight was considered in all policies and practice.

Locally, healthy weight was a growing concern in Hyndburn:

- The prevalence of childhood obesity in Hyndburn was greater than the national average, with 22.8% of children aged 10-11 in the district classified as obese. This was the highest prevalence across Pennine Lancashire.
- Hyndburn was one of the 10% most deprived districts/unitary authorities in England, which was significantly associated with being overweight and obesity. Furthermore, about 19% (3,300) of children lived in low income families, which was also a risk factor for poor health outcomes.
- Physical inactivity directly contributed to 1 in 6 deaths, and around a quarter of the population was inactive and 45% of women and 33% of men were not active enough to benefit their health.
- Diet-related ill health in the UK was estimated to lead to approximately 70,000 premature deaths annually, which represented around 12 per cent of the total number of deaths.
- Evidence showed that poor diet had the highest impact on the NHS budget, costing around £6 billion per year. An unhealthy diet was strongly associated and causally linked with a number of chronic, complex conditions such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, some cancers and type II diabetes.
- Those with obesity were at greater risk of poor outcomes relating to Covid-19.

Healthier Places Healthier Future Trailblazer

Across Pennine Lancashire, local authorities had been asked to support the delivery of the Healthier Place Healthier Future Trailblazer programme, to adopt the Healthy Weight Declaration and look at creating some local commitments. It had already been adopted by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and Pendle Borough Council.

The Declaration had been produced by Food Active, a healthy weight programme originally commissioned by local authority public health teams, NHS organisations, and Public Health England teams at both regional and national level. It had been approved by the North West Regional Association of Directors of Public Health, British Dental Association, Children's Food Campaign and the UK Health Forum.

Hyndburn – Healthy Weight Declaration

A local authority signing up to the Declaration signalled a strategic commitment made across all council departments to: reduce unhealthy weight in local communities; protect the health and wellbeing of staff and citizens; and to make an economic impact on health, social care and the local economy.

Adoption of the Declaration provided an opportunity for local authorities to lead local action and demonstrate good practice in adopting a systems approach to healthy weight.

The Declaration included 16 standard commitments whereby local authorities pledged to achieve action on improving policy and healthy weight outcomes in relation to specific areas of the council's work. Within the Declaration there was also the opportunity for local authorities to add local commitments relevant to their community health needs and priorities.

The Policy Team had undertaken a review of the Council's current activity and how this could link to the 16 core commitments in the Healthy Weight Declaration. Full details of their assessment was set out in a table within the Cabinet report.

The table showed that the Council already addressed many of the core commitments as part of its usual business. However, the Covid-19 pandemic had brought increasing pressures on many Council departments. It would therefore be difficult to meet the remaining core commitments within existing resources.

Therefore, the Policy Team had consulted with Corporate Management Team (CMT) to ascertain their views.

CMT had recognised the importance of reducing obesity in Hyndburn, and highlighted the many actions the Council already undertook to do this. However, they were concerned that signing the Healthy Weight Declaration would commit the Council to undertaking action on the 16 core commitments, several of which the Council did not have the current capacity to undertake. The Scrutiny Committee shared these concerns, and had agreed that the Council should only sign the Healthy Weight Declaration if it had the capacity to deliver, which, due to increased workload on many Council departments due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it did not.

The Council could still demonstrate its commitment to healthy weights without signing the Declaration, by agreeing to commit to the actions proposed in the report.

Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

Cabinet should sign the Healthy Weight Declaration – this was rejected as there was no current officer capacity to deliver on some of the core commitments of the Healthy Weight Declaration.

Resolved

- That Cabinet agrees to:

- (1) Support the principles of the Healthy Weight Declaration and Lancashire County Council's commitment as the upper tier authority responsible for Public Health in Hyndburn:**
- (2) Show its commitment to reducing obesity in Hyndburn by maintaining the actions detailed below:**

- **Support action at national level to help local authorities promote healthy weight and reduce health inequalities in our communities by promoting national healthy weight campaign messages through our social media channels.**
- **Maintain supplementary planning guidance for hot food takeaways around schools, with a restriction zone of 400m radius around all schools in the Borough. New hot food takeaways will not be supported within these areas, except when located in a defined town or local centre, or controls on the hours of operation are implemented to help reduce the likelihood of young people visiting.**
- **Use planning policy where possible to support health and wellbeing and create development that encourages physical activity and active travel.**
- **Continue our approach to enabling and promoting active travel for staff and visitors whilst providing staff with opportunities to be physically active through the promoting of stair use, cycle to work scheme and subsidised leisure access.**
- **Encourage partners who operate catering from Council owned buildings to offer healthy options.**
- **Through our work with partners notably Hyndburn Leisure, encourage residents to be physically active through use of leisure facilities and outdoor spaces.**

(3) Review Officer capacity in 6 months-time, and consider then whether resources are available for the Council to sign the Healthy Weight Declaration and carry out the 16 core commitments.

160 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved

- **That, in accordance with Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item, when it was likely, in view of the nature of the proceedings that there would otherwise be disclosure of exempt**

information within the Paragraph at Schedule 12A of the Act specified at the item.

161 Proposed Disposal of the Council's Land Known as Clayton Triangle

In accordance with Regulation 5(6)(a) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, approval was given by Councillor Jenny Molineux, Chair of the Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to the following decision being made by Cabinet on 20th October 2021, in private, on the grounds that the decision was urgent and could not reasonably be deferred. The relevant notice had been published on 20th October 2021.

Exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Councillor Loraine Cox, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regeneration, provided a report seeking the Cabinet’s approval to the disposal of two additional small parcels of land following the Council’s approval in March 2021 to sell the four larger land plots known as Clayton Triangle for residential development. The proposed additional disposal provided the Council with an opportunity to sell all of its land holdings in this location without leaving small irregular plots that had no value to the Council. The land was not suitable for building on so would remain public open space and provide some biodiversity.

Approval of the report was not a key decision.

Reasons for Decision

The reasons for the decision were set out in the exempt report.

Alternative Options Considered and Reasons for Rejection

The alternative options considered and reasons for rejection were set out in the exempt report.

Resolved - **That the recommendations as set out in the exempt report be approved.**

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
At which the minutes were confirmed