

Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held remotely on **Thursday 24 September 2020** at **7.00pm**.

A roll call was taken and the following Members were present:

Cllr K A Vincent – Chairman

Cllr A D Adams	Cllr D Harrison	Cllr G Peck
Cllr S C Beadle	Cllr L H Hemsall	Cllr S M Prutton
Cllr N J Brennan	Cllr S I Holland	Cllr S Riley
Cllr D J Britcher	Cllr N C Karimi-Ghovanlou	Cllr C E Ryman-Tubb
Cllr P E Bulman	Cllr K S Kelly	Cllr N C Shaw
Cllr S J Catchpole	Cllr D King	Cllr L A Starling
Cllr J K Copplestone	Cllr S Lawn	Cllr D M Thomas
Cllr A D Crotch	Cllr K E Lawrence	Cllr J L Thomas
Cllr J J Emsell	Cllr J Leggett	Cllr S A Vincent
Cllr J F Fisher	Cllr K G Leggett	Cllr S C Walker
Cllr R Foulger	Cllr I J Mackie	Cllr J M Ward
Cllr R M Grattan	Cllr T M Mancini-Boyle	Cllr F Whymark
Cllr S C Gurney	Cllr M L Murrell	Cllr F Whymark
Cllr N J Harpley	Cllr G K Nurden	

Also in attendance were the Managing Director, the Director of Resources, the Director of Place, the Director of People and Communities, the Assistant Director Chief of Staff, the Assistant Director Governance & Business Support (Monitoring Officer), the Assistant Director Finance, and the Democratic Services Manager.

167 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8

There were no declarations of interest from members.

168 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Clancy, Cllr B Cook, Cllr I Moncur, Cllr J Neesam, Cllr D Roper and Cllr M D Snowling.

169 MINUTES

The Chairman proposed the following amendments to the minutes of the meeting held 30 July 2020:

With regard to minute 159 (Monitoring Officer Report), sixth paragraph, to insert the words “from the Monitoring Officer” after “advice”.

The amended sentence to read: “The Chairman of the Council stated that she had taken advice **from the Monitoring Officer** on this matter and was keen to see the Constitution upheld.”

Within the same paragraph, to join the second and third sentence together and slightly reword. The new combined sentence to read: “She had decided that the late receipt of the changes would not be justified on the grounds of urgent business and was of the view that the late amendment did not fall within the **requirements** of the Constitution.”

To amend the first sentence of the eighth paragraph to read “The Chairman commented that the procedure had been the same for the last 12 months and the proposed changes had only been notified 3 days before the meeting, **which was considerably later than the 10 days stated in the Constitution.**”

Subject to the above amendments, the minutes were then, by way of a roll call, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

170 MATTERS ARISING

In response to a query regarding minute no 163, Temporary Pavement Licensing, Cllr J Leggett confirmed that to date, no applications had been received for a temporary pavement licence.

171 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed the former Senior Governance Officer, Sara Utting, to the meeting. Ms Utting had recently left the Council, after 33 years of service. On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Ms Utting for her service, and the help and guidance she had provided to Members over the years. Ms Utting was presented with a bouquet of flowers from the Chairman, as a token of her appreciation, and she wished Ms Utting every success in her new position at the Broads Authority.

Ms Utting thanked Members for their kind words and wished everyone well for the future.

The Chairman then drew Members’ attention to the civic engagements she had undertaken since the last meeting of the Council. She explained that it had been a privilege presenting awards to the Covid-19 Community Heroes, and heart-warming and inspirational to hear of their work within their communities.

The Chairman then drew attention to a couple of items not listed in the agenda one being a visit to Council's refuse collection depot where one of the crews had collected the Covid-19 Community Heroes award on behalf of the entire refuse collection crew. The Chairman had been keen to meet and thank around 70 members of the collection crew at an early morning visit to the depot as the crews went out on their rounds.

Members also noted that the Chairman had presented the "Wow" award at the recent staff One Awards, to Jamie Henry and the Green Guardians, who were recognised for all their hard work carried out in their own time transforming the grounds outside Thorpe Lodge.

The Vice-Chairman, Cllr R Foulger, advised Council that on 15 August, he had attended a very moving ceremony at Drayton, organised by the Parish Council and the British Legion, in remembrance of VJ Day.

The Leader of the Council (Cllr S Vincent), reminded Members of the impacts of Covid-19 on individuals and communities. He advised that infection levels across the district remained low, however, stressed the importance of following government guidance, to avoid the spread of the virus.

The Leader of the Council was pleased to announce that Broadland Growth, had sold (subject to contract) all 22 homes of its development in Great Plumstead. The development had provided eight new affordable homes, and had contributed to the provision of green infrastructure and local highway improvements.

Members were advised that the Council, along with Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council, had recently won an award for partnership working across the Greater Norwich area, relating to work carried out on the Joint Infrastructure and Investment Plan.

