

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

CABINET

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on
Tuesday, 4 March 2014 at 5.30pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court,
Chapel Street, King's Lynn**

PRESENT: Councillor N J Daubney (Chairman).
Councillors A Beales, A Lawrence, B Long,
Mrs E Nockolds, D Pope and Mrs V M Spikings.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lord Howard.

CAB139: **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 February 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB140: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

CAB141: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

CAB142: **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chairman passed on the Cabinet's best wishes to Councillor Lord Howard who had recently undergone a procedure in hospital.

CAB143: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors Mrs Z Christopher and T de Winton attended and addressed the Cabinet on item CAB148: Regeneration and Economic Development Member Task Group and Heritage Task Group Report

CAB144: **CALLED IN MATTERS**

None

CAB145: **FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

The forward decision list was noted.

CAB146: **MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM COUNCIL BODIES**

i) Resources and Performance – Audit & Risk Committee : 25 February 2014

The Committee made the following recommendation to Cabinet, which was dealt with when Cabinet considered the report on the agenda:

ARC86: Cabinet Report: Treasury Management 2014/2015

RESOLVED: That the Committee support the recommendations to Cabinet as follows:

Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council:

- 1) The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2014/2015, including treasury indicators for 2014/2017.
- 2) The Investment Strategy 2014/2015.
- 3) The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2014/2015.
- 4) Adopt the revised Treasury Management Practices (TMPs).

ii) Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel – 29 January 2014

The Panel made the following recommendations to Cabinet, which were dealt with when Cabinet considered the reports on the agenda:

REC113: Cabinet Report – Regeneration And Economic Development Policy Task Group And Heritage Task Group Report

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Cabinet be asked to take into consideration the comments of the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel.
- (ii) The Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as follows:

That the Cabinet:

1. Receives the reports of the two Member Task groups (Appendix A and B) and thanks both for their commitment and hard work.
2. Notes the common areas of priority identified by both groups and considers the issues raised within the content of the development of the Council's forward Corporate Business Plan:
 - a. Waterfront regeneration, including the area from Outer Purfleet to Nar Loop – assess feasibility and financial viability of proposals that can maximise this area's potential.
 - b. Improvements to main approaches/gateways to King's Lynn, including Southgates area.

- c. Marketing the borough to business investors and visitors, including targeted campaigns on NORA and promoting King's Lynn as a heritage tourism product.
 - d. Working with key stakeholders in King's Lynn town centre to enhance the retail core area and historic built environment and attract businesses that will provide a wider range of higher quality shops.
3. Endorses the proposal to focus on these areas and instructs officers to prepare a further report to outline a strategy for each and to identify priorities for early action including:
- a. Delivery of NORA infrastructure to unlock 13 ha of employment land with the potential to generate circa 1,000 jobs.
 - b. Review of the Council's commercial portfolio to identify opportunities to maximise its potential.
 - c. Delivery of a programme of environmental enhancements at key gateway routes into King's Lynn, particularly enhanced tree planting schemes along the Nar Ouse Way and in the Southgates area.
 - d. Provision of location maps at the train and bus stations, car parks and key places in King's Lynn showing not only tourist information but other key buildings.
4. Considers the recommendation from both groups in relation to the Marketing and Heritage areas within the Cabinet Portfolios.

REC131: Cabinet Report – New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan And The West Norfolk Strategic Economic And Infrastructure Investment Plan

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as follows:

1. That Cabinet endorses New Anglia LEP's Draft Strategic Economic Plan.
2. That Cabinet approves the West Norfolk Strategic Economic and Infrastructure Investment Plan.

CAB147: TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2014/2015

Cabinet was reminded that the Council was required to receive and approve a Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy by 31 March 2014 which covered :

- Capital plans, including prudential indicators

- A Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy
- The Treasury Management Strategy
- An Investment Strategy

This report covered the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) Prudential Code, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the DCLG Investment Guidance.

