

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS LTD

Minutes from the Board Meeting of Wednesday, 5 March 2008 The Council Room, New Hall, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge

Board Members in Attendance:

Sir David Trippier	Chairman
Chris Banks	Cambridgeshire PCT
Cllr Dr David Bard	South Cambridgeshire District Council
John Bridge	Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce
Steve Cox	EEDA
Nigel Howlett	Housing Association Representative
Cllr Peter Moakes	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Ian Nimmo-Smith	Cambridge City Council
Robert Sansom	Greater Cambridge Partnership
Steve Sillery	Developers Representative

Company Secretary:

Mike Parsons	Company Secretary
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Also in Attendance:

Sue Beecroft	Sub-regional Housing Strategy Co-ordinator
Simon Bishop	English Partnerships
Cllr Peter Bucknell	Huntingdonshire District Council
Gwyn Drake	Highways Agency
Quentin Golder	Taylor Vinters
Sally Hutchinson	Cambridgeshire Horizons (Minutes)
John Onslow	Director for Development, Cambridgeshire Horizons
John O'Mahoney	Housing Corporation
Tim Mills	Fenland District Council
Alex Plant	Chief Executive, Cambridgeshire Horizons
Malcolm Sharp	Huntingdonshire District Council
Yvonne Taylor	Cambridgeshire Horizons

Apologies:

Cllr Ian Bates	Huntingdonshire District Council
Dr Gareth Goodier	Addenbrooke's Hospital
Professor Ian Leslie	University of Cambridge
John Lewis	English Partnerships
Cllr Alan Melton	Fenland District Council
Cllr Keith Walters	Cambridgeshire County Council
John Williamson	GO-East

Item		Action(s)
1	Welcome and Introduction	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended a particular warm welcome to Simon Bishop, Area Director for the East at English Partnerships, representing John Lewis. John Lewis has announced he will be resigning as a Director from the Cambridgeshire Horizons Board from the 31 March 2008, the Chairman thanked him for his continuous support to the Board and wished him well in his new role as Chief Executive for the Milton Keynes Partnership.	
1.2	The Chairman also welcomed John O'Mahoney, Investment Manager – Cambridge Sub-region for the Housing Corporation. The Chairman informed the Board that John would be replacing Margaret Allen on the Cambridgeshire Horizons Board who has taken up a new post within the Homes and Community Agency. The Chairman thanked Margaret for being a source of enormous strength and for all her support to the Board over the years and wished her well in her new role.	
1.3	Finally the Chairman welcomed Sue Beecroft, Sub-regional Housing Strategy Co-ordinator who will be presenting Agenda item No. 11 – Monitoring Housing Supply.	
2	Declaration of Interests	
2.1	The Chairman asked for Declaration of Interests from those present. These were:- - Steve Sillery, Agenda Item No. 12 - Progress on Major Developments and Infrastructure in relation to Cambridge East as an employee of the Marshall Group.	
3	Minutes	
3.1	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting of Wednesday, 12 December 2007.	
4	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	
8.1	The Chief Executive confirmed that Cambridgeshire Horizons is planning to take forward some work over the next few months to outline how any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)/tariff arrangement might work in Cambridgeshire. This would then provide a basis for further discussion with partners and would be tabled at a future Board meeting to consider whether there is merit in bringing such a scheme forward.	
	Cllr Dr David Bard commented that there are 5 planning authorities in the Cambridge Sub-region and to incorporate a new policy within each authority could be a long process.	

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9.2(c) The Chairman confirmed that he had received confirmation that no extra funding would be received for Northstowe from the Eco-towns budget, as it is a prototype Eco-town. Additional support from other sources is not ruled out however.	
5 Company Secretary's Report	
5.1 The Company Secretary presented the paper and asked Board Members to approve the changes on various matters of governance as outlined in the report.	
5.2 The Board approved the changes.	
6 Changes to the Bank Mandate	
6.1 The Chief Executive presented the paper and asked the Board to agree to change the Company's financial authority levels as outlined in the report.	
6.2 The Board approved the changes.	
7 Minutes of the Audit & Risk Management Committee of 12 December 2007	
7.1 The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Management Committee, John Bridge presented the Minutes. He confirmed that Audit & Risk Management Committee meetings had also been held on 4 and 29 February to look at the Business Plan and the accounts to the end of January 2008. The Chairman of the Committee confirmed that Minutes of these meetings would be circulated to the Board along with a copy of the Accounts dated 27 February.	
7.2 The Chairman of the Committee informed the Board that, although the accounts show an underspend to the end of January 2008, having looked and discussed the latest financial forecast, the Chairman is convinced that the year end will turn out in an acceptable way. The Chairman was particularly concerned that the additional £1.4M would not be spent by the end of March, but is satisfied that it will be used in a suitable manner.	
7.3 The Chairman of the Committee also informed the Board that the Risk Audit and Management Committee would be setting up an Internal Control System to look at processes and procedures. Any problems found would be reported to the Board.	
7.4 The Chairman of the Committee informed the Board that the £1M due to be paid to Cambridgeshire Horizons in November 2007 by Communities and Local Government has still not been paid. This will be monitored as it could present cashflow problems.	
Cllr Dr David Bard asked if Cambridgeshire Horizons was incurring	

