

## **COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a meeting of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 16 September 2019 at 7.30pm**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Councillors: Minshull (Chairman), Amis, Bendle, Bills, Burrill, Clifford-Jackson, Curson, Dearnley, Dewsbury, Duffin, Easter, Ellis, Elmer, Francis, Fuller, Glover, Halls, Hardy, Holden, Hudson, Hurn, Kemp, Kiddie, Knight, Laidlaw, Mason Billig, Neal, Nuri, Overton, Ridley, J Savage, R Savage, Spruce, Thomas, Thomson, Wilby and M Wilby
<b>Apologies:</b>	Councillors: Bernard, Blundell, Brown, Edney, Elliott, Hornby, Legg, Rowe and Worley
<b>Officers in Attendance:</b>	The Managing Director (T Holden), the Director of People and Communities (J Sutterby), the Director of Place (P Courtier), the Director of Resources (D Lorimer) the Assistant Director, Governance and Business Support (E Hodds) and the Assistant Director, Chief of Staff (H Ralph)

### **3511 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2019 were confirmed as correct a record and signed by the Chairman.

### **3512 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members noted the civic engagements attended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council, for the period 15 July to 15 September 2019. The Chairman thanked the Vice-Chairman, Cllr F Ellis, for her support during his recent incapacity.

### **3513 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET**

#### **(a) Cabinet meeting 22 July 2019**

#### **(i) Performance, Risk, Revenue and Capital Budget Position for Q4 2018/19**

Cllr A Thomas presented the Cabinet recommendations to members, regarding the revenue and capital budget position for Quarter 4 2018/19.

With 33 votes for, 0 against and 2 abstentions, it was

**RESOLVED: To:**

- a) Approve the budget virement which exceeds £100,000 in accordance with the rules of financial governance (section 1.12).
- b) Approve the movement in reserves as outlined in Section 1.12
- c) Approve the slippage requests of £267,957 on revenue and £677,885 on capital
- d) Approve the amended Capital programme and its financing for the next four financial years as set out in Appendices 7 and 8.

**(ii) Treasury Management Annual Report 2018/19**

Cllr A Thomas presented the Cabinet recommendations to Council, regarding the Council's Treasury Management activity.

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED: To:**

- a) Note the treasury activity for the second half of the year and that it complies with the agreed strategy.
- b) Note the 2018/19 prudential indicators for the latter six months of the year.

**(b) Cabinet meeting 9 September 2019****(i) Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework, June 2019.  
Shared Spatial Objectives for a Growing County and Statement of  
Common Ground**

Cllr J Fuller outlined the recommendations of the Cabinet, regarding the Norfolk Strategic Spatial Objectives for a Growing County and Statement of Common Ground.

Cllr J Fuller explained that although this was not a statutory planning document, it would assist the Council in fulfilling its obligations to demonstrate the Duty to Cooperate and would meet the National Planning Policy Framework requirement to have a Statement of Common Ground. He outlined the changes to the document, referring to new housing figures using the Government's Local Housing Need methodology, the new agreement covering Minerals and Waste, and the new work across the County boundaries. He emphasised the importance of the document and suggested it added weight to negotiations regarding the Long Stratton bypass and stressed the importance of the A140 as a core link between Norwich and Ipswich.

In response to a query from Cllr J Halls regarding the lack of detail concerning affordable housing, Cllr Fuller explained that whilst he understood Cllr Halls'

concerns, the purpose of the document was to provide an evidence base, not to ascertain any course of action.

It was then unanimously

**RESOLVED:** To agree to:

- (a) be a signatory to the updated Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (JUNE 2019)
- (b) support the continued work of members and officers to ensure that the NSPF remains up to date.

### **3514 MONITORING OFFICER REPORT**

Cllr J Fuller presented the report of the Monitoring Officer to members, which sought approval to make various amendments to the Council's constitution.

Cllr Fuller outlined the proposals regarding the changes to the Council's scheme of delegation, explaining that he felt sufficient safeguards were in place to merit the amendments.

With regard to the membership of the Community Action Fund (CAF) Panel, Cllr Fuller explained that it was proposed that its membership increased from 3 to 5, and that he had appointed Cllrs J Overton and M Wilby to join the Panel. He added that he was minded to bring forward the budget from next year's CAF, to guarantee sufficient funding for this year's applications, however, he would await the outcome of the CAF meeting on 20 September, before confirming this decision.

Cllr Y Bendle advised members that she had been invited to represent the Council on the Norfolk Against Scams Partnership, stressing the importance of the issues it addressed. Cllr M Dewsbury explained that this was a multi-agency approach to work on the prevention of scams.

Cllr Fuller then referred to an additional recommendation, explaining that he had appointed Cllr J Easter to replace Cllr P Hardy, to represent the Council on the Norwich Area Museums Committee.

The recommendations were seconded by Cllr K Mason Billig and it was then unanimously

**RESOLVED:** To:

1. Amend the Scheme of Delegation with regard to planning applications submitted by staff, councillors and those related to staff and councillors of both South Norfolk Council and Broadland District Council, and to clarify interpretation of the clause in relation to employment, as outlined at section 2.2 and 2.5 of this report.

