

Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Thursday 7 November 2019** at **7.00pm** when there were present:

Mrs K A Vincent – Chairman

Mr A D Adams	Ms N J Harpley	Mrs S M Prutton
Mr S C Beadle	Mr D Harrison	Mr S Riley
Mr N J Brennan	Ms S I Holland	Mr D Roper
Mr D J Britcher	Mr K S Kelly	Ms C E Ryman-Tubb
Mr P E Bulman	Miss S Lawn	Mr M D Snowling
Ms S J Catchpole	Dr K E Lawrence	Mrs L A Starling
Mr S M Clancy	Mrs J Leggett	Mr D M Thomas
Mrs J K Copplestone	Mr K G Leggett	Miss J L Thomas
Mr J Emsell	Mrs T M Mancini-Boyle	Mr S A Vincent
Mr J F Fisher	Mr M L Murrell	Mr S C Walker
Ms R M Grattan	Mr G K Nurden	Mr J M Ward
Mrs S C Gurney	Mr G Peck	

Also in attendance were the Managing Director, the Assistant Director Governance & Business Support (Monitoring Officer), the Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the Committee Officer (DM).

## **68 MINUTE'S SILENCE**

Council stood for a minute's silence for Mr John Lee, Councillor for Thorpe St Andrew North West Ward from 1973 to 1987 and for Thorpe St Andrew South Ward until his retirement in 1994, and Deputy Leader of the Council in 1990/91 and Leader in 1991/92 and part of 1992/93. A fellow Councillor paid tribute to Mr Lee.

## **69 NORFOLK CONSTABULARY – PRESENTATION AND QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

Members received an update from Supt Chris Harvey of Norfolk Constabulary on crime and work relating to the Broadland area over recent months. He reported that Kirsty Brooks had recently been appointed as the Chief Inspector for the area and that Broadland had recently merged with South Norfolk. Work was underway to develop neighbourhood Policing in Broadland in line with recent progress in South Norfolk. Supt. Harvey gave an overview of crime levels in Broadland which on the whole remained very low. Approximately 29 jobs per day were dealt with, 11 of these being

emergencies. Domestic violence was a main area of concern, with victims unwilling to support prosecutions and much work was continuing in relation to safeguarding. The importance of community activity was still recognised and Supt Harvey updated Members on recent activity by Beat Managers. County Lines continued to be a big issue nationally but there was currently no activity in Broadland. Funding invested in “Moonshot” was proving effective in providing live intelligence to officers on patrol using automated number plate recognition and was helping to deprive criminals of use of the road network. Much work was continuing with partnership working within the help hubs at Broadland and South Norfolk with a view to further extending Police involvement in this area. Proposals were being developed for the provision of a new Police hub at the Business Park in Broadland with an emphasis on “cyber detective” facilities as this reflected the changing nature of crime.

In response to questions, Supt Harvey confirmed that any potential loss of local stations would be monitored with a view to ensuring that appropriate local presence was retained where needed and the service continued to respond to the changing needs. With regard to the role of SNAPs he added that these played a vital role in community policing but that they also needed to adapt to meet the needs of particular areas.

The Chairman thanked Supt Harvey for attending and for his informative and relevant presentation.

## **70 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Minute No &amp; Heading</b>	<b>Nature of Interest</b>
Mrs Catchpole	Minute no 77 – Cabinet Minutes (Minute no: 47 – Council Tax Good Practice Protocol)	Other interest – advisor at the Citizens’ Advice Bureau

## **71 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs B Cook, Mr A D Crotch, Mr R R Foulger, Mrs L H Hemsall, Mrs N C Karimi-Ghovanlou, Mr D King, Mr I J Mackie, Mr I N Moncur, Ms J A Neesam, Mr N C Shaw and Mr F Whymark.

## **72 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to an amendment to Minute no 50 – declarations of interest – to reflect that Mr Whymark was Councillor for Wroxham and not Aylsham.

