

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, on Tuesday 26 April 2022 at 4.00pm.

Cabinet Members Present: Councillors: S Vincent (Chairman), T Mancini-Boyle (Vice-Chairman), J Copplestone, J Leggett, S Lawn and F Whymark.

Apologies Councillor: J Emsell

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor: S Beadle, K Leggett and S Riley

Officers in Attendance: The Managing Director, Director of Resources, Director of Place, Director for People and Communities, Chief of Staff (Monitoring Officer), Assistant Director of Finance, Assistant Director for Individuals and Families, Assistant Director for Economic Growth, Assistant Director ICT/Digital and Transformation, Assistant Director for Communities, Assistant Director for Planning, Governance Manager, Senior Governance Officer and the Democratic Services Officer (JK).

269 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 15 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

270 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised members on the views expressed by the Committee when it reviewed the Cabinet Agenda on 12 April 2022, as each item was considered.

271 ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence informed members of the good work the Warm Homes Team was doing to help vulnerable residents. In addition, during the first week of the new waste contract, Veolia had collected the equivalent of 110 standard size bins full of small electrical items, five bins full of batteries and two tons of textiles, all of which had come out of the residual waste stream. The Portfolio Holder for

Environmental Excellence also advised members that the new contract used HVO fuel only, from a sustainable source and would continue to do so for the length of the Veolia contract, over the following ten years.

272 ADDENDUM TO THE 2022-24 DELIVERY PLAN AND THE USE OF THE EARMARKED RESERVES CREATED AS A RESULT OF THE IN-YEAR BUDGET OPTIONS

The Director of Resources introduced the report, which detailed the proposed initiatives relating to the use of the Earmarked Reserves, created as a result of the In-Year Budget Options. The key areas which would be supported by these additional monies were outlined as follows:

- Progress towards carbon net zero
- Accelerating our Growth Agenda
- Our Environment
- Supporting Our Communities
- Investing on our talent and pipeline for the One Team

The total of the monies available was £2.578m and 13 initiatives had been identified and described in the report. Subject to agreement, these amendments would be added to the Delivery Plan.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance raised a query around the three new posts in Economic Growth and owing to the importance of the outcomes these posts should deliver, it was recommended that a business case be brought forward approximately 18 months into the two year period of the contracts, to consider if these posts could be extended or made permanent.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance also advised that back in July last year, the agreement on how to spend the monies from the Norfolk Strategic Fund grant had not been completed as other issues had taken priority. It was recommended that a further paper should come back on that funding and what to spend it on.

In addition, the Portfolio Holder for Finance requested that the prioritisation of projects and delivery timescales should be added to the addendum to the 2022/24 Delivery Plan as shown in Appendix B.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence asked why there was no mention of training or the cost of training on the Customer Relationship Management System (CRMS) business case and the Assistant Director for ICT/Digital and Transformation explained that a business case would come back to members at a later date, with details around budget, and timescales and that this would also cover training.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance recommended that a report on the CRM system, to include the training requirement, should come back to Cabinet. Subject to these additional recommendations, the Portfolio Holder for Finance proposed that the recommendations in the report should be approved.

The proposed amended recommendations were duly seconded and following a show of hands it was unanimously:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

1. To approve the transfer between the earmarked reserves to enable the funding of the 13 initiatives as shown in the table in section 4.1.
2. To approve that the spend within these newly adjusted earmarked reserves be delegated to the appropriate Assistant Director in consultation with their appropriate Portfolio Holder.
3. The addendum to the 2022/24 Delivery Plan as shown in Appendix B, subject to the prioritisation of projects and delivery timescales, being added.

RESOLVED

That subject to Council approval of the above recommendations, to agree

1. To progress the 13 initiatives detailed in section 3 utilising the £2.578m earmarked reserves (Appendix A). Where business cases are required, as indicated by the tables in section 3, the release of funds is subject to these being agreed by Cabinet in due course.
2. To receive a business case to consider if the three new posts in Economic Growth could be extended or made permanent after 18 months of the two year contract.
3. To receive a business case on the potential spend for the Norfolk Strategic Fund grant monies.
4. To receive a further report on the CRM system to include training

Reasons for Decision

To utilise additional income to support residents, enhance the environment and drive economic growth in the district.

