

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 14 January 2019 at 7.30pm.

Members Present: Councillors: Overton (Chairman) Amis, Bendle, Bernard, Bills, Broome, Dale, Dewsbury, Duffin, Easton, Foulger, Fulcher, Fuller, J Hornby, L Hornby, Hudson, C Foulger, C Kemp, W Kemp, Kiddie, Legg, Lewis, Minshull, Neal, Palmer, Riches, J Savage, Stone, Thomson, Wheatley, J Wilby and M Wilby

Apologies: Councillors Bell, Blundell, Edney, Ellis, Goldson, Gould, Gray, Hardy, Larnier, Mason Billig, Mooney, Pond, R Savage, Thomas and Worsley

Officers in Attendance: The Managing Director (T Holden), the Director of Communities and Wellbeing (J Sutterby), the Director of Growth and Business Development (D Lorimer), the Head of Governance (E Hodds) and the Head of Business Transformation (H Ralph)

Also in Attendance: Mr P Grant – Assistant Secretary of Yare Valley UNISON

3472 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Committee Clerk declared an interest on behalf of all senior officers present, with regard to item 4 on the agenda, the Senior Management Structure.

3473 SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Members considered the report of the Managing Director, which sought approval of the senior management staffing structures for Broadland and South Norfolk Councils to facilitate a single paid service, and the process for appointing to the Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer roles.

Cllr J Fuller introduced the report, welcoming the Managing Director to his first South Norfolk Council meeting.

Cllr Fuller reminded members that the recommendations of the report were a consequence of the decision taken by members back in July, to agree to collaborative working and the formation of one joint officer team across Broadland and South Norfolk Councils. Now that the Managing Director was in post, a joint senior management structure was required to drive forward the ambitions of the original feasibility report, and members' attention was drawn to the draft senior management structure, outlined at Appendix A of the report.

Referring to the recommendations, Cllr Fuller proposed an amendment, in that recommendation 8.2, regarding the approval of the appointment panel for Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers, be deferred, to allow more time for the Managing Director to engage with members regarding the process. Members noted that colleagues in Broadland agreed that a deferral would be helpful to tie up a number of loose ends. Cllr Fuller stressed the importance of ensuring the right people were recruited to the right posts and he suggested that the proposals be reconsidered at the Council meeting in February.

Cllr L Neal then seconded the amendment.

Referring to the proposed deferral, the Managing Director agreed that it was important that everyone was comfortable with the recruitment process. He stressed the need for fairness and transparency, reminding members that staff had been aware for some time that they were “at risk”, and that it would be preferable for all appointments to have been made before the elections in May. He referred to the need to ensure that the right people were appointed, and he explained that all candidates would need to complete a strength-based assessment before the interview.

Cllr T Lewis suggested that the process would be difficult at times, especially for those candidates that were unsuccessful. Referring to the proposed structure, he queried whether there was a need for so many senior posts.

In response, the Managing Director stressed the need to treat all staff involved with respect, and to ensure that the process was fair and transparent. He believed that the proposed structure would provide both Councils with the operational capacity to deal with change, and he stressed the importance of retaining quality staff. He advised that the strength-based assessment would be carried out by an external company, who were experts in that field, and that this would provide a third-party view of candidates.

Mr P Grant, the Assistant Secretary of Yare Valley UNISON (the newly amalgamated union representing staff in Broadland and South Norfolk), addressed the Council and referred to UNISON’s initial response to the proposals, which had been emailed out to all members.

Mr Grant referred back to the feasibility report from July 2018 which detailed the cost of £70,000 for a Decision-Making Accountability tool (DMA), which would help to establish the number of layers of management required by an organisation. The feasibility report had also suggested that the Human Resources support and organisational services of the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA), would also be sought. Mr Grant queried whether this support would still be required.

Mr Grant also stressed that UNISON was still concerned that the collaboration was being pushed through too quickly, and it would have preferred for issues to have first been considered at Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. However, he was pleased to report that UNISON had had a constructive meeting with the new Managing Director, and it was felt that he was listening and responding to concerns. Summing up he explained that UNISON would continue to monitor the situation, to ensure a fully transparent, equitable and accountable process, for the

benefit of staff in both Broadland and South Norfolk, and the residents in both areas.

The proposed amendment was then unanimously carried.

It was then unanimously

RESOLVED: To:

1. Approve the proposed pre-consultation senior management structure, with any changes, as a result of formal consultation, delegated to the Managing Director in consultation with the Leaders
2. Defer consideration of the arrangements for the recruitment of Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers to enable these matters to be discussed further, with recommendations being presented to Council at its meeting in February.
3. To approve the terms of reference for the Joint Statutory Officer Hearing Committee and Joint Statutory Officer Appeals Committee and agree that meetings of the Committees be included as an approved duty in line with the Member Allowance Scheme
4. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make the consequential changes to the constitution necessary for the Council to appoint to the senior management structure.

3474 RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET

Greater Norwich Joint 5-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24 and the Annual Growth Programme 2019/20

Cllr J Fuller presented members with the recommendations of the Cabinet, regarding the Greater Norwich Joint 5-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2019/20 -2020/24, and the Annual Growth Programme 2019/20.

Cllr Fuller referred to the current shortfall in pooled CIL and the decision of the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB), to suspend the inclusion of new projects in future five-year investment plans and Annual Growth Programmes.

Cllr Fuller stressed that the Council was concerned at the shortfall and estimates for forecasted amounts of CIL, and members noted that the Scrutiny Committee would be considering a report regarding Norwich City Council's decision to adopt a Community Infrastructure Levy Exceptional Circumstances Relief Policy, at its meeting on 23 January 2019.

It was then

RESOLVED: To endorse the Greater Norwich Joint 5-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan (5YIIP) for 2019/20 to 2023/24 and agree the Annual Growth Programme (AGP) for 2019/20, for consideration at the next meeting of the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB).

(The meeting concluded at 7:56 pm)

Chairman