

Norwich City Councillor Andrew Boswell
Norfolk County Councillor Richard Bearman

Leaders of the Green Party groups on
Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council

Address for contact:

23, Havelock Road,
Norwich,
Norfolk, NR2 3HQ.
01603-613798
07787-127881

andrewboswell@fastmail.co.uk

Mark Pendlington
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership,
The Walpole Suite,
Ketteringham Hall,
Wymondham,
NR18 9RS.

26th August 2015

Dear Mr Pendlington,

Open Letter: New Anglia LEP, Sept 9th Board meeting, NDR item

We are writing to you in advance of your September 9th Board meeting with a number of questions relating to the recent indications in the Press that the LEP is intending to provide £10m towards the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR) funding shortfall. We are presenting these questions in an Open Letter so that this decision and the associated issues may be understood by the public in a transparent way. We do so as Leaders of Council groups which hold 18 seats in the Norwich area, and have a significant mandate across the Norwich City area: we are also both County Councillors.

1. How does the LEP propose to find the £10m to support the NDR shortfall? The County Council intend to borrow the money for their £10m contribution with a loan servicing impact of around £0.5m annually to future revenue budgets. Is the LEP proposing to adopt a similar route and at what cost?
2. Or does NALEP intend to divert funds from existing budget stream(s) and projects?
3. If the latter, what will be effect on delivery of other LEP objectives of the use of this money from these budget stream(s)? Please be specific, for example, the June 23rd LEP Board agenda papers¹ detail on page 24 the Growth Deal 2015/2016 Live Projects – which of these will be impacted? The July 7th New Anglia Local Transport Body meeting received a presentation on the New Anglia Transport Strategy² – will this programme be impacted and how?
4. How does the LEP intend to adhere with public sector procurement rules in making the £10m injection into a project which hitherto NALEP has had no formal procurement, contractual or legal relationship? What legal and other advice has the LEP taken in reviewing its public procurement obligations before making a decision on September 9th?
5. Is the LEP proposing to ring-fence its contribution to any one part of the project? The context here is that the ³/₄ NDR, now costed at £178.5m, comprises two main parts: Postwick-A140 (Airport), and A140 (Airport)-A1067. The Government (DfT) funding has previously only been provided for the Postwick-A140 connection. The Government predicated making the NDR a National Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) on the strategic and economic aspects of the

¹<http://www.newanglia.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/June-WEB-Papers.pdf>

²http://www.norfolkandsuffolkltb.org.uk/app/download/5802166027/BodyItem7_LocalTransportBoardWorkProgramme.pdf

Eastern section. And it is also the section that relates to the Norwich North East Growth Triangle (NEGT) where new homes and economic development are primarily planned in the Joint Core Strategy (JCS). Will the LEP, like the Government, restrict its funding contribution only for the Postwick-A140 section? If so, this needs to be made clear to the public and completely transparent in any arrangements with the Council.

6. If not, how will the LEP justify a blanket injection to the $\frac{3}{4}$ NDR as a whole in terms of demonstrating “value for money” in meeting the LEP’s objectives for economic development?
7. What “value for money” measures and tests do the LEP apply to considering investments? Have they been applied in this case?
8. What evaluation has been carried out on the level of fit of this £10m investment with the employment growth areas identified with NALEP’s own strategy? What employment growth areas across Norfolk and Suffolk are being adversely discriminated against, in terms of investment, by this decision?
9. Has the LEP taken in account the interim results of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, undertaken by the Greater Norwich Development Partnership³ but which has been extended to cover Breckland and North Norfolk too as a “Joint Central Norfolk” Strategic Housing Market Assessment? This shows:
 - a. a demand for 3,000 fewer dwellings in the JCS area in the next 10 years than was previously anticipated;
 - b. that housing build in Breckland and South Norfolk will be significantly greater than Broadland
 - c. that housing demand from Norwich economic activity will have a stronger pull South Eastwards down the A11 corridor to Breckland (which is why Breckland is now included in the SHMA) rather than North Eastwards into Broadland
 - d. indicative annual house build numbers in the Joint Central Norfolk area from the SHMA interim results are:
 - i. Breckland 650 dwelling per annum
 - ii. South Norfolk 650 dpa
 - iii. Norwich 610 dpa
 - iv. Broadland 480 dpa
 - v. North Norfolk 420 dpa
10. The Joint Core Strategy is not delivering as intended (see previous point): it clearly does not reflect what is happening on the ground geographically. This reveals in-built flaws in its overall approach to achieving a sustainable and environmentally sound strategy. Also its objective to deliver a 5 year land supply is at risk from the flawed approach. Further the modifications called for by Inspector Vickery at the Planning Inquiry have not been achieved meaning that it will shortly be required to refresh it. This will require a major restructure of the strategy to work with, rather than against, emerging geographical realities. Should NALEP not be much more prudent and wait until after the JCS refresh, before committing a disproportionate investment to one very localised area of Norfolk and Suffolk?
11. Given all of the above, and in line with the level of due diligence on investment that would be expected in a private sector organisation, why does the LEP not seek to test whether the proposed economic benefits to be derived from the NDR might be served better by other options, including the much cheaper orbital movement option of a fully designed Inner Link

