

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

REGENERATION, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Regeneration, Environment and
Community Panel held on Wednesday, 25th March, 2015 at 6.00 pm in the
Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30
1EX**

REC1 PRESENT:

Councillors C Sampson (Chairman), Mrs A Wright (Vice-Chairman),
T Bubb, M Chenery of Horsburgh, Mrs J Collingham, Mrs S Collop,
C Crofts, Mrs J Leamon (substitute for M Pitcher), J Moriarty, Miss S
Sandell (substitute for M Shorting), D Tyler and D Whitby.

Portfolio Holders:

Councillor A Beales – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial
Assets

Councillor A Lawrence – Portfolio Holder for Community and Housing

Councillor B Long – Portfolio Holder for Environment

Officers:

Chris Bamfield – Executive Director, Leisure and Public Space

Emma Boore – Careline Community Service Manager

Dale Gagen – Corporate Project Officer

John Greenhalgh – Environmental Health Manager – Community
Safety

Laura Hampshire – Regeneration Project Officer

Ray Harding – Chief Executive

Ostap Paparega – Regeneration and Economic Development Manager

Dave Robson – Environmental Health Manager – Environment

Jo Russell – Repairs and Adaptations Manager

By Invitation for REC137: Councillor T Wright.

REC2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D J Collis, M
Howland, M Pitcher, M Shorting and Mrs E Watson.

REC3 MINUTES

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 February 2015
were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

REC4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was none.

REC5 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

REC6 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Loveless – REC139 and REC142.

REC7 **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

REC8 **MATTERS REFERRED TO THE PANEL FROM OTHER COUNCIL BODIES AND RESPONSES MADE TO PREVIOUS PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS/REQUESTS**

The Panel noted the responses made by Cabinet at its meeting on 3 March 2015 to the recommendations made by the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel at its meeting on 25 February 2015 in respect of the following items:

- Byelaws for Skin Piercing Activities
- Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Delegation of Decision Making for Neighbourhood Development Plan Processes
- Award of the Honorary Freedom of the Borough – Honorary Alderman Dr P Richards
- King's Lynn Town Hall

REC9 **CARELINE AND CARE AND REPAIR PRESENTATION**

The Careline Community Services Manager and the Repairs and Adaptations Manager provided the Panel with an overview of the services provided.

The Panel was informed that a Home Improvement Agency was a local organisation dedicated to helping older people, people with disabilities, and vulnerable people to live in safety and with dignity in their own

homes. The services were focussed on ensuring that existing housing was fit for purpose and that vulnerable people were able to continue living independently for as long as possible. The Council's Home Improvement Agency consisted of two teams: Careline Community Service and Care and Repair.

The Careline Community Service offered the following services:

- Community alarms – which allows the client to call for help and receive a response from a 24 hour control centre which securely holds all of the personal and medical information. Once an emergency call is made the operator will ensure that the client receives the appropriate help and support.
- Assistive technology – once a client had a community alarm, there were a range of assistive technology equipment which could be installed which worked via the alarm system. This could be triggered by the client or trigger automatically on their behalf. Examples included smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, bed, chair and property exit sensors.
- Minor adaptations and falls prevention – trained assessors were qualified to specify and install a range of aids including grab and hand rails, half steps, lever taps, secure flooring, removing trip hazards, lighting and supporting hospital discharges.
- Home security – provision of a range of equipment and interventions to help clients feel safer and more secure, which included: key safes, door chains and window locks, spy holes, security lighting etc.
- Energy Efficiency – keeping homes warm and as energy efficient as possible was a vital part of the service and the Careline Community Service could provide radiator foils, door and letter box brushes and edging strips, checking of central heating settings, distribution of winter warmer packs, treating damp and making referrals to other energy efficiency schemes and fuel poverty agencies.
- General Handyperson Service – clients could contact Careline if they were no longer able to complete small jobs within their homes. Careline supported the clients as much as possible and attended to jobs such as changing fuses, light bulbs, small repairs and other minor plumbing and carpentry jobs.

The Care and Repair Service provided the following:

- The statutory function to process Disabled Facility Grants.
- Facilitation of other grants and loans.
- Private repairs and adaptations service.
- Delivery of a range of major adaptations, including stair lifts, level access showers, ramps, door widening, complex child and adult cases.