**73 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members noted the civic engagements undertaken by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council since the last meeting. The Chairman drew attention to some of the events she had attended, in particular the Community at Heart Awards at which a number of amazing residents had been acknowledged for their contribution to helping others. She thanked all involved in the organisation of the event.

The Chairman reminded Members that the date of the next meeting of the Council had changed from 10 December 2019 to 17 December 2019.

The Leader of the Council (Mr Vincent) advised Members of proposals to host a joint Broadland/South Norfolk informal Cabinet meeting on 27 November 2019. In response to a query, he confirmed that the agenda for the meeting had yet to be finalised but the purpose of the meeting would be to examine options for aligning the work of the two Cabinets and developing joint working. The meeting would not be a decision-making meeting.

The Leader also advised that a joint all Member briefing was being arranged for 4 December 2019.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence (Mrs Leggett) stated that agreement had now been signed to facilitate the coming together of organisations involved in making food production and consumption more sustainable.

The Head of Paid Service advised Council on progress with developing revised terms and conditions for staff, including productive negotiations with trade unions and that a report on this would be made to the next Council meeting. He also reported that a joint team of staff had recently taken part in the Local Government Challenge East, organised by Breckland Training Services which was a work based competition involving teams from all councils in the eastern region. The team had done very well and had won the media award for the day. With regard to the forthcoming Parliamentary Election, the Head of Paid Service stated that the planned review of polling districts/stations had been delayed until after the election and that all stations with the exception of Blofield would remain the same as the last election. The Count venue would be the Norfolk Showground and the Count was likely to be overnight.

**74 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

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

**75 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

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

**76 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 24 September 2019, 8 October 2019 and 22 October 2019 were received.

In presenting the Minutes, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee drew attention to the debate on the Eco Cube and to the issue of the Committee's recommendation that the Environmental Excellence Panel become a Committee. This recommendation had not been accepted by Cabinet. In response to a request that the previous Portfolio Holder for Economic Development be invited to speak to Council on the Eco Cube, as he had declined to speak to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Chairman determined that this would not be possible.

**77 CABINET**

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 October 2019 were received.

The Leader of the opposition requested that the matter relating to the Motion set out at agenda item no.19 be brought forward on the agenda and be considered before the Cabinet recommendation relating to the Environmental Action Plan and Policy Statement. He believed a precedent had already been set to do this by previous agreement to change the order of business in relation to a Motion submitted. The Monitoring Officer advised that no precedent had been set and each situation was dealt with appropriately, as it arose.

The Leader of the opposition then proposed a Motion without notice that the order of business on the agenda be changed to enable the Motion at agenda item no.19 to be considered before the Cabinet recommendation regarding the Environmental Action Plan and Policy Statement. On being put to the vote, the Motion was lost. Clarification was sought as to whether the Motion would now be ruled out of order or if the Motion would be debated. It was confirmed that the Motion set out at agenda item no. 19 would be debated. The Chairman added that Members had all received the agenda papers detailing both the Cabinet recommendation and the Motion and that they would be mindful of all the information before them in determining these matters.

Minute no: 45 – Environmental Action Plan and Policy Statement

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence advised Members that the Environmental Action Plan and Policy Statement had now been considered by the Environmental Excellence Panel, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. Some amendments had been made to the documents to reflect the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in the Cabinet minutes. The action plan still needed to include some additional base data and timelines which would be added as soon as possible. The three monthly review of the action plan by Cabinet would ensure the matter was kept high on the agenda. There were plans to arrange a joint informal meeting between the Environmental Excellence Panel and its equivalent Committee at South Norfolk to learn from each other's approach.

In supporting the proposals, a Member welcomed the amendment to ask Cabinet to review the action plan in three months' time, as this would allow for any developments in Government Policy to be taken into account.

A proposal was made, duly seconded, that the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to change the Environmental Excellence Panel to a Committee be supported. On being put to the vote, the proposal was lost.

