

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Review of Cabinet Agenda

Members of the Committee

Cllr S Riley (Chairman)

Cllr M Murrell (Vice Chairman)

Cllr N J Brennan

Cllr P E Bulman

Cllr S J Catchpole

Cllr N J Harpley

Cllr S I Holland

Cllr C Karimi-Ghovanlou

Cllr K S Kelly

Cllr D King

Cllr K Leggett

Cllr G K Nurden

Cllr S M Prutton

Cllr C E Ryman-Tubb

Cllr N C Shaw

Date & Time:

Tuesday 14 December 2021 at 10.00am

Place:

Council Chamber Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich NR7 0DU

Contact:

James Overy tel (01603) 430540 Email: committee.services@broadland.gov.uk

Website: www.broadland.gov.uk

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE:

This meeting will be live streamed for public viewing via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZciRgwo84-iPyRImsTCIng>

The public will not be permitted to attend the Council offices to observe meetings.

If a member of the public would like to attend to speak on an agenda item, please email your request to committee.services@broadland.gov.uk, no later than 5.00pm 9 December 2021. Please see further guidance on the options for public speaking at page 2 of this agenda.

Rules on Public Speaking

All public speakers are required to register a request to speak at public meetings by the date / time stipulated on the relevant agenda. Requests should be sent to:

committee.services@broadland.gov.uk

Public speaking can take place:

- Through a written representation (which will be read out at the meeting)
- In person at the Council offices

Please note that the Council cannot guarantee the number of places available for public attendance but we will endeavour to meet all requests.

All those attending the meeting in person must, sign in on the QR code for the building and promptly arrive at, and leave the venue. The hand sanitiser provided should be used and social distancing must be observed at all times. Further guidance on what to do on arrival will follow once your public speaking registration has been accepted.

AGENDA

1. To receive declarations of interest under Procedural Rule no 8 4
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of meeting held on 30 November 2021 6
4. Matters arising therefrom (if any)
5. Chairman's Announcements
6. Public Speaking

To consider representation from the members of the public who have expressed the wish to convey their views on items on this agenda.

In accordance with the Constitution a period of 3 minutes is allowed per member of the public.

7. Cabinet Reports

To consider the Cabinet reports in respect of the 21 December 2021 meeting.

N.B. the Cabinet Agenda will be published on the Council's website on Friday 10 December 2021

