

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

**CABINET**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on  
Tuesday, 12th November, 2019 at 3.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town  
Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillor B Long (Chair)  
Councillors R Blunt, P Gidney, P Kunes, A Lawrence, G Middleton and  
E Nockolds

An apology for absence was received from Councillor I Devereux

CAB56 **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 September 2019  
were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CAB57 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

CAB58 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

CAB59 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None for this meeting

CAB60 **MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors J and S Collop – Parish Partnerships fund referral from  
KLACC  
Councillor M de Whalley – Forward Decisions and the Guildhall  
Councillor J Moriarty – Unreasonably Persistent Complaints

CAB61 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

None

CAB62 **FORWARD DECISIONS**

The Forward Decision list was noted.

Under standing order 34, Councillor de Whalley addressed Cabinet regarding the Climate Change Notice of Motion he had submitted to Council which had been referred to Cabinet. He expressed concern about the report not being submitted to this meeting. He referred to the fact that Norfolk County Council was due to be considering the issue. Councillor Long explained the item would go to Cabinet on 7 January providing a suitable report could be prepared in time for the meeting. Otherwise it would go to the 4 February meeting.

**CAB63 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES**

The King's Lynn Area Consultative Committee referral of the Parish Partnership Fund was dealt with in the item on the agenda.

**CAB64 PARISH PARTNERSHIPS FUND - REFERRAL FROM KING'S LYNN AREA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

Cabinet considered a report which explained that in 2016 the King's Lynn Area Consultative Committee (KLACC) had their Terms of Reference extended to allow bids to be made into Norfolk County Council's Parish Partnership fund. The fund provided match funding for small-scale highway schemes within Parishes, and was extended to cover unparished areas of the County. The maximum value of schemes was £50,000, therefore the maximum amount of match funding is £25,000. Parish Councils and District/Borough Councils in unparished areas had to submit bids for the fund, and the deadline for the submission of bids to the County Council for the next round of funding was 6 December 2019. Any bid was expected to have the support of the relevant County Councillor(s), which was the case with the schemes put forward here.

Four schemes had been put forward for the 2020/21 funding year, namely the provision of a moveable Speed Awareness Messaging (SAM2) sign to be located in the Newlyn (Queensway) area, and the provision of bus shelters at Peckover Way, Minster Court/William Booth Road, and Saddlebow Road. The total cost of the schemes was £18,650, and agreement from Cabinet for funding of £9,475 was requested (half the total cost of the schemes plus the insurance costs for the SAM sign). This would need to be paid for out of the King's Lynn special expenses.

At the KLACC meeting on 31 October, and in relation to the specific schemes, it was resolved:

- 1) That all four schemes be endorsed by the Committee and recommended to Cabinet that they be taken forward as bids to Norfolk County Council through the Parish Partnership scheme
- 2) That Cllr John Collop present the Committee's views to Cabinet

Councillor J Collop addressed Cabinet on behalf of the KLACC and explained each scheme. He explained that for the SAM device, volunteers would move the device and charge it as required.

Councillor Collop explained that the 3 bus shelters proposed were:

Peckover Way, Councillor S Collop had proposed. An objection had been received to the proposal by the adjacent householder.

Minster Court, Councillor Mrs Wilkinson had proposed this, no objections had been received and it was supported by County Councillor Smith.

Saddlebow Road, Councillor Kemp had proposed this. Objections had been received from local residents.

In discussing the proposals the question was asked as to whether the County scheme included bus shelters. Councillor Blunt suggested that a wider discussion on this matter within his portfolio would be useful.

Councillor Long asked whether the bus companies had indicated a need for them, to which Councillor Collop explained that the report had come to KLACC the police and others had been informed. KLACC were putting the items forward for support so they could be part funded from special expenses.

Councillor Long asked whether the local County Councillors had agreed to use part of their County Council ward allowance to put towards the schemes. It was confirmed that County Councillor Young had agreed to put part of her allowance towards the Peckover Way shelter.

Cabinet supported the SAM sign, and agreed that the bus shelters would be supported providing they could receive match funding and a contribution in support from the local County Councillor's ward budget.

**RESOLVED:** 1) That the request for match funding for the provision of one SAM2 sign in the Newlyn (Queensway) area of the town be approved.

2) That the proposal for the bus shelters at Peckover Way, Minster Court/William Booth Road and Saddlebow Road be endorsed subject to bus shelters being eligible in the scheme, and the County Councillors contributing to the proposal with part of their ward allowance. If agreed, these will be paid for through an increase in King's Lynn special expenses to be incorporated in the Budget document.

### **Reason for Decision**

Cabinet is required to consider any Parish Partnership fund bids endorsed by KLACC, as per the Committee's terms of reference.

The decision on the bus shelters is to ensure they would be eligible for County Council funding as part of the scheme, and to ensure buy in from County Councillors with the use of some of their ward allowance.

## CAB65 **CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Cabinet considered a report which reminded members that the borough council strives to provide excellent services to customers, visitors and businesses, and to deliver those services right first time. Occasionally, customers may be dissatisfied with council services and make a complaint about the service they had received. The current process focussed on the administration of complaints so a thorough review of the process had been conducted to drive greater consistency, reflect best practice, improve customer experience and to ensure all complaints were dealt with appropriately.

Issues identified during the review were:

- The existing process focussed on administration of the policy. The revision had been developed on best practice and according to advice from the Local Government (LGO) and Social Care Ombudsman
- Clear definitions of what constituted a complaint were not explicit
- Clearer timescales in the handling of complaints were needed to bring the policy into line with the Ombudsman's timescales

The revised policy had been presented to the Corporate Performance Panel and their comments and recommendations have been incorporated into the policy.

