

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Tuesday 13 August 2019** at **10.00 am** when there were present:

Mr A D Adams – Chairman

Mr S C Beadle
Mr P E Bulman
Ms S J Catchpole
Ms S I Holland

Mr K S Kelly
Mr D King
Mr M L Murrell
Mr G K Nurden

Mrs S M Prutton
Mrs C E Ryman-Tubb
Mr N C Shaw

Also in attendance were the Director Resources, Senior Governance Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Environmental Protection Manager, Revenues and Benefits Manager and the Committee Officer (JO).

Mr J Hull, Head of Waste, Norfolk County Council, was in attendance for item 43 – Fees on DIY Waste.

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8

Member	Minute No & Heading	Nature of Interest
Ms S Catchpole.	44 – Council Tax Good Practice Protocol	Local Choice non pecuniary – volunteer at Citizens Advice

41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Brennan and Mr Riley.

42 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Minute no: 35 – Household Wheeled Bin Charging for New Properties

The Chairman advised the meeting that Cabinet had not accepted the recommendation of the Committee and had recommended to Council that a charge for the provision of waste bins to new properties be introduced at cost plus an additional 10 percent surcharge to build resilience into the price.

43 FEES ON DIY WASTE

The verbal report provided an update on the impact of fees for the disposal of

DIY waste, which were introduced at Household Waste Recycling Centres by Norfolk County Council on 1 April 2018.

Members were advised that the County Council had, in fact, been charging for disposal of DIY waste since 2001, but had allowed for one large item or up to 80 litres to be disposed of free of charge. However, due to the increasing costs of disposal and to avoid other options such as closing any Household Waste Recycling Centres or reducing their opening hours, it was decided to remove this concession. Alongside this a shift to card payment had been made to avoid holding cash at the Recycling Centres, the pricing structure had been simplified and larger volumes were now accepted at all sites rather than just the seven main sites

The Recycling Centres continued to take all household waste items for free and a paid trade waste disposal service for business was also provided at the sites, Monday to Friday.

The County Council had achieved its savings target of £500,000 in 2018/19. The savings were intended to cover costs only, not to generate a profit or to subsidise another part of the service. It remained to be seen if the savings would be replicated in 2019/20.

It was confirmed that there had been no discernible trend identified in fly tipping on public land following the introduction of the charge in the district. Moreover, the majority of the fly tipped items would have been accepted free of charge at Recycling Centres. Data for fly tipping on private land was more difficult to assess, because it could be cleared by the landowner without being reported. There were a range of options available for private landowners to dispose of fly tipped litter, such as skips, taking it to a Recycling Centre under the business waste option or to a Waste Transfer Station.

It was also noted that an increasing amount of litter was being picked up by local litter picking groups, probably due to an increasing awareness of environmental issues. The Norfolk Waste Partnership also had a 'Love Norfolk, Hate Litter' campaign running to encourage more people to keep the County cleaner.

Members noted the update.

44 COUNCIL TAX GOOD PRACTICE PROTOCOL

The report presented the Citizens Advice Council Tax Good Practice Protocol, which covered the collection and recovery of Council Tax arrears. In January 2019 the Committee had requested that the Protocol be placed on its Work Programme, so that it could consider recommending its adoption by Council.

The aim of the Protocol was to help Councils establish good practice with Citizens Advice in dealing with Council Tax debt. So far, 61 authorities across the country had adopted the Protocol. If adopted by the Council, Broadland would be the first local authority in East Anglia to adopt the Protocol.

Work had been undertaken to compare the Protocol with Broadland's practices and procedures and a meeting with the Council's enforcement agent and the Chief Executive of Norfolk Citizens Advice took place in February 2019, where a number of changes to the national Protocol were agreed in order for it to work locally.

South Norfolk Council was also in a position to adopt the Protocol and a report would be considered by their Finance and Resources Committee in September.

It was confirmed that no changes to the Council's contractual documents with its enforcement agent would need to be changed to meet the requirements of the Protocol. It was emphasised that the Council had not had a complaint about the actions of its Enforcement Agent in over two years.

In response to a query regarding Universal Credit claimants, who were subject to Council Tax reduction varying on a monthly basis, the Revenues and Benefits Manager advised the meeting that the introduction of an income tolerance for claimants who received the housing element of Universal Credit, which was currently being consulted on, was designed to smooth out these changes and so reduce any unnecessary hardship for claimants.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

That the Council Tax Good Practice Protocol is brought forward for adoption by the Council.

45 NORFOLK HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Committee noted the Outcomes and Actions and the Forward Plan for the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 July 2019.

None of the issues raised at the meeting were directly relevant to Broadland.

46 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members were informed that the Audit Manager was drafting the recommendation report of the EcoCube Time and Task Panel, which would

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be considered by the Panel prior to it being brought to the 24 September 2019 Committee meeting. In response to a query, the Senior Governance Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed that she would check if an ex-Member of the Panel would be permitted to attend the final Panel meeting.

It was agreed that the Future Infrastructure Provision in Broadland and the GP and dentist provision in the district would be combined and considered after the preferred sites for the Greater Norwich Local Plan were published.

The Senior Governance Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed that she would look at the proposal for a joint scrutiny with South Norfolk Council in respect of affordable housing delivery in both districts.

The meeting closed at 11.01 am