

# SPECIAL COUNCIL

Monday 16 April 2018

7.30 pm

Council Chamber

*South Norfolk House, Cygnet Court, Long Stratton, Norwich, NR15 2XE*

Mr B Duffin – Chairman of the Council

Mr J Overton – Vice-Chairman of the Council

**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**



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.

## **Group Meetings**

Conservatives : Cavell & Colman Rooms 6.00 pm  
Liberal Democrats : Kett Room 6.30 pm

Contact: Claire White on 01508 533669 or [democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk)

## The Council's Prayer

# Agenda

### 1. Apologies for Absence

### 2. Urgent Items:

**Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as matters of urgency pursuant to Section 100 B (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 – page 3)

### 4. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Monday 19 February 2018

(attached – page 4)

### 5. Collaborative Working

(report attached – page 44)

## Agenda Item: 3

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

Members are asked to declare any interests they have in the meeting. 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 on the matter.
- 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.
- In any case, members have the right to remove themselves from the meeting or the voting if they consider, in the circumstances, it is appropriate to do so.

Should Members have any concerns relating to interests they have, they are encouraged to contact the Monitoring Officer (or Deputy) or another member of the Democratic Services Team in advance of the meeting.



## **COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a meeting of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 19 February 2018 at 7.30pm**

**Members Present:** Councillors; Duffin (Chairman), Amis, Bell, Bendle, Bernard, Bills, Broome, Dale, Dewsbury, Easton, Ellis, Foulger, Fuller, Goldson, Gould, Gray, Hardy, L Hornby, Hudson, C Kemp, W Kemp, Lerner, Lewis, Mason-Billig, Overton, Riches, Stone, J Savage, R Savage, Thomson, J Wilby, M Wilby, Worsley and (for parts of the meeting):  
Councillors; Edney, J Hornby, Neal, Pond and Thomas

**Apologies:** Councillors; Blundell, Fulcher, Kiddie, Legg, Minshull, Mooney, Palmer and Wheatley

**Officers in Attendance:** The Chief Executive (S Dinneen), the Director of Growth and Business Development (D Lorimer), the Director of Communities and Wellbeing (J Sutterby), the Assistant Director - Resources (P Catchpole) the the Head of Business Transformation (H Ralph), the Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer (E Hodds) and the Electoral Services Manager (J Tovee-Galey)

**Also in Attendance:** Mr R Foster and Mr J Halls (Petitioners)  
The Press and 21 members of the public

### **3420 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

With reference to item 6, the petition (minute 3423) and item 7, the Community Governance Review and Recommendations from the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee (minute 3424) members declared the following interests:

<b>Members</b>	<b>Pre-determination</b>
Cllrs: Broome, J Hornby L Hornby Pond and R Savage	<u>Wymondham</u> Members declared that they were predetermined and did not take part in the debate or vote
Cllr Goldson	<u>Diss and Roydon</u> Member declared that he was predetermined and did not take part in the debate or vote
<b>Members</b>	<b>Other Interests renewed from Meetings of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee</b>
Cllrs: C Kemp Easton L Hornby Stone Lewis and Bills	<a href="#">Link to the “Declarations of Interest” from the meeting of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee Meeting held on 15 August 2017</a>  <a href="#">Link to the “Declarations of Interest” from the meeting of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee meeting held on 29 November 2017</a>
<b>Members</b>	<b>Other Interests - Lobbying</b>
ALL	Lobbied by the petitioner and by Wymondham Town Council
<b>Members</b>	<b>Other Interests</b> <b>The following members declared that they had attended town/parish meetings, as indicated below, but had not given any opinions and were able to take part in the consideration of these items with an open mind</b>
Cllr Amis	Bawburgh and Costessey
Cllr Bills	Cringleford, Bawburgh, Hethersett, Colney and Keswick & Intwood
Cllr Dewsbury	Easton, Kimberly, Marlingford & Colton, Barford, Wrampingham and Wicklewood
Cllr Duffin	Ashwellthorpe, Tacolneston and Forncett
Cllr Easton	Bunwell, Carleton Rode, and Tibenham
Cllr Edney	Barnham Broom, Kimberley & Carleton Forehoe, Morley, Brandon Parva, Coston, Runhall & Welbourne and Wicklewood
Cllr Foulger	Bracon Ash, Mulbarton, Ketteringham, East Carleton, Flordon, Swainsthorpe, Wreningham, Newton Flotman and Swardeston

Cllr Fuller	Chaired meetings which were attended by most parish councils and sat as a member of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee
Cllr Gould	Loddon and Chedgrave
Cllr Gray	Wortwell & Alburgh, Earsham & Denton, and attended meetings of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee
Cllr Hardy	Newton Flotman, Flordon, Wreningham and Swainsthorpe
Cllr Hudson	Pulham Market, Pulham St Mary and Starston
Cllr C Kemp	Bawburgh, Colney, Cringleford, Keswick & Intwood and Little Melton (parishes in Cllr Kemp's ward - provided procedural advice only), and a number of other parishes outside of his ward ( provided procedural advice only)
Cllr W Kemp	Aldeby, Burgh St Peter, Haddiscoe, Norton Subcourse, Thurlton, Toft Monks and Wheatacre
Cllr Lewis	Bixley, Caistor St Edmund, Dunston, Stoke Holy Cross, Trowse with Newton and Keswick
Cllr Mason Billig	Ellingham, Geldeston, Gillingham, Hales, Heckingham, Kirby Cane, Raveningham and Stockton
Cllr Neal	Poringland and Framingham Earl
Cllr Overton	Poringland and the Framinghams
Cllr J Savage	Harleston
Cllr Thomas	Long Stratton, Wacton, Tharston & Hapton, Tasburgh, Bedingham, Fritton & Morningthorpe, Hempnall, Shelton & Hardwick, Saxlingham, Shotesham and Woodton
Cllr Thomson	Bixley, Caistor, Poringland and the Framinghams
Cllr Worsley	Long Stratton with Tharston, Hapton and Wacton present

Cllr K Worsley then declared an interest in item 10 (minute 3427), the Monitoring Officer report, regarding Councillor absence. He did not partake in the discussion or vote on this matter.

## 3421 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11 December 2017, were agreed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

## **3422 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman was sorry to report the passing of former district councillor, Dick Smith.

Cllr V Bell explained that it was with great sadness that she had learnt of the passing of Richard Smith (known as Dick) last December. He had been a member of both the district and town council from 1995 until 2003. He was a very kind and conscientious individual who always demonstrated great empathy for the frail and vulnerable. A real gentleman, and instantly recognisable by his colourful bow ties, he would be sadly missed by the Costessey community.

Members then stood and observed a minute's silence in memory of Mr Smith.

## **3423 PETITION – FORMATION OF A NEW COMMUNITY COUNCIL FOR SPOONER ROW, SUTON AND WATTLEFIELD**

The Chairman referred to the following petition received:

“That the recommendations of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee NOT to allow the setting up of a separate community council is rejected by the Full Council and that the original proposal is reinstated and accepted. We ask that Full Council considers this matter again and please listen to its residents”

He referred members to the full statement of the petition, detailed at page 18 of the agenda, and then invited the lead petitioner, Mr R Foster to address the Council.

Mr Foster outlined the purpose of the petition, explaining that the residents of Spooner Row, Sutton and Wattlefield had not felt that the strength of feeling expressed by the community had been recognised by the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee (EARC), at its meeting on 29 November. He explained that the three villages formed a rural area currently governed by Wymondham Town Council, which many felt was neglected within the current arrangements. He referred to the overwhelming positive response to the proposal to separate the three communities from Wymondham Town to create a new Community Council. There had been 530 positive responses to this proposal across the two consultations, with 89% of respondents being in favour of the proposals. With regard to the first consultation, out of 631 responses received, 316 had been concerning the Wymondham proposal and Mr Foster explained that this equated to 50% of the responses being concentrated on only 0.5% of the total electorate of South Norfolk. Residents had been very disappointed, that following another positive response rate in the second phase of consultation, that the EARC had reversed their previous recommendation, without any supporting evidence. The second phase of the consultation process had attracted 312 responses, of which 160 were in favour of the proposals.

The petitioners had been disappointed to learn at the EARC meeting that at least two of the Council members had not read the responses received. The EARC had failed to provide any tangible evidence to reject the proposals and concerns regarding the

long-term sustainability of the proposals had been based upon assumption only. Mr Foster then referred to the 10 letters of intent to stand as councillor (from residents in all three parishes), copies of which had been sent to all members.

Summing up, Mr Foster urged members to reconsider the EARC's recommendations, and to allow the three villages to take collective control of their own destiny, within their rural community, sharing local values and creating a better environment for all. He stressed that this was rural community that did not fit with the needs of Wymondham town and he believed that that there was little to be lost by taking forward the proposals.

The Chairman then moved that the petition be received, and this was seconded by Cllr J Overton, and agreed by Council.

Cllr C Kemp then moved that the petition be fully taken in to account during consideration of the Community Governance Review, (item 7 on the agenda) and this was seconded by Cllr T Lewis.

With 37 members voting for, 0 against and with 1 abstention, this proposal was carried.

It was

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	That the petition be fully taken into account during consideration of the Community Governance Review and the Recommendations of The Electoral Arrangements Review Committee.
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#### **3424 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Cllr C Kemp presented the recommendations of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee (EARC), regarding the Community Governance Review, to Council.

He reminded members of the background to the proposals, explaining that legislation required the Council to undertake a Community Governance Review every 15 years. This was a statutory process governed by the Local Government and Public Involvement Act 2007 and Cllr Kemp drew attention to the requirements of the Council to ensure that community governance in the area of the review reflected the identities and communities in that area, and that arrangements were effective and convenient.

Cllr Kemp reminded members that they needed to have regard to the Government Guidance on how this should be applied, when making their decision. Drawing attention to section 102 of the Act, he referred to the need to consider the interests of the "whole area" of the District, not just individual settlements, and he then referred in particular to the need to consider the interests of the whole parish of Wymondham, not just those of Spooner Row, Sutton and Wattlefield.



Referring to the evidence submitted by all parties, he stressed the importance of quality of evidence over quantity, and he advised Council that should evidence be equal, then the status quo should prevail. Turning to the position regarding Wymondham, he explained that it had been his view at the last EARC meeting, that the evidence had been equal, and therefore he had supported a recommendation for status quo. He added that the Committee had not “changed its mind” as suggested by the petitioners. After the first round of consultation, the Committee had decided that the proposal was worthy of a second stage of consultation, however, he stressed that the Committee had not at this point decided to support the proposal.

Cllr Kemp then proposed the following amendment to ensure that the Chief Executive had sufficient delegated powers to implement the decision of Council, relating to changes to County division and District ward boundaries, should it be required.

To add at the end of recommendation 3 **“(including amendments to County Division and District Ward Boundaries)”**

This amendment was seconded by Cllr T Lewis and was then unanimously carried.

Cllr T Lewis then proposed the following amendment, seconded by Cllr M Gray:

**“That whereas the Parish Councils of Caistor St Edmund and Bixley each**

**(a) assent to their Parishes merging, but**

**(b) judge that the proposed new Parish Council of 12 councillors is unnecessarily large, having regard to the current and forecast electorate, to official guidance on the size of Parish Councils and to the effective and economic delivery of local services, so that they**

**(c) seek that the new Parish Council should have nine councillors, six for the Caistor St Edmund ward and three for the Bixley ward, which will also more closely reflect the future electorates in each ward allowing for the separately proposed transfer of part of Bixley to Poringland,**

**South Norfolk Council amends its proposed Orders accordingly.”**

Cllr C Kemp explained that he had been made aware of this proposed amendment and he fully supported it.

The amendment was then voted upon and unanimously carried.

Cllr R Savage, speaking in his capacity of the Mayor of Wymondham, then addressed the meeting. He referred to the importance of the decision and stressed the need for careful consideration by members. He explained that historically the settlements of Spooner Row, Sutton and Wattlefield had been governed by various administrative bodies located in the town, going back 120 years. He referred to the background to the proposals and referred to a consultation exercise carried out last July, by residents in the three settlements, where 308 out of 531 residents had expressed a wish to form a Community Council. In response to this, the Town Council had distributed information regarding what these proposals would mean and held various drop-in sessions for residents. He explained that it was clear that a significant number of residents in Sutton did not support the proposal

for a new Community Council, and he felt that this may have been due to the location of the settlement, to the west of the A11 dual carriage way, completely cutting off Sutton from Spooner Row. He went on to explain that in October 2017, Wymondham Town Council had unanimously resolved to retain the villages within the parish of Wymondham, with town councillors expressing concerns that the separation would be detrimental to community cohesion given the divergence of views and the physical barrier of the A11 within a new parish. Over the last few days, local town councillors had canvassed opinion in the town, and the wider parish, and out of 300 electors interviewed, 80% were in favour of the settlements remaining within the parish of Wymondham. Residents had expressed concerns that the settlements were too small to break away, and that the proposal was a waste of public money. Referring in particular to responses in Sutton, he advised that residents in the village, on a ratio of 2:1, had indicated that they wished to remain in the parish of Wymondham. He then urged members to vote to retain the current boundaries, for reasons of community cohesion, reminding members that the interests of the whole community should be taken in to account.

