

Agenda

Scrutiny Committee

Members of the Scrutiny Committee:

Mr G Minshull (Chairman)
Ms V Clifford-Jackson (Vice Chairman)
Mr B Bernard
Mr B Duffin
Mr J Rowe
Mr R Savage
Mr T Spruce
Mrs J Wilby
Mr J Worley

This meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed by the public; however, anyone who wishes to do so must inform the Chairman and ensure it is done in a non-disruptive and public manner. Please review the Council's guidance on filming and recording meetings available in the meeting room.

Date

Wednesday 25 March 2020

Time

9.30 am

Place

Colman and Cavell Rooms
South Norfolk House
Cynet Court
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE

Contact

Claire White tel (01508) 533669

South Norfolk District Council
Cynet Court
Long Stratton Norwich
NR15 2XE

Email: democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk
Website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting,
please let us know in advance

Large print version can be made available

AGENDA

1. To report apologies for absence and to identify substitute members;
2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent business may only be taken if, "by reason of special circumstances" (which will be recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency;
3. To Receive Declarations of Interest from Members;
(Please see guidance form and flow chart attached – page 4)
4. Minutes from the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held 6 February 2020;
(attached at page 6)
5. Member Ward Grants; (report attached – page 13)
6. Scrutiny Work Programme, Tracker and Cabinet Core Agenda;
(attached – page 19)

Working style of the Scrutiny Committee and a protocol for those attending

Independence

Members of the Scrutiny Committee will not be subject to whipping arrangements by party groups.

Member leadership

Members of the Committee will take the lead in selecting topics for and in questioning witnesses. The Committee will expect members of Cabinet, rather than officers, to take the main responsibility for answering the Committee's questions about topics, which relate mainly to the Council's activities.

A constructive atmosphere

Meetings of the Committee will be constructive, and not judgmental, accepting that effective overview and scrutiny is best achieved through challenging and constructive enquiry. People giving evidence at the Committee should not feel under attack.

Respect and trust

Meetings will be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and trust.

Openness and transparency

The Committee's business will be open and transparent, except where there are sound reasons for protecting confidentiality. In particular, the minutes of the Committee's meetings will explain the discussion and debate, so that it could be understood by those who were not present.

Consensus

Members of the Committee will work together and, while recognising political allegiances, will attempt to achieve consensus and agreed recommendations.

Impartial and independent officer advice

Officers who advise and support the Committee will give impartial and independent advice, recognising the importance of the Scrutiny Committee in the Council's arrangements for governance, as set out in the Constitution.

Regular review

There will be regular reviews of how the overview and scrutiny process is working, and a willingness to change if it is not working well.

Programming and planning

The Scrutiny Committee will have a programme of work. Members will agree the topics to be included in the work programme, the extent of the investigation to be undertaken in relation to resources, and the witnesses to be invited to give evidence.

Managing time

The Committee will attempt to conclude the business of each meeting in reasonable time. The order of business will be arranged as far as possible to minimise the demands on the time of witnesses.

