

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET – 14TH JANUARY 2014 FROM
THE REGENERATION, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL
MEETING HELD ON 8TH JANUARY 2014**

REC99: **CABINET REPORT – ST MARGARET’S TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE
INITIATIVE**

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager presented the Cabinet report which considered the approval of the allocation of £100,000 per annum over the five year Townscape Heritage Initiative project lifetime from the additional second homes monies, which were allocated to West Norfolk by Norfolk County Council.

The Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel was reminded that the Borough Council had previously submitted a stage one bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The bid had been approved and the Council were now in the process of submitting a stage two bid. He confirmed that the stage two bid required confirmation of all match funding under the scheme, which was £1 million. The Borough Council had already approved £500,000 as match funding.

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager provided the Panel with the background to the scheme and provided information on the eligible area of the project, the buildings which had been identified as critical and priority and the purpose of the scheme, which was to address historic buildings in need of repair.

The Panel was informed that a number of options had been investigated to source the match funding, including looking at other external funding opportunities, but unfortunately none had been forthcoming. The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager explained that the amount of money as part of the second homes bonus had increased in April 2013 resulting in additional income of circa £200,000 to the Council, so it was considered that this fund could meet the shortfall required to match fund the project.

The Chairman thanked the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, some of which are summarised below.

In response to a question from Councillor Moriarty, the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager explained that the second homes money was guaranteed to the Council so it was unlikely that the money would suddenly become unavailable.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel supported the recommendation to Cabinet as follows:

That Cabinet approves the allocation of £100,000 per annum over the five year project lifetime from the additional second homes monies, which are allocated to West Norfolk by Norfolk County Council.

REC100: **CABINET REPORT – COASTAL CONCORDAT FOR ENGLAND**

The Principal Planner LDF and Water Management Officer presented the report to Cabinet which considered the adoption of the principles set out in the Coastal Concordat for England. He explained that the Coastal Concordat was an agreement between various different organisations and set out key principles for coordinating the consenting process for coastal development in England. It was explained that the Concordat did not amend or remove the regulatory or enforcement responsibilities of any signatory parties. Coastal local planning authorities were being encouraged to adopt the principles set out in the Concordat to simplify the planning processes for applicants, regulators and advisors to enable sustainable growth in the coastal zone.

The Principal Planner LDF and Water Management Officer outlined the five core principles of the concordat:

- To enable a single point of entry.
- Single lead authority to coordinate to reduce the duplication of evidence.
- Seek opportunities to defer regulation duplications where appropriate.
- Agree evidence requirements at the pre-application stage.
- Provide coordinated advice across organisations.

The Panel was informed that if the Council agreed to the adoption of the principles they would join eight other early adoption authorities, which more locally included Suffolk Coastal and Waveney. The Principal Planner LDF and Water Management Officer reminded the Panel that it was voluntary to endorse the Concordat but felt that it would be beneficial to the Council. He reminded those present of the difficulties the Council faced when seeking the relevant licences for the installation of the Pontoons at the South Quay and explained that this was one example of how the Concordat would be of benefit.

The Chairman thanked the Principal Planner LDF and Water Management Officer for his report. There were no questions or comments from the Panel.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel supported the recommendation to Cabinet as follows:

The Cabinet is recommended to adopt the principles set out in the Coastal Concordat for England.

REC101: **CABINET REPORT – HACKNEY CARRIAGE STANDS, KING’S LYNN**

The Licensing Manager presented the Cabinet report which considered a number of changes to Hackney Carriage Stands in King's Lynn which needed to be adopted.

He explained that following the refurbishment of the Tuesday Market Place a new Hackney Carriage Stand had been created which needed to be adopted. At the same time, a review of Hackney Carriage Stands on Norfolk Street and Blackfriars Street had been completed, resulting in changes which needed to be adopted by the Borough Council.

The Licensing Manager outlined the proposed changes which needed to be adopted as set out in the report at point 3. He explained that Section 63(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 required that the Borough Council gives public notice of the proposal. A public notice had been placed in the Lynn News and affected persons/bodies were consulted in writing. No comments had been received following the consultation exercise.

The Chairman thanked the Licensing Manager for his report. He explained that the proposals had also been considered by the Borough Council's Licensing and Appeals Board. There were no questions or comments from the Panel.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel supports the recommendation to Cabinet as follows:

That Cabinet approve adopting the new hackney carriage stands in King's Lynn as detailed within the report.

REC102: **CABINET REPORT – NEW ROAD BETWEEN EDWARD BENEFER WAY AND LYNNSPORT**

The Corporate Project Officer presented the Cabinet report which considered the options available to develop the proposal for the proposed access road between Edward Benefer Way and Lynnsport.

The proposals would enable the Council to be in a position whereby detailed costings could be put in place, a full business case could be completed and planning permission sought. This could then form the basis of applications for funding.

The Panel was reminded that the Council had previously submitted a bid for Pinch Point Funding to build a new road between Edward Benefer Way and Lynnsport, opening up access to the Councils housing land at Marsh Lane and Lynnsport. The bid was unsuccessful.