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<p>interest charges, as funding had not been received. The Chief Executive responded by saying that Horizons was not currently in an overdraft situation although reserves were dwindling.</p>	
<p>7.5 The Chairman of the Committee confirmed that Cambridgeshire Horizons had still not received confirmation of its allocation of funding for the period 2008/09 and as a consequence the financial year is uncertain. Further information to be obtained as soon as possible.</p>	
<p>The Chairman responded by saying that he was aware that other Local Delivery Vehicles are in a similar situation, however, the Chairman had been assured that the funding for Cambridgeshire Horizons in 2008/09 would not be less than awarded for the period 2007/08.</p>	
<p>7.6 Finally the Chairman of the Committee confirmed that now that the Audit and Risk Management Committee meetings had moved away from being held prior to Board meetings the cycle and process is working much better.</p>	
<p>7.7 The Chief Executive responded by thanking the Audit and Risk Management Committee for their commitment. The Chief Executive went on to say that as Horizons would be taking on additional responsibilities with the Housing Growth Fund he would be putting forward to the Committee a proposal on how the new Housing Growth Funding process would work and how Horizons' monitoring and control responsibilities would be fulfilled in the next financial year.</p>	
<p>8 Minutes from the Joint Strategic Growth Implementation (JSGIC) Committee of 4 December 2007 and 6 February 2008</p>	
<p>8.1 The Chairman presented the Minutes and asked Board Members if they had any questions or comments.</p>	
<p>8.2 Steve Cox gave a brief update under agenda item No. 8 - Regional Infrastructure Fund of the minutes of 6 February 2008. He informed the Board that EEDA are now taking this forward and a workable proposition for the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) is expected by the end of March, followed by options and a business case by July.</p>	
<p>8.3 An update on the progress of RIF would be presented at the next Board meeting. The Horizon's Chief Executive is working with them in developing the RIF proposals.</p>	Steve Cox
<p>9 Housing Growth Funds Prioritisation</p>	
<p>9.1 The Director for Development presented the paper and described the increased flexibility that the Housing Growth Fund will have over the Growth Area Fund. He noted that a firm funding figure is only available for 2008/09, funding sums for the 2 following years are indicative only. CLG is currently consulting on the new system. It seems that the funding allocations for the second and third years will depend on</p>	

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effective spending in the first year. He went on to say that the HGF Steering Group would work closely with the project promoters in monitoring the projects.

The Director asked the Board to note the report to the Founder Members in Annex A and to approve the allocation of funds for 2008/09 as set out in Appendix 3 of Annex A. The Board approved the allocation of funds.

9.2 The Chairman praised the Local Authorities in agreeing the programme of expenditure as outlined in Appendix 3.

9.3 Board Members asked questions and made the following comments:-

- a) Steve Sillery voiced reservations regarding the directness of a link between certain HGF projects and the delivery of housing, asking whether the Treasury might also query this.
- b) The Director for Development responded that sustainable communities must be delivered in addition to houses. He added that the HGF projects will have wider benefits, ensuring that Cambridgeshire remains a desirable place to live and work. He noted also that the Cambridge sub-region has received the largest single HGF allocation.
- c) The Director for Development confirmed that Cambridgeshire received the highest payout at £14.2M although collectively the 2 bids from North and West Northamptonshire are larger than this.
- d) Cllr Peter Bucknell agreed that we have a commitment to the well being of our communities.
- e) Gwyn Drake asked what relationship HGF funding would have to Section 106 agreements and planning conditions.
- f) The Director for Development responded that HGF funding would be factored into viability calculations, which inform section 106 agreements. He gave the example of infrastructure for Cambridge Southern Fringe.
- g) The Chief Executive mentioned the potential of additional funding from the Rolling Fund. He noted that Cambridgeshire Horizons' request to CLG for more Rolling Fund money is awaiting a response.
- h) Robert Sansom asked whether the level of HGF funding accorded to the Cambridge Sub-region was defensible.
- i) The Chairman responded that it was, on grounds of being the

