

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 10 December 2018 at 7.30pm.

Members Present: Councillors: Overton (Chairman) Amis, Bell, Bendle, Bernard, Bills, Blundell, Dale, Dewsbury, Duffin, Easton, Edney, Foulger, Fulcher, Fuller, Gould, Gray, L Hornby, Hudson, C Kemp, W Kemp, Kiddie, Lerner, Lewis, Minshull, Neal, Palmer, Pond, J Savage, R Savage, Thomas, Thomson, Wheatley, J Wilby and M Wilby

Apologies: Councillors Broome, Ellis, Goldson, Hardy, J Hornby, Legg, Mason Billig, Mooney, Riches, Stone, Riches and Worsley.

Officers in Attendance: The Chief Executive (S Dinneen), the Director of Communities and Wellbeing (J Sutterby), the Director of Growth and Business Development (D Lorimer), the Assistant Director (Resources) and Section 151 Officer (P Catchpole), the Head of Business Transformation (H Ralph) and the Senior Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer (E Goddard)

3464 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 17 September and 4 October 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3465 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked all those who had attended his civic reception, held on 9 November 2018, at the Poringland Community Centre. He was pleased to report that the event had raised over £3,000 for his chosen charities.

3466 MONITORING OFFICER REPORT

Members considered the report of the Monitoring Officer, which sought to appoint a new Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer, approval for a joint Scrutiny Committee, and authorisation to amend the Constitution.

Cllr J Fuller explained that sadly Cllr K Mason Billig had suffered a family bereavement and would not be attending meetings of the Council for some time. He proposed that Cllr Mason Billig be excused from attending meetings until further notice, and this was duly seconded by Cllr C Kemp.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED: To excuse Cllr K Mason Billig from attending meetings of the Council and the Committees on which she serves, until further notice, pursuant to Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972

Turning to Cllr Mason Billig's membership of the Joint Lead Members' Group, Cllr Fuller explained that Cllr L Hornby would temporarily take her place, and that Cllr M Edney would step up as the temporary chairman of the Group. Cllr Hornby would therefore no longer sit on the Joint Scrutiny Committee (as was indicated in paragraph 3.2 of the report), and this seat would instead be allocated to Cllr L Dale.

In response to a question, Cllr Fuller explained that it was proposed that Julia Tovee-Galey be appointed as the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) for South Norfolk, and that Broadland District Council had appointed its own ERO, Martin Thrower.

It was then unanimously

- RESOLVED:**
1. To appoint Trevor Holden as the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for South Norfolk Council from 2 January 2019.
 2. To appoint Julia Tovee-Galey as the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer.
 3. To establish a Joint Scrutiny Committee with Broadland District Council and agree:
 - a. the terms of reference of the Joint Scrutiny Committee as outlined at Appendix 1 of the report;
 - b. that Cllrs G Minshull, B Bernard, L Dale, C Gould, B Duffin and J Wilby be appointed to the Committee
 - c. that meetings of the Committee be included as an approved duty in line with the Members Allowances Scheme,
 - d. to authorise the Monitoring Officer to make the consequential changes to the constitution.
 4. To approve the changes to the Rules of Financial Governance and Contract Standing Orders, within the Constitution, as outlined in paragraph 4.1 and authorise the Monitoring Officer to make the consequential changes to the constitution.

3467 STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

Members considered the report of the Licensing and Enforcement Officer, which presented members with the Council's Statement of Gambling Policy, for approval.

Members' attention was drawn to the proposed Policy, detailed at Appendix A to the report. Cllr L Neal explained that the Gambling Act required all licensing authorities to determine and publish a statement of its licensing policy at least once every three years.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED: To adopt the Statement of Policy, as set out in Appendix A, and authorise the Director of Growth and Business Development to carry out all regulatory processes to enable the policy to come into effect on 31st January 2019.

