

**Greater Thetford Development Partnership Board
Minutes**

Monday 15 February 2016 10.00am – 12.00pm
Chares Burrell Centre, Staniforth Road, Thetford, IP24 3LH

Chair: Anna Graves AG (Breckland Council)

Attendees:

Board Members

Denis Crawford DC (Norfolk County Council), Robert King RK (Croxton Parish Council), Mike Brown MB (Thetford Business Forum), Chris Hey CH (Norfolk County Council), Ellen Jolly EJ (Breckland District Council), Tony Poulter TP (Brettenham & Kilverstone Parish Council), John Newton JN (Thetford Town Council – Substitute for Terry Jermy), David Armstrong DA (Flagship – Substitute for Adam Broadway) & Tig Armstrong TA (Norfolk County Council – Substitute for Fiona McDiarmid)

Officers

Sarah Barsby SB (Breckland Council), Robert Walker RW (Breckland Council) & Robert Campbell RC (Breckland District Council – Substitute for Julie Kennealy),

Guests

Minutes

Natalie Thatcher NT (Breckland District Council)

Apologies:

Adam Broadway AB (Flagship)
Fiona McDiarmid FM (Norfolk County Council)
Will Van Cutsem WVC (Pigeon)
Terry Jermy TJ (Thetford Town Council)
Julie Kennealy JK (Breckland District Council)

	Item	
	AG welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introductions were done around the table, due to several substitute attendees.	
1	<u>Approval of Minutes 02/12/15</u>	
	The minutes from the last meeting were approved. The following points were noted;	
	- The traffic study actions will be picked up in the agenda.	
	- The communications actions will be picked up in the agenda.	
2	<u>Approval of Terms of Reference for the GTDP Board</u>	
	The terms of reference for the Board had been circulated and some	

members of the board have asked for several amendments to be made.

Role of the Board:

- Include a reference to championing the greater vision for Thetford.
- The document says “Ensure delivery of important strategic projects”, however the Board cannot deliver, as it is not a decision making body. Instead, the Board can influence & negotiate, so a better term to use is “oversee and coordinate”.
- Managing risk is not mentioned within the role of the board. The three sub groups will need to identify the key risks that the board will need to be made aware of. E.g. A lack of funds for a project.

Membership:

It was confirmed that current membership on the Board includes Education & Highways which are represented by Norfolk County Council. The primary care representative will be discussed later in the agenda so the proposed initial membership will still be included and the name left absent until it's been resolved.

The Norfolk Constabulary suggestion is Paul Wheatley. Rob Walker will contact him to clarify if he will be attending.

It was confirmed that as GTDP is not a legal entity, voting rights are not required. The GTDP acts as a consultative board. Therefore the chairs of the three sub groups should play an active role on the board, and should provide valuable input from the range of work within the sub groups. They will sit as full members of the board, with the ability to vote, should it ever be required.

It was agreed that the sub groups would nominate their chair and then the Board ratify the decision.

Notes:

- Section b - The length of time that representatives serve on the Board was questioned as 1 year is not very long for continuity. Although this is a good point, it was clarified that this was because at a council level, council members are reviewed annually. It was suggested that the text is amended to include the rest of the board for longer.
- Section e – It was confirmed that substitutes can act as the board member, with equal rights so this needs to be amended.

Meetings:

Flexibility of meeting regularity was agreed “at least” 6 times a year.

Confidentiality & Conflicts of Interest:

- The Breckland Council legal department were asked to look at the impacts of the 2000 Freedom of Information act and in response they have produced a protocol for the Board to use. A hard copy was circulated during the meeting. It is proposed that the current confidentiality section is removed from the terms of reference and instead the protocol is added as an appendix to it. This was agreed.

There were discussions about using confidential issues with caution and only due to a matter of commercial sensitivity or conflict of interest. This is the process stated within the act.

All amendments noted above were agreed and signed off by the Board. A

	<p>final Terms of Reference will be circulated to board members by email, and uploaded to the website as agreed.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that the annual reviews of the terms of reference needed to be programmed in. 	NT
3	<p><u>Communications Update</u></p> <p><u>Communications Protocol</u></p> <p>An updated version of the initial communications protocol was circulated to the board, reflecting some helpful comments received by some members of the Board. These amendments were mainly regarding references to the Greater Thetford area. Most of the changes have been made, except a comment on the wording of pg3, reactive media relations, point 1. This has been kept as is because it would relate to something unanticipated.</p> <p>A link to the web page is likely to come out later this week, once the content has been updated with the key messages in the comms plan. The ghost domain name acquisition is in progress and is likely to be www.gtdp.org.uk</p> <p>The revisions to the protocol were agreed by the Board.</p> <p><u>Other Activities</u></p> <p>It was requested that Communication Activities be a standing item on the agenda, to talk about any forums, conversations and presentations, where the members have been asked to speak about the work of the GTDP. This was agreed by the Board.</p> <p>JK recently made a presentation at the last Town Council meeting about the TEP, and the work being done to move this forward. The Town Council expressed considerable support for the work being done and are looking at ways that they could help. This was a good exchange of views and it was great to have complete support for the whole project.</p> <p>AG recently made a presentation to the Business Forum on the A11 work, the Councils direction and the GTDP. There was general support for the partnership but concerns about getting the geography right for the area as well as challenges in the history, although it was explained that focus is now on moving forward.</p> <p>DC has had discussions at various schools and often talks of the work of the board.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a standing item to the agenda – Communication Activities 	NT