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largest growth area, having the first flagship Local Delivery Vehicle, and being seen as successful at building partnerships	
j) The Chief Executive concurred with the Chairman and added that CLG have rewarded genuine joint working between Local Authorities and other stakeholders. He also added that the HGF projects gaining the largest funding sums were directly enabling development.	
k) Steve Sillery reiterated his reservations, and commented that he did not think that growth in the Cambridge Sub-region was dependent on the HGF projects.	
l) Steve Cox commented that HGF Funding was only vulnerable if homes were not being delivered.	
m) The Chairman commented on the need to publicise the HGF projects, specifically referring to Cambourne Churches Community Centre. Local Authorities to send out press releases by next Monday, 10 March 2008 with Cambridgeshire Horizons to co-ordinate through John Onslow.	Local Authorities/ Director for Development

10. Cambridgeshire Horizons Business Plan 2008/11

10.1 The Chief Executive presented the Business Plan. Once approved he recommends turning into an external communications document, taking out the majority of appendices and leaving perhaps the first 20 pages. The Business Plan had been presented at the Founder Members meeting and they were happy with its content.

10.2 Board Members asked questions and made the following comments:-

- a) Cllr Peter Bucknell agreed that a public document was a good idea.
- b) Cllr Ian Nimmo-Smith noted the need for the plan to be dynamic, in response to climate change and the low carbon future.
- c) Chris Banks mentioned in relation to health funding, a comment from the Rural Advocate 'that Cambridge is like a sponge, absorbing Cambridgeshire funding' need to address these comments.
- d) The Chairman noted that a consultant is being selected to examine how successful Cambridgeshire Horizons has been at promoting

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the growth agenda. Cambridgeshire Horizons is also in the process of appointing a Communications Manager.

- e) The Chief Executive stated in response to Cllr Ian Nimmo-Smith's comments on the environmental agenda that he felt there were enough references in the plan to ensure that a dynamic approach was possible.
- f) Nigel Howlett highlighted the need for quality of life to consider services as well as infrastructure.
- g) Cllr Peter Bucknell pleased to see that market towns are included within the Plan.

11 Monitoring Housing Supply

11.1 The Sub-regional Housing Strategy Co-ordinator, Sue Beecroft presented the paper and asked that the report be noted.

11.2 Board Members asked questions and made the following comments:-

- a) Cllr Dr David Bard mentioned that the lead-in time to major development sites was proving longer than initially expected. More housing is therefore being built on smaller sites. He asked if the paper made allowance for likely movements in the housing market.
- b) The Chairman commented that Cambridgeshire may escape the housing market downturn.
- c) Steve Sillery responded that Cambridgeshire could not escape such a downturn, but would have a slower rate of decline, perhaps the lowest in the country. Cambridgeshire would not be immune to a recession and completions would fall.
- d) Cllr Peter Bucknell noted that housing demand continues to outstrip supply.
- e) The Chief Executive responded by saying that this explained part of why Cambridge is likely to be less affected by a housing market downturn.
- f) The Chief Executive noted that when the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is published, housing trajectories will be to 2021 rather than 2016. Asked whether our trajectory timeline therefore should be changed, and whether housing updates should be on a county-wide basis, as the RSS is.
- g) The Chairman asked Sue Beecroft to come back to the Board with **Agenda Plan**

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a further update at the next meeting.

- h) Steve Sillery expressed concern about the 40% level of affordable housing when considering the funding available. He requested a report into volumes of affordable housing and funding allocation.
- i) The Chairman commented that he did not share this concern.
- j) John O'Mahoney confirmed that he was confident of funding for the next three years and deliverability of targets on that timescale.
- k) Cllr Ian Nimmo-Smith does not want Cambridgeshire Horizons to be a champion for RSS and the 2021 figures. Still needs to go through due process before the RSS figures are included in local plans.
- l) The Chief Executive noted that the RSS feeds into LDFs as soon as it comes out, hence need to look forward to 2021.
- m) Steve Sillery noted that Local Authorities will, by law, have to include increased housing targets in LDFs, or developers will be knocking at the Planning Inspectorate's door.

12 Progress on Major Developments and Infrastructure, including Quality of life

12.1 The Director of Development presented the paper. He drew the Board's attention to the fact that a Delivery Board is being set up for Cambridge East, the market towns are poised to accept additional growth and the work on the economic rationale for the A428 has been completed. The A428 Steering Group is also linking up with the East-West Rail Consortium to ensure an integrated approach to inter-urban transport in the corridor. The Director also described the rollout of the Quality Charter and Urban Design Guide, and made mention of Eco-towns and the faith group. He noted that a letter on Eco-towns has gone to Henry Cleary at CLG and an announcement on the eco-towns shortlist is expected soon.