273 PROPOSED CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN RENEWABLE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Director of Place introduced the report, which asked for approval to move £1m of the Council's reserves into the Capital Programme, to be set aside for renewable energy infrastructure. This report was being presented to members now, as recently, an opportunity arose for infrastructure to be provided to connect a proposed solar park near the Food Enterprise Park (FEP) to the businesses on the FEP. The Director of Place explained that in order to move quickly when needed, the £1m needed to be earmarked now, so that monies could be quickly accessed when required.

Members queried some of the detail around the proposed project and the Director of Place explained that it was too early to provide much specific information and that all the details

would be in the subsequent business case, which would be reported to a future meeting. Members noted that this was a three-step process and that each stage would require Cabinet authorisation:

- To earmark the reserves (as detailed in the current report);
- Members' consideration of a proposed loan agreement.
- Thirdly, members' consideration regarding the raising of a green bond.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance requested that this business case, and indeed all others, provided a section for financial considerations and the Director of Place agreed to incorporate that aspect in any such future reports.

Following a show of hands, it was unanimously:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

To agree the inclusion of £1m to enable capital investment in renewable energy projects and/or associated infrastructure in the Capital Programme for 2022/23.

Reasons for Decision

To facilitate the delivery of a local infrastructure project.

274 UKRAINE UPDATE BRIEFING REPORT

The Director of People and Communities introduced this report which provided an overview of the ongoing work in the districts to prepare for the arrival of Ukrainian refugees. The background to the current scheme, was that at present at least, just sponsored families were coming to the UK. The process was that the UK host family identified a Ukrainian family, then a sponsored visa was applied for from the Home Office, and then they were granted a visa to come to the UK. The visa was for three years, and the host family needed to commit to at least six months as hosts.

To date, in the Broadland district there had been approximately 46 volunteer households for host families, but as yet no take up. The issue of the £10,500 funding per refugee was raised and the Director for People and Communities confirmed these funds would be held by Norfolk County Council and distributed as needed. The Council was likely to spend the funding on:

- A Housing Officer
- A Community Support Officer
- Grants to support successful and sustainable hosting
- Funding to support successful and local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE)
- A Central fund held for the drawdown of temporary housing costs

The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny explained that for a family with standard needs, this funding should cover most costs, however for families with special needs, Norfolk

County Council might need a significant portion of that funding to support, for example traumatised children. He went on to advise that it might be helpful if local members were advised of the placements to offer any local support as may be needed. The Director of People and Communities advised that although the Council could let local members know of families within their ward, due to GDPR regulations, it could not provide the exact address.

In response to a query from Councillor Beadle, the Director of People and Communities confirmed that the welcome centres in South Norfolk had been listed in error and that once the welcome centres in the Broadland District had been agreed, he would advise members accordingly.

Following a show of hands it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

1. To acknowledge arrangements put in place.
2. To agree delegation to the Director of People and Communities, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Housing and Wellbeing to utilise any devolved funding to support Ukrainians.

Reason for Decision

To provide support and assistance to refugees from Ukraine.

275 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY ANNUAL REPORT

The Senior Governance Officer presented the report, along with the draft joint Public Sector Equality Duty Annual Report for 2021-22. As a public body, the Council had a statutory requirement to report annually on how the Council had complied with its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, as required by the Equality Act 2010. The Annual Report was also required to be published on the Council's public website.

The Annual Report contained a list of the nine characteristics which were protected under the Equality Act. In addition, in exercising the Council's functions, due regard needed to be given to three specific areas, both for service users and staff. The Senior Governance Officer briefly summarised these areas as follows:

To "Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act".

In addition to the more obvious work undertaken by the Help Hub when it dealt with vulnerable people who had fallen victim to harassment or discrimination, this section also required the Council to pay due regard to equality issues when forming policies, and in its processes to ensure it was not discriminating against anyone with a protected characteristic.