The Leader of the Council reminded Members that nominations for the Community Hearts Awards, would close on 27 September and that this was an opportunity to celebrate the selfless work of individuals within local communities.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance (Cllr T Mancini-Boyle), reminded Council that the Community Lottery was launching on 5 November, and she asked Members to ensure that all good causes were registered with the Community Team as soon as possible. Members noted that tickets would be going on sale in January 2021.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development (Cllr J Copplestone) was pleased that the Government had recently announced a new Job Support Scheme, to replace the Furlough scheme from November. Members also noted that the reduced rate of VAT (5%) for the hospitality and tourism sector was to be extended to 31 March, and Cllr Copplestone felt this would be a welcome boost for local businesses.

Cllr Copplestone also informed Members that a grant had been received from the "Getting Building Fund" to support the Food Innovation Centre.

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development (Cllr J Emsell) was pleased to advise that despite lockdown, and the need to work from home, officers had made excellent progress with a number of Spark IT projects, referring in particular to the ongoing work on the joint website and email projects. Improvements had also been made to the telephony system, enabling more efficient communication whilst officers worked at home. He explained that the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee would be regularly receiving updates on such projects.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning (Cllr L Hemsall) explained that officers had prepared the Council's formal responses to two Government consultations; the White Paper Planning for the Future, and Changes to the current Planning System, and these had already been considered at recent meetings of the Place Shaping Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She thanked Members for their positive engagement in helping to shape the final responses and encouraged Members who wished to make any additional comments to do so through herself, the Leader of the Council, or officers, ahead of the Cabinet meeting the following Tuesday.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence (Cllr J Leggett) was pleased to announce that current recycling rates from DEFRA had indicated an overall recycling rate of 49.6% for Broadland, over 7% more than that achieved by any other authority in Norfolk. She stressed that further work was needed to achieve the Council's ambition of reaching a recycling rate of 60%.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing (Cllr F Whymark) congratulated staff on the recent One Awards and made particular reference to Heath Allsop who was recognised as a "customer hero" for all his work as Handyperson, and also Victoria Parsons, recognised as a "rising star" due to her excellent work in Housing.

Cllr Whymark encouraged all Members to attend a Member Briefing session on 30 September at 5.00pm on the proposed Housing Allocations Scheme. Members noted that the Scheme would be considered at the Wellbeing Panel on 7 October.

Members were also informed that the Marriott's Way 10k race and Family One Mile Fun Run, would be going ahead virtually, with runners being asked to complete the distance between Monday 28 September and Sunday 4 October.

The Managing Director thanked Members for their references to the One Awards, explaining that all nominations had come from officers themselves. The Awards were a great opportunity to celebrate the significant achievements of staff.

The Managing Director went on to inform Members that staff were continuing to work from home where possible, and had recently attended orientation sessions, which had provided an opportunity for teams to meet in person in a Covid-19 secure environment, and to discuss who would be working from where going forward.

Finally, the Managing Director was pleased to inform Council that former apprentice, Katy Whiting, had recently been recognised as runner up in the East of England Apprentice of the Year Awards.

172 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

It was noted that there had been no questions from the Public.

173 PUBLIC SPEAKING

It was noted that there had been no requests for public speaking.

174 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The non-exempt minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 18 August and 8 September 2020 were received.

175 CABINET

The non-exempt minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25 August 2020 were received.

Minute no: 123 – Covid-19 Response – Norfolk Wide Fighting Fund

The Leader of the Council, seconded by Cllr T Mancini-Boyle, invited Members to support the recommendation to delegate authority to the Assistant Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to allocate £150,000 to the Norfolk wide Fighting Fund. The Leader stressed the importance of the Fund in helping local businesses and felt the investment to be good value for money, advising that the latest allocation figures would result in approximately £430,000 being reinvested back into the Broadland area.

It was then, by way of a roll call,

RESOLVED

that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader, to allocate £150,000 to the Norfolk Wide Fighting Fund.

Minute no: 125 – Update to Local Development Scheme

The Portfolio Holder for Planning (Cllr L Hempsall), seconded by Cll S Vincent, invited Council to support the recommendation to approve the proposed amendments to the current, May 2019 Local Development Scheme.

It was then, by way of roll call

RESOLVED

to approve the proposed amendments to the current, May 2019, Local Development Scheme.

176 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The decisions of the Planning Committee meetings held on 12 August and 9 September 2020, were received.

177 AUDIT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee, held on 16 July 2020, were received.

Cllr G Nurden outlined the items considered by the Committee, at its meeting held on 16 July. He drew particular attention to the Internal Audit Follow Up Report, which had been an area of concern for the Committee. He explained that some audit recommendations going back to 2017/18 had still not been implemented, and this was felt to be unacceptable by the Committee. Members noted that all responsible officers had been tasked with devising a plan of how recommendations would be implemented before their new due date, and the Committee would require a response from the Managing Director, should recommendations fail to be implemented by the date of the next Audit Committee meeting.

178 LICENSING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee, held on 22 July 2020, were received.

179 MONITORING OFFICER REPORT

Members considered the report of the Monitoring Officer, which detailed proposed changes to the appointments of Members to Committees, an update to the terms of reference of the Service Improvement and Efficiency

Committee, and a proposed archive policy for committee meetings live streamed on YouTube.

