

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk Council, held on Tuesday 19 April 2022 at 9.00am.

Committee Members Present:	Councillors: J Fuller (Chairman), A Dearnley, R Elliott, K Mason Billig, G Minshull, L Neal and A Thomas
Other Members in Attendance:	Councillors: D Bills & T Laidlaw
Officers in Attendance:	The Managing Director (T Holden), the Director of Place (P Courtier), the Director of People and Communities (J Sutterby), the Assistant Director for ICT/Digital and Transformation (C Lawrie), the Assistant Director Finance (R Fincham), the Assistant Director of Community Services (S Phelan), the Assistant Director of Individuals and Families (M Pursehouse), the Assistant Director of Economic Growth (G Denton), the Governance Manager (L Mockford), the Housing Development and Enabling Manager (H Skoyles), the Senior Governance Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer (S White), the Senior Community Planning Officer (R Squires), the Place Shaping Manager (P Harris), the Property Consultant (S Bizley) and the Democratic Services Manager (C White).

2998 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

2999 TIVETSHALLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUBMISSION

Members considered the report of the Senior Community Planning Officer, which presented Cabinet with the latest version of the Tivetshalls Neighbourhood Plan and sought agreement to take it through to the next stages of consultation and independent examination.

The Chairman explained that the Plan had been submitted back in February, but following the advice of officers, the Parish Council had carried out further work which had resulted in a more detailed document that better reflected its aims and aspirations. He felt the Plan to be comprehensive, well laid out and

clearly evidenced, and was pleased to support its move to the next stage of consultation.

Cllrs L Neal and G Minshull, also members of the Development Management Committee, expressed their support for the document, explaining that it gave a clear direction to both officers and members.

The Senior Community Planning Officer advised that the Plan did satisfy the required assessment criteria, however, officers were still proposing some representations detailed at Appendix 2 of the report. In response to a query, he confirmed that if approved, the Regulation 16 consultation would commence shortly, for a period of 6 weeks, and that the Council would seek to appoint an Examiner during that time. He hoped that the referendum would take place sometime in the Autumn.

It was

RESOLVED:

To agree that

1. The submitted Tivetshalls Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of Part 6 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. The Neighbourhood Plan can therefore proceed to consultation, in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, and subsequently to an independent examination.
3. The proposed South Norfolk Council responses, as detailed in Appendix 2, are formally submitted as part of the Regulation 16 consultation.

The Reason for the Decision

The Plan has met the assessment criteria and should therefore progress through to the next stage of consultation and independent examination.

Other Options Considered

None.

3000 WYMONDHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUBMISSION

Members considered the report of the Senior Community Planning Officer, which presented Cabinet with the Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan, and sought agreement to take it through to the next stages of consultation and independent examination.

The Chairman suggested that further work was required to ensure that the Plan was really fit for purpose and could be used as a tool to ensure the Town Council's aspirations could be achieved.

Cabinet members agreed that improvements were needed, suggesting that more detail was required, with evidenced reasoning, to create policies that could support what was and was not desired for the town. Members recognised that Wymondham was facing some key dilemmas but felt that the Plan had failed to mention some of them, for example where future growth should occur, the importance of Browick Road for commercial use, the strategic gap with Hethersett, and how the railway station would link in with the town centre and future development.

Members agreed that the document was a good start and hoped that the Town Council would recognise that the suggested improvements would help to protect the future of Wymondham and ensure that future growth only happened in a way in which the town wanted.

The Chairman suggested that the Plan be reviewed by the Town Council and be returned to Cabinet for consideration in June. He stressed that Cabinet was not rejecting the Plan in its entirety and was offering constructive feedback to ensure a sound and robust Plan.

The Place Shaping Manager, whilst not disagreeing with the views expressed by members, explained that there was a lot of breadth in which a Neighbourhood Plan could operate, and it was not necessarily a requirement to address all the issues raised. Officers' view was that the Plan did meet the tests required at the current stage in the process, and he advised that Wymondham Town Council could, if it wished, refer the Plan to the Secretary of State, if it felt unfairly treated.

It was

RESOLVED:

To request that Wymondham Town Council reconsiders the content of the Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan, and that it be resubmitted to the Cabinet, for consideration at its meeting on 13 June 2022.

The Reason for the Decision

To ensure that the Plan is fit for purpose and provides evidenced policies to ensure that growth happens in a way in which is acceptable to Wymondham.

Other Options Considered

That the Plan is progressed to the next stage of consultation.

3001 ADDENDUM TO THE 2022/24 DELIVERY PLAN AND THE USE OF THE EARMARKED RESERVES CREATED AS A RESULT OF THE IN-YEAR BUDGET OPTIONS

Members considered the report of the Director of Resources, the Director of People and Communities, and the Director of Place, which sought Cabinet's agreement to recommend to Council the proposed projects and initiatives relating to the use of the earmarked reserves created as a result of the In-Year Budget Options. The report also proposed an addendum to the 2022/24 Delivery Plan, to detail any additional projects/ initiatives not previously agreed as part of the Plan.

The Chairman drew attention to each of the earmarked reserves, outlined at paragraph 3 of the report. He suggested some of the descriptions of initiatives were incomplete, making particular reference to solar panels and electric charging points, and the work at the Loddon Staithe Bridge. Referring to the Delivery Plan, he suggested that some of the terminology required amendment.

Regarding the Positive Planning for a Post Carbon Economy reserve, he stressed the need to ensure a joined up approach across all projects. He also reminded members that some of the initiatives would attract match funding from the Government.

Turning to the Accelerating Economic Growth and Prosperity reserve, members noted that the Loddon Staithe Bridge repairs was part of a much wider project to make environmental improvements and improve the public realm. Cllr K Mason Billig explained it was hoped that safe public access to the river could be created by way of a slip way, and also outlined plans to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee through the creation of Jubilee Trails promoted through the Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk's Office. Cabinet agreed that the budget for this project should be increased by an additional £75k.

Referring to the Supporting our Communities reserve, members noted that these funds would provide additional support to families to equip them with the necessary tools/skills to manage finances, providing long term solutions. This was in addition to the hardship fund which would provide short term support to families that were struggling. Members also noted the project to improve the Council's temporary accommodation and Cllr A Thomas explained that this would provide comfortable, welcoming and efficient temporary accommodation, for those in need.

The Chairman stressed the importance of the Council's new relationship with parishes and referred to the installation of electric charging points throughout settlements and the CIL co-investment fund, and suggested that a report to a future cabinet meeting could provide more detail on how this would be delivered. The Managing Director assured members that officers were considering the future social and physical infrastructure for parishes, and that an event had been planned to brief the town and parish councils on the opportunities available to them.

It was

RESOLVED:

1. **TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL** approves
 - a) The transfer between the earmarked reserves to enable the funding of the 17 initiatives as shown in the table in section 5, and that the budget allocation for the Loddon Staithe Bridge Repairs be increased by an additional £75,000, for public realm improvements in the area.
 - b) That the spend within these newly adjusted earmarked reserves be delegated to the appropriate Assistant Director in consultation with their Portfolio Holder.
 - c) The addendum to the 2022/24 Delivery Plan as shown in Appendix B of the report.
2. Subject to Council approval of the above, to progress the 17 initiatives utilising the £2.5m earmarked reserves. Where business cases are required, as indicated in the tables in section 3, the release of funds is subject to the business cases being agreed by Cabinet in due course.

The Reason for the Decision

To accelerate the delivery of the Council's ambitions.

Other Options Considered

None

3002 UKRAINE UPDATE BRIEFING REPORT

Members considered the report of the Director of People and Communities and the National Management Trainee, which updated Cabinet regarding the Council's work to prepare for the arrival of Ukrainian refugees.