³See 1.23-1.27 of <http://democracy.breckland.gov.uk/documents/g3739/Public%20reports%20pack%2020th-Mar-2015%2010.00%20Local%20Plan%20Working%20Group.pdf?T=10>

Road in North East Norwich? This is already in the local plan, would be funded by developers, and meets the requirement of all housing demand until well after the JCS refresh.

12. Please make available the agenda papers and minutes for the July 21st NALEP Board meeting which have not, as of writing, appeared on the NALEP website. Please also provide, when they are available, the September 9th NALEP Board meeting papers.
13. As a further request for transparency, we request that you open up the NALEP Board meetings in the future to the Public and to public questions starting with the September 9th meeting.

Whilst the above questions relate to process and transparency, we wish to make an additional statement below relating to the economics of climate change, and the NDR. This was raised at last year's Public Examination but is not widely known or understood: your Board members should be aware of this before they vote on September 9th. The scientists and Green industry experts on your board may be particularly interested in this aspect. Both the Examiner's report and SoS Decision Letter for the NDR DCO acknowledges that the NDR project would lead to an immediate and ongoing increase in (road transport) carbon emissions as compared with the "Do Minimum" scenario - this is in fact an over 6% increase in road transport carbon emissions across the whole of Norfolk.

The Examiners also reported that carbon abatement costs were calculated by Norwich Green Party as £2.27 billion to 2076, and were not refuted by Norfolk County Council. Note, this is approximately twice the supposed economic benefits of the road scheme. However, the Examiners, under Planning Act 2008, Section 104, did not have to require that the financial evaluation of the NDR should include this assessment of future carbon abatement costs. So they did not account for this in their recommendation. At this stage, it is important for you and your fellow Board members to understand that the sum referred to here, £2.27billion, was calculated in line with the Committee for Climate Change methodology, and represents a real financial cost to future generations.

It is not that one scheme such as the NDR will tip the world into dangerous climate change, but that the accumulative effect of many such infrastructure schemes being rolled out currently add up to a massive carbon abatement costs for the post-2035 generations, both nationally and internationally. We foresee that by that date, our grandchildren's generation will not just be considering ultra low carbon technologies (for energy and transport etc) to mitigate the debt of carbon emissions generated now and in future decades. They will also have to be seriously considering massive geoengineering projects costing trillions in projects akin to the Manhattan project. These will have massive carbon abatement costs for which the £2billion associated with NDR will be a small part. Such projects, currently in early evaluation and research by scientists, have numerous cost, scientific, technical, legal and ethical issues associated with them – is this the legacy we wish to leave for that generation, however small our own contribution?

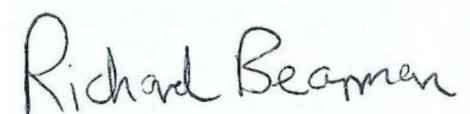
We look forward to your full response to all our questions above.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Andrew Boswell
Leader of the Green Party

Norwich City councillors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Bearman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Councillor Richard Bearman
Leader of the Green Party
Norfolk County Councillors