

COUNCIL – THURSDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2024

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR R SUTTON TO COUNCILLOR K MERRIE

“The Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire (SGPLL), approved by this Council on Nov 13th 2018, speaks with pride of the “Leicestershire International Gateway (LIG) focused around the northern parts of the A42 and the M1” and “improvements to the A42, the M1, railway lines and services set out in the Midlands Connect Strategy”. This implied dependency is reiterated in the SGPLL under ‘Aligning Infrastructure and Growth’ as follows: “we will need the support from government if we are to achieve the step change in the amount and speed of housing and economic growth”.

Can the Council give details of all firm and significant investments by government, county and district since 2018 specifically for infrastructure and growth at the North end of the District, to warrant and support the ambitious Draft Local Plan currently out for consultation, providing, at the same time, any other tangible evidence for members representing communities such as Diseworth, Breedon, Castle Donington, Hemington, Lockington and Kegworth that the cumulative impacts of the Local Plan will not be for them further exposure to relatively deregulated development which satisfies an iconic LIG Freeport’s ambition for urbanisation without prior investment in infrastructure, services, rural preservation and traditional village communities.”

REPOSENSE FROM COUNCILLOR K MERRIE TO COUNCILLOR R SUTTON

“The Strategic Growth Plan is a non-statutory plan which sets out an agreed strategy to meet the future developments needs of Leicester and Leicestershire up to 2050. It has been jointly prepared by the ten partner organisations in Leicester & Leicestershire to provide a long term shared vision for Local Plans to address both the challenges and the opportunities that growth presents. The Council’s draft Local Plan aligns with the Strategic Growth Plan in terms of its overall strategy.

The days of new infrastructure being paid for solely from the public purse are gone. Instead, there is a clear expectation from government that new development will make a significant contribution towards the cost of providing the new infrastructure which is required to make a development acceptable.

In recent years both the Kegworth bypass (which opened in November 2018) and the Castle Donington relief road (February 2020) were funded as part of new development (the East Midlands Gateway development and housing off Park Lane respectively). The East Midlands Gateway development also provided £300,000 to Castle Donington, Kegworth and Lockington & Hemington Parish Councils to improve community facilities. In addition, the Park Lane development also secured over £1million towards the cost of youth and adult leisure facilities in Castle Donington as well as significant contributions towards health (about £500,000) and education, including a new primary school.

As part of the Council’s new Local Plan an Infrastructure Delivery Plan is being prepared. This will identify what new infrastructure is required to support the development proposed as part of the Local Plan. That work, together with a Viability assessment as required by national policy, is now underway and will be reported to Local Plan Committee before any decisions are made regarding the final preferred plan. It is likely that funding will need to come from both the public purse, but also from new development paying its way.”