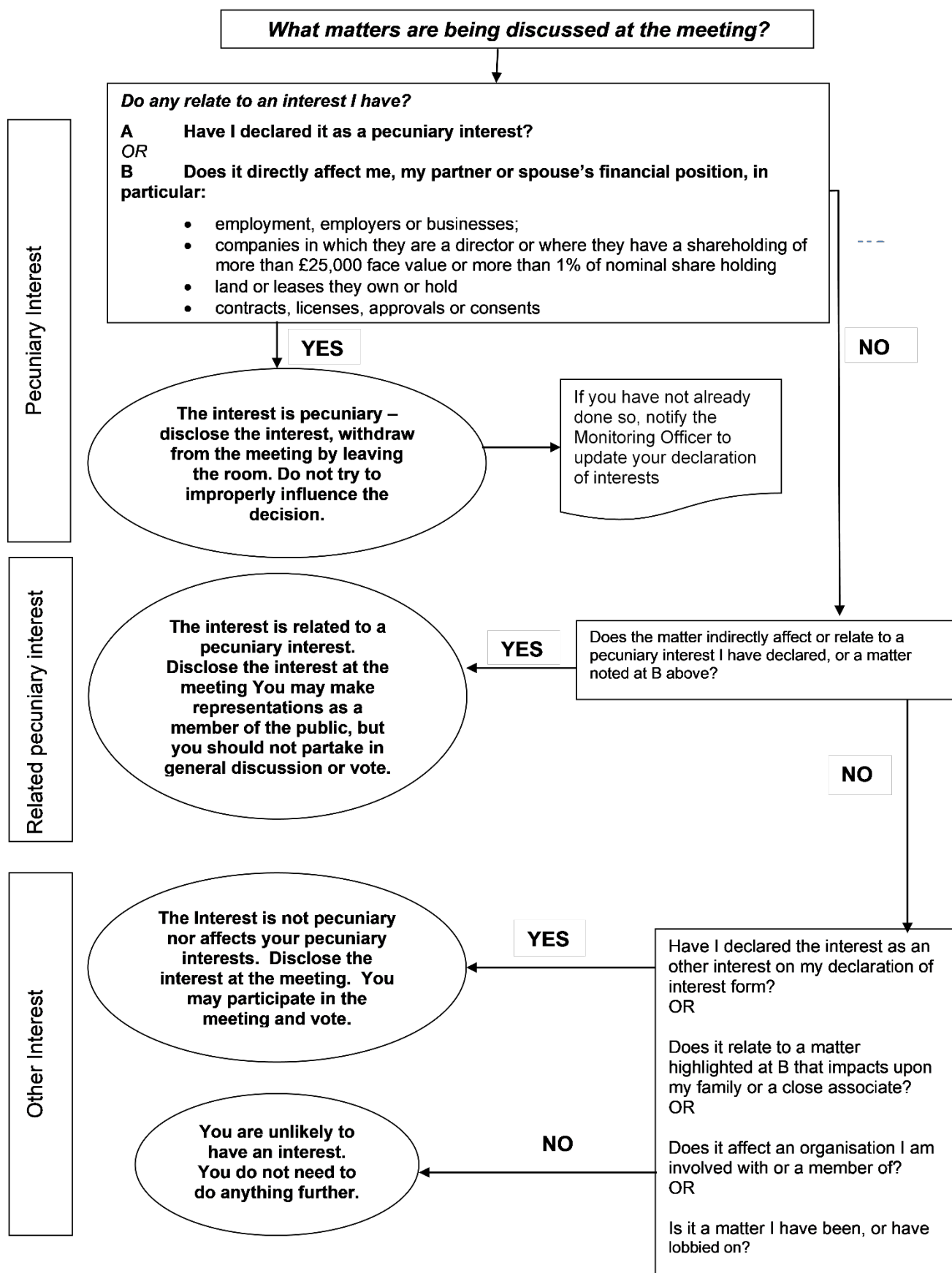
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

<p>Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.</p>
<p>Does the interest directly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position? 2. relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner? 3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council 4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own 5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in <p>If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.</p>
<p>Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?</p> <p>If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but you should not partake in general discussion or vote.</p>
<p>Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be an other interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.</p>
<p>Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.</p>

**FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF.
PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST
INSTANCE**

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Broadland District Council, held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on Tuesday 30 November 2021 at 10.00 am when there were present:

Committee Members Present: Councillor: M L Murrell, (Chairman), A D Adams, S C Beadle, N J Brennan, S J Catchpole, S C Gurney, N J Harpley, S I Holland, K S Kelly, K G Leggett and S M Prutton.

Other Member in Attendance: Councillor: J Leggett.

Officers in Attendance: Assistant Director Regulatory, Chief of Staff, Communities Manager, Help Hub and Communities Senior Manager, Senior Environmental Management Officer and Democratic Services Officers (LA, JO)

70 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bulman, Cllr Karimi-Ghovanlou, Cllr King, Cllr Nurden, Cllr Riley and Cllr Shaw.

71 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

72 MATTERS ARISING

Minute No: 68 – Award of Contract – Bure Valley Railway Fencing

In answer to a query, the Chief of Staff confirmed that when tenders were invited a clear specification for the contract was provided.

The Chief of Staff confirmed that she would forward the specification for the Bure Valley Railway Fencing contract to the member who had requested it.

In response to a question it was confirmed that discussions were taking place with the Chairmen of the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee and the Commercial, Trading and Customer Focus Policy Committee about meetings of the Future Office Project Joint Member Working Group. It was hoped that one or two meetings could be held before the end of the year.