Members then voted on the recommendation from Cabinet and it was

**RESOLVED**

to adopt the proposed Environmental Policy Statement and Action Plan and for the review the Action Plan by Cabinet in three months' time.

Minute no: 47 – Council Tax Good Practice Protocol

The Portfolio Holder for Finance (Mrs T Mancini-Boyle) invited Council to adopt the Council Tax Good Practice Protocol which covered the collection and recovery of council tax arrears and had been developed following consultation with interested organisations. Any minor alteration would be dealt with by the Assistant Director for Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, with any major changes necessary being reported back to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:**

to adopt the Protocol (copy attached at appendix 1 to the signed copy of these Minutes) and delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to amend the Protocol as necessary in the future.

Minute no: 48 – Draft Commercialisation Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Finance invited Council to support the recommendations of Cabinet to adopt the Joint Strategy which set out the approach as to how commercial opportunities outlined in the feasibility study could be taken forward. Whilst the Strategy set out a coordinated approach, it also allowed for a different appetite for risk and approach where necessary. The Chairman of the Audit Committee expressed the desire that the Audit Committee have oversight of commercial opportunities. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented that the Committee would find it helpful to receive examples of commercialisation opportunities at other local authorities.

**RESOLVED:**

to adopt the Joint Commercialisation Strategy (copy attached at appendix 2 to the signed copy of these Minutes).

**78 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The decisions of the Planning Committee meetings held on 2 October and 30 October 2019 were received.

**79 AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 10 October 2019 were received and the Chairman drew attention to the main areas of business dealt with at the meeting.

**80 NORFOLK BUSINESS RATES POOL**

Due to timescales, the Leader of the Council had agreed in principle that Broadland Council would participate in the 2020/21 Norfolk Business Rates Pool subject to ratification by Council. The report informed Members of the Norfolk Business Rates Pooling arrangements for 2020/21, and the potential financial risks and reward involved for participating councils, to enable Council to make an informed decision on whether to ratify the decision in principle and the consequences for the Pool in 2020/21 should a decision be made not to participate. Members also considered an additional addendum to the report (copy attached at appendix 3 to the signed copy of these Minutes).

The Portfolio Holder Finance advised Members that the original decision to join the pool had been taken in 2013/14. She highlighted how the scheme worked, the benefits of being in the scheme and the risks involved. As a member of the pool, Broadland had benefitted from the retention of 75% of

business rate growth. Following the setting of a court date for the NHS Trust business rates challenge, the Council needed to decide whether to continue to participate in the pool in 2020/2021 having regard to the nature of this previously identified risk. If the court judgement found in favour of the NHS, Broadland could face a worst-case scenario of having to fund £948k of safety net payments. A decision to not join the pool for 2020/2021, could lead to a reduction in business rate income to the pool of £45m

The Council had been diligent in setting aside funds to deal with any potential business rates appeals and a sum of £2.7m had accrued which would enable the Council to deal with the worst-case scenario without any impact on normal business. The view of the Norfolk Leaders was that all the Norfolk Councils should remain in the pool and they were optimistic that Government support would be forthcoming in the event of the worst-case scenario. Should any Council decide to leave, the Pool would fall.

In answer to a question, the Portfolio Holder for Finance confirmed the funds had been put aside from Section 31 Grants and were earmark to deal with business rates appeals but not ring-fenced for this purpose and could be considered for another use.

**RESOLVED**

to ratify the decision in principle to participate in the Norfolk Business Rates Pool for 2020/21.

**81 ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE (IHRA) DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM**

Members considered the letter from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government inviting the Council to join others in adopting the following non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism:

*“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”*

**RESOLVED**

to adopt the non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism as set out above.

**82 MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT**

Members considered the report of the Monitoring Officer.