12.2 Board Members asked questions and made the following comments:-

- a) The Chairman noted that the study into faith facilities has been completed and that the Steering Group were meeting in April, he asked if report could be brought to the Board meeting in June on how the study's recommendations are being taken forward.
- b) Cllr Ian Nimmo-Smith acknowledged the letter sent to Henry Cleary from Alex Plant as being splendid.

**Chief
Executive/
Agenda
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c) Cllr Dr David Bard added that the letter sent by Alex Plant had also been backed by other letters sent from the Local Authorities.	
12.3 Gwyn Drake presented a paper (tabled and attached) from the Highways Agency on the A14, Huntingdon to Cambridge. Gwyn went on to update the Board on the efforts being made to ensure that the A14 would not be affected by the Northstowe development. He stated that the Northstowe Planning application is due to be considered in September, resulting in much to do in the six months available. Timing is essential to ensure housing delivery does not slip.	
12.4 Gwyn Drake went on to say that the development at Northstowe is possibly manageable but described other development sites including the Urban Fringe sites as challenging, he emphasised the importance of the Highways Agency being involved at an early stage of proposed development sites and having an early understanding of what is coming forward ie Cambridge East.	
12.5 The Chief Executive confirmed that the Delivery Board approach should facilitate this early engagement.	
13 Climate Change	
13.1 The Chief Executive presented the paper. He highlighted that most work to date has concentrated on carbon neutrality, less on wider environmental issues such as transport, and the impact of climate change. Noting that transport is the largest residual contributor to carbon emissions and the most difficult to tackle, he asked whether we are currently doing enough to address this and invited discussion.	
13.2 Board Members asked questions and made the following comments:-	
a) Cllr Peter Bucknell - should consider transport and carbon footprint. Looking at alternative options to buses and roads are all part of delivering the growth agenda.	
b) Cllr Ian Nimmo-Smith described Cambridgeshire Horizons' role as mediating between housing growth and carbon neutrality. He noted the Government's tendency to focus on delivery of numbers, but stated that Cambridgeshire Horizons is able to take an integrative approach. Need to build on work following the Carbon Workshop. Need an honest overall package.	
c) Chairman stated that he considered Cambridgeshire Horizons should be at the vanguard of owning a living document on Climate Change which is updated regularly.	
d) The Chief Executive noted that Cambridgeshire Horizons' focus must be on the growth agenda and that the Quality Charter attempts to address climate change in this context. He noted that	

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the A14, rail freight and other national issues cannot be so readily influenced and need to be realistic, about what Horizons can achieve.

- e) Cllr Dr David Bard – RSS review needs to look closely at growth numbers. Concerned about Ruth Kelly’s announcement regarding the M11 widening and upgrade of the Cambridge to Liverpool Street line.
- f) Gwyn Drake commented that Ruth Kelly’s statement is part of the Stansted G2 process and a pre-cursor to BAA’s application. Will not creep further northwards. He noted that many transport interventions are already in the pipeline.
- g) Cllr Ian Nimmo-Smith emphasised the importance of TIF as a source of funding. Need to have a clear understanding of the factors that matter.
- h) Steve Sillery asked whether the reliance on small sites for housing growth was sustainable? He agreed with the discussions that had already been made regarding transport issues and emphasised the need that public transport should be made readily available.

14 Agenda Plan and Any Other Business

14.1 The Chairman asked Board Members to note that the itinerary had changed for the Ministerial visit of Iain Wright MP on 11 March and those involved or attending the lunch should have received an updated version. The Chairman asked for any questions/comments for Iain Wright at lunch to be sent to Yvonne Taylor at Cambridgeshire Horizons.

14.2 The Chairman informed Board Member’s that the Annual Conference is scheduled to be held on Friday, 13 June 2008 and a letter has been sent out informing stakeholders of the event.

The Chairman has yet to receive a response to his invitation to Hazel Blears to be the keynote speaker at the Conference. The Chairman has also invited Robert Devereux, Permanent Secretary, Department for Transport to speak but has unfortunately declined and has suggested Bronwyn Hill, Director General, City and Regional networks.

14.3 Steve Sillery raised an error in Agenda Item No. 12, 2.3.1 (page 4), Progress on Major Developments. He wished to be noted that the Joint Planning Committee did not consider the NIAB planning application on the 20 February because of a lack of a quorum, rather than a lack of time as stated in the report.

The Chairman agreed to amend the report.

Chairman

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14.4 There was no other business.

15 Date of next meeting:-

Wednesday, 11 June 2008 at 10 am

South Fens Business Centre, Chatteris