



Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR

Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.co.uk

Minutes of the meeting of the:

SPECIAL FULL COUNCIL

Held on:

Tuesday 19 June 2018, 4.30 pm - 6.25 pm, Boardroom, Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate

PRESENT:

Cllr. Baker	Penrith Pategill Ward
Cllr. Bowen	Penrith East Ward
Cllr. Burgin	Penrith South Ward
Cllr. Clark	Penrith South Ward
Cllr. Donald	Penrith North Ward
Cllr. Jackson	Penrith North Ward
Cllr. Kenyon	Penrith North Ward
Cllr. Monk	Penrith West Ward
Cllr. Whipp	Penrith North Ward

Deputy Town Clerk
Economic Development Officer

MINUTES FOR FULL COUNCIL TUESDAY 19 JUNE 2018

The Leader of Eden District Council, Deputy Director of Technical Services and Planning Policy Officer were welcomed to the meeting.

PTC18/23 Apologies

Members received and accepted apologies from Councillors Briggs, Connelly, Lawson and Thompson.

Councillor Donald joined the meeting at 4.33pm.

PTC18/24 Interests and Dispensations

Members confirmed the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 26 July 2017 and authorised the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Meeting as a true record.

PTC18/25 Declaration of Interests

The meeting was requested to receive any declarations of interest of any disclosable pecuniary or other registrable interests relating to any items on the agenda for the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

PTC18/26 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 – Excluded Item

Members considered whether agenda item 4, Penrith Masterplan, should be considered without the presence of the press and public, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Section 2. The Leader of Eden District Council stated that although the document was still confidential had had no problem with Members holding the discussion in the public domain.

RESOLVED that this agenda item considered in the presence of the press and public.

PTC18/27 Penrith Vision Strategic Masterplan

- Councillor Monk joined the meeting at 4.40pm

Members received a presentation on the Penrith Vision Strategic Masterplan from the Leader of Eden District Council. Accompanying him were the Deputy Director Technical Services and Planning Policy Officer who answered any questions Members had.

- The Leader of Eden District Council, Deputy Director Technical Services and Planning Policy Officer left the meeting at 5.30pm.

Members considered the documentation and information provided at the meeting.

- Councillor Whipp left the meeting at 5.45pm
- Councillor Burgin left the meeting at 5.55pm
- Councillor Jackson left the meeting at 6.00pm

RESOLVED that the following letter be sent to Eden District Council:

Penrith Town Council welcomes the prospect of a Masterplan for Penrith and the development of a long-term vision for the growth of the town, in terms of its economy, housing supply and transport links. Understanding the interplay between the needs of economic growth, housing supply and transport issues makes this plan very important for Penrith's future. It is with this desire for success in mind that we feel we have to express our concerns with the manner in which the Masterplan has been developed and outline issues we have with a number of aspects of the document:

1. The draft document states that the growth option chosen was approved by the stakeholder group. This was not the case. At the first meeting when an Officer of EDC asked if those present were being asked for a preferred option, Dr Hooper stated that he had told the consultants which option to progress. LUC's website says that they have to provide an evidence based Masterplan to provide a resolute case for EDC. We have the impression that EDC have appointed a Consultant to make a case for its plans.
2. The Eden Local Plan states (PEN2) that a Masterplan should be prepared through genuine public consultation. For such a major plan it is important that any development plan grows from the future needs and wishes of the residents and businesses. We believe that there should have been public consultation after the 'leaking' of the plan in December 2016 rather than, as is the case now, presenting the Town with a single option. Extensive consultation should also have taken place with businesses, transport providers, schools, healthcare providers, the emergency services and surrounding parishes. We understand this to have been the strategy adopted by Carlisle City Council who have spent 18 months consulting on their Garden Village Scheme and associated Link Road.

The Penrith Neighbourhood Development Plan policies and supporting actions were developed from the public consultation and the comments provided by those who live, work and visit Penrith. We would support Eden District Council was it to take a step back from the evident rush to publish the Masterplan then revise the Eden Local Plan, and conduct a thorough public consultation which allows those potentially impacted to give their views on all possible alternative sites for development; options for reducing traffic in and around the Town, the commercial area and housing needs. The Housing Needs Survey, currently being undertaken by Eden District Council on behalf of Penrith Town Council, should help inform the latter.

2. We question whether 'behind The Beacon' is the best site for 3 new villages, two the size of Appleby and one the size of Kirkoswald. No solid evidence regarding the unsuitability of other proposed sites has been presented. Indeed, the impression gained is that a desk-top exercise has been conducted in order to appease those who have questioned why other sites have not been proposed. For example, in the Masterplan 2011 to 2025, the area around Newton Rigg (current Masterplan areas 8, 9 and 22) was highlighted as being suitable for residential development but is dismissed in the current Masterplan. Despite the existence of a road connecting directly with Gilwilly and the West of the town, 'poor connectivity' and 'significant visual impact' are cited. Building behind The Beacon encroaches into the Eden Valley and will be visible from many areas including from the North Pennines AONB.

- 4 We agree that there is a need for more better paid and higher paid jobs but we must support existing businesses and attract manufacturers and service providers to Penrith. Building new houses on the scale suggested needs to be part of a broader strategy to attract inward investment which seems to be beyond the remit of this Masterplan. We are concerned however that there is an imbalance between industrial and residential allocations and would suggest that you review whether sufficient land has been allocated for the envisaged employment opportunities. For example, distribution centres occupy huge sites as do many manufacturers.

