

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held by video link on **8 September 2020** at **10.00 am** when there were present:

Cllr S Riley – Chairman

Cllr A D Adams
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 G K Nurden
Cllr S M Prutton
Cllr N C Shaw

Also in attendance were the Director Resources, Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer), Assistant Director Individuals and Families, Senior Governance Officer (SU), Democratic Services Officer (LA) and the Democratic Services Officer (JO).

161 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr S Beadle.

162 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 August 2020 were confirmed as a correct record, save for the correction of two typographical errors and the following:

Minute No: 154 Covid-19 Response – Norfolk Wide Fighting Fund

The third paragraph would be replaced by the following:

It was confirmed that the £150,000 contribution to the Norfolk Wide Fighting Fund would be drawn from the £173,740 third tranche of the Covid-19 Emergency Funding.

The Chairman then provided feedback to the Committee in respect of the decisions made by Cabinet at its 25 August 2020 meeting.

He noted that although Cabinet had not recommended to Council the amended proposal made by the Committee in respect of the Norfolk Wide Fighting Fund, it had expressed a similar view that further clarification on the allocation of the funds was required.

Minute No: 155 – Review of Mandatory Licensable Houses in Multiple Occupation Fees

The Chairman informed Cabinet that the Committee had raised concerns about the increase in licence fees being passed onto tenants and had recommended that the fees remain unchanged. The Vice-Chairman had also supported this view at Cabinet. Cabinet had agreed with the proposal by the Committee and had supported the view that the fees remained unchanged.

Minute No: 158 – Waste Services Review

The Chairman advised Members that he had been unable to inform Cabinet of the views of the Committee on this item prior to the decision being made, as Cabinet had decided to make the decision in public and the Committee's views were related to the confidential Waste Services Review papers.

He suggested that this had been inappropriate, as the views of the Committee should have been made clear to Cabinet before the decision was made. However, he confirmed that the Cabinet decision did correspond with the recommendation that had been made by the Committee.

163 BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL 7 YEAR STAFF TURNOVER

The Assistant Director Governance and Business Support introduced the report, which set out the levels of Broadland staff turnover from 2013 to present and included; the percentage of staff turnover, reasons for leaving and an historical annual commentary that had previously been presented in the performance reports.

She emphasised that a certain level of turnover was healthy and encouraged the organisation to learn and develop as new entrants started with the Council.

The statistical position for staff turnover for financial years 2013/14 to 2019/20 were:

Financial year	Staff turnover %
2013/14	5.6%
2014/15	10.0%
2015/16	6.0%
2016/17	6.5%
2017/18	10.2%
2018/19	10.4%
2019/20	10.9%

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

When staff left the Council, they were all offered the opportunity to have an exit meeting, whether this be with their line manager or Human Resources. Discussions were then held to explore reasons and any necessary action taken. The table below confirmed the high-level reason for leaving over the same period.

Reason for leaving	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Personal / health	1	2	4	2	2	5
Childcare	4	0	0	0	3	1
Career change / advancement	7	11	8	5	9	9
Job satisfaction	2	4	2	1	3	3
Unitary	0	0	0	0	0	0
Role not as expected	0	0	0	0	0	0
Relocation	1	0	1	1	0	1
Termination of employment by Council	0	4	0	2	1	2
Left during temp contract	1	7	1	5	1	1

As could be seen above, the figures were quite stable and no trends that would raise concerns were apparent.

Commentary for the financial years 2013/2014 to 2019/2020 were included in the report to give some historical context of the work undertaken, as a result of feedback from leavers.

The statistical information provided to the Committee showed that turnover has been at a consistent level for the past three years, the reasons for leaving had also been consistent and the Committee could see the historic action that had been taken in this regard.

The Committee was advised that the median average staff turnover rate in the Local Government Workforce Survey, published in June 2019, was 13.4 percent.

The report confirmed that the Committee would continue to receive regular Cabinet Performance Reports that would monitor the information provided in the report, or it could choose to investigate the matter further through a Time and Task Limited Panel.

In response to a query, Members were advised that it was preferred that the information provided by leavers was not anonymous, as this could prevent further dialogue and action being taken to address any issues raised. However, leavers were perfectly entitled to do so if they wished.

A proforma was provided for managers when conducting exit interviews, (which was the reason 'unitary' was included in the categories listed for leaving). However, other kinds of submissions by leavers were acceptable and they were not constrained to any categories. Since the pandemic exit interviews had been conducted via Zoom.

