

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**COUNCIL****Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 26th November, 2015 at 6.30 pm in the Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn**

PRESENT: Councillor D Whitby – Deputy Mayor
 Councillors Miss L Bambridge, A Beales, R Blunt, Mrs C Bower, A Bubb, Mrs J Collingham, J Collop, Mrs S Collop, P Colvin, C Crofts, N Daubney, I Devereux, Mrs S Fraser, P Gidney, G Hipperson, P Hodson, M Chenery of Horsbrugh, Lord Howard, M Howland, H Humphrey, A Lawrence, B Long, Mrs K Mellish, G Middleton, J Moriarty, Mrs E Nockolds, M Peake, D Pope, C Sampson, Miss S Sandell, M Shorting, T Smith, Mrs S Squire, M Storey, J M Tilbury, A Tyler, D Tyler, Mrs E Watson, Mrs J Westrop, D Whitby, A White, Mrs M Wilkinson, T Wing-Pentelow, Mrs A Wright and Mrs S Young

Apologies for absence were received from the Mayor, Councillor C Manning and Councillors B Anota, B Ayres, P Beal, R Bird, Mrs S Buck, I Gourlay, R Groom, M Hopkins, C Joyce, P Kunes, C Manning, G McGuinness, A Morrison, P Rochford, Mrs V Spikings and G Wareham

C:53 PRAYERS

Prayers were led by the Mayor's Chaplain Father Ling

C:54 MINUTES

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 October 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Mayor.

C:55 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Prior to inviting declarations of interest, the Deputy Mayor informed Members that item 8 Determination of Council Tax Discounts to Second Homes and Empty Properties for 2016/17 would be withdrawn and resubmitted in January 2016.

Councillors J and S Collop declared a personal interest in item CAB82: Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fees.

C:56 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Deputy Mayor informed Council that birthday wishes had been sent to HRH Prince of Wales.

C:57 URGENT BUSINESS

None

C:58 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None

C:59 DETERMINATION OF COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS RELATING TO SECOND HOMES AND EMPTY PROPERTIES FOR 2016/2017

The item was withdrawn in order to enable further discussions on the levels.

C:60 CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**i Culture Heritage and Health - Councillor Mrs E Nockolds**

Councillor Mrs Nockolds presented her report. Councillor Moriarty asked whether in her meeting regarding the Norfolk County Council Walking and Cycling Strategy the issue of the closure of permissive paths was on the agenda as it affected the ability largely in the rural areas to use such paths. Councillor Nockolds agreed to take the issue up with the officer preparing the document.

Councillor Mrs Collop drew attention to the fact that she had been refused entry into an exercise class at Lynnsport because she was 5 minutes late. She asked if this should be made known to the users. Councillor Mrs Nockolds undertook to mention it to the Management.

Councillor Mrs Squires asked how much tourism for the area contributed to its economy and how many jobs it supported. Councillor Mrs Nockolds responded that it was very important for the economy of the area as it contributed £300m in 2014 spent in the Borough, supporting 10,000 jobs mostly throughout small businesses in the area, many of which were along the coast. She commented that businesses were being encouraged to make it known that they were in West Norfolk, rather than North Norfolk which was often assumed.

Councillor Smith asked whether following the success of the series of lectures held on the area they would be repeated next year. Councillor Nockolds confirmed that they had been popular with 40 people attending one of the lectures. The Outreach Worker who organised them was now arranging them for next year, hoping to provide 10 lectures. Attendees were also given a questionnaire on attending the lectures, on which one of the things was to encourage people to volunteer, so a network of volunteers was being organised.