The businesses cited as being unable to attract workers are those requiring specialist skills and are in fields where there are few qualified people nationally, not because of the lack of housing. There is a disconnect between the vision of attracting fully automated distribution centres supplied by autonomous trucks and staffed by a few well-paid managers and the building 5500 homes to provide workers for new and existing businesses. However, the proposed phasing does give the Council the ability to manage change. Perhaps a risk assessment is required in order to assess the impact on infrastructure of, for example, only one village being built.

5. The chosen sites are disconnected from Penrith so that distance and topography will mean that very few will walk or cycle into town. People living here will use their cars and will find it easier to access J41 and head for Carlisle. Likewise, those working at the proposed business park at J41 are unlikely to walk or cycle along the A6 so will also use their cars.
6. The Masterplan proposes the provision of retail facilities, primary schools and a secondary school so making the villages largely self-sufficient, i.e. potentially, coupled with lower business rates and the likely growth in shopping online, reducing the need to use the shops and services offered in the Town.
7. There is a perception that the development of the 'villages' is being driven by the desire for a relief road behind the Beacon. Highways England (HE) have already stated that such a road will not be part of the A66 upgrade scheme and that even if such a road was to be built by HE it would be a strategic bypass and so would not provide multiple access points to residential developments. This being the case Cumbria County Council would need persuading to include it in their capital programme.
8. The statement in the Draft Masterplan that the Link Road would provide greater benefits than the southern (Alternative Route) on the basis that it would support the major movement between the A66 and Junction 41 is, at best, misleading.

The Masterplan states that the southern (Alternative) route will only provide a benefit to east-south movements, ignoring the fact that by joining the M6 at Clifton it too would remove east-north movement from the A66 before Penrith. In addition, despite the likely high cost of constructing a large flyover near Hornby Hall and the topography of the proposed route of the Link Road, the suggested 'Alternative Route' has been dismissed because, despite neither being costed, it would be more expensive. Cost has not been an impediment to the choice of the route for Carlisle's southern relief road.

9. We need to encourage the retention of young people in order to provide the manpower to sustain and grow local businesses. The town desperately needs truly affordable housing for all ages (ref: Penrith Neighbourhood Development Plan).

The supplied draft of the Masterplan clearly states no affordable housing is to be provided. While it may be EDC Policy to require of developers 30% affordable housing, the reality is that time and again developers justify reduced quotas of affordable housing on the grounds of viability.

Surely it is time for EDC to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy so developers are compelled to meet infrastructure costs. We cannot rely for funding from grant schemes that are available today but may be withdrawn in the future.

No Planning Gain is envisaged from employment land. Therefore we question whether developers, when told that they are required to provide 'all other site related costs, provide new infrastructure, greenspaces, and public transport, will argue that the provision of affordable housing is not viable.

The evidence is that EDC cannot rely on Section 106 Agreements to provide affordable housing.

10. The Town Council cannot support a Masterplan that is not evidence based (documented). Further, given the scale of the proposed development it is not acceptable to state that impact assessments will be carried out at a later date.

Impact Assessments must be provided as part of the evidence base as too should detailed mapping of land ownership (e.g. joint ownership, Covenanted land and generational tenancies).

The Town Council wishes to take this opportunity to record its concerns that a Land Agent for a major landowner with a vested interest in the development has been attending the Stakeholder meetings despite not representing the views of all landowners, indeed we know of landowners who have not even been approached about the proposed development.

Whilst we appreciate that the document that we have reviewed is in draft, we would recommend that the photographs of Penrith containing images of adults and children are reviewed to ensure that there is not a potential breach of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

Penrith Town Council would urge Eden District Council to carry out a genuine public consultation on all alternative options for relieving congestion at the Kemplay roundabout and J40, including a Kirkby Stephen bypass, a southern slip road and new Junction 39a, and the alternative sites for housing development, i.e. to give the people of Penrith a say in what happens to their Town.

Finally, Town centre improvements are needed now and we cannot wait for the period 2032 to 2050 for these to be implemented. The Town Council looks forward to working with EDC and CCC (PNDP15: emerging Penrith Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2032) to define and prioritise these improvements using the Mott McDonald report as a reference.

And:

2. the letter be shared with Members prior to final signature to ensure that all points are incorporated.

- **Councillor Monk left the meeting at 6.20pm**

PTC18/28 Closure & Next Meeting

The meeting was closed at 6.25pm.

Members were reminded that the next meeting was the Ordinary Council Meeting scheduled for 25 June 2018, at 6.00 pm Room 2 Parish Centre, St Andrews Place.

CHAIRMAN:

DATE:

For the Attention: All members of the Penrith Town Council:

Cllr. Baker	Penrith Pategill Ward
Cllr. Bowen	Penrith East Ward
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Cllr. Burgin	Penrith South Ward
Cllr. Clark	Penrith South Ward
Cllr. Donald	Penrith North Ward
Cllr. Jackson	Penrith North Ward
Cllr. Kenyon	Penrith North Ward
Cllr. Lawson	Penrith Carleton Ward
Cllr. Monk	Penrith West Ward
Cllr. Whipp	Penrith North Ward