The Careline Community Services Manager and the Repairs and Adaptations Manager highlighted the following:

- A procurement process had been completed to ensure that all local contractors met the highest possible standards.
- The services were registered with Trustmark, the standard applied by the governing body of Housing Improvement Agencies.
- The department had worked on a number of projects and participated in a range of working groups, including Home from Hospital, Winters Pressures Initiatives, Dementia Service Development and re-enablement services.
- Services were provided to Fenland and Breckland District Council via Service Level Agreements.
- The Careline Service extended across North Norfolk, Broadland, South Holland and East Cambridgeshire.
- Careline had Dementia Care Coaches and Dementia Champions and had secured funding to deliver a Dementia Friendly Homes pilot, which would involve researching practical support and interventions to support those living with dementia to stay within their own home for as long as possible.

The Chairman thanked the Careline Community Services Manager and the Repairs and Adaptations Manager for their presentation and invited questions and comments from the Panel, some of which are summarised below.

In response to a question from Councillor Baron Chenery of Horsburgh, the Careline Community Service Manager explained that Careline did work with the West Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group on a range of initiatives and projects, including the Dementia Partnership, Home from Hospital and Norfolk Older People's Partnership. Representatives from Careline tried to attend as many meetings as possible.

In response to a further question from Councillor Baron Chenery of Horsburgh regarding Dementia Services, the Careline Community Service Manager explained that Careline was involved with the West Norfolk Dementia Forum which was led by the Clinical Commissioning Group and made up from representatives from the public and voluntary sector. Careline were also involved in the Norfolk-wide Forum for Dementia.

The Vice Chairman asked how the service supported Dementia clients who could not live on their own. The Repairs and Adaptations Manager explained that a Care Assessment would be carried out which would include a financial assessment and the client would be referred to the relevant organisations for assistance.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Collop regarding charges for services, the Careline Community Service Manager explained that an hourly rate was charged, which was dependent on if the client was on benefits. £10 per hour plus VAT was charged to clients on benefits and £20 per hour plus VAT was charged to those not on benefits. The client could provide the parts or Careline could purchase them on their behalf. There was an option to pay by monthly

direct debit if required and all cases were assessed on their own merits.

Councillor Mrs Leamon questioned if Careline was involved in the Clinical Commissioning Group's Navigator Scheme. The Careline Community Service Manager explained that she was aware of the scheme which would look at how services were accessed and how referrals were made.

In response to a further question from Councillor Mrs Leamon regarding waiting times, the Careline Community Service Manager explained that there was a seven working days target for installation of alarms and a three week waiting list for the Handyperson Service. Careline also provided a Home Assessment Service which involved a visit to the client's property and provided advice and assistance on funding streams available and see if they are eligible for free access to care.

In response to a question from Councillor Moriarty regarding Housing Association properties the Repairs and Adaptations Manager explained that the service worked closely with all Housing Associations in the Borough and responded to referrals. If a client had recently moved to a Housing Association property and required adaptations, the Support Officers could look at why the property was taken, for example was it through Homechoice or a mutual exchange and look at the eligibility for adaptations.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community, Councillor Lawrence informed the Panel that he was extremely proud of the work carried out by Careline and Care and Repair and highlighted how small adaptations could make huge improvements to the quality of life of clients. He thanked the Careline Community Service Manager and the Repairs and Adaptations Manager for their work and asked that his thanks be passed on to all members of the team.

On behalf of the Panel, the Chairman reiterated the comments made by the Portfolio Holder.

RESOLVED: (i) The presentation was noted.

(ii) That on behalf of the Panel and the Portfolio Holder for Community the Careline and Care and Repair Services be thanked for the services they provided.

REC10 ANNUAL FEEDBACK REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODY REPRESENTATIVES

Annual feedback reports from Councillors who had been nominated by the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel to serve on Outside Bodies were presented to the Panel as follows:

- College/Council Liaison Board
- West Norfolk Disability Forum
- West Norfolk Community Transport Project
- King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee
- Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel.
- Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman thanked all those Members who had provided a written report, which had been included with the agenda and invited any additional comments. He also invited those Councillors who had not provided a written report to provide a verbal report to the Panel.

Councillor Moriarty in referring to his report on West Norfolk Community Transport informed the Panel that a new Chief Executive had now been appointed. Councillor Mrs Leamon commented that she hoped that the new Chief Executive would be as enthusiastic and passionate as the previous Chief Executive who had sadly recently passed away.