Minute No: 69 – Proposal for a Second Building at the Food Enterprise Park

It was confirmed that discussion of this item would be held following the exclusion of the public later in the meeting.

73 REVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

The Assistant Director Regulatory introduced the report, which provided the Committee with an update on the delivery of the Environmental Strategy.

In an update to the report the Committee was informed that this was national tree week and that the Council would be bidding for £20,000 to allocate to parish and town councils to plant trees. It was confirmed that tree maintenance would also be part of the bid and that this was in addition to the Tiny Forest project.

The meeting was advised that work was being undertaken to deliver energy efficiency improvements to low-income households, as domestic sources contributed an estimated 26 percent of all carbon emissions across the District.

Key areas being developed to deliver the aims of the Strategy were:

- The Council was exploring how a Community Municipal Investment Fund, or 'Green Bonds', could be commissioned to secure investment in projects such as extending access to existing home energy efficiency programmes to homeowners who were not on low incomes. This could also link well with proposals for a grant scheme for the replacement of domestic gas boilers with newer technologies.
- A Carbon Audit to ascertain the Council's carbon footprint and identify options for reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions was being carried out

- A review of future office accommodation with the environmental performance of buildings and services as one of the key themes was being undertaken.

Review of Environmental Enforcement Penalties report would be going to Cabinet in December.

A member noted that uptake of a Norfolk County Council tree planting scheme had been low and that trees could be costly to maintain for small parishes with limited resources. She also added that not all soils were suitable for tree planting and that in some areas residents had planted trees in unsuitable locations, such as verges, which could damage cables and sewers beneath them.

In response, it was emphasised that the right trees should be planted in the right place and that funding for their maintenance would be available. Members were also informed that officers could provide extensive support and guidance to parish and town councils and would ensure that planting and aftercare plans were in place for local tree planting schemes.

It was also confirmed that there were other means of reducing carbon, such as peat preservation, rewilding and planting hedgerows, which could be combined with tree planting.

The Chairman also noted that much of this work fell under the remit of the Tree Warden Network.

In answer to a query it was confirmed that Green Bonds were required to provide a financial return and would mainly be used for projects such as energy efficient homes, but there were other funding sources that could be used to develop and promote activities such as countryside walks.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence reminded members that on top of all the projects being developed through the Action Plan the Council were carrying out a whole range of business as usual activities that contributed to carbon reduction, such as recycling, the Warm Homes project, fly tipping enforcement and planning policy.

Following a show of hands it was unanimously:

AGREED

To note the contents of the report.

74 MEMBER WARD GRANT – SPEND REVIEW

The Communities Manager introduced the report, which was a six monthly update on the member-led grant scheme.

The scheme allocated £500 to each member who in turn could allocate this funding or a portion of it to projects within their ward. The grants were subject to ground rules to ensure that public funds were distributed in a responsible manner and provided an audit trail to ensure transparency in spending public money.

Of the £23,500 per year available, £8,822 had been spent by 17 Members on 16 projects, so far. Eleven Members have spent all of their budget for 2021/22.

All funding needs to be allocated by 1 March 2022 of each year. Any remaining fund would be distributed to organisations agreed by the Help Hub Senior Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development.

Key facts about the scheme to date were:

- Approximately 49 percent of allocated funding had been spent on equipment and materials.
- 27 percent had been spent on defibrillators.
- Youth provision made up 51 percent of the funding allocated.
- 18 percent of the funding had been used to replace materials or equipment.
- Around 82 percent of the funding went to 'place shaping' projects, where the funding from the Council had been used to fill a gap in provision where the needs of residents had not been met, or to enable a project to continue, that would have otherwise folded.

The Help Hub and Communities Senior Manager advised the meeting that the Communities Team were able to provide support for members in identifying projects and spending their grants. It was confirmed that a link to the Communities Team web pages would be forwarded to members following the meeting.