Cllr J Hornby, also representing Wymondham Town Council, endorsed the views of Cllr Savage, explaining that there were some properties in both Sutton and Wattlefield that did not fit within the boundaries of the new proposals, and therefore the proposals would be splitting communities apart, not bringing them together. He felt that it was unfair of Spooner Row to include Sutton and Wattlefield in to the proposals, when it was clear that these settlements did not share the enthusiasm for change.

Cllr J Fuller then explained that although he was a member of the EARC, he had been unable to attend the meeting on 29 November. He had listened very carefully to the views expressed by the petitioners and those from Wymondham Town Council, and he had studied the evidence collected as part of both consultation exercises. He urged members to weigh up the evidence carefully and to remember that the quality of the evidence was important, as was the need to consider the extent of the wider area, including Wymondham. He stressed this was not a political issue and his Group had been advised that members were free to exercise a “free vote” on this matter.

Cllr M Gray explained that he had been in attendance at both EARC meetings (in August and November), as a local member, and that he had been very surprised at the final recommendation regarding Spooner Row, Sutton and Wattlefield, as the responses to the second consultation only reinforced the results from the first. The only justification given by committee members was about the future sustainability of a relatively small parish, but there appeared to be no evidence to back this up.

He informed members that he represented five villages, four of which were smaller than the combined size of Sutton, Spooner Row and Wattlefield, and that each did a fantastic job for their local community. He stressed the need for all local communities to be treated equally, and he felt it unfair to restrict these three settlements by insisting that they be governed by a town ten times its size. He urged members to do what was right and fair for the rural communities around Wymondham, and he was confident that these settlements would be able to better manage their own affairs, rather than being a very minor part of Wymondham Town Council’s core business. The petition had clearly demonstrated that the formation of a Community Council reflected the identities and interests of the local communities.

Referring to the reasons given by the EARC regarding future sustainability, he felt that this had been clearly undermined by the evidence submitted that there was a pool of members of the community willing to serve on the future Community Council. The submissions sent had demonstrated the quality of talent within these settlements, and this added to the argument that a Community Council would be more than capable of leading and determining its own priorities, rather than having to rely on neighbouring Wymondham to do so.

He drew attention to the Town Council's concern regarding the loss of precept from the 282 properties in the three settlements, but Cllr Gray referred to the hundreds of new properties to be built in the town.

Cllr Gray then moved the following amendment, which was seconded by Cllr V Bell:

**“To grant Spooner Row, Sutton and Wattlefield the ability to manage their own affairs in their own community Council.”**

Cllr J Fuller suggested that the amendment required some refinement, and with the agreement of both Cllrs Gray and Bell, the amendment was revised as follows:

**“Spooner Row, Wattlefield and Sutton be separated from Wymondham Town Council and Spooner Row Community Council be formed as indicated in Map 14 (page 34 of the agenda papers), with 7 councillors. South Wymondham Ward to be amended as indicated in Map 14 and the number of councillors be reduced from 4 to 3”**

Cllr K Mason Billig acknowledged that both the petitioners and Wymondham Town Council had gone to a lot of trouble to canvass the thoughts and opinions of residents, and she had listened to the arguments very carefully. She referred to Mr Foster's suggestion that nothing would be lost should the Community Council fail. She could not agree; the community was already partly divided and public funds would be required to set up the new governance arrangements. She referred to the need to ensure effective and convenient governance for all and that the arrangements were reflective of the identities and communities in the area. She was not convinced that this could be said for all three settlements. She reminded members that new boundary arrangements would be in place in the next couple of years, and these changes would see a fairer representation of these settlements on Wymondham Town Council. She was not persuaded that as it stood, the proposition was the right one, and could not support the amendment.

In response to a query from Cllr J Overton, Cllr J Hornby confirmed that the Town Council had delivered over 5000 leaflets, to every household in the parish. Cllr Overton was concerned as to why the Town Council had failed to follow up on this sooner, noting that it had canvassed residents as late as the previous weekend.

Cllr V Bell referred to the expressions of intent received from residents wishing to serve on the proposed new Community Council, and she was most encouraged by the commitment shown from residents of Sutton, Spooner Row and Wattlefield. She then expressed her support for the amendment.

Cllr T Lewis explained that the Liberal Democrats were also free to exercise a free vote on this issue. He felt it difficult to understand in real terms what the loss to Wymondham would be, should the three settlements break away. He understood that there may be residents in the town who would support the status quo, but their views could not be weighed any greater than those expressed wishes from the parishes who urged for change. He referred to the letter received from the Wymondham Town Clerk (sent to all members before the meeting), and he felt that this presented no arguments or evidence to suggest that the parishes should not break away.

Cllr C Kemp explained that he had listened carefully to the views of all parties and he still felt the decision to be a finely balanced one. He did accept that there was clear support for a separate Community Council from residents in Spooner Row, but he questioned whether this could also be said for both Sutton and Wattlefield. He referred to the expressions of intent from residents to stand for office on the newly formed Council, and he suggested that this added little value to the argument, as residents in 14 months' time might change their mind or move away. He had also noted that out of the ten expressions of interest, only two had been from Sutton and one from Wattlefield. He informed Council that although there appeared to be a case for Spooner Row to break away from Wymondham (without Sutton or Wattlefield), this was not an option for consideration that evening, as there had been no consultation regarding that proposal. He did however suggest that should this option be put forward in the form of a Community Governance Review Petition, it would receive early attention. He then urged members to reject the amendment.

Members then voted and with 16 votes in favour, 14 against and with no abstentions, the amendment was carried.

The Chairman then drew members' attention to all the recommendations and it was unanimously

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<p>To:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the recommendations of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee, held 29 November 2017 (appended to these minutes), except those decisions relating to Wymondham, Caistor St Edmund, Bixley and Diss and Roydon.</li> <li>2. Approve the recommendations of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee with regard to the parishes of Caistor and Bixley, except in so far as the new parish council be composed of 9 councillors (not 12 as recommended), 6 from Caistor St Edmund ward and 3 from Bixley ward.</li> <li>3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive for the creation of any Orders or the taking of any other steps required, for the implementation of those changes agreed and any consequential matters thereby required (including amendments to County Division and District Ward Boundaries).</li> </ol> <p><b>Reasons for Decisions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the reasons given in the minutes of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee (appended to these minutes), held 29 November 2017</li> <li>2. The Council agrees to the creation of “Caistor St Edmund and Bixley Parish Council”, for the reasons given in the minutes of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee, held 29 November 2017 (appended to these minutes), however, it is the view of the Council (having considered all the evidence submitted) that the composition of 9 parish councillors for Caistor St Edmund and Bixley, better reflects the identities and interests of this community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance within that part of South Norfolk.</li> </ol>
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With 20 votes in favour and 11 against, it was

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<p>To agree that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Spooner Row, Wattlefield and Sutton be separated from Wymondham Town Council and Spooner Row Community Council be formed as indicated in Map 14 (page 34 of the agenda papers), with 7 councillors.</li><li>2. South Wymondham Ward to be amended as indicated in Map 14 and the number of councillors be reduced from 4 to 3.</li></ol> <p><b>Reasons for Decision</b></p> <p>The Council decided that, having regard to all the evidence submitted and recognising that the argument is finely balanced, this new Council will better reflect the identities and interests of this community, and will put in place effective and convenient community governance within that part of South Norfolk.</p>
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With 33 votes in favour, 0 against and with 2 abstentions, it was

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<p>To agree with the recommendations of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee held 29 November 2017 (appended to these minutes), relating to Diss and Roydon.</p> <p><b>Reasons for Decision</b></p> <p>For the reasons given in the minutes of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee, held November 2017 – that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.</p>
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## 3425 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET

### i) Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework

Cllr Fuller introduced the recommendations from the Cabinet, regarding the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework. He explained that the document had been produced by all planning authorities in Norfolk, together with other relevant bodies, such as the

Environment Agency, Natural England and Local Enterprise Partnerships, and set out guidelines for strategic planning matters across the county and beyond, demonstrating how authorities would work together in an integrated approach, under the Duty to Cooperate requirement.

Cllr M Gray expressed his support for the document, stressing the importance of being able to demonstrate co-operation as part of the Local Plan process.

It was unanimously

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Approve the Norfolk Strategic Framework (outlined at Appendix 1) and that the Council becomes a 'signatory' to it;</li> <li>b) Continue to support the Norfolk Strategic Planning Group to evolve the Framework and associated work, to ensure it remains up to date and relevant; and continues to fund the work necessary to keep the Framework up to date, including the project management support, for 2018/19 and 2019/20</li> </ul>
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## ii) Greater Norwich Joint Infrastructure Investment Plan 2018/19 – 2022-23

Cllr J Fuller introduced the recommendations from the Cabinet, concerning the Greater Norwich Joint Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP) 2018-19 – 2022-23.

Cllr Fuller reminded members that back in 2014 Broadland, Norwich City, and South Norfolk Councils agreed to pool receipts from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to create an Infrastructure Investment Fund (IIF), to support strategic infrastructure across the Greater Norwich area.

Members' attention was drawn to Appendix A of the IIP, which outlined those schemes supported within South Norfolk.

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED:** To approve the projects in South Norfolk to be included in the Greater Norwich Joint Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2018-19 to 2022-23 (Appendix 1), and endorse the draft programme for Greater Norwich, including the 2018/19 projects as the Annual Growth Programme, for consideration by the next meeting of the Greater Norwich Growth Board.

### **iii) REVENUE BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL TAX 2017/18**

The Chairman proposed and the Council agreed that, in accordance with Standing Order D4.5, Group Leaders be permitted to speak for 15 minutes each on the budget.

Cllr J Fuller began by explaining that this was the tenth budget he had delivered as Leader, since the Conservatives took control of South Norfolk in 2007. In that time, the Conservative Group had created an enviable record of high performance, low taxation and a relentless focus on delivering more for residents and business, with the single aim of making South Norfolk one of the best places to live in the country.

He referred to the current uncertain financial environment for local authorities and how district councils had been hit hard by a system that transferred finance from New Homes Bonus to Adult Social Care. He felt it ironic that despite being one of the highest performing authorities on delivering homes, South Norfolk had been one of the hardest hit financially. He drew attention to the negative Revenue Support Grant that would next year result in South Norfolk tax payers subsidising councils in other parts of the country, and reminded members that this was the third of a four-year settlement, and that no one knew what lay ahead. He hoped that future change would result in a more simple and fair finance system for local government, but acknowledged that this could not be left to chance.

He stressed the need for a positive approach that he believed had become second nature to South Norfolk Council. He referred to the Council's focus on commercialisation, generating income to spend on those that needed it most, and the 10% challenge, which was currently ahead of track. He drew attention to the Council's website and IT infrastructure, which allowed nearly two thirds of service requests to be made on line, making considerable savings. These were examples of deliberate decisions, which were paying dividends at a time when money was needed the most.

Cllr Fuller suggested that commercialisation, trimming costs, reducing demand and growing the economy were the way forward if the Council was to remain sustainable, and he was proud that South Norfolk was already delivering this.

Turning to South Norfolk as a place to live, Cllr Fuller made reference to the investment in the Wymondham Leisure Centre and the increase in income, fitness membership, swim school membership and casual users. The Council's investment in these areas allowed more people to have the opportunity to get fit and healthy and pursue active lifestyles. He explained that the Council was on track to ensure 100% coverage of fast broadband throughout the District and he referred to how the Council was adapting residents' homes through Disabled Facilities Grants, to support people to live independently for longer. He made particular reference to the District Direct Hospital Discharge scheme in place to assist hospital patients get home quicker, and the excellent homelessness and housing advice service, provided by the Council.

He advised members that next month the Council would be investing in bin lorries, part of a comprehensive investment that had allowed the Council to have the highest recycling rate in Norfolk. He reminded members that new housing growth made this



investment all the more important. He went on to refer to the Council's developing relationship with Broadland Council and the opportunities this would bring, including savings and managing the housing and labour markets.

Cllr Fuller was very proud of what had been achieved, he referred to the various positions / nominations received over the past year, suggesting that these selections demonstrated how the Council was strong and well regarded by its peers.

Turning to Council Tax, he explained that a £5.00 increase on a Band D property was necessary, honest and simple pricing. He reminded Council that council tax had been frozen for 8 years and was now a fifth less than inflation and reserves had never been healthier. He referred to the previous Liberal Democrat administration when council tax went up by 235% and was eight times inflation.

He then announced that as a result of a more favourable settlement which had seen an additional £69,768 come in to the Council, he had two projects to share with members. Firstly, he outlined plans to install electric car charging posts in all the market towns in the District, by Christmas and members noted that any funding provided by the Council would be matched by Government. He believed that this would encourage more visitors to the market towns, whatever their mode of transport, and he thanked Cllr K Worsley for his work in this area. Secondly, he announced an urgent £15,000 feasibility study to enable all parishes to express an interest in to whether residents feel that on street resident parking permits was an option in their settlements. He agreed that there were a few settlements in the District, where all day parking had got out of hand so that residents were unable to get in to their drives or industrial estates were over run with parking commuters.