<p>4</p>	<p><u>Independent Chair Progress</u></p> <p>The independent chair selection panel met recently with the HR consultant to consider the applications. It was agreed to continue with further recruitment with an amended description and an increase in the salary offered.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the amendments to the remunerations are to be circulated to the board. 	<p>JK</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><u>Growth & Education</u></p> <p>Chris Hey gave a short presentation on education.</p> <p>Chris is the Head of Place Planning and Organisation within Children’s Services at Norfolk County Council and is responsible for the supply of school places and the schools’ capital programme.</p> <p>The role of the County Council in managing pupil number growth and the current picture in Thetford was discussed.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the County Council does not run schools itself. They are run by governing bodies/ academy trusts which are responsible for the standards, finances and the buildings. The County Council has a duty to promote high standards, provide sufficient learner places and ensure provision for vulnerable learners.</p> <p>The Government has a policy that all schools should become academies within the life of this Parliament. Academies are maintained by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>The Children’s Services’ Local Growth & Investment Plan has recently been approved by Committee and demonstrates how the County intends to provide a sufficient number of schools and a ‘reasonable’ place for every child. Places are allocated through an annual admissions round but longer term place supply needs are reflected in this medium to long term plan.</p> <p>A table was shown regarding the current governance status of schools in Thetford. There are three different academy trusts in charge of some of the schools, as well as some NCC-maintained community schools. The Ofsted judgements show that an equal number require improvement than those that are good or above.</p> <p>The concept of ‘form of entry’ was discussed and confirmed to be the number of classes starting each year. For example, if there are 3 forms of entry, with approx. 30 children in each class, the year group will be approx. 90 children.</p> <p>The need for both primary and secondary education places is going to increase. The Breckland local plan is used to inform the County where housing allocations will be and site specific locations and S106 funding will help the planning and financing of new schools to meet the sufficiency duty.</p> <p>When a new school is needed, the County Council sets up a commissioning competition between academy providers and offers them</p>	

	<p>the opportunity to open the new school. Assessments are made against the specification and suggestions of the most appropriate provider are forwarded to the Regional Schools Commissioner on behalf of the Secretary of State.</p> <p>The current capacity in the primary sector is 12 forms of entry, which means every reception year, 360 places are on offer. It is estimated that by 2026, 18 forms of entry will need to be provided. This could be covered with 3 new schools, each with 2 forms of entry and the expansion will come through with the housing development.</p> <p>The County cannot build school places that will remain empty. Therefore figures have been based on patterns of preference. If the preferences change, the number of places needed would alter.</p> <p>School places need to be of good quality and it was suggested that the Board should think of ways in which it can support schools in their journey to becoming good or outstanding in their Ofsted reports and help to support skill development more widely in the town.</p> <p>It was suggested that the timing of school building could be thought about by the planning and projects sub-group. Revenue finance to run a school come from a funding formula based on number of pupils, so pupils are needed before the schools can be opened. It is ideal to build at the critical point and not when there are excess pupils seeking places.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that the process of procuring a school provider takes approx. 6-9 months.</p> <p>Schools admission policies are set by academies and voluntary aided schools, or by the County Council for community and voluntary controlled schools.</p> <p>If education/skills does not naturally fit into any of the sub groups, a satellite group could focus on this issue.</p> <p>Parking responsibility in and around schools was also discussed. It is difficult for the police or highways to control matters on the ground on a daily basis, as it is ultimately down to the behaviour of parents. Car parks on school sites are against NCC Highways policy, although schools do have a travel plan. This is always refreshed as a planning requirement where building takes place at a school.</p> <p>It was proposed that influencing safer travel routes with pathways and cycle routes, through the work of the Board, would be a good idea.</p> <p>It was agreed to follow up the last idea and to consider for the next meeting how the schools infrastructure development, and other education/skills related matter, might fit in with the work of the Board and sub groups.</p> <p>Chris was thanked for the presentation.</p>	
6	<p><u>Community Sub Group (Progress)</u></p> <p>The action to finalise the terms of reference hasn't yet happened for this sub group.</p>	