The Corporate Project Officer explained that the purpose of the report was to ensure that, when future funding opportunities arose, the project was 'shovel ready' which meant that the land needed to be within ownership or control of the applicant, the scheme was fully worked up and that Planning permission had been granted.

The Corporate Project Officer explained that three options had been considered for the new road, as detailed in the report. Option 3 was considered the preferred option as it had the ability to reduce the Environmental Impact of the scheme although it was the most expensive.

The Panel was informed of the wider benefits of the scheme, which was the future development of housing areas. The Corporate Project Officer explained that if housing was to be developed on the site the Internal Drainage Board had agreed to carry out the necessary drainage works to the culvert and build a pumping station which would divert water away from King's Lynn by pumping it into the culvert drain and then over pumped to the Ouse and Wash which would mitigate flooding.

The Chairman thanked the Corporate Project Officer for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, some of which are summarised below.

Councillor Baron Chenery of Horsbrugh referred to option one which had the least impact on wildlife. He asked for details on the environmental impact of option three, which was the preferred option. The Corporate Project Officer explained that by increasing the width of the existing drain, which was required as part of the drainage solution, an additional habitat for wildlife would be created. It was hoped that the large hedge would also be retained.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration explained that option three was the preferred option as the environmental impact was less. An Environmental Impact Assessment would be carried out at the planning application stage. He explained that the hedge obviously had wildlife value and would be retained if possible. The cycle path would also be retained which also brought about environmental benefits. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration explained that soil conditions were a problem in some areas meaning that it was likely that pipes would need to be underpinned.

Councillor Moriarty referred to the cost of the scheme and asked how much of the money required would need to be spent before planning permission could be applied for. It was confirmed that all of the budget required would bring the project up to the planning permission stage.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration explained that the money would come from the second homes money which was a stable source of income. He appreciated the concerns that the spend to bring the project up to the planning application stage was significant, but reminded the Panel of the value of the housing scheme which could be achieved once the land was unlocked. He reiterated the importance of having the project 'shovel ready' so that once funding opportunities became available the Council could bid for them.

Councillor Crofts asked if the drain would run under or alongside the new road, as if it ran over the road inspection chambers would need to be installed. The Corporate Project Officer explained that there was almost enough space beside the road to run the drain, but it was not quite sufficient so predominately the road would sit alongside the drain. He reminded the Panel that designs had not yet been drawn up and ground conditions would need to be investigated. It was hoped that any inspection chambers would be offset to the side.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment highlighted the benefits of the scheme with regard to air quality. The new road would divert some traffic from Gaywood which would improve the air quality in this area and throughout the town. He also outlined the benefits of the culvert and the movement of water away from the town centre which would assist with the mitigation of flooding.

Councillor Moriarty referred to the financing of the scheme and asked if the Council had considered cheaper ways of sourcing the funds, such as looking at what the Council loaned to others and the interest rates they achieved. The Corporate Project Officer explained that the Chief Accountant and Deputy Chief Executive had examined the best ways to finance the project.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration referred to the point raised by Councillor Moriarty and explained that the Panel could suggest that the Cabinet investigate other ways to finance the scheme if they wished.

In response to questions from Councillor Pitcher, the Corporate Project Officer explained that a tender exercise had been started a few months ago and five responses had been received. It was hoped that soon an invitation to tender would be sent out and the successful bidder would be known by July, with the drawing up of agreements to take place by October 2014.

Councillor Pitcher referred to the NORA site and the land available for development. The Corporate Project Officer explained that the first 55 of 155 units were starting to be developed and due to be completed in October. The Marsh Lane and Lynnsport scheme would deliver 200 properties for sale, 300 available for private rent and 87 (15%) would be affordable housing. The Corporate Project Officer confirmed that a requirement of the successful tender would be that the project would need to be delivered within five years.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration informed the Panel that the Major Housing Scheme had been presented to the Resources and Performance Panel. A full Council briefing was to be organised for all Members to keep them updated on the scheme.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration suggested that it may be worthwhile for the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel to conduct a site visit to look at the development taking place on the NORA site.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration confirmed that it was option three which was being recommended, not option two as set out in the report at point 6.3.

Councillor Loveless addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He explained that he was pleased that option three was being considered as the preferred option. He asked if the Internal Drainage Board had been approached with regards to the cost of culverting the drain as it would have a long term benefit to them. Councillor Loveless outlined the advantages of option three in that it would be easier for traffic to get out of the housing estates and it would be easier to access Lynnsport.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment explained that discussions had been held with the Internal Drainage Board. Maintenance of a culvert was more expensive than a closed drain, therefore the Internal Drainage Board were unlikely to financially benefit from the culvert. He referred to the additional work that the Internal Drainage Board would be required to carry out following the housing development and the associated costs to them.

In response to a question from Councillor Bubb, the Corporate Project Officer explained that the junction with Edward Benefer Way would be managed with traffic lights and a cyclist crossing.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel supports the recommendation to Cabinet as follows:

1. That the Capital programme is amended to include the £361,170 split between 2013/2014 (£80,000) and 2014/2015 (£281,170) to enable the scheme to be made 'shovel ready'.
2. Instruct Officers to work up scheme Option 3 and submit the scheme for planning approval.