Summing up, Cllr Fuller announced that the Council had a budget and capital programme that was affordable over the next 3 years. This proved that the Council was a forward thinking, organised, responsive and high performing. The Council was building better lives and stronger economies and he then commended the budget to members.

Cllr B Stone then explained to members how the Council had been able to deliver a balanced budget and an affordable capital programme long term. He explained that the Medium Term Financial Plan was balanced for the year ahead, with a small surplus in 19/20, and deficits for 20/21, 21/22 and 22/23 that were being addressed through a review of services. In terms of borrowing, he informed members that this would incur an estimated £1.2 million in costs. However, investments funded from borrowing had been budgeted to generate £1.4 M annually, which would more than offset the borrowing costs. Concerning income from commercial companies and wider commercial activities, such as building control, leisure centres, and garden waste, members noted that this had now been budgeted at £9m. He added that reserves remained healthy and he explained there were plans to use some of these to avoid borrowing, but revenue reserves would still total £10M by 22/23. Staffing costs had been addressed through the reviewing of vacancies and the removal of unneeded posts, and the 10% challenge was on track to be achieved, He was very proud that no redundancies had been necessary.

Turning to the capital programme, he stressed that this was affordable due to planned use of reserves and prudent borrowing. He referred to a £10M contingency, which was available for key infrastructure projects. He then explained to members that since the

capital programme had been drafted, a Housing Infrastructure Fund grant of £5.5 million had been awarded to the Council. It was anticipated that this grant funding would be received in tranches and transferred to Big Sky Developments to deliver infrastructure upfront for the development at Cringleford.

Cllr Stone then referred to the budget consultation exercise, which had received 113 responses. The results indicated that the Council listened to its residents and was in tune with their needs.

Finally, Cllr Stone thanked the staff in the Finance Team for delivering a workable, balanced budget, and he commended the budget to members.

Cllr T Lewis explained that the Liberal Democrat Group supported the budget, and agreed that there had indeed been many achievements that the Council should be proud of. He added that many of these initiatives had originated from the Liberal Democrat administration, such as brown bins and commercial investments. He agreed with Cllr Fuller on a number of issues concerning the need for fundamental change, with a simpler and more understandable finance system for local government and he felt that this clearly demonstrated how local government and national government were not so joined up. Whilst admiring the ambitions of some investments, he did highlight the huge risks involved; he had never known a capital programme so ambitious, and he stressed the need to keep a watchful eye as investments progressed.

On the whole, Cllr Lewis supported the budget, and he welcomed Cllr Fuller's announcement regarding parking permits for residents, although he suggested that the Council would need to proceed carefully as he suspected that Norfolk County Council would not be paying for the process. With regard to the plans to install electric car charging posts in all the market towns, he felt that the plans no doubt had some merit, but he suggested that Cllr Fuller was accelerating this a little too fast, and that there were far too many unanswered questions to progress further at this stage. He questioned whether these posts posed any danger to the public and whether this really was something that would benefit the majority of residents. Cllr Lewis then proposed the following amendment:

**“That instead of setting up a £50,000 reserve against the future provision of electric vehicle charging points (section 2.2 of the Council Tax Resolution), this Council instead sets up a £50,000 reserve against the Council later deciding to enhance its community cohesion functions after the abolition of the PCSOs.”**

Cllr Lewis expressed concern regarding the impact on South Norfolk residents, following the withdrawal of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). He explained that Scrutiny had agreed that it would consider the impact, some 6-9 months after the changes had been implemented, however, he felt it prudent to have in place a reserve to fund any functions the Council might choose to take on in future. He explained that other councils were already making arrangements to deal with the impact that the loss of PCSOs would have on the community.

In seconding the amendment, Cllr V Bell explained that several years previous, the County Council had withdrawn funding for youth officers, and Costessey Town Council had decided to provide a level of funding each year to ensure the service continued. This she said was an example of how services did not necessarily need to cease, should different organisations intervene and become more innovative with regard to how services were delivered. The proposed amendment was an opportunity to put something back, which all the community could benefit from. With regard to the installation of electric vehicle charging points, she was concerned that these plans were premature and she suggested that their installation would require planning permission.

Cllr C Kemp reminded Council that the decision to discontinue the use of these officers had not been taken lightly, and had only been made after much research and deliberation. One hundred and fifty PSCO jobs would be lost, but this would result in 81 new police officer roles which would assist in tackling crimes that required more complex investigation; crimes that were on the rise. He could not envisage how £50,000 would fill the gap, bearing in mind that this might only fund 1.7 PCSOs.

Cllr Y Bendle explained that one of the major partners in the Hub was the Police, and that officers already worked very closely with them on a number of issues. The Community Connectors already in place did an excellent job and liaised with the Police on a regular basis.

She went on to advise that much of the work of the Hub centred on prevention. Over the next 3 years, it was anticipated that the hub would support more than 6500 people resulting in an overall £2.4 billion fiscal benefit.

The pro-active multi agency approach to homelessness had reduced demand on temporary accommodation and other resources, keeping most residents in stable tenancies. This prevention approach was recognised in the LGA “Housing our Homeless Households” report, which featured the work of the Council’s FIRST Officers, based in the Hub.

Turning to affordable homes, she explained that over the last three years 1300 affordable homes had been delivered in the District, more than any other authority in either Norfolk or Suffolk, and she predicted that this figure would rise to 1500 over the next 3 years.

She referred to social prescribing, where Community Connectors were based at GP surgeries, offering non-medical solutions to social, emotional and practical issues that might be causing health problems or making them worse. In the first 6 months, 187 patients had benefitted from the scheme and records had shown that the Connectors were able to meet the needs of 45% of patients in the initial appointment, where they received tailored information and advice. This scheme had then led on to the District Direct scheme which had assisted people leaving hospital, getting back to their own homes quicker. This scheme had in its first 17 weeks, supported more than 130 patients, with 190 interventions, and provided wider information and advice. It had been recognised by NHS England and had so far saved nearly 400 bed days and £77,000.

Cllr K Worsley referred to the Council as a forward-thinking organisation, and he was disappointed that the electric vehicle charging points were not supported by the Liberal Democrat Group, given the Party’s support of the Green Transport Bill.

Cllr K Mason Billig considered the proposed amendment to be ill thought through. Through the installation of electric vehicle charging points in the District, residents would be encouraged to buy electric cars, and she urged members to support their installation.

Agreeing with Cllr Mason Billig, Cllr W Kemp was surprised at the lack of support from the Liberal Democrat Group, and he felt it absurd that it had been suggested that this initiative would only benefit the rich. He suggested that their installation would unlock other funding and would benefit the District widely.

Cllr Fuller was also surprised at Cllr Lewis' lack of support for electric vehicle charging points, and referred to the proposed £50,000 for community cohesion which was equivalent to the employment of only one full time PCSO. Referring to Cllr Lewis' point regarding caution being required concerning parking permits, he advised that South Norfolk and County would be working hand in hand on the project.

The vote on the amendment was then conducted as a roll call vote as follows:

Cllrs Bell and Lewis voted in favour of the amendment.

Cllrs Bendle, Bills, Broome, Dale, Dewsbury, Duffin, Easton, Ellis, Foulger, Fuller, Goldson, Gould, Hardy, L Hornby, Hudson, C Kemp, W Kemp, Larner, Mason Billig, Overton, Riches, J Savage, R Savage, B Stone, Thomson, J Wilby, M Wilby and Worsley voted against the amendment.

Cllrs Amis, Bernard and Gray abstained from the vote

The amendment was therefore lost.

The vote on the substantive was then conducted as a roll call vote as follows:

Cllrs Amis, Bell, Bendle, Bernard, Bills, Broome, Dale, Dewsbury, Duffin, Easton, Ellis, Foulger, Fuller, Goldson, Gould, Gray, Hardy L, Bendle, Bernard, Bills,,Dale, Dewsbury, Duffin, Easton, Ellis, Foulger, Fuller, Goldson, Gould, Gray, Hardy, L Hornby, Hudson, C Kemp, W Kemp, Larner, Lewis, Mason Billig, Overton, Riches, J Savage, R Savage, Stone, Thomson, J Wilby, M Wilby and Worsley voted in favour of the recommendations.

No members voted against and there were no abstentions.

It was therefore unanimously

**RESOLVED: To**

- (a) Approve the base budget; as shown in para 7.1, subject to confirmation of the finalised Local Government finance settlement figures which may, if significant, necessitate an adjustment through the General Revenue Reserve to maintain a balanced budget;
- (b) Approve the use of the revenue reserves as set out in section 15;
- (c) Agree that the Council's demand on the Collection Fund for 2018/19 for General Expenditure shall be £6,997,555 and for Special Expenditure be £78,662.17;
- (d) Agree that the Band D level of Council Tax be £145.00 for General Expenditure and £1.63 for Special Expenditure;
- (e) Agree that the assumptions on which the funding of the capital programme is based are prudent.
- (f) Approve the capital programme for 2018/19 to 2022/23, noting that a Housing Infrastructure Fund of £5.5 million has been awarded since the capital programme was drafted.

**(iv) Treasury Management and Capital Strategy 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2021**

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED: To Approve**

- a) The Treasury Management Strategy Statement for April 2018 to March 2021.
- b) The Capital Strategy outlined in section 3 and Appendix A of the report.
- c) The Prudential Indicators and Limits for the next 3 years contained within Appendix B of the report, including the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator.
- d) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement (section 9) that sets out the Council's policy on MRP.
- e) The Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19 (section 6) contained in the Treasury Management Strategy, including the delegation of certain tasks to the Section 151 Officer
- f) The Treasury Management Policy Statement (Appendix E).

**3426 COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2018/19**

The Chairman reminded members that a revised report had replaced that originally published in the agenda. This was due to an amendment following a request from Alburgh Parish Council to increase its precept.

The vote was conducted as roll call vote as follows;

Cllrs Amis, Bell, Bendle, Bernard, Bills, Broome, Dale, Dewsbury, Duffin, Easton, Ellis, Foulger, Fuller, Goldson, Gould, Gray, Hardy L, Bendle, Bernard, Bills,,Dale, Dewsbury, Duffin, Easton, Ellis, Foulger, Fuller, Goldson, Gould, Gray, Hardy, L Hornby, Hudson, C Kemp, W Kemp, Lerner, Lewis, Mason Billig, Overton, Riches, J Savage, R Savage, Stone, Thomson, J Wilby, M Wilby and Worsley voted in favour of the recommendations.

No members voted against and there were no abstentions.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED**

- 1) To approve the recommendations of the Cabinet meeting held 5 February 2018 relating to the Council Tax Base for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relates as in the attached Appendix B
- 2) The recommendations of the Cabinet meeting 5 February 2018 relating to the Revenue and Capital Estimates 2018/19, as amended to reflect the final local government financial settlement described in section 2 of this report, be approved.
- 3) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2018/19 (excluding Parish precepts and special expenses) be calculated as £6,997,555.00.
- 4) That the Council Tax requirement for special expenses be calculated as £78,662.17.
- 5) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2018/19 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Act.
  - a) £68,464,178.00 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.

- b) £57,809,984.87 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- c) £10,654,193.13 being the amount by which the aggregate at 6(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 6(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the 1992 Act).
- d) £220.77 being the amount at 6(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts and special expenses).
- e) £3,656,638.13 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts and special expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per attached Appendix B).
- f) £145.00 being the amount at 6(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 6(e) above by Item T (1 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept or special expense relates.
- 6) To note that Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Act for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below.
- 7) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Act, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2018/19 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

	Valuation Bands							
Precepting Authority	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
South Norfolk Council	96.67	112.78	128.89	145.00	177.22	209.44	241.67	290.00
Norfolk County Council	881.82	1,028.79	1,175.76	1,322.73	1,616.67	1,910.61	2,204.55	2,645.46
Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner	152.76	178.22	203.68	229.14	280.06	330.98	381.90	458.28

Aggregate of Council Tax Requirements (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses)	1,131.25	1,319.79	1,508.33	1,696.87	2,073.95	2,451.03	2,828.12	3,393.74
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- 8) The Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2018/19, which reflects an increase of £5.00, is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Act.

As the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2018/19 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Act.

### 3427 MONITORING OFFICER REPORT

Cllr J Fuller introduced the report of the Monitoring Officer, which sought approval to make amendments to the constitution, amongst other matters.

Referring to the recommendations regarding Homelessness Appeals, the Chairman of the Licensing, Appeals and Complaints Committee, Cllr D Goldson, confirmed his support for the proposals. He considered that the proposals would make the process more efficient and cost effective, whilst retaining input from members. Both Cllrs Gray and Bendle indicated their support for the proposals.

Cllr Fuller referred to the recommendation to excuse Cllr Worsley from meetings, following a serious operation in March, and on behalf of Council he wished him the best of luck and a speedy recovery. Cllr T Lewis also expressed his best wishes to Cllr Worsley.