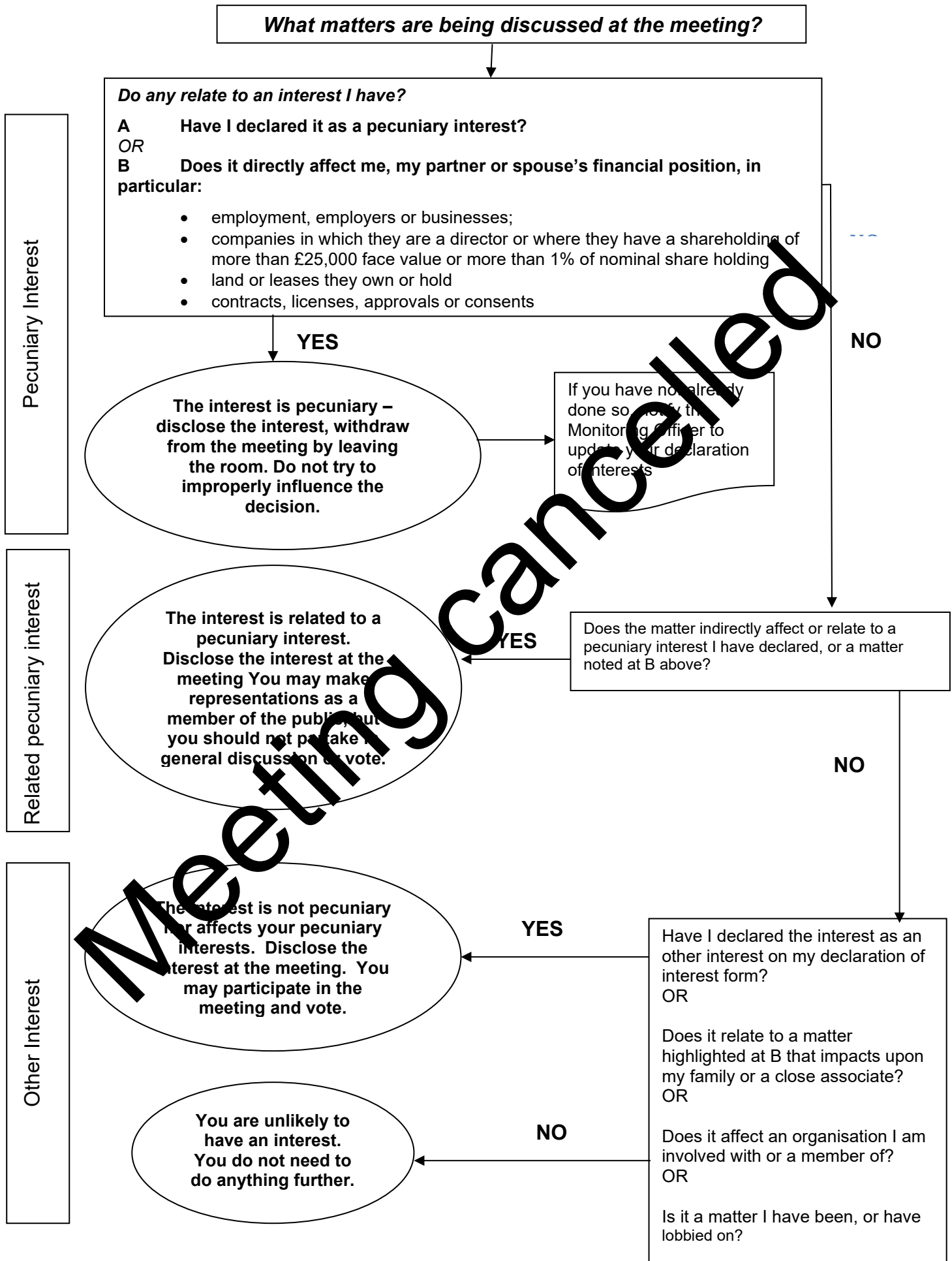
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

<p>Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.</p>
<p>Does the interest directly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position? 2. relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner? 3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council 4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own 5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in <p>If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.</p>
<p>Does the interest indirectly affect or relate to any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?</p> <p>If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but you should not partake in general discussion or vote.</p>
<p>Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be an other interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.</p>
<p>Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.</p>

**FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF.
PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST
INSTANCE**

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF





SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on 6 February 2020 at 9.30am.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: G Minshull, B Bernard, V Clifford-Jackson, B Duffin, T Spruce, J Wilby, J Worley

Apologies for Absence: Councillors: J Rowe and R Savage

Officers in Attendance: The Director of Resources (D Lorimer), the Director of People and Communities (J Sutterby), the Director of Place (P Courtier), the Assistant Director of Governance and Business Support (E Hodds), the Assistant Director - Finance (R Fincham), the Assistant Director, Chief of Staff (H Ralph), the Strategy and Programmes Manager (S Carey), the Capital Accountant (H Craske) and the Senior Governance Officer (E Goddard)

Also in Attendance Cllr S Nuri

1261 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

1262 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 27 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the addition of Cllr Spruce in the list of members present at the meeting.

1263 BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL AND SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL – STRATEGIC PLAN AND DELIVERY PLAN

Members considered the report of the Strategy and Programmes Manager, which invited the Committee to endorse Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve and adopt the new Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and the interim Delivery Plan 2020/21 for Broadland and South Norfolk Councils. In presenting the report, the Strategy and Programmes Manager stated that the ambition arising from the feasibility study was to develop joint strategic priorities and delivery plans to provide a clear vision for the collaboration and to enable a common focus for the new one joint officer team. Both councils had their own vision, priorities and ambitions set out in their current respective plans which were very similar. Moving

forward, the “Our Plan” strategic plan would set out the visions, ambitions and priorities as a collaboration and would align to the 4 year political term of office, with a 6 month period for development, supported by a rolling 2 year delivery plan (following a one year interim plan), which would set the programme of work. The Delivery Plan included delivery measures to enable the success of activities to be monitored. The overarching vision was to work together to create the best place for everyone, now and for future generations and priorities included growing the economy, supporting individuals and empowering communities, protecting the natural and built environment whilst maximising quality of life and moving with the times, working smartly.

Following consideration by the Joint Lead Members’ Group, an amendment to the Strategy had been suggested to incorporate changes regarding the environment and the Environmental Strategy.

At its meeting on 3 February 2020, Cabinet had decided to recommend Council to approve the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and the Interim one-year Delivery Plan for 2020/21, to include proposed changes regarding the environment and Environmental Strategy.

A question was raised about how the individual plans of the two councils could be aligned having regard to their differing timeframes. Officers confirmed that the new joint plan would replace the existing plans and incorporate the joint aims and ambitions for both councils which were very similar in terms of their priorities and ambitions and that these would be aligned with the four year political term of office.

