

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Tuesday 18 December 2018** at **9.00 am** when there were present:

Mr S A Vincent – Policy (Chairman)

Portfolio holders:

Mrs J K Copplestone	Economic Development
Mr J F Fisher	Environmental Excellence
Mr R R Foulger	Housing and Wellbeing
Mrs T M Mancini-Boyle	Finance
Mr I N Moncur	Planning

Mrs Bannock and Mr Emsell also attended the meeting for its duration.

Also in attendance were the Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, Head of Finance and Revenue Services, Head of Planning, Interim Head of Housing and Environmental Services, Environmental Protection Manager (Special Projects), Service Improvement Officer, Projects and Training Officer, Development Manager, Housing Enabler and the Committee Officer (JO).

66 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Mr Peck.

67 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

68 REPRESENTATIONS FROM NON CABINET MEMBERS

The Chairman agreed that, at his discretion, all non-Cabinet Members in attendance be allowed to join the debate at the relevant point of the proceedings on request.

69 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised Members of the views expressed by the Committee when it reviewed the

Cabinet Agenda on 11 December 2018, as each item was considered.

70 ECONOMIC SUCCESS PANEL

Cabinet received the Minutes of the meeting of the Economic Success Panel held on 27 November 2018.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development informed Members that the Panel had considered the County Council's proposed options for the Western Link between the A47 and the A1067 Fakenham Road. The Panel had recommended Option D (a new dual carriageway route west of Ringland, linked to the A47, which would cross the Wensum and Tud over two viaducts and carry around 31,000 vehicles per day).

Option C (a new dual carriageway and A1067 upgrade, which would link to the A47 at Wood Lane and carry around 32,000 vehicles per day) was also considered an acceptable alternative.

A response from the Council would be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 15 January 2019.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing advised the meeting that the A47 Alliance was seeking to bring forward the start date for the dualling of the A47 from spring 2021 to the original start date of spring 2020.

In response to a query the meeting was advised that a noise assessment of the road would be undertaken as part of the planning application process.

71 PLACE SHAPING PANEL

Cabinet received the Minutes of the meeting of the Place Shaping Panel held on 4 December 2018.

The Panel had considered a consultation response to the National Parks Review Call for Evidence. Members had confirmed their opposition to the proposal by the Broads Authority to extend its boundary to the full extent of the parishes that the Broads Area were within.

72 COUNCIL PERFORMANCE BROADLAND BUSINESS PLAN

The report provided a comprehensive view of the Council's performance over the last six months, as well as details of the Local Government Ombudsman decisions and formal complaints received over the same period.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development drew Members' attention to two Broadland businesses that had received assistance from the Council to access LEADER funding. There were also another five Broadland applications totalling £335,132 to be decided over the next few months.

In response to a query, the Head of Planning advised the meeting that the recruitment process for the Growth Delivery Team would be discussed with the Managing Director and taken forward after he took up his post on 2 January 2019.

In answer to a question in respect of new home delivery, the Head of Planning confirmed that the delivery of homes to mid-year had been consistently low for some time, but it was anticipated that delivery would increase over quarter three and four and be in line with the 693 homes delivered in 2017/18. The Chairman noted the high number of sites with planning permission, but not yet built, which emphasised the importance of bringing forward the big strategic sites in the district.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence drew Members' attention to a reduction in residual waste and the increase in the number of garden waste bins and food waste tonnage over the last year. He noted that Broadland was well ahead of the game in collecting food waste, which was being encouraged by the Government's Resources and Waste Strategy, which had been launched that day.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance asked Members to note that Council Tax and Business Rate collection rates were on target. The Garden Waste service was around £105,000 better than budget and licence fee income was £20,000 better than budget. Housing Benefit overpayment also continued to improve. She noted that collaborative working would be closely monitored to mitigate any financial risk.

The Chairman noted that the Council had secured £3.1m from the Warm Homes Fund. He also highlighted the reduction in time taken to deal with fly tipping; how the Help Hub had continued to thrive and the success of the Handyperson+ scheme.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing also informed the meeting that the Handyperson+ scheme played a key role in allowing people to maintain their independence. It was noted that the number of Disabled Facilities Grants completed had reduced slightly but that this was due to staffing issues that were being addressed.

The Chairman noted that all the complaints against the Council over the period were unjustified or not upheld. This was remarkable considering the number of residents that the Council dealt with and demonstrated the excellent level of support that Broadland provided.

RESOLVED

to note the progress made against the objectives in the report.

Reasons for decision

The report was a factual account.

73 ADDITIONAL DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS FUNDING

The report requested that Cabinet consider making a contribution from Council funds to top up the Government allocation of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) for 2018/19, which had decreased by £20,886 from 2017/18.

DHPs were awarded on a case by case basis to provide financial assistance to claimants in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, where it was considered that additional help with housing costs was required. Housing Benefit expenditure to date had been on par with last year.

A contribution of £12,900 to the DHP fund would top up the funding received from central Government to £142,045; which was the total amount spent on DHP applications in 2017/18. Any funding that was not spent would be returned to the general budget.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance noted that there were a variety of reasons that residents required additional support and that this funding went to support a lot of claimants.

RESOLVED

to approve the additional in year funding of £12,900.

Reasons for decision

To provide additional support for residents with proven financial hardship.

74 ANNUAL AUDIT INSPECTION LETTER – YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

The Head of Finance and Revenue Services informed the meeting that the Audit Letter had confirmed an unqualified opinion of the Council's finances and value for money.

Members noted the excellent Audit Report.

RESOLVED

to note the Audit Inspection Letter.

Reasons for decision

The report was a factual account.

75 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.

76 LAND AT SALHOUSE ROAD PANXWORTH

The report explored options for the disposal of Council owned land at Panxworth.

Broadland Growth Limited had considered the site for housing, but did not believe the site was viable and had given a number of reasons why they did not wish to take the site forward.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing advised the meeting that the site was not suitable for affordable housing and as there was limited scope for other forms of development the best course was to sell the land.

RESOLVED

to offer the site for sale without planning permission and allow the market to take it forward.

Reasons for decision

To dispose of a parcel of council owned land.

77 NEWS JOINT VENTURE COMPANY – UPDATE REPORT

The report provided an update on the financial performance of the NEWS Joint Venture Company (JVC) that the Council had a seven percent share in, as well as an update on the situation with the recycling markets.

The JVC operated the Material Recycling Facility at Costessey, as well as a number of other waste facilities in Norfolk including the Marsham Composting Plant.

In January last year, China announced that it would no longer accept unsorted grades of paper and new stringent quality requirements for sorted papers would be introduced. The immediate effect of the changes had been a reduction in the price paid and an increase in equipment, labour and disposal costs. This had led to losses for this financial year.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence advised Members that despite these losses the Council continued to benefit by low and stable gate fees for processing garden waste and dry recyclables. The JVC had also protected the Council from the risk of the contract being ended due to the crash in material prices.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the content of the report; and
- (2) to endorse the continuing progress made by NEWS to provide a cost effective way for this Council to process recycling it collects.

Reason for decision

The report was a factual account.

The meeting closed at 9.46 am