Councillor A Tyler drew attention to the Lynn News Education Awards which Councillor Mrs Nockolds had attended, and referred to the Hanseatic book available for year 5 children. He commented that he was impressed with the standards being achieved in local schools and asked the Portfolio Holder to comment. Councillor Mrs Nockolds responded that she was a Governor of South Wootton School, and had let them know about the book, commented that it was on sale in the Tourist Information Centre and welcomed the awards locally..

ii **Development - Councillor R Blunt**

Councillor Blunt presented his report. Councillor Moriarty drew attention to the fact that 88% of major applications were being determined within the statutory timeframes, he asked how many of the minor applications were being determined within the required timeframes. Councillor Blunt undertook to let Councillor Moriarty know the figures.

iii **Environment - Councillor B Long**

Councillor Long presented his report. Councillor A Tyler asked what the situation was regarding the Bawsey Drain. Councillor Long responded that he had held discussions with the IDB who were responsible for the drain and they would maintain their programme of clearance, and would monitor it. He commented that the issue of enforcement for the area mentioned at a previous meeting also applied to the Alley ways in North Lynn.

Councillor Middleton asked why West Norfolk had a lower cost per tonne for Waste Services than many others in the County, and what would have to happen to get the others to the same position . Councillor Long responded that the contract had been procured alongside North Norfolk District Council, and the joint procurement had saved in the region of £200,000 because of the economies of scale. For others to operate at such levels meant looking across Norfolk to procure. He also commented that West Norfolk had been good at delivering more waste through maximising recycling which earned recycling credits.

Councillor J Collop commented that in his neighbourhood less people appeared to be using the food recycling caddies, he asked how the overall figures were performing at present compared to the start of the scheme. Councillor Long responded that he had recently asked officers to produce the up to date food recycling figures which would be available in due course. He considered that the use of the caddies varied between areas, with no set patterns, but 10 tonnes of waste food was being delivered each day, which meant it was 10 tonnes per day not going into landfill. He stated he hoped Councillors would encourage people to participate, and also drew attention to the fact that it was well known that once food recycling schemes had been

running for a period of time the levels collected dropped, which was often because it made people realise how much food they wasted, so altering shopping habits to buy and waste less.

Councillor A Tyler asked if the reduction could be because people composted waste or fed it to animals etc. Councillor Long reminded members that home composting was encouraged, but the scheme dealt with more types of waste than could be composted or fed to the chickens etc.

Councillor J Collop asked what had been occurring at Freebridge Community Housing (FCH) as Councillor Long was a Council representative on it and he felt Councillors should know what was occurring there. Councillor Long reminded Members that he had to act in the interests of FCH as he was appointed to their Board. He suggested that Members could attend their Board AGM where a full report was given, or make a request through one of the Panel meetings that FCH be invited to come along and give an update. After further requests from Councillors Collop and Tilbury, Councillor Long said he would look into what was available electronically to provide for Members in the bulletin.

iv **Housing and Community - Councillor A Lawrence**

Councillor Lawrence presented his report. Councillor Moriarty asked if he shared his concerns about the new forum being proposed with FCH with Cabinet Members and Officers. He asked if the minutes of the meetings would be available for Members. Councillor Lawrence commented that the meeting was not new, but had previously been carried out on an informal basis. The proposal was to formalise the arrangements to protect it for the future, and to make sure the good working relationships continued.

Councillor J Collop asked if Councillor Lawrence would be attending the meeting with Taxi Drivers which had been agreed at Cabinet Scrutiny Committee, and asked what progress had been made with arranging the meeting. Councillor Lawrence confirmed he would attend and was awaiting confirmation of a date where officers were liaising with the drivers.

v **Special Projects - Councillor Lord Howard**

Councillor Lord Howard presented his report. There were no questions.

vi **ICT, Leisure and Public Space - Councillor D Pope**

Councillor Pope presented his report. Councillor Pope corrected a statement he had made at the previous meeting regarding the use of

the keypads on the parking machines. He explained that when they had been introduced previously there had been much criticism of them, so having spoken to the Leader he withdrew the undertaking that their use would be re-introduced for all incidences.

Councillor Pope did confirm that the pay by phone scheme was now up and running, and the Cattle Market signs mentioned previously, which were in the ownership of the County Council were scheduled for replacement the following week.

Councillor J Collop asked of there had been any money spent on the keyboards, to which Councillor Pope responded £175 per keyboard, but they would be used in a different way.

Councillor Moriarty asked if the Council would be making a contribution to the Town Centre Development Manager post mentioned in the report. Councillor Pope informed him that the post was a Town Centre project and would be funded by them.

Councillor Howland asked if any savings had been accrued by the conversion to ipad use by the Council. Councillor Pope responded that he was pleased to see all using the ipad in the Panel meeting last evening, and that savings were being made on broadband provision, removal of landlines, provision of hardware amongst other things.

vii **Deputy Leader and Regeneration and Industrial Assets - Councillor A Beales**

Councillor Beales presented his report. By way of an update, Councillor Beales informed Council that the Enterprise Zone for the Nora Business Park had been confirmed, which was very good news for the area.

Councillor A Tyler drew attention to the Wennis Public House and commented that he was confident that if planning permission was granted there would be a positive outcome for the building. Councillor Beales explained that the building had changed hands and the new owners were talking positively with officers, so he was optimistic for its future. Councillor Tilbury, in acknowledging any commercial sensitivity asked if there was any indication what the new owners would do with the building, he hoped it was something positive for the town rather than just a Friday and Saturday night venue. Councillor Beales confirmed that officers were encouraged by progress, and agreed to update Members within the realms of commercial sensitivity.

Councillor Tilbury commented on the news of the proposed development in Downham Market which he hadn't been aware of. He asked how much the Council had been involved in the process. Councillor Beales suggested Councillor Daubney would be better placed to discuss this matter.

viii Leader and Resources - Councillor N Daubney

Councillor Daubney presented his report. Councillor A Tyler sought assurance from the Leader that the Council would do all it could to encourage a better rail service for the area following the recent announcement about infrastructure issues on the King's Cross- King's Lynn line. He also confirmed he had carried out an interview on the subject, where he had been pleased to wear his Borough tie. He sought support from the Leader in encouraging Members to purchase such a tie.

Councillor Daubney responded that the wearing of the ties was promoting the Borough. With regard to the Ely Junction matter, he confirmed that the Council needed to be, and was angry at the issue, and pushing for the half hourly service as the Borough was being encouraged to grow and develop and was trying to improve job prospects, pay and technology, but it required the infrastructure to deliver this.

Councillor Tilbury asked how much the Council had been involved in the proposed development in Downham Market. Councillor Daubney responded that the proposal was a purely private sector development which had been being developed for over 2 years. The developer had approached a number of groups across the area, had invited Members to briefings, and had issued newsletters. The Council had not had any financial involvement but had provided encouragement and introductions and would look to deal with it as efficiently as possible. He felt that there was an opportunity for the development to do a lot of good for the Borough, and the rail infrastructure mentioned earlier was key to such developments.

Councillor J Collop asked what the Leader thought of the Spending Review announced the previous day, including the announcement about stamp duty increase on second homes. Councillor Daubney responded that the issue of the change in tax credit proposals would be in the financial interests of the Council, but the Revenue Support Grant figures weren't yet known but were expected to decrease. He concurred with the Chancellor's statement made that the Country should live within its means. With regard to the second homes issue, Councillor Daubney acknowledged that people needed somewhere to live and the opportunity to buy a home.

Councillor A Tyler asked what criteria students would have to meet in order to participate in university courses as part of the new University Centre at the College of West Anglia. Councillor Daubney responded that the criteria would remain the same, as the college already offered degree courses. It offered an opportunity for students who wanted to stay in the area to study a degree the opportunity to do so in world class facilities. The building would be ready by the Autumn term 2016.

C:61 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

C:62 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES****i** **Cabinet: 3 November 2015**

Councillor Daubney, seconded by Councillor Beales proposed the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting on 3 November 2015.

With regard to CAB78: Customer Services and Channel Shift, Councillor J Collop expressed concerns about the reduction in opening times of Downham Market and Hunstanton offices to two days per week. He had misgivings that in an emergency situation a vulnerable member of society wouldn't be able to get the advice or help they needed. He acknowledged that officers had said that people would still be able to contact the Council by phone in the same way as now but felt that often victims of abuse had their phones taken away by their abusers. Councillor J Collop went on to express concern about the level of consultation which would take place on the proposal as he had assumed that it would include the public, whereas it did not. He stated he would be voting against the recommendation as he wanted to make sure people didn't suffer because of it.