It was confirmed that no staff, to date, had refused to have an exit interview.

A Member expressed concern that the staff turnover figures had gone up over the last three financial years, when compared to previous years and suggested that measures should be put in place to bring this figure down.

The Chairman noted that there were important issues such as staff retention and training that would deserve further investigation, through a Time and Task Limited Panel. He suggested that by looking at the statistics across departments and throughout the staff structure of the Council, a much fuller picture would emerge. It was also suggested that it would be useful to see at what stage in their careers staff were when leaving the Council.

AGREED

To convene a Time and Task Limited Panel to investigate staff turnover at the Council. Membership of the Panel was confirmed as: Cllr Adams, Cllr Brennan, Cllr Harpley, Cllr Holland, Cllr Nurden and Cllr Riley.

164 NORFOLK HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Committee were given an update on the 30 July 2020 meeting of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr Penny Carpenter was elected as Chairman of the Committee and proved to be a very able Chairman.

Most of the meeting was taken up by the effects that Covid-19 was having on local NHS services and the significant measures being taken to mitigate them, which staff were to be congratulated upon.

Another meeting of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been held on 3 September 2020 where progress reports on mental health, NHS dentistry and palliative care were received. Members would receive a fuller update on this at the next Committee.

The next meeting of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee was on 8 October 2020 and would be looking at ambulance response times, cancer services, childhood immunisation and out of hours GP services.

165 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Senior Governance Officer took the Committee through the Work Programme.

Further to Minute no: 163 above, the Staff Turnover topic would be updated to reflect its status as a Time and Task Limited Panel.

In respect of Future Topics for Scrutiny, which was on hold due to Covid-19, it was decided that a letter inviting parish and town councils to submit topics for consideration by the Committee would be drafted for dispatch to coincide with the next issue of Broadland News, which would contain an article inviting topics for the Committee to consider.

In respect of Broadband and mobile phone coverage, it was agreed to invite the Programme Director of Better Broadband for Norfolk to help the Committee better understand why residents with access to superfast Broadband chose not to take it up, as well as to clarify some further points identified by the Chairman in the presentation that she had made to the Economic Success Panel.

The Assistant Director Individuals and Families suggested that the review of Early Intervention and Community Safety be placed on hold pending a review of this service area and this was agreed by the Committee.

Water – supply, management and climate would be worked through with the appointed Members and the new Senior Governance Officer.

The Housing Allocations Policy item was put on hold pending a Cabinet report in December, with a possible review by the Committee of the policy six months after implementation.

The two Affordable Housing Provision items were combined and a report would be brought to the 17 November 2020 meeting of the Committee that would contrast how effectively each authority delivered affordable housing and update Members on Clarion Housing's future plans for building affordable housing in the District.

The Assistant Director Individuals and Families suggested that the review of the Provision of Leisure Principles item be postponed pending a Review of Community Leisure Provision scheduled for Cabinet in March 2021. This was agreed by the Committee, followed by a possible review four to six months

after the implementation.

It was agreed that the Apprenticeships Time and Task Limited Panel would be postponed, as the objectives of the Panel (which had been set in June 2019), except for barriers to transport, were no longer relevant.

Unfortunately, circumstances had delayed commencement of the panel, including the Covid 19 pandemic. Therefore, officers would aim to bring a report to a future meeting of the Committee on a number of new schemes and initiatives that could assist apprenticeships and young people.

166 SENIOR GOVERNANCE OFFICER

The Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) informed Members that the Senior Governance Officer, Sara Utting, would be leaving the Council shortly to take up a post elsewhere. She thanked Sara for all her help and support over many months and years and wished her well for the future. The Chairman concurred with this view and noted that Sara's departure was a loss to the Council.

167 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.

168 EXEMPT MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 18 August 2020 as a correct record, save for the following amendments:

Minute No: 159 – Food Innovation Centre

The following additional sentence was inserted after paragraph four:

A Member expressed reservations about the 50:50 income split with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

Paragraph six of the same Minute was amended to:

A Member informed the meeting that *he* and the local residents were against

the development due to the adverse impact it would have on their community.

The Chairman advised the meeting that Cabinet decided to defer recommendations 2 – 5 until 29 September 2020, as they required further clarification.

The meeting closed at 12.21pm.