This report looked at the period 2013/2017 which fitted with the Council's Financial Plan and capital programme. The report was based upon the Treasury officers' views on interest rates, supplemented with leading market forecasts provided by the Council's treasury advisor, Capita Asset Services, Treasury Solutions.

In presenting the report the Principal Accountant explained that in 3.2 of the report, the Council's Borrowing Need (Capital Financing Requirement – CFR), only the first column of figures were those which were set, the other columns were dependent on any changes to the interest rates. However, the estimated external borrowing need for 2014/15 should have read (£839,000) and not (£189,000). This would subsequently amend the estimated closing CFR figures as follows:

Closing CFR	£000's
2014/15 Estimate:	£14,360
2015/16 Estimate:	£14,072
2016/17 Estimate:	£13,659

Cabinet was informed that since the publication of the agenda the Council's Treasury advisors had provided an update to the Interest Rate Forecast, it was agreed to provide a copy of the document to Cabinet for information. Essentially in 4.4 of the report by March 2017 it was anticipated that the interest rate would increase to 1.75%.

Following a question from the Chairman on changes to the diversification of where the Council invested its funds it was explained that the policy ensured the spreading of the Council's £27m across at least 5 parties with credit ratings from AAA to A+/A. Councillor Long asked whether the figures had changed, to which it was explained that rather than saying that the figures would be a range of figures – for example between £5-8M previously, it was now up to £8m.

Councillor Pope asked the following questions:

- How with the CFR it appeared the Council would be in credit, to which it was explained that as at the current time there was a high level of temporary borrowing, but when capital receipts began to come

in from the NORA development it should show less short term borrowing.

- If the Council was using many pfi arrangements, to which it was explained that apart from the County's pfi for street lighting this Council had no involvement with pfi agreements.
- How an asset's life was assessed for accountancy purposes, to which it was explained that assets were grouped together into different categories - buildings, vehicles, IT etc. Buildings were revalued every 5 years, and the life of the asset assessed at that time. Vehicles lives were dependent on the type, and the work and mileage of the vehicles.

Councillor Beales asked the following questions:

- why the CFR was wrong on the table, and whether the figure was a matter of historic or projected debt. The Chief Financial Officer explained that the only confirmed figures in the table in 3.2 of the report were the 2013/14 year, the following years were all estimates of projected debt.

- How the Minimum Revenue Position (MRP) and statutory annual revenue charge worked the management of debt. The Chief Financial Officer explained that the Council had to determine how to set the MRP, and once an asset had reached the end of its asset life it was written off. If money was spent on an asset such as a building, the MRP would be adjusted accordingly.

- How would the NORA development affect the MRP. It was explained that the CFR would change depending on how the Capital Programme was funded, the current year had an increase in temporary borrowing, but next year the properties should begin selling which would decrease the capital financing and therefore decrease borrowing through receipts.

- Whether using the Council's own capital influenced the CFR, to which it was confirmed that if using the Council's resources it would.

Cabinet noted that the Resources and Performance – Audit Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 25 February 2014 and supported the report and recommendations.

RECOMMENDED: 1) That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2014/2015, including treasury indicators for 2014/2017 be approved as now amended to incorporate changes to the Capital Financing Requirements.

2) That the Investment Strategy 2014/2015 be approved.

3) That the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2014/2015 be approved.

4) That the revised Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) be adopted.

CAB148: **REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MEMBER TASK GROUP AND HERITAGE TASK GROUP REPORT**

Cabinet considered a report which explained that in November 2012 it had approved the creation of the Regeneration and Economic Development Member Task Group. Its main purpose was to review key areas of the Council's current Regeneration and Economic Development Policy and make a series of recommendations to Cabinet in terms of future priorities and interventions.

In January 2013, Cabinet approved the creation of a further task group to examine the Heritage Assets stream of work associated with the Regeneration and Economic Development Policy Task Group. The Heritage Task Group was asked to provide a series of recommendations to Cabinet on how to preserve and enhance the cultural and historical assets of the area.