To "Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not".

Advancing equality was about treating everyone the same. Advancing equality was about removing or reducing disadvantages suffered by people, due to their protected characteristics and this sometimes meant that the Council needed to treat these individuals more favourably than others, to bring them up to the same level of opportunity as everyone else.

To “Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not”.

This could be achieved through a variety of ways – for example - through the Council’s Community Connectors introducing people to local groups where they could make friends and get help, through officers and members helping to set up community groups, and it also included raising awareness and providing positive messaging around subjects such as mental illness and accessibility and promoting events such as World Menopause Day and Norwich Pride.

Within the report, each of these three sections had been explored, firstly providing evidence of how these had been met for residents and secondly how they had been met for staff, as required under the Act.

Members noted that as a Local Authority, this was not just a tick box exercise, but was how the Council dealt with issues and staff on a daily basis and the Senior Governance Officer explained a number of real life examples had been included in the report where some really good work had been done and had made huge differences to people’s lives.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing advised members of the good work being undertaken in relation to mental health and felt the increase in the Council’s Mental Health First Aiders was welcome, particularly at this time. He commended the report and the impressive work carried out by officers, which was echoed by the Chairman and other members.

Following a show of hands, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To approve the joint Public Sector Equality Duty Annual Report, as attached as Appendix A.

Reasons for Decision

To continue to provide support and assistance to residents and staff.
To meet legislative requirements.

276 FORWARD PLAN

A query was raised regarding the £150.00 Energy Rate Rebate Scheme, which according to the Forward Plan would be considered in June 2022. Members queried this as the Direct Debit rebates would have been completed by the end of April 2022. The Assistant Director for Finance agreed that the majority of the rebates would be completed in the next couple of weeks, however those residents who used methods other than direct debit

would take longer. He went on to advise members that the team was working at pace to ensure that these payments were completed.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence requested that the Green Waste Contract be added to the Forward Plan, for consideration at the July meeting of the Cabinet.

277 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business because otherwise, information which is exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, would be disclosed to them.

278 FRETtenham DEPOT REDEVELOPMENT

Members considered the exempt report of the Assistant Director of Community Services, which outlined plans for the initial phase of the redevelopment of the Frettenham Depot site, which was owned by the Council.

Members noted that the report sought approval to direct award the contract for the project management of the redevelopment of the site. As the total cost of the works would be over £100,000, the waiving of the procurement standing orders required approval from Cabinet. Members noted that the proposal would not only save the Council money but would shorten timescales and save officer time.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence advised members that a number of previous proposals have been undertaken for Frettenham so there was already a good idea of the costs and she confirmed that further reports on the specification and then the tenders would be brought to members at the appropriate times.

The Assistant Director of Community Services agreed and confirmed that the plan was to present the tender to members as the next step, should this report be agreed by Cabinet.

Following a show of hands it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To approve the recommendations contained in the exempt report.

Reasons for Decision

To progress the redevelopment of the site, whilst making efficiency savings for the Council.

279 MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT – CONTRACT AWARD

Members considered the exempt report of the Assistant Director of ICT/Digital and Transformation, which provided an update on the progress of the contract award for the provision of the Microsoft Enterprise agreement, for both Broadland and South Norfolk Councils.

The Assistant Director ICT/Digital and Transformation reminded members of the paper presented to them back in February 2022, which had resulted in a contract award, based on price. Members noted that since that award, the then preferred supplier had withdrawn its original submission, and following a further evaluation of the revised pricing, the contract had been awarded to a different supplier. This had been authorised by the Managing Director, through special provisions which could be exercised in matters of urgency. The purpose of the report, therefore, was to request retrospective approval of that decision.

Addressing the Committee, the Chairman highlighted it was retrospective approval and emphasised this was all accounted for in the current budget.

Following a show of hands it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To approve the recommendations contained in the exempt report.

Reasons for Decision

To ensure the provision of licences to use Microsoft applications, at the best price.

280 EXEMPT MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD ON 15 MARCH 2022

Cabinet duly noted the minutes.

(The meeting concluded at 5.00pm)