Councillor Mrs Collop thanked all of the Members who had provided an update and asked if any members had not provided a report. The Chairman explained that a written report had been received from representatives from all of the bodies to which a nomination had been made from the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel with the exception of two Outside Bodies, however the Council representative was present at the meeting to provide a verbal update.

Councillor A Wright explained that he was the Council's representative on the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel, however the Panel had only met on one occasion and was now dealt with by the Police Crime Commission.

Councillor A Wright informed those present that he was also the Borough Council's representative on the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and had been involved in this Committee since 2002. He explained that the Committee invited people to attend the meetings to talk about health services and if required the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would look into any relevant issues. Sub-Committees were set up to investigate issues and recent Sub-Committees had been established to look at Stroke services, bed blocking, GP Appointments, Mental Health and Pathways.

RESOLVED: That the feedback reports be noted.

The Corporate Project Officer presented the Cabinet report which updated Members on progress made on the NORA Housing project and requested Members to authorise the signing of contracts to enable the start of works for Phase 2.

He reminded the Panel that on 29th July 2014 Cabinet had authorised the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, subject to a trigger point of 20 sales on phase 1, to authorise the signing of contracts and the start of works for phase 2. The latter was subject to the business case not requiring an additional contribution for phase 2 of more than £400,000.

The Corporate Project Officer explained that this position had not quite been reached, even though sales had gone well with 42 out of 54 units having been sold, of which nine had been exchanged, eleven were due to be exchanged in the coming weeks and 22 had been reserved.

The Corporate Project Officer outlined the options available to Cabinet as set out in the report at point 3. Option 3 was the preferred option which would be recommended to Cabinet and would include the provision of affordable housing units. The Corporate Project Officer provided the Panel with details of the other options available.

The Panel was informed that under the initial agreement each party had invested £1 million into the project, the Council's investment being in the form of land value. Norfolk County Council had now increased their contribution to £1.2 million.

The Corporate Project Officer referred to the financial implications and risk management implications as set out in the report.

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

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets, Councillor Beales reminded the Panel how the NORA site used to be and the significant amount of work involved to make it into a developable site. He felt that the end result was very pleasing and units were selling well. He encouraged members of the Panel to visit the site to see the quality properties which had been provided.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets explained that the key issue was the provision of affordable housing. The Council could have put a case together that the provision of affordable housing was unviable, but he felt the provision of affordable housing was important.

Councillor Moriarty sought assurance that no further funds would be required following the current request and asked if the commencement of phase 2 could wait until the remaining units on phase 1 had been sold. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets explained that funds were required for the completion of phase 1. The completion of phase 2 would result in further capital receipts which could be used on other capital projects. The Portfolio Holder reminded those present that the project was a regeneration project and would not be consuming capital it would be generating it at a level cost to the tax payer.

The Corporate Project Officer explained that it was hoped that the remaining units would be sold shortly. An event would be held on site to promote the Help to Buy scheme. The Corporate Project Officer explained that this site was the only site available in King's Lynn which offered the Help to Buy scheme. The Panel was informed that there was already a demand for phase 2 properties and by starting work on phase 2 there would hopefully be a continuous product available.

Councillor Bubb requested clarification on the qualifications for affordable housing. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community agreed to circulate details of the criteria to the Panel for information.

Councillor Mrs Collingham expressed support for the scheme and felt that it was an excellent way to make use of Capital Funds, especially considering the need for housing in King's Lynn. She referred to the New Homes Bonus and the Council Tax which would be received by the Council. Councillor Mrs Collingham commended the scheme.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets thanked Councillor Mrs Collingham for her positive comments and referred to point 6.4 of the report which explained that it was estimated that the Borough Council would receive £1,072,350 and Norfolk County Council would receive £1,177,389 in New Homes Bonus, subject to the continuation of the scheme.

The Chief Executive reminded those present that a number of years ago the Council had made a decision to regenerate the NORA site. It was a very difficult site to get involved with and required significant investment. The Chief Executive explained that it was now important to ensure that development continued. He informed the Panel that the units provided on the site were very high quality and recommended that Members conduct a visit to the site. The Chief Executive reminded those present that alongside receiving capital receipts, the Council would still be retaining an asset in equity shares.

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

1. To authorise the signing of contracts to enable the start of works for Phase 2.
2. To fund additional contributions from a reduction in the overall land receipt using option 3 paragraph 3.3 of the Cabinet report.