With regard to a concern about increased risks associated with two organisations coming together, officers confirmed that Cabinet currently received a quarterly report on risks and that a piece of work on reviewing the approach to risk management was underway and would be brought forward for consideration by members.

Members then considered each of the main sections of the Plan and officers answered a number of questions.

Officers confirmed that, in terms of funding streams, the councils would remain two independently funded bodies, with differing risk appetites to income generation, particularly in respect of income from commercial services. With regard to how the budget was spent, particularly in relation to resources, officers confirmed that the cost apportionment had been verified with the External Auditors at 45% Broadland/ 55% South Norfolk.

In response to a comment that the inclusion of other delivery measures in relation to use of the leisure centres might be helpful, officers confirmed that a whole range of other data was available but the data supplied gave an overview of performance. With regard to the measures for household waste recycled, concern was expressed that measuring increases in the percentage of waste recycled did not help monitor any reduction in overall waste. Officers confirmed that part of the proposed changes from JLMG on the environment, was to include a new measure on the amount of residual waste which would pick up this point.

A member welcomed the proposals for apprenticeships and internships and noted the timescales for this which would see the establishment of internship placements for 16-18 year olds this year, followed longer term by the development of

apprenticeships and graduate schemes. Proposals for partnership working were also welcomed but, it was suggested, attracted additional risks which needed to be managed. In some instances, for example market towns, it was felt there was a need for a more coordinated approach to partnership working between all interested parties. Members were assured that work was ongoing to continue to develop strong, well designed partnership arrangements. In response to comments regarding the arrangements for review of performance, officers confirmed that quarterly performance reports were reviewed by Cabinet together with a high level review of the delivery plan measures and overview of individual projects through various committees.

In response to a comment about the need to ensure that services and support were available to all, including those without IT access, and in the right way, officers reported that work was underway to develop a new customer experience plan following the move to one joint officer team to ensure that customers' needs were met but mindful of the need to maximise efficiency and the use of IT. The proposals would also look at locality working to ensure staff and services were accessible.

With regard to remote working, officers assured members that measures were in place to ensure that staff were given the necessary tools and support to work flexibly and remotely and that training would be given to managers to enable them to support remote working by their staff. Progress continued to be made to develop robust IT infrastructure to facilitate this and to ensure business continuity in the event of any emergency. It was noted that adequate training budget for staff would be available to ensure staff were in the best position to support the delivery of the Plans.

Members were supportive of the recommendations and the proposal to include reference to the environment and the environmental strategy in the Plans.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED: to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve the adoption of the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and the Interim one-year Delivery Plan for 2020/21, subject to the inclusion of reference to the environment and the environmental strategy.

1264 2020/21 BUDGET – CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21 TO 2024/25

Members considered the report of the Capital Accountant which set out the Council's capital strategy for the next 5 years and the capital programme and capital financing for that period. The Assistant Director - Finance highlighted the key issues in the report stating that the Council owned significant assets valued at £32m which would likely require capital investment over the next 20 years and it currently held £18.6m in loans and equity in its companies. The Programme totalled £78m including slippage and additional budget for investment in IT infrastructure and software to support collaboration. Revenue reserves of £4.9m would be required to fund the programme and reduce borrowing. Overall the strategy was deliverable and affordable and the risks were actively managed.

The biggest call on the capital programme was the large proportion of borrowing relating to Big Sky, much of which was however likely to be short term pending repayment on the delivery of projects. This figure could vary depending on potential slippage of projects and an allowance had also been made to facilitate any new projects identified. Funding of the capital programme would be by way of borrowing (45%), capital receipts (30%), grants (18%), reserves (6%) and S106 monies (1%). Attention was drawn to the sum of £4m which had been allocated provisionally for the likely need to refurbish or replace the depot which would be the subject of a detailed report to Cabinet. It was also noted that the sum of £4m allocated for disabled facilities grants was offset by external funding.

Members noted that, at its meeting on 3 February 2020, Cabinet had decided to recommend Council to approve the capital strategy and programme for 2020/21-2024/25 and the programme of work for 2019/20 to align key elements of ICT infrastructure and corporate systems across the two councils.

In response to a question about the likelihood of reserves being used, officers confirmed that these would be needed to fund vehicle replacements. In respect of a comment about the allocations for Big Sky, officers assured the member that this investment was monitored in accordance with the treasury management strategy and was mindful of the need for spending to be prudent and affordable. In response to a concern about the need to balance liquid assets and fixed assets having regard to the fact that proceeds from the sale of capital assets could not be used to fund revenue expenditure, officers commented that capital funds invested in Big Sky returned an income to the Council which was in excess of the returns which could be achieved if the funds were invested in the banks. Going forward, this position would continue to be monitored and any mitigating steps would be taken to respond to any changes in market conditions should the need arise, for example houses not selling could be rented out to generate a revenue income.

With regard to borrowing, rates continued to be very favourable. It was noted that, whilst the Council had both borrowed and lent to other local authorities, it was not practical to assist parish councils in their financial management by utilising their surplus reserves in the form of loans. With regard to the extent of borrowing proposed, officers confirmed that the budget usually allowed for a level of borrowing depending on how the budget proposals progressed but that this had not been needed to date. The Council had been prudent in setting aside reserves for items such as the vehicle replacement scheme and was in a good position to fund the proposed programme. In response to a questions, officers confirmed that, despite longer term plans for future leisure provision in Diss, the proposed works to the current Diss Leisure Centre were necessary. They also confirmed that a business case in relation to the Council's potential involvement in the Framingham Earl leisure facility was to be investigated.

With regard to the proposals for funding the programme of work to align the ICT infrastructure and corporate systems in use across the two councils, officers referred to the detailed proposals set out in appendix D of the report. IT provision at both sites had been reviewed, much of which was reaching its end of life requiring investment over both sites. There was a need to build a flexible foundation to accommodate the current joint needs and future needs, creating efficiencies for staff and investments which should facilitate longer term savings. IT provision for members was part of the proposals and would include access to calendars. In

response to questions, it was confirmed that the proposals would enable any specific needs of existing or new staff to be readily accommodated, action was already being taken to reduce the carbon cost through the use of IT and appropriate security measures would continue to ensure the protection of data.

It was then

RESOLVED: to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve the capital strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25 and the programme of work for 2019/20 to align key elements of ICT infrastructure and corporate systems across both councils.

1265 2020/21 BUDGET – REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2020/21

Members considered the report of the Assistant Director – Finance on the Council's revenue budget for 2020/21 and their attention was drawn to the changes in the budget set out in detail in the report. It was noted that a large element of the budget relating to housing benefits (£31m) would be recouped via government subsidy. With regard to government funding, the revenue support grant was now nil and changes to business rates retention were expected in 2021/22 together with the phasing out of the new homes bonus. A new scheme to replace the new homes bonus was anticipated but no details were as yet available and therefore a "worst case scenario" approach had been taken in relation to the budget. It was proposed to increase fees and charges in line with inflation. With regard to the medium term financial strategy savings were expected arising from the one joint officer team structure but in view of the reduction funding incomes there would be a funding gap of approximately £1m. It was anticipated this would be met from the government's replacement for the new homes bonus funding stream but, the Council was also looking to generate additional income and there was potential for Big Stryke to help fund the gap. Overall the Council was in a good position and the view of the £151 officer was that the budget was robust and reserves were adequate. The report included a recommendation for a £5 increase in council tax for 2020/21 to support the budget.

Members noted that, at its meeting on 3 February 2020, Cabinet had decided to recommend Council to approve the revenue budget for 2020/21 and council tax as proposed in the report.

In response to questions, officers confirmed the budget still included provision for those streetlights for which parishes had not taken on responsibility and it was felt could not be turned off. With regard to the pay awards for staff, the arrangements for the interim period were noted and that a new performance related pay scheme was currently being explored.

RESOLVED: to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve the revenue budget and council tax for 2020/21 as set out in the report.

1266 2020/21 BUDGET – TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2020/21

Members considered the report of the Assistant Director – Finance outlining the Council's approach to management of its borrowing, investments, cash flows, banking, money market and capital market transactions and the effective control of the associated risks and performance. The security of investments remained a primary consideration for the Council. Reserves could continue to be used to borrow up to £9.6m internally from cash balances and up to £28m of external borrowing could be utilised for economic and housing growth and property investment. There was currently no borrowing in place and the proposed level of borrowing was prudent and affordable. Members' attention was drawn to the investment parameters set out in the report which provided a secure framework for investments.

Members noted that, at its meeting on 3 February 2020, Cabinet had decided to recommend Council to approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, the Policy Statement, the Annual Investment Strategy, the Treasury Management Practice Credit and Counterparty Risk Management, the Treasury Management Scheme of Delegation, the Minimum Revenue Provision statement and the Prudential Indicators and Limits for the next 5 years.

Members expressed the desire where possible to ensure the Council utilised ethical options for borrowing/investment and also asked if training could be made available to members on treasury management matters. Officers stated that a training session for members on treasury management was being earmarked for the summer. With regard to ethical investments, officers agreed that it was possible to include reference in the strategy to the Council's preference to invest ethically where possible and viable. It was noted that, where possible, options for environmentally favourable replacement of items such as vehicles and boilers would be considered and that this was addressed in detail in the environmental strategy.

