

Extract from:

West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee Minutes - Monday, 7 June 2010

7. THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARC

The Head of the JPU submitted a report that referred to Northamptonshire County Council's consultation upon the concept of the "Northamptonshire Arc" and elaborated thereon. He referred to the recommendations and in particular the need to establish the relationship between the Joint Core Strategy, which was a statutory document, and Arc which would be non statutory.

The Chair observed that the Northamptonshire Arc to promote Northamptonshire to attract investment and jobs should be welcomed but that it should not duplicate or confuse the Joint Core Strategy.

It was noted that the Arc appeared to resurrect a concept of creating an urban spine through the County and ignoring Northampton as an economic driver. This concept had been heavily criticised at the time. The Arc could only be a second to whatever the statutory planning policy base was, currently, the Joint Core Strategy. The County Council's concept should not be confused with the MKSM Northampton Arc which was about transport links, the A43 and A45 in particular; they were different documents with different status.

Councillor Jim Bass commented that he would support the idea that the North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire arrangements should be unified and noted that a review of the Joint Core Strategy in North Northamptonshire was due to commence shortly.

In general discussion the concept of the Northamptonshire Arc as a means of promoting the County for investment and jobs was supported. There seemed to be gaps in it in respect of rural communities and facilities for young people. The Arc also needed to consider circumstances beyond the County's boundary. The County Council needed to recognise the non- statutory status of their concept. The situation in respect of the Daventry Appeals proved the need for, and the vulnerability of not having, a planning strategy in place.

Councillor Brown observed that in future planning would reside with local councils and with it local development frameworks. He believed that the Arc did cover rural communities and infrastructure including Silverstone. The County Council would have to work with all of its neighbours.

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The Chair commented that there was an existing infrastructure deficit in West Northamptonshire; the need for infrastructure led development was still relevant although the economic situation complicated this. It would be important to attract inward investment and jobs to address some of this. The Northamptonshire Arc would be a good promotional tool for the County Council and NEL. He hoped that the Secretary of State would clarify the situation in the near future. None of this took away the need for a plan to be in place to avoid the risk of developer led development.

RESOLVED: 1. That the principle of the non- statutory Arc as a way of raising the profile of Northamptonshire, particularly in terms of developing a mechanism for increasing the potential for future investment be supported.

2. That the County Council be requested to reconsider the intention of the Arc to be a unifying alternative to the two Joint Core Strategies in Northamptonshire.
3. That the Arc, as a non- statutory document, should support the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy together with the other planning policy documents forming part of the statutory Local Development Framework as set out in the approved West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme (February 2010).