**RESOLVED:**

to note

- (1) the following appointments to the Electoral Arrangements Committee:

Mr S C Beadle  
Mr P E Bulman (Chairman)  
Mr J F Fisher  
Mrs S C Gurney  
Mrs C Karimi-Ghovanlou  
Mrs J Leggett  
Mr M L Murrell (Vice Chairman)  
Mrs K A Vincent

- (2) the appointment of Mr D Britcher as an additional Liberal Democrat member of the pool of substitutes for the Planning Committee.

**83 OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS – FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES**

Members received and noted the feedback from Members on Outside Bodies.

With regard to the report on the Norfolk Waste Partnership, Members noted that since the meeting of the Partnership on 15 October, the procurement of the waste collection and disposal of clinical sharps service had been unsuccessful and other options were being explored.

**84 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

The following question was received in accordance with Procedural Rule 12.4. from Mr D Roper to the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence:

“One of the welcome outcomes of the building of the Broadland Northway has been opening up of additional routes for walking and cycling. Many residents exercise their dogs along these routes but to date there is no provision of dog waste or general litterbins. Will the Portfolio Holder please commit to reviewing whether there is a case for dog waste or litter bins on any of these routes and work with parishes to secure their installation if there is a perceived need or demand?”

In response to the question, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence stated that since the opening of Broadland Northway there had been very few complaints regarding dog fouling and/or litter on the footpaths associated with it. Broadland were responsible for the cleansing of the footpaths and the verges and these would be inspected by Veolia supervisors when complaints were received.

Officers were currently in the process of assessing the need for interval litter picks along the main route of the Broadland Northway dependent on demand; due to the cost of picking the entire stretch it was necessary to make sure that resource was deployed appropriately. Any littering, fly tipping and dog fouling of public footpaths surrounding the new road would be dealt with through one off cleansing orders as they were reported. There was no proposal to install any dog or litterbins along the footpaths at the current time.

## **85     MOTIONS**

In accordance with Procedural Rule 13, the following motion was proposed by Dr K Lawrence, seconded by Mr S Riley:

*“Broadland District Council recognises last October’s report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) calling for “rapid, far-reaching, and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.” It is now clear that the world has less than 12 years to switch away from fossil fuels to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Councils can have a direct impact on carbon emissions in a variety of ways and 62% of cross party councils have committed to aim to do this by 2030 with a total 254 cross party local government organisations in the UK declaring a climate emergency. As such 37 of these are conservative councils, 65 labour councils, 20 Lib Dems and 60 are councils that have no overall control and the rest are either Parish or Town councils. This includes councils such as Bristol and Birmingham cities, Kent, Liverpool, Surrey, Suffolk, and Herefordshire and many others that have set targets for 2030.*

*The time is right for Broadland District Council to declare a climate emergency and take a leadership position for the district.*

*It is acknowledged that Broadland District Council has already taken steps and reduced its emissions from 2012 to 2016 by 14.06% (National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory). However, in order to meet the government’s ambitious new legal target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050, Broadland’s contribution in terms of annual net emissions, must be reduced by 20% per year to be on target for zero net emissions or carbon neutrality by 2050. Therefore this motion seeks to build upon and strengthen the environmental policy motion submitted on the 25 April 2019.*

*Taking action now we can help to achieve long term sustainable economic growth from innovative, low carbon, green industries across the District. This*