REC12 **CABINET REPORT - AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN**

The Environmental Health Manager (Environment) presented the Cabinet report which highlighted the work which had been completed in drawing up an Air Quality Action Plan and the mechanisms used to consult with the public and stakeholders on the proposed air quality reduction measures.

The Environmental Health Manager (Environment) reminded those present that they had received in 2014 prior to the plan going out for public consultation. The Cabinet report included the results of the consultation and presented the final version of the Air Quality Action Plan for adoption.

The Panel was informed that DEFRA provided guidelines on what should be included in an Air Quality Action Plan and these guidelines had been followed by the Council.

The Environmental Health Manager explained that an Air Quality Steering Group had been set up by the Council with the Portfolio Holder for Environment in the Chair. The Group had produced the draft Air Quality Action Plan and had co-ordinated the consultation exercise which had included information published on the website, online surveys and drop in sessions. A report detailing the consultation responses was included in the report at Appendix 1.

DEFRA had also considered the draft Air Quality Action Plan and were supportive. DEFRA's report was available on the Borough Council's website.

Following the consultation exercise the Air Quality Steering Group had met to consider responses and formulate 20 measures which had been included in the Air Quality Action Plan – Non-technical Summary.

The Environmental Health Manager referred to the Policy Implications as set out in the report and explained that the Air Quality Action Plan would be used to implement measures designed to, in combination, reduce the levels of NO₂ to levels below the National Air Quality Objective and eventually lead to the revocation of both Air Quality Management Areas within King's Lynn.

The Environmental Health Manager reminded the Panel that it was a legal requirement for the Borough Council to complete, adopt and implement an Air Quality Action Plan.

The Environmental Health Manager drew the Panels attention to page 19 of the agenda which was a chart showing the results of the consultation exercise.

The Chairman thanked the Environmental Health Manager (Environment) for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, some of which are summarised below.

Councillor Crofts referred to Air Quality Policy Action 5 which was to consider, with Norfolk County Council, if taxis and private hire vehicles could use the 'bus only' lane from Wisbech Road through to the Friars and Boal Street. He felt that this was a good idea as it would divert some traffic away from London Road and should definitely be progressed. The Environmental Health Manager explained that a local bicycle user group had raised concerns on this issue in that there would be additional traffic on the bus route. Comments had also been received from residents and the nearby school.

Councillor Baron Chenery of Horsburgh felt that more consideration should be given to encouraging people to visit King's Lynn by rail from Downham Market and Watlington. The Environmental Health Manager explained that options to utilise the old Sand Line had been investigated for possible use as a 'Park and Rail' facility but was not feasible. The Environmental Health Manager referred to Air Quality Policy Action 6 which was to look at ways that public transport could be made more attractive.

Councillor Bubb referred to 'Park and Ride' schemes. He was aware that this had been looked at in the past but had not been feasible. He asked if it was worth looking at it again. The Environmental Health Manager explained that options for 'Park and Ride' had been looked at but was very expensive to set up and there would have to be an incentive for customers, for example not having to then sit in traffic on a bus to come into town. Improvement measures such as installation of the variable messaging system to direct vehicle users to available car parking spaces had already been implemented and would hopefully have an impact on air quality as drivers would not have to drive round searching for spaces.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Leamon, the Environmental Health Manager explained that various policy actions within the plan addressed car parking issues and any implemented actions would be monitored in terms of air quality. The Environmental Health Manager confirmed that any new developments would be subject to Air Quality Impact Assessments as part of the planning application process.

In response to a further question from Councillor Mrs Leamon, the Environmental Health Manager confirmed that there were two Air Quality Monitoring Stations in the Borough, one at London Road,

King's Lynn and one near Gaywood Clock. There were also 66 diffusion tubes across the Borough which were used to monitor and compare sites and could be used to look at the cumulative impact.

The Environmental Health manager explained that patterns and trends could be identified through the monitoring process, for example an increase in pollutants during rush hour, and different levels on each side of the road depending on the direction of travel.

In response to a question from the Vice Chairman the Environmental Health Manager explained that monitoring was carried out in residential areas, or in areas where people were likely to congregate for a period of time, for example the bus station. In response to a question from the Vice Chairman regarding the Hardwick Retail Park, the Executive Director explained that it was private land, so issues with queues in the car park would need to be addressed by the land owner.