In response to concerns about the current difficulties associated with the Council's auditors, the Director of Resources explained that she had met with the Council's auditors and with other local authorities about the current difficulties being experienced in securing the completion of public sector audits. The current issue was a national one arising from pressure being placed on all local authority auditors to undertake more robust audits of public services following major failings in the private sector with the audit of some national companies. There were cost and time implications for the auditors arising from the requirement for higher levels of audit and this, together with a shortage of qualified auditors, had created a significant issue. It had become apparent that the 31 July audit deadline was not a statutory requirement but that the Council's auditors were endeavouring to complete the audit by the end of September with formal sign off in October.

Members supported the proposals for the authority's approach to the management of its borrowing, investments, cash flows, banking, money market and capital market transactions and the effective control of the associated risks and performance, and added their desire to see training offered on this topic to members and, where possible to look to place the Council's investments with ethical companies.

RESOLVED: to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve the various treasury management documents as detailed in the report, subject to reference in the treasury management statement that where possible, the Council will look to place its investments with ethical companies.

1267 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME, TRACKER AND CABINET CORE AGENDA

The Committee noted the work programme, tracker and cabinet core agenda. The Senior Governance Officer reported that a review of the Community Action Fund would be added to the work programme for consideration at the meeting on 25 March 2020.

Members were reminded that they could suggest future items for consideration and should do so through the Scrutiny TOPIC form.

(The meeting concluded at 11.25 am)

Chairman

Meeting cancelled

Member Ward Grants

Report Author(s):

Mike Pursehouse
Assistant Director Individuals and Families
01508 533933
mpursehouse@s-norfolk.gov.uk

Portfolio:

Stronger Communities and Governance

Ward(s) Affected:

All

Purpose of the Report:

The member ward grants scheme requires the Scrutiny Committee to review grant spend from the members ward scheme to ensure that processes and procedures have been followed and the general overview of the scheme. This report presents the statistics of the member ward spend over 2019/20 and to provide an opportunity for review and to make future recommendations on the scheme.

Recommendations:

- 1.1 Members are requested to review the member-led grants process, ensuring compliance with the ground rules, and that monies are spent effectively and in line with corporate priorities.

2 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Member Ward scheme is part of a range of grant schemes that the Council offers to the community. Other schemes include the Community Action Fund, pop up grants, and go-for-it grants. All except the member ward grant scheme falls under decisions delegated to officers however the Member Ward Grant is authorised directly by members and accordingly the decision to authorise this spend is delegated directly to members.

3 BACKGROUND

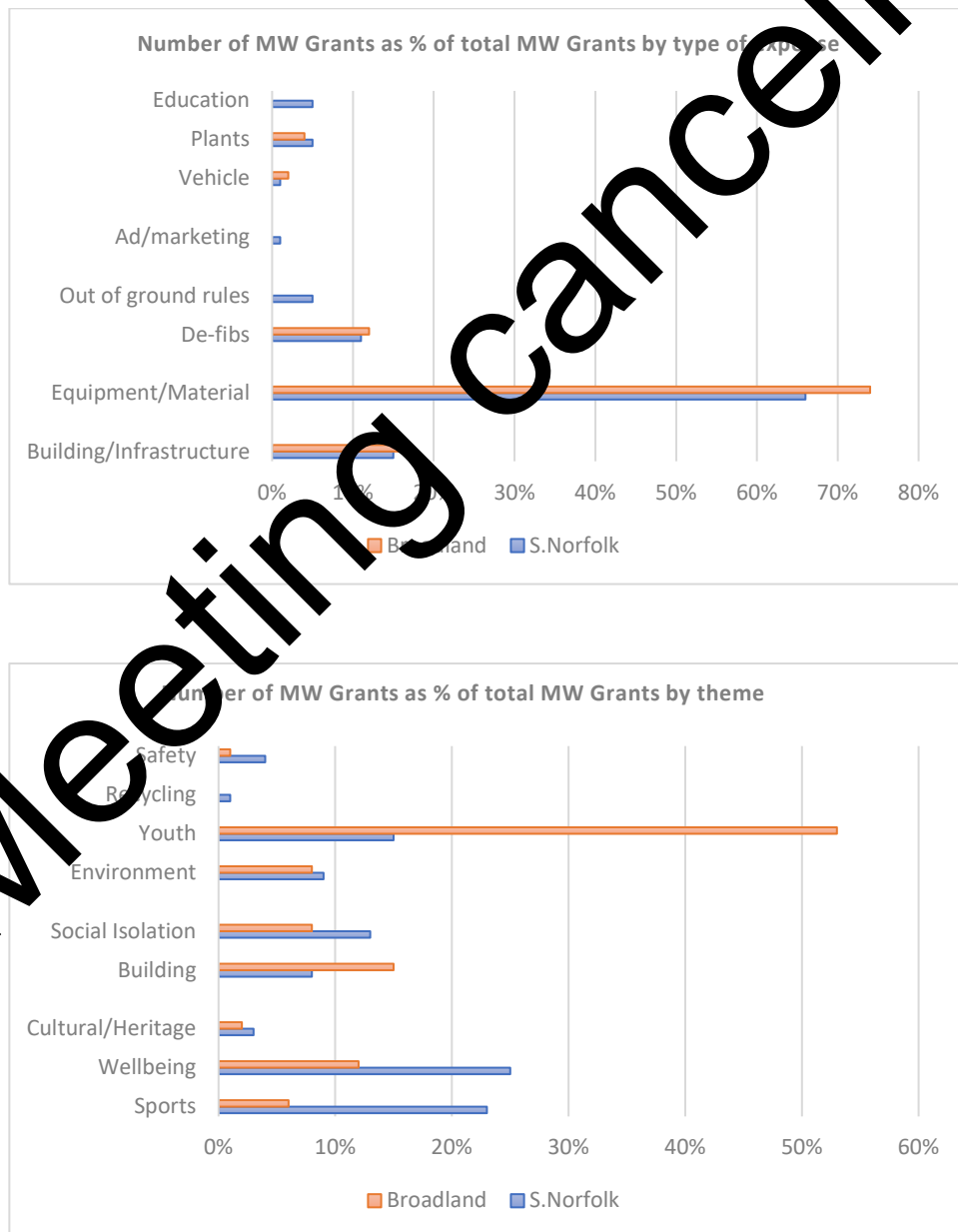
- 3.1 The member ward grants have been in operation now for three years. Currently each member has a budget of £1,000 to spend on projects which benefit their local community. The list of spend is via the link <https://forms.south-norfolk.gov.uk/pub/MembersSpend.ofml?Prepopulate=true?UnitName=SNC>
- 3.2 In 2017/18, 78 community projects were supported by the Member Ward funding, and 89 projects have been supported in 2018/19, with 80 projects supported in 2019/20. The average spend has remained reasonably consistent, with this year the average spend on a project being £464.35
- 3.3 In each of the last three years, the Member Ward fund has been underspent:
- 3.3.1 2016/17-member ward underspent by 23%
 - 3.3.2 2017/18-member ward underspent by 7%
 - 3.3.3 2019/20-member ward underspent by 15%
- 3.4 As well as a member ward grant underspend, two members did not spend any of their budget at all this year, and nine members spent less than 75% of their ward budget. The member ward grant fund operates from April to December 31st each year (unless an election year and then starts the week after the election).