It was then unanimously

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	To (a) Approve the changes to the constitution, as outlined in section 2 of the report; (b) Note the changes to the membership of the Development Management Committee and the Development Management Substitutes Pool
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It was unanimously (Cllr Worsley did not partake in this vote)

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	To excuse Cllr K Worsley from attending meetings of the Council and the Committees on which he serves, until further notice, pursuant to Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972
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### **3428 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2018/19**

Members considered the report of the Payroll Manager, which presented Council with the annual Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19.

It was unanimously

<b>RESOLVED</b>	To approve the content of the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19.
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### **3429 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMEN AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

#### **a) Cabinet**

There were no questions to cabinet portfolio holders

#### **b) Scrutiny Committee**

In the absence of Cllr G Minshull, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, Cllr T Lewis (Vice-Chairman) informed members that the last two meetings of the Scrutiny Committee had considered the Business Plan and the Budget. The Committee had also been updated on the progress with the Council's collaboration with Broadland District Council.

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

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

Cllr Goldson informed Council that a full meeting of the Licensing Committee had recently met to consider Doggy Day Care.

**d) Development Management Committee**

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

**e) Electoral Arrangements Review Committee**

There were no questions to the Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee  
Cllr Kemp informed members that the Committee would shortly be considering a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places.

**3430 OUTSIDE BODIES – FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr C Kemp presented his report to members, regarding the Police and Crime Panel for Norfolk. With regard to the transfer to the Commissioner functions of the fire and rescue authority, he explained that should the Commissioner decide to proceed to develop a full business case, there would be a consultation process with key stake holders, including South Norfolk Council. He suggested that this might be a role for the Scrutiny Committee.

With regard to the Broads Authority, Cllr V Thomson informed members that the Peer Review Report had been received and issues were around poor governance and communication with stakeholders and land owners. Discussions had already taken place regarding how to address these issues, and he would keep members informed on the progress made.

(The meeting concluded at 10.37 pm)

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Chairman



## ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on 29 November 2017 at 10:00am.

**Committee Members Present:** Councillors: C Kemp (Chairman), C Easton, K Kiddie and T Lewis

**Apologies:** Councillors: J Fuller and L Hornby

**Substitute Members:** Councillors: D Bills for J Fuller and B Stone for L Hornby

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillors: For parts of the meeting: D Goldson, M Gray, J Hornby, L Hornby, G Minshull, J Overton, T Palmer, R Savage and V Thomson

**Officers in Attendance:** The Chief Executive (S Dineen) (for part of the meeting), the Electoral Services Manager (J Tovee-Galey), the Electoral Services Officer (N Tullock), the Deputy Monitoring Officer (E Goddard) (for part of the meeting)

**Also in Attendance:** David Johnson – NpLaw

The press and 63 members of the public were also in attendance

**28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Interest</b>
Cllr Kiddie	<u>Diss / Roydon</u> Other Interest:- District Councillor for Diss, Town Councillor for Diss, and County Councillor for Diss and Roydon.  Member stated that, although he did not consider himself to be predetermined, he declared that he had elected to leave the room when this item was discussed, to ensure public confidence in any recommendation made to Full Council.  Cllr Kiddie withdrew from the room for this item, did not take part in the discussion, and did not vote.
Cllr Kemp	<u>Diss / Roydon</u> Other Interest:- Member had been lobbied by residents, and had been present at Roydon Parish Council meetings and other meetings with residents, where the Community Governance Review had been discussed, but he had provided procedural advice only.  <u>Poringland</u> Other Interest:- Member had given advice on procedural matters only.  <u>Wymondham</u> Other Interest:- Member had given procedural advice only to other Local Members.  <u>Cringleford</u> Other Interest:- District Councillor for Cringleford. Member had taken part in discussions but had provided procedural advice only.
Cllr Easton	<u>Carleton Road / Bunwell</u> Other Interest:- District Councillor for Bunwell but representing both parishes. Member had been in discussions with residents and was present at Parish Council meetings where the Community Governance Review had been discussed, but no opinions or advice had been given.
Cllr Stone	Other Interest - County Councillor for Thurton and Ashby.
Cllr Lewis	<u>Poringland and Framingham</u> Other interest:- Member had attended several meetings in Stoke Holy Cross and Poringland but no opinions had been given.  <u>Bixley and Caistor St Edmund</u> Other Interest:- District Councillor for Bixley and Caistor St Edmund. Member had presented information at meetings where issues had been discussed, but no advice had been given.
Cllr Bills	Other Interest:- District Councillor for Hethersett

## 29. MINUTES

Regarding Minute 27, at the paragraph detailing the consideration of Bunwell, the Committee agreed that the wording of the first line should be changed from, "*The Tacolneston Parish Clerk advised that...*" to "*A member of Bunwell Parish Council (who is also the Tacolneston Parish Clerk) advised that...*".

Subject to that amendment, the minutes of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee held on 15 August 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 30. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Chairman and Chief Executive welcomed everyone to the meeting. Cllr Kemp summarised the aims of the Review and explained that the Committee would be considering the representations received before making its recommendations to a meeting of the Full Council to be held on 19 February 2018, where the Authority's final decision would be made.

The Chairman reminded members that the District Boundary Review had already taken place ahead of the Community Governance Review and that any proposed parish boundary changes would be required to respect current County, District and Parliamentary boundaries. Speakers were advised that the Committee could only consider those things set out in the relevant legislation and guidance and were unable to take into account any issues which might fall under the control of the District or Parliamentary Reviews.

It was noted that, during the first phase of consultation, the number of representations received from towns and parishes had been disappointingly low and it appeared that, where parishes and residents were content with current governance arrangements, they had made little representation during that phase. However, due to a significantly higher number of responses being received towards the end of the second phase, the Committee now considered they had a more accurate indication of the opinions and views of town/parish councils and residents.

The Committee was reminded of its obligation to ensure that, when considering each parish boundary, the proposals for change should be in line with the Terms of Reference of the Community Governance Review, and clearly support the aims of the Review; to improve community engagement and local democracy, to facilitate efficient, effective and convenient delivery of local services, and to ensure electors across the whole District are treated equitably and fairly. It was noted that, should these proposals not meet the aims of the Review, then the status quo should continue.

The following speakers addressed the meeting with regard to the various proposals:

Diss and Roydon	Ms D Sarson – Diss Town Council Mr P Curson – Roydon Parish Council Ms N Atkins – Residents' Group against recommendations Mr T Knights – Resident against recommendations Cllr T Palmer – Local Member for Diss Cllr D Goldson – Local Member for Roydon
Carleton Rode and Bunwell	Mr J Pennell – Bunwell Parish Council Dr B Slater – Carleton Rode Parish Council Mr A Hatcher – Resident against recommendations Mr L Elley – Resident against recommendations
Poringland and Framingham Earl	Ms L Brook – Framingham Earl Parish Council Ms J Sykes – Resident against recommendations for Poringland / Framingham Earl Cllr J Overton – Local Member for Poringland and the Framinghams
Wymondham	Cllr R Savage – Wymondham Town Council Cllr L Hornby – Wymondham Town Council Mr J Halls – Resident in favour of recommendations Mr S Ward – Resident in favour of recommendations Cllr J Hornby – Local Member for Wymondham
Earsham	Cllr M Gray – Local Member for Earsham
Costessey	Ms H Elias – Costessey Town Council
East Carleton with Ketteringham	Mr T Cave – East Carleton with Ketteringham Parish Council Mr P Riches – Resident against the recommendations
Ashby St Mary	Mr R Todd – Ashby St Mary Parish Council

The Committee considered each town/parish in the order indicated in the agenda and made its recommendations, as detailed below:

### **Diss and Roydon**

Members voted 4-1 to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Diss and Roydon, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. the number of Councillors for Diss be increased to 14 and the number of Councillors for Roydon remains unchanged; and
3. the town/parish council names for both Diss and Roydon remain unchanged.

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Bunwell and Carleton Rode**

Members voted 4-0 (2 abstained) to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Bunwell and Carleton Rode, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. the number of Councillors for Bunwell and Carleton Rode remain unchanged; and
3. the parish Council names for both Bunwell and Carleton Rode remain unchanged.

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

## **Poringland**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Poringland and Framingham Earl, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Poringland and Bixley, that it should **agree** a boundary change, as indicated in map 11 on page 40 of the agenda, to move a part of Bixley into Poringland;
3. the number of Councillors for Poringland remains unchanged; and
4. the parish council name for Poringland remains unchanged.

### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

## **Framingham Earl**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Framingham Earl and Poringland, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. the number of Councillors for Framingham Earl remains unchanged; and
3. the parish council name for Framingham Earl remains unchanged.

### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.



### **Wymondham**

Members voted 5-1 to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Wymondham and the proposal that Spooner Row, Wattlefield and Sutton be separated from Wymondham Town to create a new community council, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries, as set out in the Local Government Boundary Commission for England Order 2017;
2. Wymondham Town Council retain 5 Councillors in North Wymondham Ward, 5 councillors in Central Wymondham Ward, 1 councillor in East Wymondham Ward and 4 councillors in South Wymondham ward; and
3. Wymondham Town Council remain as set out in the Local Government Boundary Commission for England Order 2017.

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence and arguments presented to the Committee and was finely balanced. The Committee consider that, on balance and due to the evidence submitted together with concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of the proposal, the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Tivetshall St Margaret and Tivetshall St Mary**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Tivetshall St Margaret and Tivetshall St Mary, that it should **agree** the proposals and merge the parishes to create a parish with no wards called "Tivetshall Parish Council"; and
2. the number of Councillors for Tivetshall Parish Council be set at 7;

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

**Dickleburgh & Rushall and Burston & Shimpling**

Members voted 5-0 (with 1 abstention) to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Dickleburgh & Rushall and Burston & Shimpling, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. the number of Councillors for Dickleburgh & Rushall and Burston & Shimpling remain unchanged; and
3. the parish Council names for Dickleburgh & Rushall and Burston & Shimpling remain unchanged.

**The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

**Cringleford**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Cringleford, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. the number of Councillors for Cringleford remains unchanged; and
3. the parish Council name for Cringleford remains unchanged.

**The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Keswick & Intwood**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Keswick & Intwood, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. the number of Councillors for Keswick & Intwood remains unchanged; and
3. the parish Council name for Keswick & Intwood remains unchanged.

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Denton and Earsham**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Denton and Earsham, that it should **agree** the proposals and amend the parish boundary (as indicated on Map 6 on page 49 of the agenda);
2. the number of Councillors for both Denton and Earsham remain unchanged; and
3. the parish Council names for both Denton and Earsham remain unchanged.

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

### **Alburgh and Wortwell**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Alburgh and Wortwell, that it should **agree** the proposals and make a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to request for the amendment of the district boundary, as indicated on Map 7 on page 50 of the agenda;
2. the number of Councillors for both Alburgh and Wortwell remain unchanged; and
3. the parish Council names for both Alburgh and Wortwell remain unchanged.

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

It is noted that this recommendation would also require the agreement of the Local Government Boundary Commission as it affects a district boundary and would require the amendment of this district boundary.

### **Bawburgh**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Bawburgh, that it should **agree** the proposal to move Lodge Farm Ward from Bawburgh Parish into Costessey Town and that it should **agree** boundary changes between Bawburgh and Little Melton, as indicated on map 8 on page 51 of the agenda, and make a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to request for the amendment of both the parish and County boundaries;
2. the number of Councillors for Bawburgh be set at 5; and
3. the parish Council name for Bawburgh remains unchanged.

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

It is noted that this recommendation is subject to the agreement of the Local Government Boundary Commission as it affects “protected electoral arrangements” within the meaning of section 86 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

### **Little Melton**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Little Melton, that it should **agree** boundary changes between Little Melton and Bawburgh, as indicated on map 8 on page 51 of the agenda, that it should **agree** boundary changes between Little Melton and Hethersett, as indicated on map 8 on page 51 on the agenda, and that it should make a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to request for the amendment of both the parish and County boundaries between Bawburgh and Little Melton;
2. the number of Councillors for Little Melton remains unchanged; and
3. the parish Council name for Little Melton remains unchanged.

### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee’s decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

It is noted that this recommendation for the parish boundary between Bawburgh and Little Melton is subject to the agreement of the Local Government Boundary Commission as it affects “protected electoral arrangements” within the meaning of section 86 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

### **Hethersett**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Hethersett, that it should **agree** the proposals and amend the parish boundary (as indicated on Map 8 on page 51 of the agenda);
2. the number of Councillors for Hethersett be increased from 13 to 14; and
3. the parish Council name for Hethersett remains unchanged.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

### **East Carleton and Swardeston**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding East Carleton and Swardeston, that it should **reject** the proposals and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. the number of Councillors for both East Carleton and Swardeston remain unchanged; and
3. the parish Council names for both East Carleton and Swardeston remain unchanged.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Costessey**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Costessey, that it should **agree** the proposal to move Lodge Farm from Bawburgh Parish into Costessey Town, as indicated on map 10 on page 53 of the agenda, and make a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to request for the amendment of both the parish and County boundaries;
2. the number of Councillors in the Costessey Parish be retained in the following wards; New Costessey Ward 8 Councillors, Old Costessey Ward (incorporating the Lodge Farm area) 6 Councillors, and 5 Councillors in Queen's Hill Ward; and
3. the parish Council name for Costessey remains unchanged.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

It is noted that this recommendation is subject to the agreement of the Local Government Boundary Commission as it affects "protected electoral arrangements" within the meaning of section 86 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

### **Bixley**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Bixley and Caistor St Edmund, that it should **agree** the proposals and merge the parishes to create a parish called "Caistor St Edmund and Bixley Parish Council" with the number of Councillors for Bixley Ward to remain as 5 and for Caistor Ward to remain as 7; and
2. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Bixley and Poringland, that it should **agree** a boundary change, as indicated in map 11 on page 40 of the agenda, to move a part of Bixley into Poringland.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

### **Caistor St Edmund**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Bixley and Caistor St Edmund, that it should **agree** the proposals and merge the parishes, (taking into account the recommendation above to move part of Bixley into Poringland), to create a parish called "Caistor St Edmund and Bixley Parish Council" with the number of Councillors for Bixley Ward to remain as 5 and for Caistor St Edmund Ward to remain as 7.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the amended boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will put in place effective and convenient community governance.

### **Ashby St Mary and Thurton**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. having considered the relevant legislation, guidance, and representations made regarding Ashby St Mary and Thurton, that it should **reject** the proposal to merge the parishes and retain the parish boundaries as they currently exist;
2. the number of Councillors for both Ashby St Mary and Thurton remain unchanged; and
3. the parish Council names for both Ashby St Mary and Thurton remain unchanged.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary better reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Ditchingham**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. the parish boundary for Ditchingham be retained as it currently exists;
2. the number of Councillors for Ditchingham be reduced from 11 to 9; and
3. the parish Council name for Ditchingham remain unchanged.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance. The decision to decrease the number of Councillors was taken due to the difficulties experienced in appointing Councillors for this Ward.



### **Tasburgh**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. the parish boundary for Tasburgh be retained as it currently exists;
2. the number of Councillors for Tasburgh remains unchanged; and
3. the parish Council name for Tasburgh remains unchanged.

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Stratton**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. the parish boundary for Stratton be retained as it currently exists;
2. the number of Councillors for Stratton be increased from 11 to 13; and
3. the parish Council name for Stratton be changed from "Long Stratton Parish Council" to "Long Stratton Town Council".

#### **The reason for the decision**

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance. The Committee agreed that, due to the future growth of Long Stratton, the number of Councillors should be increased in line with the recommendations of the National Associations of Local Councils in regard to the number of Councillors per electorate.

### **Easton**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. the parish boundary for Easton be retained as it currently exists;
2. the number of Councillors for Easton be increased from 7 to 10; and
3. the parish Council name for Easton remains unchanged.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Hempnall**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. the parish boundary for Hempnall be retained as it currently exists;
2. the number of Councillors for Hempnall reduce from 9 to 8; and
3. the parish council name for Hempnall remains unchanged.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

### **Bressingham**

Members voted unanimously to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. the parish boundary for Bressingham be retained as it currently exists;
2. the number of Councillors for Bressingham reduce from 9 to 7; and
3. the parish council name for Bressingham remains unchanged.

### The reason for the decision

The Committee's decision was based upon the evidence before it. Members reached the conclusion that the existing boundary reflects the identities and interests of the community and will continue to provide effective and convenient community governance.

**All Other Parishes**

In addition to those mentioned above, members considered all other parishes as detailed from pages 87 to 97 in the agenda, and in each case voted to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

1. the parish boundary be retained as it currently exists;
2. the number of Councillors remains unchanged; and
3. the parish council name remains unchanged.

The Chairman thanked officers for their work and it was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the recommendations, as above, be put forward for consideration by Full Council for its final determination;
2. Full Council be requested to delegate authority to the Chief Executive for the creation of any Orders, or the taking of any other steps required, for the implementation of those proposals which receive its support, and any consequential matters thereby required;

and

3. officers prepare the report for Full Council in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Review Committee.

(The meeting closed at 4:27 pm)

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Chairman

**Full Council  
16 April 2018**

**Agenda Item 5**

## Collaborative Working

**Report of the Chief Executive, South Norfolk Council  
Cabinet Member: John Fuller, Leader of the Council**

**CONTACT  
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## **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 On the 18 September 2017 South Norfolk Council and on 21 September 2017 Broadland District Council agreed for a feasibility study to be undertaken, exploring the options and opportunities for shared working between the two councils. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on progress with that feasibility study. Appendix 1 comprises the progress report which includes an overview of the member governance to date, details of the focus areas for joint working and an outline of the proposals that are being developed, and the next steps towards the final feasibility study report which will be presented in July 2018.
- 1.2 Good progress has been made to date by the two councils on the feasibility study and no major issues have been identified which would suggest our collaborative approach won't work, or fail to deliver on our ambitions. Work continues in developing the ideas and proposals identified in the report.
- 1.3 Council is asked to note the report and endorse the approach for the next phase of work.

## **2 KEY DECISION**

- 2.1 This is not a key decision and has been published in the Forward Plan.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The background to this report is highlighted in Section 2 of the attached report.

## **4 CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 The current position in relation to the feasibility study is shown in the attached report. Both Full Councils' will consider the same report, South Norfolk Council on 16 April and Broadland District Council on 17 April.

## **5 PROPOSED ACTION**

- 5.1 Council is asked to note the contents of the attached report and the progress to date with the feasibility study and endorse the approach for the next phase of the work.

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 External costs to date incurred in preparing the feasibility study and networking meetings for members are within the agreed budget of £25k. As previously agreed all external costs are shared between both Councils. Future costs and savings arising from closer collaboration will be set out in the feasibility study and therefore be the subject of further decisions by Council.

## **7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 As the proposal is to formally explore the case for shared arrangements with a neighbouring council there are no legal implications at this stage. In the event that a case is made then any subsequent report will set out the relevant legal implications arising from such a decision.

## **8 RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 The Council is **RECOMMENDED** to:
1. Note the attached report in Appendix 1 on the progress report on the South Norfolk / Broadland Council Feasibility Study and endorse the approach for the June / July feasibility as outlined in section 14 of the report.

## **Progress report on the South Norfolk/Broadland Council Feasibility Study**

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

In September 2017, the Full Councils of Broadland and South Norfolk mandated officers to develop a feasibility study to explore the opportunities for a strategic collaboration and one shared officer team supporting two autonomous councils. The purpose of this progress report is to provide Members with an update on the developments to date of the feasibility study work, including an overview of the member governance involved in its development, the initial focus areas for joint working which have been developed and the next steps for the full feasibility study. The work for this update will feed into the feasibility report for decision by Members in June and July 2018.

### **2. Background**

In December 2017 the two Council leaders issued a joint statement of intent which set out the ambitions for the enhanced collaboration between the two councils. The joint statement can be found below:

#### **Joint Statement of Intent by Leaders**

Our joint statement of intent for this process as councils is clear. Both councils have similar scale and demographics and see shared services with each other as preferred partners as a positive looking position for the future.

We are progressing opportunities for a shared culture, shared management and one shared officer team that represent an evolution in the way we work for the benefit of our communities on a geography they can recognise and relate to.

Working more closely together on this locally led initiative offers both councils increased capacity and resilience, together with greater financial stability.

**We want a local government that moves with the times and innovates, while retaining and attracting the most talented staff, offering them positive futures and career development opportunities.**

In a world where we need to do more with less, a shared services partnership can make us more efficient and strengthen our hand when working with partners. It will also increase our ability to take advantage of commercial opportunities to deliver better value for our residents. We want to show strong leadership of place and are committed to building a larger and more prosperous local economy with quality jobs and homes, while ensuring those that rely upon us the most are not left behind.

Our residents and our businesses expect their local councils to work hard to maximise local quality of life for everyone.

Our joint aim is for two strong councils, working together with the ambition and resources to make our combined area one of the best places to live and work in the country.

**This shared services partnership can deliver on that promise.**

**Andrew Proctor, Leader Broadland District Council and  
John Fuller, Leader South Norfolk Council (December 2017)**

The joint statement followed a decision in September 2017 by Councillors at both Broadland District and South Norfolk Councils for officers to investigate the potential of creating a closer collaborative working arrangement between the two councils, while at the same time maintaining the two councils' individual autonomy.

The report to Members in September set out the common opportunities and challenges facing both councils and the similarities of the two areas in terms of economy, people and place and the make-up of the organisations themselves. As well as this it identified the areas where the two councils were already working collaboratively to drive growth and improve outcomes for residents. The report set out that the two councils were operating in a changing local government landscape with regard to funding pressures and wider public-sector reform and that by working more collaboratively the two councils could better tackle these challenges, as well as potentially seizing some of the lost opportunities from the failed devolution deal.

In the paper brought to full councils, an indicative timeline was set out of 4-6 months to develop the feasibility study. In the early stages of the programme, both the Joint Lead Members Group, Cabinet and Joint Leadership Teams worked closely with an external facilitator from Shared Service Architects (a company supporting the development of shared services across the country) to develop the principles and focus areas for the feasibility, alongside an initial timetable for delivery. The final timeline which was developed included additional engagement aspects as well as a feasibility scoping phase during November and December. In addition, the final timeline included briefings to officer teams from services in January, ideas generation workshops with officers in February and March, and a Member progress report in March/April, to be followed by a decisions paper (Feasibility Study Report) to Members in June/July.

### **3. Members and Members groups**

In order to oversee and support the delivery of the programme and provide strategic direction, informal member-led groups were established. Cabinets of both councils have also been involved throughout the process.

The following provides an overview of each informal member group supporting the process.

#### **3.1 Joint Informal Lead Members Group**

The main purpose of this group is to oversee the development of the feasibility study.



## ***Membership***

<b>Broadland</b>	<b>South Norfolk</b>
Cllr. Greg Peck (Joint Chair) Cllr. Chris Harrison Cllr. Judy Leggett Cllr. Steve Riley	Cllr. Kay Mason Billig (Joint Chair) Cllr. Michael Edney Cllr. Charles Easton Cllr. Trevor Lewis

### **3.2 Joint Informal Scrutiny Group**

The purpose of this group is to support the development of the feasibility study and to scrutinise the recommendations coming through from the Joint Lead Members Group.

## ***Membership***

<b>Broadland</b>	<b>South Norfolk</b>
Cllr. David Harrison (Joint Chair) Cllr. Jonathan Emsell Cllr. Lana Hemsall Cllr. Karen Vincent	Cllr. Graham Minshull (Joint Chair) Cllr. Christopher Kemp Cllr. Keith Kiddie Cllr. Brendon Bernard

### **3.3 Joint Informal Cabinet**

This is an informal meeting of both Councils' Cabinets. The group meets at key stages of the feasibility study development when needed.

## ***Membership***

<b>Broadland</b>	<b>South Norfolk</b>
Cllr. Andrew Proctor (Leader) Cllr. Stuart Clancy (Deputy leader) Cllr. John Fisher Cllr. Roger Foulger Cllr. Trudy Mancini-Boyle Cllr. Shaun Vincent	Cllr. John Fuller (Leader) Cllr. Michael Edney (Deputy Leader) Cllr. Kay Mason Billig Cllr. Barry Stone Cllr. Yvonne Bendle Cllr. Lee Hornby

### **3.4 'Quad'**

Quad is a group comprised of the two Council Leaders and Chief Executives. The main role of this group is to provide a cross-cutting strategic view of the programme

as a whole and unblock any key issues arising, whilst championing the collaborative work and early opportunities seized.

### **3.5 Informal networking for members**

A networking event was held on 29 January, which provided Members and senior officers an opportunity to meet in an informal setting and ask questions to those directly involved in the feasibility study. A follow up informal networking event is scheduled (at the time of writing) for the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

### **3.6 Member/Officer visits to other shared service authorities**

On 11<sup>th</sup> January, Members chairing the informal member groups and senior officers visited East Suffolk to find out about the experience of collaborative working between Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Councils. Both Members and officers found this to be a helpful opportunity to see how other authorities had experienced sharing services and working more collaboratively and to discuss key lessons learnt which continue to be fed into the development of the feasibility study. Main areas discussed at the visit included:

- ***Focussing on quick wins*** - The process should start with the easy wins and not get too focussed on more complex issues around governance.
- ***Communication is key*** - good communication with Members, Staff, and residents is of high importance.
- ***Enhanced opportunities for staff*** - The one shared officer team had found greater opportunities for career development for existing staff and also attracted a high calibre of new staff.
- ***Increased funding opportunities*** - the Councils had found that collectively they could more easily attract funding and investment.

Following subsequent feedback from the Joint Member Groups, officers are arranging potential further contacts with other councils who have looked to undertake similar collaborative arrangements to identify a wider range of experiences and lessons learnt.

