

CABINET

Minutes of a remote meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council, held on Monday 15 June 2020 at 9.00 am.

Members Present:

Cabinet: Councillors: J Fuller (Chairman), Y Bendle, K Kiddie, L Neal, K Mason Billig and A Thomas

Non-Appointed Councillors: C Brown, V Clifford-Jackson, F Ellis, N Legg and G Minshull

Officers in Attendance: The Managing Director (T Holden), the Director of People and Communities (J Sutterby), the Director of Place (P Courtier), the Director of Resources (D Lorimer), the Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (E Hodds), the Assistant Director (Planning) (H Mellors), the Development Director - Big Sky (S Burrell), the Housing and Wellbeing Senior Manager (R Dunsire) the Senior Community Planning Officer (R Squires), and the Policy and Partnerships Officer (V Parsons)

Also in Attendance Mr J Joyce (Poringland Parish Council)

2796 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr L Neal declared an "other" interest as detailed below:

| Item | Minute No. | Reason for Declaration |
|-------------------------------|------------|---|
| Poringland Neighbourhood Plan | 2798 | Cllr Neal was a member of the Poringland Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (but had not attended any meetings since 2018) |

2797 MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Monday 9 March 2020, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2798 PORINGLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2019-2039 – CONSIDERATION OF THE EXAMINER’S REPORT

Members considered the report of the Senior Community Planning Officer, which presented members with the recommendations of the examiner, appointed to examine the Poringland Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr L Neal, drew members’ attention to the background of the report, and advised members that Poringland Parish Council was satisfied with all of the modifications from the examiner, with the exception of one, relating to Policy 2 within the Plan; “Housing – scale”.

Mr J Joyce, speaking on behalf of Poringland Parish Council, explained that the Parish Council had formally requested that South Norfolk Council exercise its powers to make an alternative modification to the policy, than that proposed by the examiner, in relation to Policy 2. The Parish Council felt that the examiner’s recommended modification would significantly weaken the Policy, which in their view, already had sufficient exceptions and allowed flexibility. He thanked officers for their invaluable support and advice regarding this matter.

The Senior Community Planning Officer drew members’ attention to the proposed alternative modification, as set out in the Decision Statement, detailed at Appendix 2 of the report. Members noted that a more effective standard for small scale development would be through an area-based approach of no more than 1 ha, rather than a cap on the number of dwellings. This would allow for more flexibility around density and was in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) definition of small to medium.

During discussion, members concluded that the examiner’s modifications with regard to Policy 2, created too much ambiguity and Cabinet supported the alternative modification. It was noted that this would result in a further period of consultation and that there might also be a need to refer the issue to further independent examination. Officers explained that due to Covid-19, Neighbourhood Plan referendums could not take place until 6 May 2021, at the earliest.

Voting was then carried out by way of a roll call, and it was unanimously

RESOLVED To

1. Take a different view to that of the examiner, in relation to the recommended modification of Policy 2 within the Poringland Neighbourhood Plan, and to propose the alternative modifications, as set out in the Decision Statement (App 2 of the report);
2. Delegate to the Director of Place (in consultation with the Portfolio Holder) the power to decide whether or not the issue should be referred to an independent examination following the six-week period of consultation.
3. Accept the examiner’s remaining recommended modifications, as set out in the Decision Statement (App 2 of the report).

The Reason for the Decision

To ensure that the policy demonstrates the clarity and contribution to sustainable development, that is required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Other Options Considered

To take a different view regarding the recommended modifications from the examiner.

2799 TEMPORARY CHANGE TO HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICIES

Members considered the report of the Housing and Wellbeing Senior Manager, which outlined proposed temporary adjustments to the home options allocation policy, to help reduce unprecedented demand on temporary accommodation caused by the current Covid -19 pandemic.

The Housing and Wellbeing Senior Manager outlined the proposals, explaining that this was a great strategic opportunity to help people in to supported housing, and to allow those that were ready to move on to more sustainable accommodation.

The portfolio holder, Cllr Y Bendle, commended the report to members and expressed her support for the proposals.

During discussion, members referred to the hidden numbers of homelessness, that had been identified as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Members felt this was an ideal opportunity to address these issues and ensure that residents were appropriately housed.

One member stressed the importance of acknowledging the vital role played by the voluntary sector through the provision of supported housing, and the pressures that this sector was facing.

Voting was then carried out by way of a roll call, and it was unanimously

RESOLVED

- 1 To agree a temporary amendment to the criteria within the Council's Housing Policy to allow officers discretion to place eligible, and suitable, individuals currently living in supported accommodation within the 'High' category for allocation;
- 2 That this be in place for an initial period of 3 months, extendable to 6 months, with approval of the Director of People and Communities, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

The Reason for the Decision

To reduce numbers in temporary accommodation and ensure that residents are appropriately housed.

Other Options Considered

Not to implement the changes to the policy.

2800 SILVER AND GOLD APPLICATIONS FOR ARMED FORCES EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

Members considered the report of the Policy and Partnerships Officer, which summarised progress made by both Broadland District and South Norfolk Councils, towards fulfilling their obligations under the Armed Forces Community Covenant and working towards a Gold status under the Employer Recognition Scheme.

The Policy and Partnerships Officer presented her report, explaining that nominations for the Silver status had been submitted in May, with a decision expected sometime in August. There was, she explained, a clear ambition to be the first authorities in Norfolk to achieve Gold status, and to do this, the Council would need to change its current policy and allow reservists an additional 10 days paid annual leave.

Cllr K Kidde, as a former member of the armed forces, stressed the importance of the additional leave, which would allow reservists to attend vital training.

In response to a query, the Policy and Partnerships Officer explained that numbers of reservists at both Councils had been typically low, and therefore there would be little impact financially on the Council. Should this change, the Council could choose to review its policy.

Members expressed their support for the proposals. Voting was then carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously

RESOLVED To:

1. Note actions and progress towards achieving Silver and Gold status through the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme;
2. Approve the proposed policy change to offer an additional 10 days paid leave to Reservists employed by the Council.

The Reason for the Decision

To demonstrate the Council's commitment to serving and retired Armed Forces Personnel and their families.

Other Options Considered

Not to amend the current policy.

2801 CABINET CORE AGENDA

Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda.

The Chairman referred to the need to ensure that officers were able to redesign the leisure offer and pricing, before the Leisure Recovery Plan was considered by Cabinet on 21 July. The Managing Director explained that he would review the existing delegations and consider whether there was a need to make any changes to delegations at the Council meeting that evening.

It was noted that the Waste Services Review would be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting in August.

2802 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was

RESOLVED: To exclude the public and press from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following item of business on the grounds that it involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended)

2803 PHASE 3, ROSEBERY PARK, PORINGLAND

Members considered the *exempt* report of the Development Director of Big Sky, regarding Phase 3 of the development at Rosebery Park. Poringland.

The Development Director drew members' attention to the key areas of his report.

Following brief discussion, it was

RESOLVED To agree the recommendations as outlined in section 8 of the report.

The Reason for the Decision

To support the economic growth of the area, whilst generating income.

Other Options Considered

As outlined in the report

(the meeting concluded at 10.00 am)

Chairman