2. Increase the membership of the Community Action Fund (CAF) Panel from three to five, noting that Cllrs J Overton and M Wilby are appointed the Panel
3. Appoint Cllr Yvonne Bendle to represent the Council on the Norfolk Against Scams Partnership.
4. Appoint Cllr J Easter as the Council's representative on the Norfolk Museums Committee.

### **3515 ANNUAL REPORT ON STANDARDS ACTIVITY**

Members considered the report of the Monitoring Officer, which outlined how the Standards regime had operated during 2018/19 at South Norfolk Council, and how the Council fulfilled its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors across the District.

Cllr K Mason Billig presented the report, referring members to the increase in the number of complaints by parish councils, explaining that this only equated to 3 parish councils, with 6 complaints relating to one of them. She added that there had been no breaches and no requirement for any standards hearings in the year 2018/19 and commended the work of officers, particularly that of the independent person.

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED:** To endorse the Annual Report on Standards Activity.

### **3516 QUESTIONS TO CHAIRMEN AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

#### **(a) Cabinet**

Cllr S Nuri asked Cllr Fuller if he had any knowledge of the future impact on the care sector following the loss of European Social Fund monies, as a result of Brexit.

Cllr Fuller felt this question was a little premature, as Brexit had not been achieved. He understood that monies were still available from the European Regional Development Fund and asked that officers updated members with regard to accessing EU funding, after the meeting.

Cllr Nuri explained that over a third of care staff in the UK were not British citizens and would need to apply for settled status. She asked what the Council was doing to advise such citizens.

Cllr Fuller explained that he was aware that an estimated 3 million EU citizens would need to apply for settled status, and that 1 million had applied to date. He

added that such citizens would have up to a year and a day after to apply. The Council would do all it could to assist, and this issue would feature in the Council's Link magazine in October.

In response to a query from Cllr S Ridley, Cllr Fuller explained that he looked forward to the Council taking a share of any Prosperity Fund, and he believed, along with the Local Government Association, that those Councils responsible for growing the economy should receive its share directly, as opposed to only being distributed through the Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Cllr J Halls asked Cllr Fuller, that given the loss of 3 Environmental Health Officers at South Norfolk, and the clear slippage in inspection rates (evidenced by the Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring Systems (LAEMS) return which recorded that the number of written warnings issued by SNC had dropped by 48%), what action was being taken to address this, as staff losses in such specialist areas would only make the situation worse. Members noted that the LAEMS return reported on food hygiene activity that the Council forwarded to the Food Standards agency. In response Cllr Fuller explained that 2 out of the 3 staff had now been replaced and he reminded Council that South Norfolk and Broadland staff were now working as one team and were beginning to work collaboratively and share workloads. Members noted that council staff were undergoing a period of restructuring, and that all employee vacancies needed to be carefully thought through.

Cllr T Laidlaw asked Cllr Fuller if he knew why the Joint Core Strategy Annual Monitoring Report for 2016/17 and 2017/18 were not available to view on the Council's website. Cllr Fuller explained that all reports were now held in a single place on the GNDP website, so as not to duplicate information across District Councils' websites. He hoped that the report for 2018/19 would be available in the weeks before Christmas or just after. He agreed that these were important statements that needed to be easily accessible to the public.

Cllr V Clifford Jackson referred to the recent report of the Public National Rural Crime Network, regarding domestic violence in rural areas. She applauded the work of the Help Hub but asked what else the Council could do to ensure that members were able to recognise domestic violence, referring to a suggestion she had already made for Safeguarding training. Cllr Fuller reminded members that they were able to make suggestions for training sessions and topics for scrutiny and policy committees. Members were informed that a member training session on Safeguarding had been scheduled to take place in October.

Cllr T Laidlaw congratulated Cllr Y Bendle on the quality of the Homelessness member training sessions, conducted by David Neville and Victoria Parsons. He explained the officers to have been extremely knowledgeable, and the sessions had been interesting as well as informative. Cllr Bendle thanked Cllr Laidlaw for his kind comments, referring to the dedication and kind attitude of officers. She explained that she would ask officers to consider the provision of further training on both homelessness and domestic violence.

**(b) Scrutiny Committee**

There were no questions regarding the work of the Scrutiny Committee.

**(c) Licensing Committee**

There were no questions to the Chairman of the Licensing Committee.

**(d) Development Management Committee**

Cllr Halls referred to a recent Development Management Committee meeting where a member of the public had been particularly abusive to members of the Committee. The Chairman of the Development Management Committee, Cllr V Thomson, explained that he took such incidents extremely seriously and always took advice from officers in such circumstances. He added that sometimes it was best to let people vent their frustrations, and although not a common occurrence, he felt such criticisms to be “part and parcel” of being a member of the Committee.

**(e) Electoral Arrangements Review Committee**

The Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee, Cllr K Kiddie, updated members on a recent meeting of the Committee, where some amendments to the number and location of polling stations had been made.

**3517 FEEDBACK ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

There was no feedback on outside bodies.

(The meeting concluded at 8.29 pm)

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Chairman