## **4. Officer governance**

A number of teams across both authorities were set up to support the delivery of the feasibility study. Outlined below are the different groups, together with their responsibilities:

## **4.2 Joint Strategic Group**

The Joint Strategic Group (JSG) comprises two CEXs, Broadland's deputy CEX and South Norfolk's 2 Directors. The main role of the group is to support the delivery of the feasibility study and provide strategic input to the development of the ideas feeding into the final report. Members of JSG have been supporting the key focus areas for this stage of the feasibility process. Alongside this, the JSG have also taken a leadership role in supporting the staff culture change across the two organisations throughout the feasibility development stages.

## **4.3 Joint Leadership Team**

The Joint Leadership Team (JLT) includes the JSG, alongside the heads of service of both councils. JLT, as part of their role, provide specific service advice and direction to the feasibility study, as well as providing an additional channel of communication and advocates/champions for the process. Training for the JLT was provided by Shared Service Architects.

## **4.4 Programme Team**

The Programme Team comprises a Core Programme Team (CPT), Strategic Support (which includes HR, Finance and Communications) and Quality Assurance. The CPT's main role is to provide the operational support to the development of the feasibility study and programme management and governance. Training for the Programme Team was provided by Shared Service Architects.

## **4.5 Quality Assurance**

A QA role is being provided by Emma Hodds (Head of Governance at South Norfolk Council) in her Internal Audit role across both Broadland and South Norfolk. The role of QA is to provide objective advice to the programme, monitor and review risks and to provide a challenge function.

## **4.6 Joint Unison, Staff Forum and Staffside**

A joint staff and union consultative group has been established to share progress of the feasibility study work and to get staff feedback on the process being followed by the programme and proposals as they are delivered. The group includes both union and non-union representatives from both councils and provides an opportunity for them to ask senior leaders questions regarding the feasibility programme. Further staff engagement has been undertaken through team briefings and cascades via a news bulletin (Shared Voice), established to keep staff aware of developments and key issues and by the CEXs who have jointly held all-staff briefings at both councils.

## **5. Preferred Partner Model**

At the beginning of the feasibility study, the Joint Lead Members Group and the Joint Informal Cabinet took part in a facilitated workshop with Shared Service Architects to discuss the type of strategic partnership to be progressed. Members agreed that they wanted to develop a ***preferred partner model***. The key features of this model are captured in the below table:

<b>Preferred partner</b>
Specific named partner(s)
Cross-organisation efficiencies
Shared management
Organisational development led
Co-ownership/co-creation relationship
Strong cultural alignment
Interdependence

‘Shared services’ can be thought of as pockets of service areas that have been joined up. Our proposed model is not about ‘pockets of shared/joint working’ it is organisation-wide, ‘one shared officer team’. The more aligned we can be, the greater the productivity will be attained.

Alongside this, Members also emphasised that the partnership must:

- Be strategic in intent – more than a shared management arrangement.
- Focus on the delivery of better outcomes for residents, always acting with the customer/resident at heart.
- Be characterised by a single management team creating a new ‘shared culture’
- Be two autonomous councils.
- Recognise that there will be differences in service delivery models and priorities between the two councils.
- Create a new type of council (model/vehicle) that other partners will want to collaborate with or join.
- Afford new opportunities not available to the councils working alone.

## **6. Service Focus Areas for the Feasibility Study**

As outlined in the paper taken to Full Councils in September 2017, the purpose of the feasibility study is to develop a more detailed case for working together, which explores in more depth the opportunities available and the options for implementing them. Following the facilitated sessions between Shared Service Architects, the Joint Lead Members Group and Joint Informal Cabinet it was agreed that the feasibility study would primarily look to address the two councils core strategic drivers, by prioritising those service areas/activities that impact directly on the strategic ambition

to drive economic and housing growth, and those enabling services that will support transformation across the two authorities in support of one shared officer team.

The following service areas have therefore been focussed on for the first stage of the feasibility study:

**Focus Area 1 - Services that will help enable transformation:**

- IT/Digital
- OD/HR
- Business Improvement and Customer Insight
- Marketing and Communications

**Focus Area 2 - Services that will help us achieve our 'strategic intent' of Driving Growth & Prosperity:**

- Economic Development
- Planning
- Strategic Housing

In order to facilitate the development of feasibility proposals for these service areas a number of activities have taken place with staff over the past couple of months to support initial information gathering and idea development:

- All staff briefing sessions to provide an overview of focus areas and principles established by informal joint member groups
- A facilitated workshop with Shared Service Architects and service leads to support collaborative behaviours and outline direction of travel
- Pen pictures of service areas developed to baseline key information including service priorities, staffing, budgets, infrastructure and challenges to inform the process of ideas generation
- Workshops involving over 70 staff from the focus service areas to develop ideas and proposals for collaborative working
- Service lead and Joint Strategic Group challenge workshops to prioritise, review and develop proposals coming forward

The emerging proposals for collaboration coming from these service areas are set out below. At this stage of the feasibility these are examples of those proposals being developed and more specific proposals will be developed for the June/July report.

## **7. Initial ideas emerging from the Feasibility Study work**

A number of initial ideas have come forward by service areas as proposals for the feasibility report and more specific proposals will be developed for the June/July report. Set out in the tables 7.1 and 7.2 and described in the following sections are initial proposals that may have potential to help deliver the desired outcomes for collaborative working, namely:

- Achieving greater influence
- Joint collaborative working of service delivery

- Creating a platform for innovation
- Financial resilience and sustainability

## 7.1 Service areas to drive Economic Growth and Prosperity

Proposal	Influence	Collaborative Service Delivery	Innovation Platform	Financial resilience
<b>Economic Growth</b>				
Joint Economic Growth priorities and ambition delivery method	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Alignment of core Economic Development business support services		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Planning</b>				
Creating a Joint Strategic Planning/Growth Delivery Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Community Enabling Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Strategic Housing</b>				
Joint Strategic Housing Statement and delivery approach/plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

## 7.2 Service areas to help transformation

Proposal	Influence	Collaborative Service Delivery	Innovation Platform	Financial resilience
<b>Business Improvement (including Customer Insight)</b>				
Develop joint strategic priorities, ambitions and approach to joint 'delivery plans'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Joint approach to service reviews and approach to support transformation		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Joint approach to public affairs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Shared approach to data and customer insight		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Shared approach to customer experience and understanding		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Communications and Marketing</b>				
Joint internal communications and engagement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Shared approach to operational marketing and communication activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>HR and Organisational Development</b>				
Shared policies and terms & conditions to support one shared officer team		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Shared set of values and competencies to support a shared culture		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Recruitment and retention joint approach to become the local council "employer of choice" in the region		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>IT/Digital</b>				
Software rationalisation/integration opportunities		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sharing of low level infrastructure and hardware				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Joint delivery of IT support		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### 7.3 Key themes emerging from feasibility proposal developments

There have been a number of common themes emerging from the initial proposals including:

- Strategic opportunities to align strategies and policies to support collaborative working – a number of opportunities across service areas have been identified to potentially jointly develop strategies and policies to support both the organisations strategic ambitions (e.g. economic growth, strategic housing) and to support more efficient and effective ways of working through one shared officer team (e.g. shared HR policies)
- Operational opportunities to support more efficient and effective working – teams have identified a number of opportunities to improve working at an operational level including sharing officer expertise, joint procurement opportunities and improving processes.
- Common risks and constraints emerging – there have been a number of common risks identified in the feasibility proposals including ensuring capacity to support the day-to-day running of services whilst also supporting collaborative transformation, recognition that there may need to be some initial investment to support effective shared service working in some areas e.g. ICT systems, and ensuring effective engagement with members and staff to successfully deliver changes and move towards new ways of working.
- Developing options and route maps for delivery – following the initial development of feasibility proposals the next stage will be for officers to work up more detailed route maps and options for delivery for Members to consider.

The paragraphs below set out those feasibility proposals being developed by service areas, highlighting insights gathered and potential short, medium and long term opportunities and risks identified.

### 7.4 Proposals from Service areas to drive Economic Growth and Prosperity

This area focusses on the strategic intent of driving economic growth and a more strategic approach to planning as core drivers for collaboration, driving growth and prosperity for the people and places the two councils serve. The following is an outline of the ideas identified and proposals being developed for the feasibility report:

#### 7.4.1 Economic Growth

***By working more collaboratively together we want to show strong leadership of place and are committed to building a larger and more prosperous local economy.***

- ***Understanding our joint Economic Growth priorities and investigating a joint Economic growth ambition delivery method to deliver the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Growth Strategy***

The short-term benefits of this would be to gain a better understanding of the

types/sector strengths and business rates generation from rateable businesses across the new economic area, to enable an 'offer' and promotion of the Unique Selling Points (USPs) for the combined economic area and gain a clear understanding of the 'added value' that a combined approach to delivering growth can bring.

The longer-term benefits would be to achieve greater levels of inward investment as a result of stronger business clusters, a clear offer and proactive selling of the location leading to defining a larger economic area which is better positioned to take advantage of more central government initiatives such as growth zones. It will also support the two councils to enhance our partnership work with the Department for Work and Pensions to support the development of the labour market across our combined area. Organisational benefits would include greater levels of resilience between Economic Development teams and priority activities delivered more efficiently through more effective alignment of staff and resources.

- ***Identification and alignment of core Economic Development business support services***

This proposal will look at opportunities for shared services to support businesses. One aspect to be investigated is expanding the Broadland Council Training Services (BCTS) which has been operating successfully in an open and competitive market for over 25 years delivering business and community training services. Key benefits would include promoting and providing a high-quality training offer that businesses in both districts can rely upon; an increase in business start-up and growth alongside the enhancement of social mobility across both areas; a higher proportion of start-up businesses remaining in business after 12 months leading to increased income from Business rates as a result of more robust start-ups; additional jobs created as well as added value to the Growth Hub start up support offer.

#### **7.4.2 Strategic Housing**

***We are jointly committed to making our area one of the best places to live in the country, enabling the delivery of good quality homes that meet our residents' needs.***

- ***Developing a joint Strategic Housing Statement (including approach to affordable housing and housing with care) and delivery approach/plan***

This proposal focusses on developing a joint way forward for the strategic housing activity which is defined as maximising the delivery of homes across all tenures to meet current and future needs of people and the local economy. This definition comprises only the aspects of strategic housing which contribute to the agreed strategic intent of driving growth and prosperity.

The short-term benefits will be to use data-based evidence (housing need and supply) to help define and agree joint priorities for the strategic housing activity and the approach to delivering the priorities. The identification of



housing need for specific client groups and the delivery of supported housing and housing for older people will require on-going positive dialogue with Norfolk County Council, integrated commissioning teams and delivery partners. These discussions will focus on the capital and revenue funding required to enable delivery, and the locations of specific schemes to meet housing need.

### 7.4.3 Planning

***Working more closely together on locally led initiatives will offer both councils increased capacity and resilience for the benefit of our communities, enabling us to work across a geography they can recognise and relate to***

- ***Creating a Joint Strategic Planning/Growth Delivery Team***

This would be a joint, multi-disciplinary team to add value and expedite the delivery of major strategic sites in Broadland and South Norfolk, for example Long Stratton, Beeston Park and Rackheath. This team would consist of officers from Broadland and South Norfolk and would also work alongside officers from other authorities, notably Norfolk County Council. The delivery of major, strategic sites requires a multifaceted programme of work. The creation of a Joint Strategic Planning/Growth Delivery team will build upon the strong track record of a multi-disciplinary approach to the planning function at both Broadland and South Norfolk to date, but it will also take the next steps to help facilitate the delivery of the broader programme of work. This includes the Development Management function; infrastructure delivery and funding (including the preparation of 'oven-ready' projects and schemes); community engagement; and potential land acquisition/development opportunities.

The intended long-term outcomes are:

- To add value to the strategic sites and enhance the new and existing communities associated with these sites.
- To speed up the delivery of the strategic sites.
- Acceleration of the delivery of strategic sites would generate income from CIL, New Homes Bonus and Council Tax/Business Rates.

The benefits of creating a Joint Strategic Planning/Growth Delivery team are:

- Sharing and pooling existing expertise, including officers from Broadland, South Norfolk and Norfolk CC.
- A more focused and dedicated resource for the delivery of the strategic sites.
- A more holistic approach to the delivery of strategic sites.

Costed options for the composition of the delivery team are being explored such as having a dedicated bespoke team or using existing resources with and without backfilling. There is potential that a consultancy budget would be required for specialisms which fall outside the expertise of South Norfolk, Broadland and other public partners. For example, viability appraisals,

quantity surveying, design work for 'oven ready' projects, technical highway advice/design.

- **Rural Community Enabling Team.**

This is the proposal under the bid that secured the £220k funding from the Planning Delivery Fund. It is to help establish a team to work with a number of local communities that are likely to be experiencing significant growth through the Development Plan process.

The objective is to set up at least 20 community planning groups and work with these to help them understand the planning process, to produce town/village appraisals and plans, and to produce 'community planning statements' for consideration under the Development Plan (local plan or Neighbourhood Plan). Other elements, if wished to be progressed by groups, could include Neighbourhood Development Orders and the identification of sites for residential development e.g. in response to 5 Year Housing Land Supply issues. This work will build on and expand the community planning and Neighbourhood Planning work that is currently undertaken by the planning policy teams.