4 CURRENT POSITION/FINDINGS

- 4.1 Each year we see an increase in applications in December as the deadline approaches, which proves challenging at a time of year when community groups and volunteers are preparing for Christmas and therefore, officers struggle to request information from community groups. Officers report that we see a reduction in the quality of applications during this last month.
- 4.2 Each of the last three years have seen grants awarded which do not meet the criteria set within the Ground Rules. This year, despite the Ground Rules being revised for 2019/20, extensive member training conducted, and officer support provided to members, four members have approved four applications that have not met the Ground Rules. These were for projects that already started and so we replaced funding that had already been agreed, were not for local ward residents, or were given to parish councils and replicated local precept funding.

- 4.3 A new process was introduced in 2019/20 for the member ward process to allow officers to review the application and make recommendations to members where the grant does not meet the Ground Rules. Therefore, despite officer advice, four members have chosen to award grants that they know are not in line with the Ground Rules. Members, as budget managers and decision-makers, set a serious precedence for the fiscal management of the Council by doing so, which presents a risk if not addressed.
- 4.4 The member ward grant has supported 84 projects this year with a range of projects which are highlighted in figure one below. Figures relating to similar funding awarded by Broadland District Council members has been included for comparison.

Fig 1



- 4.5 The main expenses continue to be for equipment and materials, with building infrastructure second. Sports and wellbeing continue to be the focus for member grants with nearly half the expenses. Projects supporting young people only make up 15% of projects, when young people make up 26% of the South Norfolk population. Building infrastructure projects also make up 15% of projects. De-fibrillators continue to be prominent spend for members with 10% of the awards. This compares to 9% of projects focused on the environment and only 1% on recycling.
- 4.6 The introduction of more multiple member Wards as a result of the recent boundary review has resulted in more than one member supporting the same project the current process has become burdensome and there is duplication in administration. Officers have also seen a substantial increase in supporting members with grant applications, following up processes and collecting the right details. In 2017 we deleted the funding officers post when member-led grants took over. However, this year we estimate that it has required 60% of an officer's role across both Councils to support member grants (approx £38,000). We also continue to see applications submitted with only a small amount of supporting evidence and required details, which doesn't provide a qualitative audit trail of member spend.
- 4.7 Around 80% of the projects this year can be described as 'core funding' for community groups, where grants have been used to provide ongoing funding to replace materials or equipment. Around 20% of projects could be considered 'place shaping' projects, where the funding from the district council has been used to fill a gap in provision where the needs of local residents have not been met, or enable a project to continue that would have folded otherwise. This core funding is replicated by a range of funding providers, and ordinarily the Council would expect that the community group or local parish council should also provide funding.
- 4.8 This year, members have been asked to capture the impact and outcomes of projects they have supported to promote the benefits of the member ward scheme. We have still yet to fully realise the marketing potential of the scheme, with very few members briefing the communication and marketing team on good news stories. The scheme also does not collate any qualitative impact form grants awarded.
- 4.9 The member ward scheme was set up to complement the community capacity building work of the Council, and the role of members in identifying and delivering local solutions that supports our corporate priorities. This means combining the Council's own skills and knowledge, with partners and the community's social capital to understand what the important issues for local people are, and to come up with innovative and effective solutions to make the necessary improvements.
- 4.10 The member ward budget appears to have become a 'money-led' model, focusing on the spending of allocated funds, rather than an 'issues-led' model, where we look for gaps and needs in our community and then seek to resolve those issues.