Councillor Moriarty asked for clarification on what would happen if the Air Quality Action Plan was adopted by the Council in terms of ongoing monitoring. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the Air Quality Steering Group would look at all data available and where levels were the highest. They would then look at available resources to take forward individual measures. This could require further consultation with specific user groups and Norfolk County Council Highways. The Environmental Health Manager reminded those present that an update report was presented to Cabinet on an annual basis and the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel would also have the opportunity to consider the update report.

The Executive Director reminded the Panel that some of the measures contained within the action plan were in the process of being implemented, for example the variable messaging system and improvements to the bus station.

Councillor Moriarty asked if there was the scope to involve outside people in the Air Quality Steering Group. The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor Long explained that the Steering Group was made up of officers, but going forward the relevant people and organisations could become involved in specific consultation exercises, they would not, however, become formal members of the Steering Group. The Executive Director reminded those present that Norfolk County Council Highways would also carry out an extensive consultation exercise if traffic management proposals were put forward.

Councillor Loveless addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He referred to the increase in vehicles using the roads and asked what could be done to discourage car use and provide alternative ways to travel. Councillor Loveless felt that the report addressed problems with pollution at a certain level, but asked what about the spread generally across the areas. The Environmental Health Manager explained that general background pollutant levels were decreasing and he felt that

this was due to the decrease in coal burning gas stations, an increase in 'green' energy and improvements to vehicle technology. The Environmental Health Manager explained that there had been a downward trend in background pollutants over the past decade and in King's Lynn 2014 had been the lowest year recorded. More details of this would be included in the Annual Report.

Councillor Loveless asked if he would have the opportunity to make further comments on the prioritising of the actions points and the Environmental Health Manager explained that once the specific actions were being looked at, it was likely that further consultation would be carried out.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as follows: That Cabinet adopt the Air Quality Action Plan.

(ii) The Panel noted that several of the initiatives were already in place.

REC13 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

REC14 **EXEMPT CABINET REPORT - KING'S LYNN INNOVATION CENTRE**

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager presented the Cabinet report which updated on progress with the development of the King's Lynn Innovation Centre and summarised the outcome of the procurement process to appoint a contractor to build the centre.

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager provided the Panel with information on the results of the tender process. He explained that potential funding sources had been identified and a bid had been submitted to the Norfolk Business Rates Pool, the results of which were awaited. If the bid was unsuccessful it was proposed that the Council loaned an equivalent amount to the project partners as an extension to the existing loan agreement.

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager explained that since writing the report there had been some progress and he outlined the changes to the recommendations.

The Chairman thanked the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager for his report and the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager responded to questions and comments from the Panel.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel support recommendation 1 & 2, subject to the figure being amended from £420, 000 to £450,000 and that recommendations 3 & 4 be amended to recommendation 3 as set out below:

1. Endorse the submission of an application for £450,000 grant funding to the Norfolk business Rate Pool to cover the build cost shortfall following submission of tenders.
2. In the event that the bid to the Norfolk Business Rates Pool is unsuccessful, the Cabinet agrees to provide a loan of £450,000 to NWES to enable them to meet the build cost shortfall.
3. That a further report be presented to Cabinet on the outcome of the method chosen for the ground improvement works.

REC15 **EXEMPT - DERELICT LAND AND BUILDINGS GROUP UPDATE**

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager and the Regeneration Project Officer provided the Panel with an update on the work of the Derelict Land and Buildings Group.

The Derelict Land and Buildings Group action plan was circulated to the Panel and provided detail on the current status of derelict land and buildings in the Borough.

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager and Regeneration Project Officer provided detail of some of the land and buildings included within the action plan.

The Regeneration Project Officer explained that Councillors were welcome to contact her if they had queries on specific pieces of land or buildings.

The Chairman thanked the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager and the Regeneration Project Officer for the update.

RECOMMENDATION: That the update be noted.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

REC16 **PANEL WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET FORWARD DECISION LIST**

The Panel considered their work programme and the Cabinet Forward Decision List.

RESOLVED: The Work Programme was noted.

REC17 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director, Chief Executive, Democratic Services Officer, Portfolio Holders, Members of the Panel and all officers who had been present at the Panel meetings for their support over the past year.

The next meeting of the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 3 June 2015 at 6.00pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm