

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 16 October 2018** at **10.00 am** when there were present:

	Mr D G Harrison – Chairman	
Mr A D Adams	Mr G Everett	Mr M D Snowling MBE
Mrs C H Bannock	Mr G K Nurden	Mrs K A Vincent
Ms S J Catchpole	Mr F O’Neill	Mr D C Ward
Mr J J Emsell	Mr S Riley	

Miss T Lodge also attended the meeting for its duration.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development (Mrs J Copplestone) was in attendance for item 57 – Economic and Tourism Update.

Also in attendance were the Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, Head of Economic Development, Interim Head of Housing and Environmental Services, Corporate Finance Manager, Economic Development Manager, Spatial Planning Manager, Environmental Protection Manager, Environmental Protection Manager (Special Projects) and the Committee Officer (JO).

### **54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Buck, Mr Grady and Mr Tapp.

### **55 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **56 APPOINTMENT TO JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

At a meeting of the Joint Lead Members Group on 1 October 2018 it was proposed to establish a formal Joint Scrutiny Committee, which would monitor the key stages of collaborative working between Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council.

Appointment to this Committee would be the responsibility of the respective Group Leaders. However, Members of the Committee were invited to indicate whether they would be interested in undertaking this role.

### **RESOLVED**

to advise the respective Group Leaders that following Members would be

interested in serving on the Joint Scrutiny Committee:

Mr J Emsell, Mr D Harrison, Mr G Nurden, Mrs K Vincent, Mr D Ward and (vacancy).

### 57 ECONOMIC AND TOURISM UPDATE

The Committee received a report on the local economy and the activities of the Council in support of tourism in the district.

Areas highlighted included:

- A reduction in the number of Job Seekers' Allowance claimant's rate to 570 people in the district.
- In April, a Business Breakfast was held at Sprowston Manor Hotel where a guest speaker spoke about designing a business strategy and a speaker from Poultec gave an update on apprenticeships. There were 67 attendees at the meeting representing 53 businesses. In July, a Business Breakfast at the Roarr Dinosaur Adventure in Lenwade, had a tourism theme and was attended by representatives from 44 businesses from a total of 63 attendees. It was emphasised that the breakfasts were very much focused on business and the assistance that Broadland could provide them with. A Business Breakfast had also been held in Thorpe St Andrew last week, where the Leader had spoken about the vision that the Council had for business in the District and Chloe Smith MP had addressed the meeting about Brexit.
- The 'Buy in Broadland' voucher booklet continued to be popular, with over 90 local businesses offering discounts to residents.
- The Choices Programme, which tackled long term unemployment and barriers to work often related to low level Maths and English skills; continued to meet on a weekly basis at Carrowbreck. The Job Centre and other partners were aware of the programme and referred customers to the service.
- Two Broadland businesses had been awarded LEADER funding grants of £40,825 and £4,580. There were also another five Broadland applications totalling £335,132 in the pipeline. It was currently unknown if this European funding would be replaced by Government funding post Brexit.

The Vice-Chairman noted that the Council did not always receive sufficient credit for the support it provided for businesses, especially with accessing

grants and other sorts of funding. Another Member concurred with this view and suggested that the Economic Development support that the Council provided should be more widely advertised; especially to parishes who could benefit from the expertise of the team.

Members were advised that the Tots2Teens service was to be looked at to assess if it was still fit for purpose, as there was a net cost to the Council of £12,684 over the first six months of the year. A report would be presented to the Economic Success Panel and Cabinet in the future to determine the long-term viability of the service.

Broadly Active had secured funding of £42,000 to continue providing GP exercise referrals in Broadland and Norwich. The Council had provided this service for the past 12 years; well ahead of the recent introduction of 'social prescribing' referrals to non-clinical services. It was noted that Broadly Active was a service that could be extended from exercise to other beneficial social activities.

Broadland Council Training Service had delivered 52 courses since the publication of the new training brochure in April 2018, welcoming 268 learners up to mid-September. Of the 52 courses, 39 were paid for courses and 13 were free for Broadland businesses. Income for these courses was £14,303 with costs amounting to £14,599.

The Council was also promoting the Broadland Growth Triangle as an attractive place for business to invest in through a new brochure that would be launched at MIPIM UK on 17-18 October 2018. A joint Broadland/South Norfolk website that promoted the districts as a place to establish businesses had also been recently launched. The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development had also proposed organising a trade delegation towards the end of November, to enable businesses to visit the area and encourage investment in Greater Norwich.

In respect of tourism, Broadland had seen a six percent increase from 2016 with the total number of visitors reaching 2,741,900; total nights stayed were 918,000 and a total visitor spend of £142,782,750.

The total visitors Broadland received in 2017 was up from 2016 by six percent, with an increase in staying visitors of over nine percent and an increase of day visitors of 5.85 percent. This made Broadland's growth from 2016 to 2017 better than the national average.

### **RESOLVED**

to commend the work being carried out by Economic Development and to recommend to Cabinet that greater effort be made to communicate to residents and businesses the valuable services that the department provided

### CABINET REPORTS

#### 58 BUDGET LOOK FORWARD 2018-20

The report presented a provisional forward look at the Council's medium term financial position, which was the start of the budget setting process for 2019-2020.

For the purposes of the report the baseline before the New Homes Bonus was paid had been estimated at 0.5 percent, not the current 0.4 percent and similarly the estimated baseline for Business Rates had been modelled for the report and could be revised once the Financial Settlement was announced in the autumn.

The initial draw on general reserves was estimated at £0.823m in 2019-20, totalling £2.724m over the three years to 2022, which would leave reserves at £9.533m.

In respect of Business Rate retention, Members were advised that this was likely to be set at 75 percent (primary legislation was required to introduce 100 percent retention, which the Government was unlikely to do in the near future).

In response to concerns expressed by Members regarding the Special Expense for Footway Lighting, the Committee was informed that this had been included in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as the matter had not yet been resolved. Once finalised the budget could be amended accordingly.

The Committee was informed that services were not set cost-saving targets; but put in estimated bids based on their expenditure in the preceding year, plus any growth or savings identified for the following year.

The Vice-Chairman noted that the Council had maintained healthy levels of reserves for at least the last eight years by making efficiencies and savings, and was likely to continue to do so in the future.

An advertisement would be placed in a local paper to meet the statutory requirement to consult with businesses during the budget setting process. There were also various options for consulting with the wider community; ranging from external market research, web based surveys, an in-house internet survey or publication in *Broadland News*. A simple online survey was adopted last year when asking residents about a Council Tax rise, but only 25 residents responded.

Other matters brought to the attention of the Committee were: the NHS was

to stop collecting clinical waste from GPs and pharmacies, which would lead to this duty falling on the Council, with an estimated cost of £60-80,000 and a report would be presented to Cabinet next month on charging for wheeled bins at new properties in the district.

A Member noted that the Cabinet had rejected the Committee's proposal to increase the budget for the Members' Grant Scheme to £27,500 and instead had proposed it be set at £23,500.

Members were asked to note that there were no proposals for a reduction in service level provision in the MTFP.

The budget process would now follow to set an appropriate budget for 2019/20 for Council to consider in February 2019.

### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

Options (1, 2, 3 and 4)

- (1) agree the proposed budget setting timetable for 2019/20 and the format of the meeting with Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) agree the format for budget consultation, if any; and
- (3) note the need for Portfolio Holders to prepare draft budgets as soon as possible to allow for discussion with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2018;
- (4) *to take account of the concerns expressed by Members regarding the footway lighting budget.*

### **59 GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN REG 18 CONSULTATION ON NEW, REVISED AND SMALL SITES AND DRAFT STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION**

The report presented proposals for a consultation on new, revised and small sites, which had been submitted for the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), as well as a first draft of the Statement of Consultation for the GNLP.

The first draft of the Statement of Consultation provided a detailed summary of around 3,000 responses to a consultation between January and March 2018. During the consultation over 200 new sites were put forward for potential allocation in the GNLP. These sites would now be consulted on between 29 October and 14 December 2018.

The Greater Norwich Development Partnership Board had recommended that the Greater Norwich authorities note the content of the Statement of Consultation and agreed the content of the proposed consultation on new, revised and small sites.

Members were advised that the Greater Norwich authorities had a duty to consider any reasonable alternative site submitted up to the conclusion of the Regulation 18 stage, which should be by September/October 2019.

### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

Options (1 and 2)

- (1) to accept the Greater Norwich Development Partnership recommendation to note the initial part of the draft Statement of Consultation on the Greater Norwich Local Plan;
- (2) to accept the Greater Norwich Development Partnership recommendation to agree the content of the proposed consultation on new, revised and small sites.

### **60 DOG FOULING PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER**

The report proposed implementing new legislation in respect of dog fouling, which would cover more areas of the district than existing legislation, as well as increasing the level of fixed penalty notice that could be issued to an offender.

Broadland currently used the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 to issue owners with a fixed penalty notice of £50, if they failed to clear up after their dog. If taken to Court they could also face a maximum fine of £1,000. However, the legislation contained a number of exemptions for certain types of land (marshland, moorland, heathland, woodland, common land and roads above 40 mph speed restriction), which had prevented action being taken in the past against irresponsible owners in these areas.

It was, therefore, proposed to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. This would then apply to the whole of the district and the level of fine that could be issued would also double from £50 to £100.

In response to a query, Members were advised that if bags containing dogs mess were discarded inappropriately it would become a littering offence and subject to an £80 fine.

### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

Option (1)

to agree to the implementation of a Public Spaces Protection Order to control dog fouling across the district, and to amend the Constitution to delegate enforcement powers to officers.

### **61 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.

### **62 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

The report recommended that a procurement exercise be commenced for the Council's Grounds Maintenance Contract from November 2019 to November 2021.

Following work carried out to look at the future delivery of the service and the legal advice received, it was recommended that a procurement exercise be commenced for the grounds maintenance service and a contract awarded from November 2019 to November 2021, with up to two years extension.

### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

Option (1)

to approve commencement of a grounds maintenance contract for a 2+2 years contract commencing on 3 November 2019.

*The meeting closed at 12.26 pm*