3468 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET**a) Treasury Management Quarter 2 2018/19**

Cllr M Edney presented members with the recommendations of the Cabinet, regarding the treasury management activity during the first six months of 2018/19, the position on borrowing and investments as at 30 September 2018, and performance against the prudential indicators required under the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

In response to a question regarding borrowing, Cllr J Fuller explained that Big Sky Developments Ltd had recently repaid a loan of £5 million from the Council and to date there had been no requirement for external borrowing.

It was

RESOLVED: To:

1. Note the treasury activity for the first half of the year and that it complies with the agreed strategy.
2. Approve the 2018/19 prudential indicators for the first six months of the year.
3. Amend the Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19 so that the Council can invest in Money Market Funds that have converted to LVNAV pricing as set out in 5.9.

b) Conservation Area Boundaries and Appraisals for Bramerton, Brockdish, Saxlingham Green, Saxlingham Nethergate and Shotesham

Cllr Neal referred members to the recommendations of the Cabinet (tabled at the meeting), regarding proposals for amended conservation area

boundaries, appraisals and management guidelines for Bramerton, Brockdish, Saxlingham Green, Saxlingham Nethergate and Shotesham conservation areas.

Cllr L Neal explained that Cabinet members had supported the proposals, subject to minor amendments to correct typographical errors and formatting.

It was

RESOLVED: To:

1. Approve and adopt the amended conservation area boundaries for Bramerton, Brockdish, Saxlingham Green, Saxlingham Nethergate and Shotesham Conservation Areas.
2. Approve and adopt the conservation area appraisals and conservation management guidelines for the conservation areas of Bramerton, Brockdish, Saxlingham Green, Saxlingham Nethergate and Shotesham, subject to minor amendments.

3469 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMEN AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

a) Cabinet

Cllr L Hornby referred to the proposed development at Anglia Square, Norwich, and the recent press that had suggested that the developer could be exempt from paying Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Cllr Hornby requested that Cllr Fuller made representations to Norwich City Council and the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB), with regard to this matter and suggested that legal advice should be sought.

Cllr Fuller reminded members that Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council had a partnership agreement to pool CIL receipts to create an Infrastructure Investment Fund. Norwich City Council had adopted a CIL exemption policy and he was particularly concerned that this had been introduced at a time when there was a shortfall in CIL and a decision had been made to suspend the inclusion of new projects in future 5 Year Investment Plans and Annual Growth Programmes. He explained that a review of CIL for Greater Norwich would be considered at a future meeting of the GNGB, and that a report from Norwich City Council regarding its new policy would be considered at the GNGB meeting in February. He agreed that South Norfolk should make representations, and legal advice would be sought if required. Members also agreed that this was an appropriate matter for the Scrutiny Committee to consider further.

In response to queries, Cllr Fuller explained that the development referred to in Anglia Square had been "called in" by Historic England, and a decision would be made by the Secretary of State, as to whether a Public Inquiry would be held.

Cllr B Bernard asked whether the Council was prepared, should there be a “no deal” Brexit. Cllr Fuller explained that the Council was in a good position and that the Local Government Association (LGA), was taking the lead in ensuring that district councils were prepared for Brexit.

Cllr T Lewis referred to the recent report by the Care Quality Commission, regarding the failings of the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, reminding members that the Trust had been awarded an “inadequate” rating for a third time. He asked Cllr Y Bendle what South Norfolk Council could do to assist and mitigate the risks to residents.

Cllr Bendle agreed that the report was disappointing, adding that the provision of mental health services in Norfolk and Suffolk had been an issue for several years. She referred to the decline in investment in lower level clinical and social mental health service provision, which was so important in stopping cases escalating and helping to alleviate the pressure on the services of the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust. Mental health required a multi-agency approach and she explained that partners in the Council’s Early Help Hub were working together to ensure that the mental health system returned to an acceptable level of performance, whilst also developing innovative approaches to tackling the first signs of failing mental and emotional health.