*council therefore agrees:*

- 1. That in declaring a climate emergency, Broadland District Council acknowledges its leadership position for the future, and therefore resolves to support the following:*
- 2. To provide leadership, seek additional powers and use resources to help deliver on National Targets limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees and national targets of net zero emissions by 2050 by reducing net carbon emissions for Broadland by at least 20% per year.*
- 3. Instruct the cabinet to adopt a policy whereby all future key decisions are considered and a statement made for their environmental impact, embedding an “environmental net gain for development” (including housing and infrastructure) thus ensuring their alignment to the 25 Year Environment Plan and IPCC guidance and report.*
- 4. The Cabinet member responsible for the implementation of future environmental policy of the council will ensure that the Cabinet takes steps to identify work streams and budgets with the aim of making Broadland Council carbon neutral by 2044, across all functions, as our contribution to implementing the 25 Year Environment Plan, fighting climate change and taking a leadership role;*
- 5. To demonstrate its commitment by making the current Environment Excellence Panel, a Committee and update the Broadland Environmental Strategy by setting ambitious targets and aspirations for future environmental policy. By doing so it will be aligned with the recent IPCC report and the government’s own 25 Year Environmental Plan; as well as an action plan and ‘route map’ to a sustainable, low carbon future for our community;*
- 6. For the Environment Excellence Committee to report and provide minutes to the Cabinet and full council on the cycle of business.*
- 7. Launch real two-way engagement with the public to:*
  - a. Improve “carbon literacy” of all citizens;*
  - b. Encourage and support leadership on this issue in all sectors of society;*
  - c. Obtain meaningful public input into the Broadland Environmental Strategy*
  - d. Facilitate wide community engagement and behavioural change.*
- 8. Instruct Cabinet to work with other Councils and partners to produce an ambitious delivery plan for the Tri-LEP area local energy strategy, the draft National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) and the New Anglia LEP to use as a key tools for seeking government funding, support offshore ring main and help us deliver the government’s 2050 target.*
- 9. Broadland District Council will seek to influence the Norfolk Pension Fund investment policies to encourage fossil fuel divestment.*

The proposer of the Motion read out the Motion in full.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence responded to the

9 proposals contained within the Motion stating that she believed there was a need for action as opposed to the declaration of a climate emergency. There was a need to fully understand what needed to be done and to show leadership in delivering through the Council's action plan. The Environmental Policy Statement had been strengthened and was now adopted and could be reviewed in the light of any development of Government targets. Provision was in place for ample scrutiny of the Council's proposals via the Environmental Excellence Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee both of which were public meetings providing the opportunity for public involvement. Work on the strategy and action plan would continue to include liaison with partner organisations. The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence stated she did not support the suggestion that the Council should seek to influence the investment policies of the Norfolk Pension Fund, and felt it was more appropriate for this to be left to the Pension Fund Managers.

Comments were made that the Council continued to lead on environmental issues and many of the requests made in the Motion were already incorporated in the latest policy and action plan. With regard to the Norfolk Pension Fund, any attempts to influence investment policies could have the impact of diverting essential resources away from research into alternative options to the use of fossil fuels and potential financial implications for the fund.

A concern was raised that the ability to scrutinise the Environmental Strategy had been negated by the loss of the officer support for scrutiny. Reference was made to the alternative arrangements made available to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for office support for Scrutiny which had not been utilised.

Supporters of the Motion expressed concerns that the Council was not leading the way as it had not joined the 77 other local authorities in declaring a climate emergency. At the recent LGA conference a Motion calling for a climate emergency received unanimous support.

In seconding the Motion, Cllr Riley stated that the Motion would give more strength to the Environmental Strategy and questioned Members would not want to support the declaration of a climate emergency. There would be immense suffrage in the next 12 – 20 years if action was not taken.

In summing up, the proposer of the Motion stated that concerns about any negative impact on the pension fund of fossil fuel divestment were unfounded. The fund had huge reserves and there was scope to make a real difference. Failure to declare a climate emergency was not showing leadership. Targets referred to in the Motion were internationally ratified and were unlikely to be significantly affected by any changes in Government Policy. Agreement to change the Environmental Excellence Panel to a

Committee would bring it more in line with its equivalent Committee at South Norfolk and would demonstrate to the community that the Council regarded the issue with some importance. With regard to the action plan, this fell short of meeting many of the targets and merely reflected what was already being done.

Members then voted on the Motion and, with 11 Members voting for, 24 against, the Motion was lost.

*The meeting closed at 8:45pm*