The size of the team will be at least 4.6 FTE posts, the main roles being undertaken by officers from the planning policy teams utilising their expertise in community planning/neighbourhood planning. This will be as a proportion of their overall time, reflecting the community planning element of their work. Additional posts may be suitable for those in other teams that are interested in secondment to gain experience in community planning, or as a temporary position for planning graduates or possibly through internship in holiday periods, or through secondment of Development Management Officer(s) to add their expertise for example for work on identifying housing sites.

Funding has been provided for a 2-year project commencing 1 April 2018.

In addition, the following collaborative joint planning work items are being undertaken as part of the more day to day work the Planning team are doing within the current interim shared planning arrangements:

- Identify the similarities and differences between the two planning teams' organisational and development management processes to move towards a best new approach for the benefit of our customers through the most efficient service. It is anticipated that this will be carried out during the next 3 months.
- Provide greater clarity of Greater Norwich groups with the Joint Head of Planning providing briefings to all relevant officers on the structure, work and governance of the Greater Norwich partnership. There are no other dependencies and no additional support or resource is required.
- Supporting more efficient and effective communications with our customers by developing the use of iMail for bulk email shots. There are no other dependencies and no additional support or resource is required. It is

anticipated this will be delivered during the next 6 months.

- Maximise opportunities for working closely with statutory bodies: The respective Planning teams have a lot of interaction with other bodies such as the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Highway Authority. The collaborative working arrangements allow for a light-touch review of these working relationships with the intention of strengthening this interaction wherever possible.
- Explore sharing specialist roles: Both Broadland and South Norfolk Councils have specialist officers whose posts are not replicated in the other authority. Examples include the following specialisms: green infrastructure; design; and landscape. The collaborative working arrangements will enable exploration of how these specialisms can be shared across the two authorities in an acceptable and reasonable manner.

As part of the collaborative investigation for the feasibility, all three Strategic Intent-related teams across the services (Economic Development, Planning and Strategic Housing) have been working together to identify cross-service activities including:

- Generating information on commercial applications and decisions
- Continuing to share intelligence internally and across the partnership on business issues to support business growth
- Working together to secure affordable housing for the two areas.

## **7.5 Proposals from Service areas to help transformation**

This area of the Feasibility Study focusses on building one shared officer team whilst maintaining two autonomous councils – this means a shared management team and officer team, shared use of each councils' buildings and establishing a 'one team' approach/culture. In order to help make this happen the following proposals are being developed by the transformation-related service areas for the Feasibility report.

### **7.5.1 Business Improvement (including Customer Insight)**

***We want a local government that moves with the times and innovates. In a world where we need to do more with less, a one shared officer team partnership can make us more efficient and strengthen our hand when working with partners.***

- **Develop joint strategic priorities, ambitions and approach to joint 'delivery plans' for the two Councils.**

This proposal is about developing a set of shared ambitions/priorities and associated delivery plan to help maximise collaboration at Broadland and South Norfolk. The benefits of this are seen as:

- Providing an opportunity to evidence publicly the extent of our collaboration to other organisations.
- To establish a common focus for both Councils' services to deliver to, by defining a set of common strategic outcomes (ambitions/priorities).
- Provide clarity of approach and progress by establishing a route map showing the key related activities and when these will be delivered.

This proposal will look at establishing an overarching joint vision, joint ambitions and priorities that can be referenced in each councils' 4/5-year strategic/corporate plans. Currently our strategic plans are developed during different periods. It is proposed that a one shared officer team delivery plan will also be developed setting out in more detail the activities to achieve the corporate objectives.

- ***Review and develop a joint approach to service reviews and approach to support transformation across the two authorities through collaborative working.***

This activity will support a one shared officer team to achieve our joint outcomes rather than defining a methodology/process for reviews and will support the removal of barriers to collaboration, for example, by managing the organisational development of embedding a single culture.

- ***Develop a joint approach to Public affairs.***

Public affairs is the strategic approach the two councils take to promoting their reputations and influencing strategy and policy on a regional and national stage. Public affairs combines policy development, government relations, lobbying to key stakeholders, strategic communications and media relations. It enables the councils to define and tailor messages for different audiences including local government peers, residents, businesses and organisations such as the LEP.

The proposal will seek to maximise opportunities for the two councils to work together to promote the Broadland and South Norfolk area, promote ourselves as forward-thinking and influential authorities and influence strategy and policy development at a national and regional level.

Benefits likely to be realised in the medium term include:

- Greater regional and national influence on policy development. Increased ability for our key strategy and policy 'asks' to be recognised by national government and leading local government organisations and incorporated in an earlier stage into the development of policy and strategy.
- Greater regional and national recognition of the Broadland and South Norfolk area, its assets and as a place in which to invest.

- Greater regional and national recognition of both authorities – both in terms of sharing best practice and becoming a forward thinking, influential partnership.
- Potential to bring in additional funding/resources from national and regional initiatives to the two districts as a result of enhanced reputation.
- Enhancing Members' public profiles on national, regional and local issues.
- Greater organisational understanding of the impacts of policy and legislation changes.

- ***Developing a shared approach to data and customer insight.***

'Customer Insight' is an understanding about the customer based on their behaviour, experiences, needs or desires.

The benefits in this arise from being able to look, for example, at health outcomes from a customer perspective to help support the most vulnerable people, to identify what customers want from particular services and to help focus joint marketing campaigns for success. Through the feasibility work officers will look to identify a proposed shared approach to data and customer insight.

- ***Develop a shared approach to customer experience and understanding.***

This proposal is about establishing shared customer standards to support the one shared office team, i.e. a joint approach to how we approach customer experience, channels and our understanding of the customer journey. It relates to establishing joint customer service standards across services as opposed to standardising the service offering of both councils and will continue to maintain the autonomous identities of the two authorities.

The benefits from this proposal will be a consistent approach for the customer, efficiency in having one rather than multiple approaches and to establish an agreed common and forward-thinking approach to how we engage with our customers across all channels included but not limited to phone, face to face, email, post and digital.

## **7.5.2 Communications and Marketing.**

***Our joint aim is for two strong councils to work together with the ambition and resources to make our combined area one of the best places to live and work in the country, whilst ensuring those that rely upon us the most are not left behind.***

- ***Developing a consistent approach to how we deliver joint internal communications and engagement (including members) across the two organisations.***

In order to support a one shared officer team, clear and consistent communications across the two authorities will be critical. A single internal communications approach would serve to enhance transparency and continuity of message. An example tool to support this would be looking to establish a shared Intranet to provide a platform for delivering consistent timely messaging, as well as delivering potential savings from having just one intranet.

- ***Opportunities for developing a shared approach to operational activities eg. market research, printing, advertising etc.***

The benefits envisaged from a shared approach to operational activities are from cost efficiencies through economies of scale through joint procurement of print, advertising and software. The teams will be developing further analysis of opportunities in this area.

### 7.5.3 HR and Organisational Development

***We are progressing opportunities for a shared culture, shared management and one shared officer team that represent an evolution in the way we work for the benefit of our communities. We want to retain and attract the most talented staff, offering them positive futures and career development opportunities.***

- **Shared HR policies including Terms and Conditions to support one shared officer team**

This proposal will look at the policies to be aligned to support one shared officer team to work as efficiently and effectively together as possible by identifying quick policy wins and options and road maps/timelines to support moving towards harmonisation across the two councils.

- **Approach to developing a shared set of values and competencies to support a shared culture for one shared officer team.**

This proposal will cover developing a single Organisational Development programme to support one shared officer team and move towards one staff culture. There are a number of values and competencies which are similar across the two authorities and some areas of difference. This proposal will develop joint staff values and competencies to support moving towards a single culture.

- **Joint approach to managing recruitment and retention, based on a shared set of HR values, to become the local council 'employer of choice' in the region.**

The key benefits of this proposal will be improved recruitment and retention of staff as well as improved opportunities for staff in both authorities through increased variety of work and/or promotion and job opportunities.

#### 7.5.4 Better use of technology

***We will increase our ability to take advantage of commercial opportunities to deliver better value for our residents, ensuring we move with the times and innovate.***

- ***Identify any software rationalisation/integration opportunities.***

This proposal is about identifying which systems would be advantageous to share, together with indicative financial information to achieve this. Officers have identified where IT systems across the two authorities are similar or different and will be developing a route map to identify opportunities for improving customer service with potential costs and areas for savings.

***Using technology to work more efficiently*** - We will explore how technology can support us to work more efficiently and effectively as a partnership by improving the way in which we can communicate remotely with each other, and reduce the need for excessive travel and mileage. With a common objective of being a low-cost operator/high performing councils, we can work to meet and exceed residents and businesses expectations in a modern connected world through multiple channels including online, mobile, landline phone and automation. Furthermore, we will explore how our councils can use technology for example, to allow virtual meetings so a single workforce can support two councils without having to be physically co-located.

- ***Sharing of low level infrastructure and hardware.***

This proposal is about investigating the development of existing site-to-site connectivity for one shared officer team, joint procurement of data circuits for both Councils and potential shared use of Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity facilities. Investigation into shared telephony has already been undertaken. Broadland have an existing on-premise telephony system in place which is fit for purpose, South Norfolk are in the final stages of procuring a new cloud hosted telephony system. However, there is an opportunity to review this as an option when Broadland next require a telephony upgrade.

- ***Develop how we can jointly deliver IT support across the two organisations.***

Taking analysis from the above two proposals, this work will look at identifying common ground where technical expertise could be shared in support of the systems and infrastructure. IT Service desk operating models and approaches to procurement will also be investigated.

## **8. Focus areas between April and June**

Following consideration of this progress report by Members in March/April, between April and June, officers will continue to refine the proposals for the existing focus service areas as well as developing proposals for a number of other areas. These are outlined below:

- Strategic intent – driving growth and prosperity services – focus will be on developing more detailed route maps for the feasibility proposals including options and financial information as well as opportunities for joint bidding for funding.
- Transformation service areas – focus here will be on maximising the opportunities and efficiencies of being organisations serving more than 250,000 residents.
- Shared commercial opportunities – an assessment will be made on potential shared commercial opportunities to explore through enhanced collaborative working
- Governance – proposals will be developed on options for governance to support one shared officer team to work as efficiently and effectively as possible across two autonomous councils.
- Finance – although members have identified that cost savings are not the main driver for closer collaborative working, analysis will be presented on the potential cross-organisational savings and costs from a shared service delivery and one shared officer team.
- Contracts and procurement opportunities – analysis will be presented on potential shared contract opportunities over the short, medium and long term that could lead to further collaborative opportunities and potential efficiency savings.
- Working more effectively with partners together – analysis will be presented on areas where by working more closely together as two authorities we could strengthen our relationship and influence with key public organisations.
- One shared officer team - A key element of delivering the ambition of a 'preferred partner model' will be one shared officer team supporting two autonomous bodies. The feasibility study in June/July will set out the first steps towards a shared management structure with a proposed timeline for implementation if members choose to progress with collaborative working across the two councils. It will also outline how better use of technology could help staff and members work more effectively and efficiently together across the councils.

The two authorities were both strong advocates for the Norfolk/Suffolk Devolution Deal which was arguably a missed opportunity in terms of the additional powers, funding and influence that the deal could have brought to the region. Members have requested that the feasibility work evidences how by working closer together the two councils could realise some of these lost benefits, as well as support the two authorities to take a more proactive approach to public sector reform. Grant Thornton are currently working with the District Councils' Network (DCN) and its members to produce a toolkit on local government transformation and collaboration and we await the toolkit being developed in order to evidence the strategic potential



that closer working between the two councils might bring, by the assessment of other areas that have undertaken similar approaches.

## **9 Early Opportunities**

Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council have a strong history of collaboration; the Greater Norwich Growth Board has played a key role in driving economic and housing growth in our areas through, for example, attracting additional funding from central government. The creation of CNC Building Control over 10 years ago has used our collective resource more efficiently and effectively to ensure regulated development in our region. Our shared Energy Efficiency and Care and Repair services have meant that we have been able to support our residents stay warm and well, including successful joint bids to provide grant funding for our residents.

As part of the focus areas proposed by the Joint Lead Members Group and Cabinet it was suggested that if further opportunities presented themselves for shared service working whilst the feasibility study was being developed, for example due to staff changes or external opportunities, these would be shared with members as proposed 'early opportunities'. It was outlined that progressing early opportunities would both be beneficial in terms of supporting organisational resilience and will also help act as trail blazers for more extensive collaborative working in the future. So far, there have been a number of early opportunities which have been pursued and investigated which include:

### **9.1 Planning**

Planning is an area where we have worked jointly for over 10 years, for example through the Greater Norwich Growth Board. Following a vacancy that arose at South Norfolk Council, this area was identified as a potential early opportunity. In January 2018, the Informal Joint Members Groups and individual Council Cabinets and Scrutiny Committees agreed to move forward with interim proposals for a shared planning management team. Arrangements included establishing shared roles of Head of Planning, Development Manager and Spatial Planning Policy Manager. This shared management team have since split their working time between the two councils and have gained valuable insight and understanding of the respective planning services. This has enabled them alongside the respective teams, to develop some initial ideas (shown in Section 7.4.3 above) for collaborative working based upon experience.