The Assistant Director explained that training had been procured from the LGO for staff across the authority to ensure consistency with the LGO approach.

It was agreed that the word "minor" be added to the recommendation regarding any amendments made.

**RECOMMENDED:** 1) That the Corporate Complaints Policy be approved.

2) That delegated authority to make any minor amendments considered necessary to the policy be granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

## **Reason for Decision**

To ensure the council has a robust, consistent and easily accessible policy for staff, members and customers to manage the complaints process and associated expectations.

### **CAB66 REVISED UNREASONABLE COMPLAINTS POLICY**

The Assistant Director explained that a recent review of corporate complaints and the Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy had highlighted a review of the policies was required to reflect best practice and to provide clarification on key points. The report related to the policy on persistent complainants and had been renamed the Unreasonable Complainants Policy.

The item had been submitted to the Corporate Performance Panel (CPP) who had discussed the matter and made comments which had been incorporated into the report. Member involvement had been included when placing someone on the list, so it would now involve an Assistant Director in consultation with the Executive Director and Chair or Vice-Chair of Standards. The appeals process would involve the Chief Executive, a Standards Committee Member and the Independent Person on the Standards Committee. It was noted that the sanctions applied to each case would be proportionate for the circumstances of each case. An amended version of the policy had been issued prior to the meeting.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Moriarty addressed the Cabinet as the Vice-Chair of CPP. He made points on the following:

- CPP wished to review the policy annually.
- He felt that the involvement of councillors in the matter did not necessarily have to be Chair and Vice-Chair
- The scatter gun approach – after the complaint had been dealt with and the matter closed.
- Refusal to accept the decision without new evidence
- The 1 year time frame was not considered by CPP.

Councillor Long reminded Members that Cabinet would not be involved in CPP reviewing the policy annually as it was their decision to make. He agreed to add “minor” to the recommendations regarding making amendments to the scheme. He agreed to have a discussion with Councillor Moriarty on any other points he wished to make.

Councillor Gidney suggested that as some people used social media to abuse staff and highlight their complaints, that should also be added to the policy. It was agreed.

The Assistant Director explained that the 1 year time frame was in line with the practice and guidance of the LGO, as set out in the corporate complaints policy.

**RECOMMENDED:** 1) That the revised policy on managing the behaviour of unreasonable complainants be approved subject to:

- the addition of reference to the use of social media to further persistent complaints
- a further discussion between the Chair and Vice-Chair and Councillor Moriarty on the minor points raised.

2) That delegated authority to make minor amendments to the policy be granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

### **Reason for Decision**

To ensure a clearly defined process is in place for the management of unreasonably persistent complainants, to provide fairness, transparency and accountability within the process, to safeguard the health and wellbeing of officers handling such complainants and to ensure the policy is in line with the Local Government Ombudsman's best practice.

The reference to CPP wishing to review the policy annually was a matter for CPP to decide, not a matter of a Cabinet decision.

## **CAB67 MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

The S151 Officer presented a report which explained that the Council had formally adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (updated 2017) and remained fully compliant with its requirements.

One of the primary requirements of the Code was receipt by Cabinet of a Mid-Year Review Report.

The Mid-Year Review Report has been prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice, and covers the following:

- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy;
- The Council's capital expenditure (prudential indicators);

No changes were requested to the policy, and the prudential borrowing was within agreed limits.

In examining the report the Cabinet discussed the PWLB rate increase and asked if there had been any notice of the rate increase. It was confirmed that there had not been any notice of the increase or reason given but Government had been asked to re-look at the rate particularly

for housing schemes which would potentially be adversely affected by the increase, and therefore affect the housing delivery test set by the Government. It was noted that a review of the capital schemes which may have been funded by this route would be carried out. It would also be reviewed as to whether this would be added to the risk register.

**RESOLVED:** That the report and the treasury activity be noted.

### **Reason for Decision**

The Council has formally adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (updated 2017) and remains fully compliant with its requirements.

One of the primary requirements of the Code is that a mid-year review will be undertaken.

### **CAB68 GUILDHALL COMPLEX**

Councillor Nockolds presented a report which proposed the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (HLF) for the Guildhall complex.

The report explained that the Council had continued to develop proposals for the Guildhall including setting it in a strategic context for Culture through the "Cultural Prospectus" and working with the Arts Council Norfolk Museum and Art Service and National Portfolio organisation. The Council now had a strong partnership approach with the National Trust and the Shakespeare Guildhall Trust in developing proposals for the site. Working with these bodies and taking forward the work of the Regeneration and Development Panel working group and subsequent discussion had resulted in a revised approach to the site to improve sustainability and flexibility of use while maintaining the historic uses.

Under standing order 34 Councillor M de Whalley addressed the Cabinet in support of the proposal and commented that the Shakespeare's Guildhall Trust had made comments on the expression of interest which he felt should be included in the document. He felt that the term "minor" should be deleted from the recommendation. This was agreed. Councillor Nockolds reminded Members that there was a word limit to the submission. It was also agreed to amend the delegation to the Chief Executive.

**RESOLVED:** That the Expression of Interest be submitted and delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health to make amendments as required and submit the document.

**Reason for Decision**

To enable the restoration of the Guildhall complex to take place and create a sustainable future for the site.

**The meeting closed at 4.38 pm**