

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Review of Cabinet Agenda** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Tuesday 2 July 2019 2019** at **10.00 am** when there were present:

Mr S Riley – Chairman

Mr A D Adams
Mr S C Beadle
Mr N J Brennan
Mr P E Bulman
Ms S J Catchpole

Ms N J Harpley
Ms S I Holland
Mr D King
Mr M L Murrell
Mr G K Nurden

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

Mrs Karimi-Ghovanlou was also in attendance for part of the meeting.

Also in attendance were the Director Place, Director Resources, Director People and Communities, Assistant Director Economic Growth, Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer), Assistant Director Individuals and Families, Interim Head of Housing and Environmental Services, Development Manager, Economic Development Manager, Environmental Protection Manager, Private Sector Housing Manager, HR and Customer Services Manager, Business Improvement Lead, Principal Planning Officer, Service Improvement Officer, Housing Enabler, Green Infrastructure and Woodlands Officer and the Committee Officer (JO).

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8

Member	Minute No & Heading	Nature of Interest
Mr Adams	28 – North-West Woodlands – Land Acquisition	Local Choice Non Pecuniary Interest as the Norfolk County Councillor for Horsford and Felthorpe

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Mr Kelly.

18 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, save for the following amendment:

Mr D King was removed from the list of those in attendance.

Minute no: 11 – Minutes

The Chairman informed Members that he had held a further meeting with the Leader and Managing Director to discuss the Overview and Scrutiny Research Officer post and as a temporary arrangement the Senior Governance Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer would be providing the Committee with some support. The arrangement should be resolved permanently in September.

The Chairman advised the meeting that he had received a letter from the Assistant Director of Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) regarding this issue and he would forward the letter to the Committee after the meeting.

Minute no: 15 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

A Member suggested that the reference to the Assistant Director of Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) bringing the Collaboration Report back at the appropriate time, did not reflect the Committee's request that it be brought to the September meeting.

However, another Member recalled that it had been decided to bring the item to an earlier meeting and divide it into the future vision for collaboration and the future staffing structure.

It was confirmed that the Assistant Director of Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) would endeavour to bring the item to the 24 September 2019 meeting.

19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that a meeting of the EcoCube Time and Task Limited Panel would be reconvened in order to agree its final report. A review of the relinquishment EcoCube lease was being conducted and this would be cross referenced with the Panel's final report.

CABINET REPORTS

20 COUNCIL PERFORMANCE 2018/19 – BROADLAND BUSINESS PLAN

The report provided an update on delivery of the Business Plan objectives for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 as well as details of the Local Government Ombudsman decisions received and formal complaints received in the same time period.

It was intended to align Broadland's and South Norfolk's Performance Reports more closely in future and to publish them on a quarterly basis.

The Committee went through the Objectives appended to the report and they noted the following issues:

- The bid by the Reedham Village Team for LEADER programme funding to improve the quayside had been unsuccessful. The Council was working closely with the Team to access funding from alternative sources.
- The Council's waste collection contractors would be adding a further 1,500 properties to the Food Waste collection scheme in July 2019 at no extra cost.
- Although fly tipping was a national problem there was no discernible trend between DIY was being dumped and the charges introduced by Norfolk County Council at Household Waste Recycling Centres.
- Homes in Multiple Occupation had increased on the urban fringe of the District.
- The vast majority of residents in Temporary Accommodation in the District were in the Council's Private Sector Leasing Scheme properties.
- A new Housing with Care scheme would be rolled out shortly.

The provision of community grants had ceased and would be replaced by a Member Grants scheme, which would allow Members to allocate up to £500 to fund local projects. Members noted that South Norfolk Council had a similar scheme, but had been allocated £1,000 per annum.

The Committee requested that Cabinet increase the sum to £1,000 per Member for the Broadland scheme. It was also noted that the grants provided by the Council had been reduced, in recent years. The importance of grants in attracting match funding for community projects was also emphasised.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Option (1)

To note and consider the progress made against the objectives outlined in the Appendices.

21 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

The report summarised the treasury management activity during 2018/19, and included an update on the Prudential Indicators.

The Council had £33.46m invested at 31 March 2019 in various financial instruments. The Council also held £481,300 for a number of parish councils. The Treasury Management Policy set an operational boundary for external debt. However, borrowing had not been required over the last year and was unlikely to be needed in the foreseeable future.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Option (1)

To note the outcome in respect of 2018/19 Treasury Management activities.

22 JOINT HR INFORMATION SYSTEM

The report proposed adopting a HR Information System, to replace the current paper based in-house system used by the Council.

South Norfolk Council currently utilised a formal HR Information system (ITRENT) and it was proposed that Broadland adopt this system, which had been found to have the following system improvements and benefits:

- Streamlined systems
- Reduction in manual paperwork
- Reduction in duplication entry
- Improved data accuracy
- Quicker processing times – eliminate manual calculations and checking
- Reduced ‘touch points’
- Removal of paper based processes
- Improved reporting and data accuracy
- Self-service access to personal data
- Self-service access for managers to team data
- Identify ownership within processes

- E-enabled HR processes
- Access to employee information regardless of location
- Release HR expertise to focus on the strategic and complex HR issues

It was considered that moving to a consistent IT platform would improve efficiency by making it easier for both managers and staff to access and use their data.

It was estimated that the new system would save a minimum of five weeks in HR officer time spent on administration, which would free up HR staff to concentrate on delivering more value-added work. Full training would be provided for the new system.

A Member expressed concern that the Council was being asked to adopt a system used by South Norfolk that might not necessary be appropriate for Broadland. Concerns were also expressed about the additional cost of the system.

In response, Members were advised that investing in the system would allow for a more efficient service for managers across both Councils as well as a more professional HR service. It was also emphasised that there was no procurement costs associated with the proposal.

A Member noted that the Council should have a modern HR system in order for both managers and staff to handle their data efficiently.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Options (1 and 2)

- (1) To agree that Broadland District Council transfers its HR information (including payroll) on to a commercial HR Information System (iTrent); and
- (2) To adopt a two-stage approach, transferring HR employee data on to the system in the first phase and transferring employee and Member payroll data in the second phase.

23 AFFORDABLE HOME OWNERSHIP IN BROADLAND AND SOUTH NORFOLK

The report proposed taking a common approach to affordable home ownership eligibility in Broadland and South Norfolk.

Broadland had seen a large supply of affordable home ownership products on sites across the district and analysis of Broadland and South Norfolk affordable home ownership data had shown that the largest proportion of purchasers already lived within the local authority area in which they purchased. It was, therefore, felt that it was unnecessary to restrict home ownership eligibility to local people. It was emphasised that properties built under exceptions policy would continue to be for local needs only.

Members raised concerns that changing the policy would lead to local residents losing out to people from areas where housing was more expensive.

It was also suggested that the Council was being asked to implement South Norfolk policies, rather than to develop its own as a sovereign Council.

In response, Members were advised that affordable home ownership was a market product and opening up the criteria would allow for more people in need to access housing. It was also emphasised that the proposal had been developed jointly and was not the adoption of an existing South Norfolk policy.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Options (8.1 and 9.2)

- (1) To retain a local connection priority for affordable home ownership.
- (2) All applicants for affordable home ownership must register with the regional Help to Buy agency (or any successor body).

24 JOINT WORKING GROUP

Cabinet were asked to appoint a Member Working Group to take oversight and make recommendation on the waste services review, which would consider a collaborative model of waste collection, grounds maintenance and street cleansing.

The Working Group would include four members, (three Conservatives and one Liberal Democrat) and would operate for the duration of the project until April 2022. The Working Group would work jointly with South Norfolk Council Members to agree any joint recommendations.

The Committee was informed that the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence, would sit on the Working Group.

25 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

to exclude the Press and public from the meeting for the remaining business because otherwise, information which was exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part I 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.

26 NORTH RACKHEATH OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION

The report proposed making an investment from the Broadland Growth Fund for the submission of an outline planning application in North Rackheath.

It was confirmed that there was no conflict of interest in making a recommendation on this matter for Members of the Committee who were also Members of the Planning Committee.

Following consideration of the report, as detailed in the exempt Minutes, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Options (1 and 2, as amended)

- (1) To commit funding from the Broadland Growth Fund to the preparation and submission of an outline planning application for North Rackheath subject to securing the necessary commitments and legal agreements with the landowner; and
- (2) To delegate authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder to negotiate the necessary commitments, *mitigation of financial risk* and legal agreements *through the Portfolio Holder decision making process*.

27 DISPOSAL OF LAND IN BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL OWNERSHIP

The report proposed the sale of Council owned land to a property developer.

Following consideration of the report, as detailed in the exempt Minutes it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Option (1)

To recommend to Council the sale of the land, subject to the Heads of Terms for sale of the site.

28 NORTH-WEST WOODLANDS – LAND ACQUISITION

The report proposed purchasing land to provide green infrastructure in the District.

Following consideration of the report, as detailed in the exempt Minutes it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Option (1)

To recommend to Council front funding the initial sum required to purchase the woodland.

The meeting closed at 1.53 pm