The portfolio holder, Cllr A Thomas, acknowledged how quickly the Council had responded, assessing properties and families, ensuring that accommodation was appropriate and safe. She also stressed the importance of safeguarding and support for both the Ukrainian families and their sponsors. She thanked both the Help Hub and Housing teams for their hard work, and, referring to the delays in the issuing of visas, felt it was regrettable that the Home Office had been unable to work at the same pace.

The Assistant Director of Individuals and Families advised that officers had carried out 69 inspections to date, with 29 further visits in the pipeline. Once the family had arrived, a second welfare visit was carried out to ensure that they was settled. Members noted that only six families had arrived in the district so far, due to delays in the issuing of visas.

During discussion, one member expressed his frustration with the matching process and suggested that the Government needed to change its response, to ensure that the situation improved.

The Chairman agreed that the Government's approach needed to be more efficient, to help families in need and ease the pressure on the rest of Europe. He commended the Council's proactive approach and was disappointed that bureaucracy had not allowed its ambitions to be fully progressed.

It was

RESOLVED:

To

1. Acknowledge the arrangements put in place.
2. Agree delegation to the Director of People and Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Better Lives to utilise any devolved funding to support Ukrainians.

The Reason for the Decision

To ensure that the right support is provided to Ukrainian Refugees relocated to South Norfolk.

Other Options Considered

None.

3003 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY ANNUAL REPORT

Members considered the report of the Governance Manager, which summarised the progress made by Broadland and South Norfolk Councils during 2021-22, in complying with their Public Sector Equality Duty, as required by the Equality Act 2010.

The portfolio holder, Cllr K Mason Billig introduced the report, explaining that the Council was obliged to report annually on how it had complied with its public sector equality duty, over the previous 12 months. She explained that that the Council had a duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equal opportunities, and to look after those people with protected characteristics. She stressed that this needed to be at the centre of all the Council's policy formation.

The Senior Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer referred members to Appendix A, the Council's Public Sector Equality Annual report. She briefly outlined the three specific areas in which the Council should have particular regard when exercising its functions and members noted that the Annual report provided evidence regarding how these areas had been met and

provided examples of where the Council had carried out work that had made a real difference to people's lives.

It was

RESOLVED:

To approve the joint Public Sector Equality Duty Annual Report, as attached at Appendix A.

The Reason for the Decision

To ensure compliance with the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty.

Other Options Considered

None.

3004 CABINET CORE AGENDA

Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda.

3005 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the public and press from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended)

3006 PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND AT MILLFIELDS HEMPSTALL

Members considered the *exempt* report of the Housing Development and Enabling Manager, and the Consultant with Big Sky Property Management, which considered disposal options for the Council owned land at Millfields Hempnall.

The Consultant outlined the report proposals and informed Cabinet of further negotiations since the report had been written, and the subsequent amendments to the Heads of Terms.

The portfolio holder, Cllr L Neal, commended the report to members.

Members discussed the options and noted that Hempnall Parish Council and the local community were supportive of the proposals.

The Chairman referred to the need to correct some typographical errors in the paperwork, and also requested that the commencement date of development be incorporated into the legal agreement.

It was

RESOLVED:

To agree the recommendations as outlined at section 8 of the report.

3007 MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT – CONTRACT AWARD

Members considered the *exempt* report of the Assistant Director of ICT/Digital and Transformation, which provided an update on the progress of the contract award for the provision of the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement for Broadland and South Norfolk Councils.

The Assistant Director of ICT/Digital and Transformation explained that since the contract award had been agreed by Cabinet back in February, the successful bidder had indicated that it could no longer deliver on the price set out in its original tender submission. Following a revised tender submission, they were no longer the preferred supplier and therefore, due to the license expiration date, a contract award to a different supplier, had been authorised by the Managing Director.

Members discussed the procurement process and suggested that contract awards should not be based 100% on price. The Managing Director explained that Assistant Directors and service areas would ensure closer working relationships with the procurement service, to ensure the right outcomes and service accountability.

It was

RESOLVED:

To agree the recommendations as outlined at section 8 of the report.

(The meeting concluded 10.30 am)

Chairman