Councillor Moriarty stated that he was broadly in favour of the recommendation, and acknowledged that public bodies had a duty to review their ways of working, particularly in times of austerity. He was disappointed the report didn't go to the Environment and Community Panel rather than the Resources and Performance Panel, but they had requested that adequate consultation would be put in place. He stated that he now understood that the consultation would take place once it had been introduced. He considered that the public would expect to be consulted. He asked the Leader what was meant by the recommendation 4.

Councillor Tilbury invited Councillor Daubney to be clear in his response as the proposal would come into force in 17 weeks, and it was reasonable that people knew what consultation and communications could be expected.

In summing up Councillor Daubney responded that he was disappointed in the comments made at scrutiny because he felt there were a number of red herrings in the comments made. He referred to the issue of emergency contact, but reminded Members that an incident could be take place anywhere in the Borough, and was often unlikely to be between 9 and 5. The Council had a 24 hour service with CCTV who monitored the emergency contact line. He commented

that the Council could have held on to its poor service from the 1990s and not embrace technology to provide a good service today, but the proposal was using the technology to deliver the best service possible. Full consultation had been carried out with staff, and statistics were held on the numbers and areas of contact, and numbers were available to contact in an emergency. He considered that the Council would be failing people if it didn't deliver with the technology available.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was agreed.

Councillor J Collop stated that the Labour Group would abstain on CAB80 and 81.

On being put to the vote the following items were approved:

CAB80: Licensing Act 2003 – Statement of Licensing Policy
CAB81: Gambling Act – Review of Policies

With regard to CAB82: Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Fees, Councillor J Collop informed Council that until the results of the meeting with the Trade were available, his Group would vote against the proposals. Councillor Daubney reminded Members that there were a number of legislative requirements in the recommendations. He expressed embarrassment about how the witnesses had not been informed about how they would fit into the process, and that it was a requirement to properly cost the licenses issued. On being put to the vote the recommendations were agreed.

CAB83: Residential Caravan Site Licensing was agreed.

In relation to CAB84: Polling District and Polling Place Review, Councillor J Collop asked if there were any comments from Ward Members on the proposals, in particular for the St Margaret's and St Nicholas polling station. As he considered it was not the best positioned station available, he considered it in the wrong place and the wrong building.

Councillor Miss Bambridge informed Council that she had been in discussion with the officer involved from the early stages, and considered the proposed station to be a very good venue which could be accessed by car to the side.

Councillor Daubney reminded Members that the Returning Officer had a legal duty to review and recommend suitable polling places. Full consultation had been undertaken, the proposed was the best option meeting the criteria. On being put to the vote the recommendation was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting on 3 November be approved.

ii Cabinet Scrutiny Committee: 19 November 2015

There were no recommendations from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee.

C:63 AMENDMENT TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY PANEL AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

The report proposed an amendment to the allocation of Memberships on the Environment and Community Panel and Licensing Committee at the request of the Labour and Independent Group Leaders.

RESOLVED: That the Labour Group release a seat on the Environment and Community Panel to be filled by the Independent Group, and the Independent Group release a seat on the Licensing Committee to be filled by the Labour Group for the remainder of the Municipal Year

C:64 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODY - HUNSTANTON SAILING CLUB DEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE

Councillor H Humphrey confirmed that the Resources and Performance Panel had recommended that Councillor P Hodgson be appointed to the Hunstanton Sailing Club.

Councillor J Collop expressed concern that as the end of the Municipal year was less than 6 months away a report would not necessarily be forthcoming from the representative before Annual Council when changes could take place. Councillor Humphrey responded that the matter was for the Panel to decide, and the issue had not been raised at the meeting when the representative was appointed, although he was sure Councillor Hodgson would be happy to report back at an appropriate time..

RESOLVED: That Councillor P Hodgson be appointed as an observer to the Hunstanton Sailing Club Development Sub-Committee..

The meeting closed at 7.51 pm