

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK**

**CABINET**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on  
Tuesday, 4 June 2013 at 5.30pm in The Committee Suite,  
King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.**

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lord Howard  
and A Lawrence.

CAB1: **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 May 2013  
were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB2: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

CAB3: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

CAB4: **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

CAB5: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors J Moriarty and A Tyler – Item 10 i  
Councillor J Loveless – Item 10 iii

CAB6: **CALLED IN MATTERS**

None

CAB7: **FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

The Forward Decision List was noted.

CAB8: **MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM COUNCIL  
BODIES**

None

**CAB9: NOTICE OF MOTION 2/12 COUNCILLOR A TYLER**

Cabinet considered a report which responded to the Notice of Motion to Council proposed by Cllr A Tyler as follows:

“This Council calls on the Cabinet to investigate the opportunities that exist for this Council to revert to a committee system. This Council further calls on the Cabinet to report back on its findings to this Council”.

The report explained that Local authorities in England were governed by one of three systems, the Mayoral system, a Cabinet or a system of committees.

The power to change from a Cabinet system to a committee system came from the localism Act 2011.

A full Council decision would be required to change the governance structure, if taken this triggers a five year commitment (unless there is a petition signed by at least 5% of the electorate and a positive referendum).

Hence in response to the question raised in the Notice of Motion the answer was that the Council was able, should it so wish, to change to a committee system of governance.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor A Tyler addressed the Cabinet commenting that he did not see the Notice of Motion as political but practical and financial. He asked the Cabinet to agree the 3 recommendations put forward. In his view a change would mean savings and there were several members who would like to see a change.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor J Moriarty, in agreeing with Councillor Tyler’s comments explained that the proposal stemmed from the Government’s Localism Agenda. A number of Councils had reverted to the Committee System having seen the limitations of the Mayor and Cabinet systems where the power base was with a small number of individuals, and were making savings in doing so. He felt that the incinerator wouldn’t have come about at the County Council with a Committee system.

Councillor Daubney, in presenting the report and responding to the points raised reminded Members that the Cabinet system had originally been introduced by a Labour Government. He felt that the proposal could potentially be considered at some point when the Council was not concentrating on maintaining its position as one of the most cost effective authorities in the Country, which had frozen Council Tax for a number of years, along with maintaining car parking charges. The manifesto commitment that the current Administration had been elected

on was one with a Cabinet system. It was important to focus the authority on the important issues for the Council, therefore he would not be proposing that officers carry out investigations into a change.

**RECOMMENDED:** 1) That the fact that the opportunity does exist to change to committee system of governance, should Council wish to do so be noted.

2) That the fact in 1) above be reported to Council.

3) That as the current Administration was elected on a manifesto containing a Cabinet, concentrating on retaining its position as one of the most efficient Councils which had amongst other things frozen Council Tax for a number of years and Car Parking Charges officers will not undertake work to assess the advantages and disadvantages of a change of governance structure for the Council.

CAB10: **POLICY FOR BUSINESS RATE HARDSHIP RELIEF**

The Revenues and Benefits Manager, Joanne Stanton presented a report which explained that following changes to the business rates funding for local councils from April 2013 the opportunity had been taken to review current arrangements for the discretionary right for the Council to reduce or remit payment of rates under section 49 of the Local Government Act 1988. It was explained that under the new arrangements the Council would now have to provide 40% of the relief instead of 25% as previously.

The report set out revised procedures and levels of support that the Council would use as guidelines in dealing with applications for hardship relief:

- The Council would use the services of an independent advisor which would act as support to the Council in dealing with applications for relief
- The level of support would normally be 25% where previously there was no formal guideline. This would still allow for support to be given above this level if appropriate.
- In the case of an application involving a member the determination of the support given will be taken by the Revenues and Benefits Manager in consultation with the Chief Executive. All group leaders would be informed of such cases.

Councillor Long asked whether the £25,000 budget set aside for the relief would be sufficient, to which it was explained that if it was not, a further report would be submitted.

In response to a question from Councillor Beales on the amounts individual claims may be, it was explained that average amounts depended on the rateable values of the buildings.

Councillor Daubney commented that it proved to be an effective assistance for those businesses who found themselves with financial problems. He confirmed that it would be right for a report to come back to the Cabinet in the event the budget was spent.

**RESOLVED:** That the revised arrangements for dealing with applications for Hardship Relief from business rates be approved.

CAB11: **APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE BODIES 2013/14**

Cabinet considered a report which explained that the Council was invited to nominate Councillor representatives to serve on a number of outside bodies and partnerships with which the Council had a range of types of relationships. The majority of appointments were made annually, although some appointments were for a longer period.

The report sought nominations for Executive appointments to serve on outside bodies and partnerships requiring confirmation for 2013/14.

It was reported that the Council had re-joined the Local Government Association to which it was invited to make appointments. It was proposed that the Leader be nominated as the representative, with other Cabinet Members attending relevant meetings as appropriate.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor J Loveless drew attention to the fact that the majority of the nominations were Cabinet Members which he felt didn't give other Council members the opportunity to represent the Council. He asked that consideration be given to the widening of the representation. Councillor Daubney acknowledged the point made, but reminded Members that the appointments for consideration were those which were closely related to Cabinet portfolios. There would be those appointments which came to Council at the next meeting which involved more ward related nominations. He undertook to continue to review the allocation of these positions.

**RESOLVED:** 1) That the appointment of representatives to serve in an Executive capacity on the outside bodies and partnerships requiring appointment in 2013 in the Appendix to the report be approved, with the addition of representative/s on the Local Government Association to be the Leader, with any appropriate Cabinet Member nominated for specific meetings.

2) That the reporting arrangements be noted, as shown in section 3 of the report.

3) Cabinet noted that all other appointments to Outside Bodies would be made at the Council meeting on 27 June 2013.

**CAB12: APPOINTMENTS OF TASK GROUPS 2013/14**

Cabinet considered a report which invited it to agree to arrange for the appointment of members to serve on the Cabinet Task Groups, and agree the membership of Joint Safety and Welfare Committee and Joint Employee Committee for 2013/14.

**RESOLVED:** 1) That officers be instructed to seek the Membership from Group Leaders for the following Task Groups for the new Municipal Year:

- Local Development Framework Task Group
- Mart Task Group
- King's Lynn Representational Arrangements Task Group.
- Regeneration and Economic Development Task Group
- Heritage Task Group

2) That the existing Membership of the Joint Safety and Welfare Committee and Joint Employee Committee be agreed for 2013/14.

**The Meeting closed at 6.00 pm**