Below outlines the activities and achievements of the joint planning team to date (first 2 months of operation) which include:

- A successful joint bid to the Government's Planning Delivery Fund for £220k to create a joint 'Rural Community Enabling Team' to help communities engage in the planning process, understand the benefits and opportunities of development, and help identify sites that are appropriate for development and can be taken forward.

- Jointly negotiating and securing enhanced planning support (including slight cost saving) provided by Norfolk County Council.
- A Business Breakfast has been held to engage with representatives of the development industry to help understand how the joint planning service can be shaped to serve our customers even better.
- Jointly drafting the Annual Monitoring Report for Greater Norwich including an update on 5-year housing land supply and which sets out alternative options to enable the two planning authorities to assert a 5 year land supply. A joint Member briefing has been organised on this.

Some initial insights from the joint planning arrangements also include:

- Confirmation that there are genuine opportunities for closer and effective collaboration across the two planning services.
- In the short term, the collaborative working arrangements may be more resource intensive because ideas and initiatives require securing the buy-in and agreement of two senior leadership teams and two sets of Members and/or Leaders.
- There are a number of technical considerations to resolve moving forward such as the need to operate two email systems when dealing with aspects specific to each respective authority. The planning team is therefore working closely with the ICT teams to develop solutions.

The next steps with the shared arrangements are to progress the collaboration proposals for the June/July Feasibility report to Members, look into both councils' development management processes and alignment opportunities, provide clarity on the Greater Norwich partnership governance groups to the team, continue to build a one-team culture, maximise opportunities for working closely with statutory bodies and also undertaking further exploration of sharing specialist roles.

## **9.2 GDPR**

The new data protection legislation provides organisations with greater obligations and data subjects with increased rights, and is due to come into force in May 2018. The two authorities have been working jointly and sharing the knowledge and expertise of staff members to ensure we both are ready for the changes, and actions are now being implemented across the two councils. Joint working to date has included; reviewing our policies and statements to ensure we are compliant, meeting with teams across both councils to review procedures and practices and liaising with both Senior Leadership teams on strategic issues.

## **9.3 Food and Licensing**

For two weeks in February 2017, officers from Broadland's Food Team (part of its Food, Safety & Licensing Team) provided temporary food safety regulatory activities within the South Norfolk Council area during a period of staff shortage due to career development opportunities. As the short-term staffing issue had been foreseen, adequate time was available for appropriate plans to be put in place to enable the

Broadland officers to be correctly authorised to perform regulatory activities in the South Norfolk area. The arrangements worked well during the two weeks and 22 inspections were made of food premises. As well as inspecting premises, the operators were provided with national guidance on the control of E.Coli, Listeria and allergens and were also advised on implementing the Food Standards Agency's "Safer Food Better Business" pack.

Feedback to South Norfolk colleagues was provided by the Broadland team following the two weeks. A presentation on the learning from this exercise and the potential for further developing collaborative working in Food Safety and other related environmental services is currently being developed. In the meantime, the two teams continue to work collaboratively offering mentoring, facilities for training and guidance when needed.

#### **9.4 Waste**

At the early stages of the feasibility study, we were exploring the potential of a shared operational waste service. This opportunity arose as Broadland District Council's contract with their external waste and recycling provider was due for renewal. The two teams across both authorities explored this opportunity and the key benefits it could bring. However, due to the tight time constraints of the existing contract, it was agreed not to pursue this further at that point in time. It may be a service area where the two authorities could explore collaborative opportunities in the longer term.

#### **9.5 Day-to-day collaborative working across the two councils**

As part of our councils' day-to-day work, we have found we are already collaborating more with each other, whilst we undertake the feasibility study, including:

##### *Joint Consultations Response Development*

An important part of our collaborative working is ensuring where possible, that we can create a single voice to promote and lobby our key policy points to central government and other bodies. Teams across the two authorities have been working together to identify opportunities where we can submit joint responses to consultations – supporting the outcome of having greater influence on a regional and national level.

Over the past few months, we have submitted a number of joint Broadland and South Norfolk responses to consultations including; Funding for supported housing, Provisional local government finance settlement 2018/19, the Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities and Fair Funding.

##### *Sharing of best practice between teams*

To support the development of a joint staff and working culture, teams across the authorities have been meeting informally to get to know each other's services, share best practice and begin to identify early opportunities for more collaborative working. The housing team for example, have both attended a shared training event on

homelessness. SNC's leisure team and BDC's economic development team have also been meeting informally to discuss the potential opportunities around developing joint initiatives on leisure and community support.

## **10. Cost/savings apportionment methodology**

In order to support the development of a financial analysis of potential savings and costs as a result of a shared approach to service delivery and one shared officer team, consideration has been given by both S151 officers to identify a preferred methodology for Broadland and South Norfolk to use as part of the collaborative working arrangements. The methodology has been developed by undertaking analysis of other district councils operating similar shared service arrangements. The proposed methodology will be applied to develop the financial analysis for the feasibility study to be reviewed by members in June/July and it will be in this report and at this stage that Members will be asked to make a decision on whether this joint approach to cost/savings split is reasonable. If agreed, this methodology will be applied after the completion of the feasibility study or if early opportunities for shared arrangements are confirmed as permanent changes.

It should be noted that until detailed calculations of the costs and potential savings of the proposals are progressed there cannot be certainty around the totality of costs and savings for each council.

Feedback from other local authorities and bodies such as Shared Service Architects has advised that it is best to keep methodologies as simple as possible. An approach that incorporates an external assessment is also seen as favourable. A range of options have been looked at and some alternatives are set out below:

<b>SNC Share</b>	<b>BDC Share</b>	<b>Basis</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
59%	41%	Core Spending Power for 2016/17 as determined by DCLG Final Settlement Figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the basis of this being an external assessment of the core spending power made by government, this would be a good proxy for the savings apportionment.</li> </ul>
58%	42%	Core Spending Power for 2017/18 as determined by DCLG Final Settlement Figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This reflects the relative income generating capacity of each council (e.g. Council Tax, New Homes Bonus, Business Rates)</li> <li>This would give us the ability to predict the savings in advance and ability to respond to changing income patterns.</li> </ul>
53%	47%	Gross Income per audited accounts 2016/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This would be an easier proxy to compare like for like across SNC and BDC.</li> </ul>

51%	49%	Gross Expenditure per audited accounts 2016/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ratio of total budgets as a proxy for the cost splits is a popular option when sharing cost savings in shared services.</li> <li>This reflects the historic pattern of service provision, and would be simple to compare at a high level.</li> </ul>
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It is proposed that the following methodology be applied to the development of the feasibility financials for the June/July feasibility study report.

Basis	Rationale	SNC Share	BDC Share
Average of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core Spending Power for 2016/17 as determined by DCLG Final Settlement Figures</li> <li>Core Spending Power for 2017/18 as determined by DCLG Final Settlement Figures</li> <li>Gross Income per audited accounts 2016/17</li> <li>Gross Expenditure per audited accounts 2016/17</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This combines a number of proxies to form an overarching basis for savings/cost apportionment. As mentioned above, core spending power of an external assessment, which also reflects income generating capacity.</li> <li>These proxies would be simple to compare and gather.</li> <li>Expenditure as a proxy for cost splits has been used by other authorities as a basis.</li> </ul>	55%	45%

The rationale for this proposal is that after analysis of a number of options, not all of which are detailed above, a range of possible splits were calculated between 41/59 to 51/49. The recommendation of 45/55, as the midpoint, was deemed a fair split representing an appropriate reflection of the two councils' different costs and income. The proposed methodology combines a number of proxies to form an overarching basis for savings/cost apportionment, including core spending power as an external assessment. By utilising this approach proxies would be simple to collect and compare and the methodology reflects that of other authorities which have established similar arrangements.

Nonetheless, it should be noted that the ambition is to move towards a 50/50 split over an agreed period if Members agree to move forward with collaborative working.

In the June/July report Members will make a decision as to whether this proposed cost/saving split be applied to the collaborative working arrangements.

## **11. One Shared Officer Team**

The senior leadership teams of both councils, as part of the Joint Strategic Group and Joint Leadership Team, have been working closely together during the development of the feasibility study to guide and support the process.

A key element of delivering the ambition of a 'preferred partner model' will be a one shared officer team supporting two autonomous bodies. The feasibility study in June/July will set out the first steps towards a shared management structure with a proposed timeline for implementation if members choose to progress with collaborative working across the two councils.

The Feasibility Study will also articulate how we will promote culture change across the two organisations, moving towards a new joint culture 'one team' approach.

## **12. Quality Assurance statement – Emma Hodds**

At the start of the QA process the governance arrangements that were developed by the programme team, were reviewed by both Councils' Head of Internal Audit. These arrangements are critical to ensure that Members and key officers are involved in the feasibility study, as they are an integral part to its success.

The QA process to date has been light touch, the early days of this feasibility study is about building key relationships, which will enable this work to successfully progress. The feasibility proposals have been developed and a "critical friend" approach has been taken whilst these are being explored.

The next stages of the QA process will focus on the outcomes that are being proposed and monitoring at key points will be undertaken so as to maximise quality assurance whilst the programme is ongoing rather than at the end when checking on completed activities.

Key aspects to check will be:

- Stakeholder engagement – with unions, staff forum, staff side, and key partners.
- Scope and objectives of the proposals – are these specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely.
- Tracking of activities and implementation plans – are key tasks assigned, managed and monitored, are timetables in place to ensure these can be delivered as expected, are risks and issues included, are there regular touch points to ensure that these remain on track, is there ownership at the right level and is there buy in to what is being proposed.
- Benefits realisation – in terms of improvements in service, improvements in performance, resilience, customer focus and quality – have these been achieved as expected through the implementation plans that the teams have been working on and are the benefits as a result of the changes clear.
- Lessons learnt – how can we learn from initial developments and improve.

In the report that was reviewed by Full Councils in September it was set out that Local Partnerships (an organisation supporting shared service working) would provide external Quality Assurance support for the two councils. As the feasibility work has progressed and scope developed, and following discussion with the Local Government Association, it is proposed that an LGA Peer Review Chief Executive undertake an independent external assessment of the process followed to develop the Feasibility Study.

### **13. Spend to Date**

The below table sets out the spend to date for the Feasibility Study, including external consultancy support and events:

<b>Area</b>	<b>Spend to date</b>	<b>Activities covered</b>
Shared Service Architects and Local Partnerships	£14,400	This has covered a number of workshops for both staff and members, development tools and expert coaching support for the development of the feasibility.
Members informal networking event	£450	Two informal networking events have been held for members to support collaborative working and share progress of the feasibility work.

### **14. Next steps**

#### **14.1 Outcomes**

Following the progress report being reviewed by the informal member groups and the two Full Councils, officers will continue to develop the Feasibility Study which will be presented to Members in June/July.

The Feasibility Study will seek to demonstrate the benefits to be delivered from a strategic collaboration and one shared officer team supporting two autonomous councils. These will include the following outcomes:

- **Achieving greater influence-** We will establish our combined area as one of the best places to live and work in the country. By showing strong leadership of place, we will increase our ability to take advantage of national and regional opportunities to deliver investment for our combined areas, driving prosperity and maximising quality of life for everyone.
- **A joint collaborative working of service delivery-** Through one shared officer team and shared culture we will transform the way we work for the benefit of our communities, building our capacity and resilience.

- **Creating a platform for innovation** – We will be forward thinking, continuously improving and innovating to ensure we deliver those services that our residents and businesses value the most.
- **Delivering financial resilience and sustainability** – We will enable the Councils to adapt to an evolving local government financial landscape, doing more with less and enhancing our productivity and efficiency.

The Feasibility Study will address these opportunities by developing proposals to support the focus areas set out in section 8 of this report.

## 14.2 Timeline

The timeline for review of the feasibility report by Members in June/July will be as follows:

Week commencing	Member group
W/c 4 June	Deadline for report to be circulated to informal Member meetings
W/c 11 June	Joint informal Member meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Joint Lead Members Group</b> [Date TBA]</li> <li>• <b>Joint Scrutiny Group</b> [Date TBA]</li> <li>• <b>Joint Informal Cabinet</b> [Date TBA]</li> </ul>
W/c 25 June	<b>Scrutinies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tue 26 June – BDC</li> <li>• Wed 27 June - SNC</li> </ul>
W/c 2 July	<b>Cabinets</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mon 2 July – BDC and SNC (this will be a co -located meeting)</li> </ul>
W/c 9 July	<b>Full Councils</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mon 9 July – SNC</li> <li>• Thur 12 July - BDC</li> </ul>

## 15. Recommendations

**Members are asked to:**

1. Note the progress of the feasibility study to date and endorse the approach for the June/July feasibility as outlined in section 14.