In this way, we have become another funding body in South Norfolk rather than working to the place shaping principles we set out to achieve.

5 PROPOSED ACTION

5.1 Whilst the member ward budget continues to provide for grassroots community projects and is within the broad ambitions of the Council, the member ward budget is consistently underspent, and projects continue to be funded outside of the Ground Rules. We have lost the original design principles we set out to achieve which were:

- To increase levels of community engagement at a very local level across the district
- To allow flexible and timely funding of very small initiatives within communities which provide flexible solutions
- To help communities to help themselves
- To enhance the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of the community.

5.2 A review of the grant scheme would look at how we can improve and transform all our grant scheme funding and revisiting our original principles we set on community capacity building. This review will help inform our future approach to funding to make sure it delivers to the Council's priorities and emerging issues.

6 OTHER OPTIONS

6.1 That the grant scheme continues along the same lines as last year.

7 ISSUES AND RISKS

7.1 **Resource Implications** – this year we have seen a significant increase in officer time to support grants which is not budgeted for and is taking officers away from providing direct support to community groups.

7.2 **Legal Implications** – None

7.3 **Ethical Implications** – the spend is disproportionally based on older populations, marginalising younger people at a time when we have an emerging County lines issue.

7.4 **Environmental Impact** – None

7.5 **Crime and Disorder** – None

7.6 **Other risks** – None

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 The member-led grant scheme continues to provide funding into our community groups to support projects and initiatives. With a timely review we can ensure that

we revisit our core principles and ensure that our resources are used in the best way to identify and deliver innovative solutions to our emerging issues.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are requested to review the member-led grants process, ensuring compliance with the ground rules, and that monies are spent effectively and in line with corporate priorities.

Meeting cancelled

Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme

In setting future Scrutiny **TOPICS**, members are asked to consider the following: **T**imely – **O**bjective – **P**erformance – **I**nterest – **C**orporate Priority

- T** Is this the right **time** to review this issue and is there sufficient **officer time** and resource to conduct the review? What is the **timescale**?
- O** What is the reason for review; do officers have a clear **objective**?
- P** Can **performance** in this area be improved by input from Scrutiny?
- I** Is there sufficient **interest** (particularly from the public)? The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny.
- C** Will the review assist the Council to achieve its **Corporate Priorities**?

Date of meeting	Topic	Organisation / Officer / Responsible member	Objectives
7 May 2020 (Thurs)	<i>No items scheduled</i>		
2 July 2020			
5 Aug 2020			
9 Sept 2020			
14 Oct 2020			
19 Nov 2020			
21 Dec 2020	2021/22 Strategic Plan with the Delivery Plan	Assistant Director – Chief of Staff & all cabinet members	For members to review the draft 2021/22 Strategic Plan with the Delivery Plan and make recommendations as appropriate.
27 Jan 2021			
11 Feb 2021	2021/22 Budget & Longer-Term Financial Strategy	S15 Officer, and Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources	Scrutiny Committee to consider the Council's 2021/22 budget and the recommendations of Cabinet. Members to also formulate a recommendation to Council regarding the budget for consideration at its meeting on February 2021.
25 Feb 2021	<i>To be held in the event of a call-in only</i>		
31 March 2021			

