

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

**CABINET**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 5th January, 2021 at 3.00 pm in a Remote Meeting on Zoom and available for the public to view on WestNorfolkBC on You Tube - Zoom and You Tube**

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

CAB209 **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 November and 10 December 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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CAB210 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

CAB211 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

CAB212 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None

CAB213 **MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors Dickinson, Rust, Morley, Moriarty, Joyce and Ryves attended under standing order 34.

CAB214 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

None

**CAB215 FORWARD DECISIONS**

Noted

**CAB216 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES**

None

**CAB217 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT: FINAL SCHEME FOR WORKING AGE PEOPLE FOR 2021/2022**

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Cabinet was reminded that the council must review and agree its 2021/2022 Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for working age people by March 2021. It was necessary to first consult with the major preceptors then publish a draft CTS scheme for public consultation. The draft CTS Scheme was agreed by delegated decision and the public consultation, using a number of difference mediums, ran from 17 September 2020 to 2 November 2020. It was noted that there were few responses to the consultation. The final CTS Scheme must then be agreed by full Council.

The report detailed the results of the consultation and the recommended final CTS scheme for working age people for 2021/2022.

Under standing order 34, Councillor Rust drew attention to her comments made at the Corporate Performance Panel regarding the hope that the council would disregard a greater amount of income for applicants.

The Chair reminded Members that there was only a limited amount of money in the pot and the number of additional claimants was putting additional strain on budgets. He reminded members about the discretionary scheme for urgent cases.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Morely commented that it was disappointing that only 6 responses had been received on the consultation process. He asked if it was worth checking for more user friendly interfaces to encourage participation. The Chair explained that officers over the years had tried a number of different avenues for consultation but would continue to do so.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Moriarty commented that he was sure officers would continue to try to increase the responses.

Under standing order 34, Councillor Joyce commented that he felt it was unfair for local authorities to have to determine the levels of

support. He considered it should be set by the Government and funded by it.

Cabinet confirmed that they would welcome more responses to the consultation and encouraged local members to encourage constituents to respond.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the draft CTS scheme for 2021/2022 which went to public consultation be adopted as the final CTS scheme for 2021/2022.

### **Reason for Decision**

To ensure a CTS scheme for working age people for 2021/2022 is agreed by Council by 11 March 2021.

## **CAB218 AUDIT COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS 2019-20**

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The Chair of Audit Committee, Councillor Dickinson presented the report which provided Cabinet with the results of the 'Review of the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee' for 2019-20 and confirmed that the Committee was fulfilling its stated purpose which was 'to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process'.

In presenting the report she drew attention to the fact that the external auditors had not yet completed the audit the statement of accounts for the previous year. She reminded members that a training session was provided for Audit members for each new subject.

The Internal Audit Manager explained that the review was carried out in accordance with the CIPFA guidelines and checklist. She drew attention to areas which were not compliant, most of which were due to them being new introductions to the list this year, and explained the measures in place to ensure compliance. She commented that the point regarding the inclusion of an independent member for the committee would remain under consideration.

Councillor Long echoed the comments regarding the training provided for Audit members and drew attention to the high levels of participation in them. He drew attention to the cross party membership of the Committee which ensured there was inbuilt audit and scrutiny of the areas. He commented that it would be interesting to see what was taking place across other authorities.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Rust commented on the well managed work of the Committee and felt that if it was considered best practice the council should engage an independent member.

Councillor Dickinson encouraged all members to attend the training sessions provided, and commented that the issue of independent member would be considered as part of their review, although covid had caused some delays.

In discussing the report Cabinet members welcomed the review of the role of the Audit Committee, and encouraged members to continue attending the training sessions provided.

The issue of the service and support given by the external auditors was referred to with the hope that the situation would improve in the future.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet accept the evidence presented in the report as confirming that the Audit Committee operated effectively during 2019-20.

**Reason for Decision**

To ensure the Council continues to meet its obligations under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**The meeting closed at 3.41 pm**