The report set out the recommendations from the Groups.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor T de Winton addressed Cabinet highlighting the following points which were his feelings on the work of the Regeneration and Economic Development Member Task Group:

- He felt that marketing of the Borough should be concentrated with a single Cabinet Member, which should centre on the Borough's image, projection and branding. He felt it needed the focus that a marketing director in a large organisation would give it.
- The focus previously given to a Marina should now be applied elsewhere.
- The industrial estates could be worked harder.
- NORA should be more powerful
- The town centre wasn't flourishing; it required a higher level of shops and needed to encourage a change in the dynamics of the clientele.
- Tuesday Market Place refurbishment was a move in the right direction
- The BID process needed to be pulled together with other issues for the town centre.
- Improvements to the waterfront needed to join up with encouraging around the coast operation with stops for boats en route.
- The Council should look at things such as advertising in the underground in London.

- There was a perceived gap in the tourism market for cultural and heritage attractions, which was a higher spend than only beach market.
- He felt that the economic cycle was improving, and the Council would be looked to for creating employment and giving the right signals – he felt the Borough should “ride the crest of the wave”.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Mrs Christopher, on behalf of the Heritage Task Group, addressed Cabinet explained the following:

- That the Group had focussed on heritage buildings in King’s Lynn, a number of which were in a poor state.
- She felt that was room for another Task Group to carry on the work.
- There was a need for a Cabinet Member with responsibility for Heritage.
- There was room to build on the Heritage element of the Borough, expanding into potential archaeology on Council owned property by professionals or amateurs.
- She felt King’s Lynn needed a Heritage Design Statement, which Members were happy to become involved with. Such a statement would help guide property owners and developers to what was being looked for.
- King’s Lynn could be advertised on the trains.

She thanked the officers involved in supporting the Group.

Councillor Beales congratulated the Members on their enthusiasm and commitment. He felt he had to be realistic from a financial point of view in the current climate. He made the following points:

- Anything proposed needed to be creative and achieve a goal, whereas he felt that something such as advertising on buses etc didn’t necessarily achieve that goal, and couldn’t be afforded.
- He felt there were a number of common goals for Cabinet to look at, many of which were regeneration heavy, some could make some money, in order to pay for others.
- With regard to the NORA development, he acknowledged that the enthusiasm for the project did pre date the work of the Task Group. There was the proposal to the LEP for funding, and Council resources to unlock some of the employment land with a view to creating employment etc.
- With regard to the industrial units he had asked officers to look at what could be delivered if a large unit was sold. He acknowledged that much of the industrial unit portfolio was old

but it did perform, although some were harder to let premises as firms were often looking for smaller footprint and taller buildings. The longer term view was to provide businesses with that they were looking for.

- The environmental enhancements to the town centre were being carried out, and provided quick wins in boosting the town centre.
- The issue of location maps was already being addressed at the bus and rail stations and would be coming forward as part of the bus station review.
- The matter of the portfolio responsibilities was something which would be reviewed in due course, although he did not feel that there was scope for 2 cabinet members, both elements were linked.
- He would look to continue the work already started, grounded in what the Council could deliver at the moment.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that the recommendations were interesting, and regretted being unable to attend many of the meetings, although had kept up to date with the minutes. Some of the recommendations which particularly interested her were those that affected her portfolio, for example the heritage element, the Town Hall, museums etc. She reminded Members that the Joint Museums Committee did see all of the brochures which were produced on the heritage front. The Chairman of the West Norfolk Archaeology Club had also attended those meetings.

With regard to environmental enhancements, Members were reminded of the work carried out in the town, and the enhancements funded in recent times by the Amiens project which would continue to produce projects in the coming year.

She thanked the Task Groups for bringing forward some good suggestions.

Councillor Daubney thanked Councillor Christopher and de Winton, and their Task Groups for the work they had undertaken, which had given much to consider for the future. He also thanked the officers who had supported those Task Groups for the work that they had undertaken.

The Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel had considered the report at its meeting on 29 January 2014 and supported the report and recommendations.

RESOLVED: 1) That the reports of the two Member Task Groups be received and both Task Groups be thanked for their commitment and hard work.

2) That the common areas of priority identified by both groups be noted and the issues raised within the content of the development of the Council's forward Corporate Business Plan be endorsed:

a. Waterfront regeneration, including the area from Outer Purfleet to Nar Loop - assess feasibility and financial viability of proposals that can maximise this area's potential

b. Improvements to main approaches / gateways to King's Lynn, including Southgates area

c. Marketing the borough to business investors and visitors, including targeted campaigns on NORA and promoting King's Lynn as a heritage tourism product

d. Working with key stakeholders in King's Lynn town centre to enhance the retail core area and historic built environment and attract businesses that will provide a wider range of higher quality shops

3) That the proposal to focus on these areas be endorsed and officers be instructed to identify priorities to progress early action including:

a. Delivery of NORA infrastructure to unlock 13 ha of employment land with the potential to generate c. 1,000 jobs

b. Review of the Council's commercial portfolio to identify opportunities to maximise its potential

c. Delivery of a programme of environmental enhancements at key gateway routes into King's Lynn, particularly enhanced tree planting schemes along the Nar Ouse Way and in the Southgates area

d. Provision of location maps at the train and bus stations, car parks and key places in King's Lynn showing not only tourist information but other key buildings

4) That the recommendation from both groups in relation to the Cabinet Marketing and Heritage areas within the Cabinet Portfolios be considered when portfolio responsibilities are reviewed.

CAB149: LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS' STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLANS

Councillor Beales presented a report which outlined:

1. The aims, priorities and intervention packages of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's Draft Strategic Economic Plan (2014-2026)

2. The aims, priorities and intervention packages of West Norfolk Strategic Economic and Infrastructure Investment Plan (2014-2020)

3. New Anglia and Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnerships' investment priorities and funding allocations under the EU Growth Programme (2014-2020).

The endorsement of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's Draft Strategic Economic Plan showed local authority commitment to local

economic development and collaboration with Local Enterprise Partnerships, which are key government requirements.

The West Norfolk Strategic Economic and Infrastructure Investment Plan aligned local economic growth priorities with LEP wider priorities and acted as the conduit for levering in funding from the Local Growth Fund and EU Growth Programme.

In presenting the report Councillor Beales reminded Members that the LEP was a business led environment with significant, if fragmented funding available. The Council needed to make it clear where its own priorities lay so the LEP was fully aware of them, and that when funding became available the Council was able to demonstrate it could deliver.

Councillor Daubney concurred with the comments made by Councillor Beales and explained that in the last 3-4 years since the LEPs were set up, they now had a grip on what funding was available, albeit that it may not be what was originally envisaged.

Councillor Long asked whether the Greater Cambridge and Peterborough (GCGP) LEP would be carrying out the same process. The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager explained that they were also producing such a document, but that both organisations were at different points in the process, as they were both required to meet with Ministers before publication of their document, which the GCGP LEP had yet to do.

Councillor Beales explained that the complexity of the LEPs funding arrangements was not of their making. He drew attention to the considerable amount of work put in by the businessmen and women sitting on the LEPs at the same time as running their own businesses, and paid tribute to that.

Councillor Daubney informed Members that the Chairman of the New Anglia LEP, Andy Wood was stepping down to take up a different position, and arrangements were being made to meet with the new Chairman as soon as possible.

Cabinet noted that the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel had considered the report at its meeting on 26 February and supported the report and recommendations.

RECOMMENDED: 1) That the New Anglia LEP's Draft Strategic Economic Plan be endorsed.

2) That the West Norfolk Strategic Economic and Infrastructure Investment Plan be endorsed.

The Meeting closed at 6.31 pm