The Leader of the Council invited Members to approve all the recommendations detailed in the report, and this was seconded by Cllr R Foulger.

Cllr S Riley referred to the proposed changes to the named substitutes of the Planning Committee and explained that the Liberal Democrat Group wished to be able to call upon any trained members to act as a substitute if required, and not be restricted to those members named in the substitute pool. He therefore clarified that Cllrs Harrison, Holland and Catchpole would remain as potential substitutes, in addition to Cllrs Lawrence and Neesam. The Monitoring Officer confirmed this proposal to be acceptable and in line with the Constitution.

Turning to the archive policy, the Leader of the Council stressed the need for the recordings of meetings to be available to the public, however, felt that there was a need for the appropriate management of historical meetings. Considerable discussion followed during which some members expressed their dissatisfaction with proposals to delete the recordings from YouTube, after three months. It was felt that the recordings not only aided transparency but were also useful historical records that could be used as a resource tool to assist students with their studies. Members noted that other Councils had complimented the way in which remote meetings had been conducted at Broadland, in particular the Planning Committee, where the number of public views were high. Members also raised the question as to what would happen once meetings resumed in person in the Council Chamber, and whether live streaming on to YouTube would continue.

In response to queries, the Managing Director confirmed that there was no legal requirement for the retention of the recordings of meetings, and he stressed that the minutes of the meeting were deemed as the permanent and official record.

Cllr S Riley then proposed the following amendment to the recommendation at 7.3 of the report:

That the recordings of committee meetings on YouTube, be held there in perpetuity, and that this policy be reviewed after 12 months.

Cllr K Kelly seconded the amendment, confirming his view that recordings should permanently remain on YouTube.

After further discussion, during which Members spoke in support of the amendment, a vote was carried out by roll call and the amendment was carried.

Following a further vote by roll call, it was

RESOLVED

1. To approve the amendments to the appointments of the Committees and Panels, as proposed in section 2 of the report;
2. To approve the Terms of Reference for the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee and the subsequent changes to the Constitution;
3. That the recordings of meeting on YouTube remain there in perpetuity, and that this policy be reviewed after 12 months

180 OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS – FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES

Members received and noted the feedback on outside bodies.

181 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

In accordance with Procedural Rule 12.4, the following questions were received from Cllr D Roper, and were put to the Leader of the Council by Cllr S Catchpole (in Cllr Roper's absence):

Question One

Will the Leader please appraise Council of his views on whether local government reorganisation should take place in Norfolk. In what circumstances would he support reorganisation and what future structure of local government does he think would best serve Broadland residents?

Question Two

Will the Leader join with me in fully endorsing the sentiments of the motion passed by Norfolk County Council on 20 July on racism and racial equality in response to recent Black Lives Matter" campaigns.

The preamble to the motion is printed below:

"Council is committed to tackling discrimination and prejudice in all of its forms and recognises our responsibility to lead by example. Council affirms its commitment to continue work to address disadvantage, promote equality and eradicate racism.

In particular Council welcomes the spotlight that the Black Lives Matter campaign has shone on racism. We recognise our role and responsibility, as councillors and Norfolk County Council as a whole, to tackle racism locally, nationally and internationally".

In response to the first question regarding local government reorganisation, the Leader of the Council felt it was premature to provide a detailed response, explaining that the Government White Paper on Devolution and Recovery was to be published sometime in October. However, Norfolk had a population of over 900,000, and having eight councils governing the area which employed over 10,500 staff with a combined expenditure of approximately £1.2 billion, he felt it was possible to create a new structure that would not only be easier for the public to understand, but would be more cost effective, provide more accountability, and achieve better outcomes. He stressed that he could not support any restructure that would not result in better outcomes for residents.

The Leader suggested that the Council had already embarked on its own reorganisation through its collaboration with South Norfolk Council, referring to improved resilience and value for money, achieved through the activities of the One Team. He felt this had clearly been demonstrated through the response from the team to the Covid-19 pandemic, and this was where he felt the current focus of the Council should lie.

In response to the second question regarding the recent motion passed by Norfolk County Council on racism and racial equality, the Leader agreed with the sentiments of the motion. He stressed that Broadland Council deplored and would not tolerate any form of discrimination. The Council had a responsibility to lead by example and would promote equality, and work to eradicate discrimination in all forms.

182 MOTIONS

Members noted that no motions were received under Procedural Rule 13.

183 EXCLUSION OF 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.

184 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The exempt minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18 August 2020 were received.

185 CABINET

The exempt minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25 August 2020 were received.

Minute no: 130 – Food Innovation Centre

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development (Cllr J Copplestone) invited Council to support Cabinet's recommendation regarding the funding allocation for the Food Innovation Centre, from the Getting Building Fund.

The Leader of the Council was pleased to second the proposal, stressing the positive impact the Food Innovation Centre would have on the local economy of Broadland, and the wider economy of Norfolk.

It was then, by way of a roll call,

RESOLVED

To accept retrospectively the decision made by officers to accept Broadland District Council's funding allocation for the Food Innovation Centre from the Getting Building Fund

The meeting closed at 8:59pm