Members noted that the Council had seen an increase in the number of Early Help and homelessness cases involving mental health issues. To address this, she advised that the Council had recently commissioned and implemented a new service based in the Help Hub which provided residents with one to one emotional resilience and peer level support. Through resources from the Norfolk County Council homelessness and rough sleeper prevention programme, the Council had commissioned Evolve East Anglia to support vulnerable customers with mental health needs and who were also at risk of becoming homeless. This support helped residents to address the underlying factors that exacerbated their mental health needs, and helped them develop resilience, coping strategies and gain important life skills. Alongside this, the service would deliver a network of group-based activity and support to help residents support each other. This service operated as part of the Early Help Hub, ensuring a holistic approach to customers.

Cllr Bendle also referred to the current strategic review of local adult mental health services across Norfolk and Waveney, advising that officers were feeding in to the consultation process, highlighting in particular the under provision of community level mental health support.

Cllr Lewis thanked Cllr Bendle for her full and reassuring response. He was pleased at the actions being taken by the Council, but felt that once again, the Council was having to compensate for the failings of others. He then queried the relationship between the Hub and the Norfolk and Suffolk Mental Health Trust.

The Chief Executive explained that the Trust fully supported the concept of the early help approach, and the work of the Hub, but due to its current situation, had been unable to focus any of their resources in this area.

Cllr B Bernard referred to the recent announcement that the waiting times for universal credit had been reduced from 5 weeks to 3 weeks, and he asked how the roll out was progressing in the area.

In response, Cllr Bendle explained that universal credit had been rolled out in the Bungay and Diss areas, and currently applied to new claims only. A number of funds, such as the Hardship fund, were in place, should the roll out adversely impact on residents, however, she did not envisage any problems.

b) Scrutiny Committee

Cllr G Minshull reminded members that a Member Business Planning workshop was to be held the following day, Tuesday 11 December, at 3.00pm in the Colman and Cavell Rooms.

c) Licensing Appeals and Complaints Committee/Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee

There were no questions to the Chairman of the Licensing Committee.

d) Development Management Committee

There were no questions to the Chairman of the Development Management Committee.

e) Electoral Arrangements Review Committee

Cllr C Kemp explained that there had been some changes following the review of polling districts and places, to ensure that suitable and convenient polling arrangements were in place for the May 2019 District and Parish elections.

3470 OUTSIDE BODIES – FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr C Kemp presented his report to members, regarding the Police and Crime Panel for Norfolk. He informed members that the results of the consultation on the future governance of the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service demonstrated a compelling case to proceed with Option 3, under which the functions of the Fire and Rescue Authority would be transferred to the Commissioner. He then drew members' attention to the decision of the Commissioner to pause the process and the reasons for this, and members noted the Commissioner's decision to sit as a voting members on the County committee that exercised the function of the Fire and Rescue Authority for Norfolk County Council.

Cllr C Gould referred to the recent Glover Report, which looked at all aspects of England's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding National Beauty, asking if this would have any impact on the Council. Cllr V Thomson explained that the scope of the review included the examination of existing statutory purposes and boundaries, and governance arrangements. The Broads Authority would be responding to the consultation, and he reminded members that any extension to its executive area would impact on its planning authority responsibilities. Members

noted that the Broads Authority had still not satisfied all the recommendations of the recent Peer Review, and Cllr J Fuller stressed the need for the Authority to focus on the review's recommendations.

3471 SANDRA DINNEEN

Cllr J Fuller paid tribute to the Chief Executive, Sandra Dinneen, for her exceptional achievements during her ten years of service at South Norfolk Council. She was highly respected by members, staff, and her peers, and on behalf of the Council, residents and local businesses, Cllr Fuller thanked her for her services to South Norfolk.

Cllr T Lewis, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Party, expressed his support for all that Cllr Fuller had said, adding his thanks to the Chief Executive for her dedication and hard work.

The Chief Executive thanked members for their kind comments. She explained that it had been a pleasure and a privilege to have worked with such ambitious and positive people and she referred in particular to the good relationship between members and staff at South Norfolk Council. She felt that members and staff could be very proud of what they had achieved together.

(The meeting concluded at 8:35 pm)

Chairman