	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the main Board TOR are now agreed, the sub group ones will be brought back for sign off at the next meeting. <p>With regards to the three residual projects, the communities' team at Breckland Council are supporting the Charles Burrell museum and the local play areas discussed have been transferred to the Town Council. Discussions are ongoing regarding the Cosy Carpets building and a more detailed update will be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was suggested that schools parking and safer travel could be a focus for the community group, which would then tie in with the work on traffic management.</p>	RW
7	<p><u>Planning and Projects Sub Group (Progress)</u></p> <p>An updated version of the terms of reference was circulated to the board for review and they were agreed.</p> <p>The first item overseen by this sub group will be the allocation of the local growth fund money from the LEP. This equates to approximately £2.2-2.3m of which some is specifically allocated and some is not. It was requested that a highlight report be provided to the next board on the progress of this sub group.</p> <p>Discussions took place around the neighbourhood plans for the two parishes represented on the board and the Thetford plan. It was confirmed that the Croxton, Brettenham & Kilverstone neighbourhood plan has to be in line with the emerging district local plan and will include Thetford Town Council as a consultee. The plan consultation is due to take place in July.</p>	
8	<p><u>Inward Investment Sub Group (Progress)</u></p> <p>The Inward Investment sub group terms of reference were agreed in principal at the last meeting and in line with the suggestions made, has been reformatted to match the other subgroups. There is a small point to amend in line with today's discussions around the confidentiality statement. This will be circulated by email to the Board for agreement. A nomination for the chairperson of the sub group is to come back to the next board meeting.</p> <p>Informal discussions have taken place with those who are to be officially invited. A formal meeting is to come next, with a highlight report coming back to the next meeting of the GTDP.</p> <p>One of the main projects in the area is the Thetford Enterprise Park site, and members of the sub-group are in discussion with both the landowners and their agent with regard to finance requirements. One of the issues of</p>	

	<p>the site is a lack of electricity and funding proposals are currently being looked at to help overcome these restraints. The group are also looking at which sectors to encourage in moving into Thetford.</p> <p>It was suggested that existing businesses are contacted for their thoughts on what they would like in the town. The local business forum offered to help gather interested parties and publicise the meeting.</p> <p>The overall plan is about the future and where the town should go, but is also about retaining existing businesses. A balance of aspirational views and current views are needed.</p> <p>The Board agreed that the Inward Investment sub group should work with the Business Forum to put this meeting together.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate the final version of the terms of reference for electronic sign-off • Work with the Business Forum to hold a consultation meeting with local businesses 	<p>NT</p> <p>JK/RC</p>
<p>9</p>	<p><u>Public Health</u></p> <p>Since the last meeting, discussions have taken place with colleagues in the health department to work out who would be best placed as a representative. The Head of the Commissioning Group for Norfolk has been approached and an invitation has been sent. The Board will be updated once a response has been received.</p> <p>Concerns were raised that this representative would not be the right choice. It was confirmed that the CCG commission health services and if it proves to be the wrong way forward, this addition can be re-addressed.</p> <p>Robert Kybird from the audience offered to assist in bringing forward health representation and this was welcomed by the board.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>It was suggested that a development session for the board members take place to create an effective board based on solid relationships. The Board supported this.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the traffic study is made up of two pieces of work. Breckland Bridge will be looking at the use of Breckland Council car parks, whilst Norfolk County Council will be reviewing traffic movement in and around Thetford. There is a traffic study meeting taking place this week, to agree the scope of study, and a report back to the Board will take place in due course.</p>	<p>AG</p>
<p>11</p>	<p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <p>The following actions were summarised as next steps for the Board to take.</p>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The TOR for the GTDP Board have been agreed in principle and the final version will be circulated and uploaded onto the website. 2) The three sub-groups Terms of Reference will be finalised and nominated chairs details will be brought back to the next meeting. 3) Communication Activities will be added to the agenda as a standing item. 4) The Independent Chair update will be brought back to the next meeting to report on progress. 5) Education challenge to sub groups. Each group to pick up timing and investment issues and transport around schools. 6) The Inward Investment sub-group is to organise a consultation with local businesses. 7) The three sub groups are to provide a highlight report at the next meeting and a template is to be circulated. 8) Development process information is to come back to the board. 	<p>NT</p> <p>NCC/JK/ RW</p> <p>NT</p> <p>JK</p> <p>NCC/JK/ RW</p> <p>JK</p> <p>NCC/JK/ RW/NT</p> <p>AG</p>
<p>12</p>	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting and Future Meetings</u></p> <p>The next GTDP Board Meeting will be on 14th April 2016, 10am till 12pm. Upcoming dates for the year were agreed to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14th April 2016 – 10am – 12pm • 24th June 2016 – 10am - 12pm – (Open Forum – 12.30 till 1.30pm) • 19th August 2016 – 10am - 12pm • 21st October 2016 – 10am - 12pm • 16th December 2016 – 10am - 12pm - (Open Forum – 12.30 till 1.30pm) <p>Venues are to be confirmed by Natalie Thatcher.</p> <p><u>Actions arising:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NT to find suitable venues for the upcoming meetings. 	<p>NT</p>