The meeting was informed that under the current ground rules there was no mechanism in place for member grants to be held over for the following year, however the Communities Team could help access additional sources of funding if a project exceeded £500. Members were also reminded that they could combine their grant with that of other members if they wanted to fund a larger project.

A member noted that aligning the member grant scheme with the one at South Norfolk, which allocated £1,000 to members had been raised in the past and suggested that the scheme should be reviewed.

In response the Chief of Staff reminded members that the Committee had reviewed the Community Grants Scheme in October 2020. She suggested that instead it might be appropriate to raise this issue at the joint budget meeting with Cabinet in January 2022.

Following a show of hands it was:

AGREED

To note progress with the member-led grant scheme.

75 STAFF TURNOVER AT BROADLAND

The Committee received the report of the Chairman of the Time and Task Panel, which set out the findings of the Time and Task Panel's review of Broadland District Council staff turnover.

A member raised a concern that the table at paragraph 3.4 did not have any dates for leavers or the period that the table covered and it was noted that the leavers in the *Members' Bulletin* did not seem to correspond with the figures in the table. The low rate of exit interviews was also raised as an area of concern. She suggested that the Panel reconvene to look at these matters further.

In response the Chief of Staff informed the Committee that the report was a summary and the original data would have included the dates covered by review. She emphasised that efforts were being made to improve the take up of exit interviews. Members were also reminded that they continued to receive staff retention rates data through the regular Cabinet Performance Reports and that there were other areas that members wished to look at in more detail through Time and Task Panels.

A member suggested contacting those staff who had left the Council without completing an exit interview to enquire as to their reasons for leaving. Another member agreed and said that the figure of 83 percent not giving an interview was very concerning and should be looked into further.

The Chairman noted that although the figure was high, completion of exit interviews was not something that could be enforced. In answer to a question the Chief of Staff confirmed that there had been no redundancies, except for some senior officers, following collaboration and that overall staff numbers had not reduced.

The Chief of Staff confirmed that she would check on the Data Protection issues regarding contacting ex-staff to enquire why they had not completed exit interviews and would liaise with the Chairman regarding the contents of a letter, if it could be sent.

Following a show of hands it was:

AGREED

1. To note the content of the report and the conclusions of the Panel; and
2. That the Time and Task Panel continue in order to try to ascertain why 83 percent of staff did not give exit interviews.

In response to a query about contacting officers via the telephone, the Chief of Staff advised the meeting that a Customer Access Strategy Report was going to the 9 December 2021 meeting of Council that would set out the current position on the improvements and actions taken in relation to the Council's telephone system.

76 PARISH COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT WITH DEVELOPERS AND THE PLANNING AUTHORITY REGARDING THE ALLOCATION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS

A member of the Working Group advised the meeting that members had gone through the guidance note with officers and agreed some amendments with officers. Members had spent much more time on the email that would be sent to developers regarding engagement with parish and town councils. An emphasis had been placed on the Council 'expecting' that developers would engage in this process, in the knowledge that there was no obligation on them to do so. It was stressed that all planning officers should be made aware of the guidance.

Two typographical errors were noted and it was confirmed that they would be amended.

The Committee was informed that, if approved, the Chairman would contact the Clerk and Chairman of Sprowston Town Council to confirm the completion of the work and to thank them for their suggestion.

Following a show of hands it was unanimously:

AGREED

To note and approve the guidance note and letter to developers.

77 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chief of Staff took the Committee through the Work Programme. The following items would be going to the 18 January 2022 meeting:

- Housing Allocations Policy
- Engagement in Public Consultations
- Norse Environmental Waste Services
- Joint Meeting with Cabinet for Budget Questions

78 EXCLUSION OF THE 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.

79 MATTERS ARISING

Minute No: 69 – Proposal for a Second Building at the Food Enterprise Park

In answer to a query from a member it was confirmed that the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development would be the best person to consult regarding the decision to not proceed with the project.

(The meeting concluded at 11.18am)

Chairman