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Resolution and Recommendations	Progress	Outcome
28 June 2019	LONG-TERM EMPTY HOMES – APPROACH AND POWERS	Environmental Protection Manager	RESOLVED: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To note the Council's approach to dealing with empty homes; and For officers to review the properties that have been empty for two years or more. 	Review undertaken and further report presented to the Committee in October 2019.	<p>Members were able to understand the complexities around the management of empty homes and the powers available to the Council and the effectiveness of measures used by officers.</p> <p>Members were keen to further investigate the properties that had been empty for over 2 years to identify if any further assistance from the Council was available.</p>
25 Sept 2019	REVIEW OF COMMERCIALISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY OPPORTUNITIES	Director of Resources	RESOLVED: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To note the Council's progress in delivering the Commercialisation Strategy; and To endorse the proposal to revise and adopt a new Commercialisation Strategy, at the appropriate time, to reflect the collaboration with Broadland District Council and the opportunities which will arise from this. 	No action required	<p>The committee was able to assess the delivery of the priority opportunities as set out in the Council's Commercialisation Strategy.</p> <p>Members were largely pleased with the progress made and what had been achieved.</p>
27 Nov 2019	SOUTH NORFOLK WELFARE RIGHTS AND DEBT ADVICE PROVISION	Prevention & Advice Manager	RESOLVED: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That any future external funding resource should be commissioned via the Council's Procurement route. That the Assistant Director for Individuals and Families works with the relevant portfolio holder, to 	Review	<p>The Committee was grateful of the input from the representatives of the CABx that operate within the District.</p> <p>Members were able to assess the provision of advice both internally and externally and consider how this might be shaped in future. The Committee were keen for the Councils and CABx</p>

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Resolution and Recommendations	Progress	Outcome
			review the delivery of the service, noting in particular Scrutiny Committee's comments relating to strength in collaboration and the need for internal and external services to work together more closely.		to consider how they could work together more closely to ensure the public were able to access services efficiently and conveniently.
27 Nov 2019	LONG TERM EMPTY HOMES – APPROACH AND POWERS	Environmental Protection Manager	RESOLVED: That the Council's approach in dealing with empty homes is proportionate and appropriate	No action required	The Committee was able to assess the Council's management of properties that has been empty for longer than 2 years and consider whether any further work could be undertaken to bring the properties back into use. Members were happy with the current approach taken
6 Feb 2020	BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL AND SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL – STRATEGIC PLAN AND DELIVERY PLAN	Strategy and Programmes Manager	RESOLVED: to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve the adoption of the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and the Interim one-year Delivery Plan for 2020/21, subject to the inclusion of reference to the environment and the environmental strategy.	No action required	Members reviewed the Plans and were happy with the planned direction of the Council in 2020/21. The Committee was pleased to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council.
6 Feb 2020	2020/21 BUDGET – CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21 TO 2024/25	The Assistant Director Finance	RESOLVED: to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve the capital strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25 and the programme of work for 2019/20 to align key elements of ICT infrastructure and corporate systems across both councils.	No action required	Members were satisfied with the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme that was recommended to Council by Cabinet.

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Resolution and Recommendations	Progress	Outcome
6 Feb 2020	2020/21 BUDGET – REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2020/21	The Assistant Director - Finance	RESOLVED: to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve the revenue budget and council tax for 2020/21 as set out in the report.	No action required	Members were satisfied with the budget that was recommended to Council by Cabinet.
6 Feb 2020	2020/21 BUDGET – TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2020/21	The Assistant Director - Finance	RESOLVED: to endorse the Cabinet's recommendation to Council to approve the various treasury management documents as detailed in the report and to request that training be offered on this topic to members and to include reference in the treasury management statement that where possible, the Council will look to place its investments with ethical companies.	No action required	Members were satisfied with the Treasury Management Strategy that was recommended to Council by Cabinet.

CABINET CORE AGENDA 2020

Date	Key or Operational	Title of Report	Responsible Officer	Portfolio Holder	Exempt?
20 April	O	Environmental Strategy	Debra Baillie-Murden/Alison Old	K Kiddie	N
	O	Insurance Procurement	Debbie Lorimer	K Mason Billig	Y
	O	Poringland Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2039 – Consideration of the Examiner's report	Simon Marjoram	L Neal	N
	O	Local Development Scheme Update	Paul Harris	Lisa Neal	N
	O	Armed Forces Covenant	Mike Pursehouse	K Mason Billig	N
Council AGM 18 May 2020					
June	O	ASB and Crime	Mike Pursehouse	K Kiddie	N
	O	Housing Allocation Policy	Richard Dunsire	Y Bendle	N
	O	Community Leisure Offer	Don Goodwin	Y Bendle	N
	O	Municipal Bonds Agency	Debbie Lorimer	Alison Thomas	N
	O	Q4 Performance, Risk and Finance (Strategic)	Emma Pepper/ Julie Brown/ Emma Goddard	K Mason Billig	N
July	O	Community Grants	Kerrie Gallagher	K Mason Billig	N
Oct	O	Early Help Approach	Kerrie Gallagher	Y Bendle	N
Dec	O	Community Transport	Kerrie Gallagher	K Mason Billig	N
	O	Procurement Options	Rodney Fincham	Alison Thomas	N

Key decisions are those which result in income, expenditure or savings with a gross full year effect of £100,000 or 10% of the Council's net portfolio budget whichever is the greater which has not been included in the relevant portfolio budget, or are significant (e.g. in environmental, physical, social or economic) in terms of its effect on the communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.