

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

CABINET

Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 11th January, 2022 at 3.30 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn

PRESENT: Councillor S Dark (Chair)
Councillors R Blunt, A Dickinson, P Kunes, B Long, G Middleton and S Sandell

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Lawrence

CAB84 **MINUTES**

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RESOLVED: The Minutes of the meetings held on 16 November and 14 December 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CAB85 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

CAB86 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

CAB87 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None

CAB88 **MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

None

CAB89 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

None

CAB90 **FORWARD DECISIONS**

The Forward Decisions List was noted.

CAB91 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES

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The recommendations from the Corporate Performance Panel on the Council Tax Support Scheme 2022-23 on 8 December 2021 were noted.

CAB92 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT - FINAL SCHEME FOR 2022-2023

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Cabinet considered a report which set out that the council must implement a Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for its working age residents for each financial year. The council had to first decide on a draft CTS scheme which was open for public consultation, and then must agree a final CTS scheme, taking into account the consultation responses.

Since 2017, authority had been delegated to the council Leader, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and the s151 Officer, to agree the draft CTS scheme. The draft CTS scheme was open for consultation from 19 October 2021 to 29 November 2021 and the 14 responses received were included in the report.

The final CTS scheme for 2022/2023 was a continuation of the 2021/2022 CTS scheme, with an uplift to the maximum weekly CTS that could be paid under the scheme.

The current limit of 75% would increase by 9% to 84% for 2022/2023 onwards. This brought the council in line with several other Norfolk authorities, and made the CTS scheme more generous at a time when working age people may still be financially impacted by Covid-19

In debating the report and recommendations Cabinet supported the increase proposed and noted that the number of people on middle incomes it supported would increase and thanked officers for the work carried out and the information provided.

RECOMMENDED: That the draft Council Tax Support scheme for 2022/2023 which went to public consultation be approved as the final Council Tax Support scheme for 2022/2023.

Reason for Decision

To ensure a CTS scheme for working age people for 2022/2023 is agreed by full Council by 11 March 2022.

CAB93 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

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Cabinet considered a report on proposals for the arrangements to appoint external auditors for the council's accounts for the five year period from 2023/2024.

The report set out the options for the appointment of an external auditor, each with varying risks and opportunities:

1. To make a stand-alone appointment which required the council to follow the procedure set out in the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014
2. To act jointly with other authorities to procure an auditor (following the required procedures as set out in the Act)
3. To opt-in to the national auditor appointment scheme administered by PSAA (a body designated by the Secretary of State as the 'appointing person')

It was noted that the Audit Committee had considered the options and recommended to 'opt-in' to the scheme led by PSAA.

In discussing the report cabinet noted that there was a shortage of auditors nationally which was having an effect on the audits carried out in a number of authorities across the country, the borough's included.

In discussing the options available, cabinet was in agreement that the risks and additional work involved in carrying out the exercise alone or with a small number of authorities were much higher than entering into the PSAA scheme designated by the secretary of state which gave greater access to auditors and was more likely to attract a higher number of auditors to posts available and therefore more reassurance for the authority.

RECOMMENDED: That the council notify PSAA of the intention to "opt in" to the national auditor appointment scheme administered by a body designated by the Secretary of State as the 'appointing person'. Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA) is specified as the 'appointing person' for principal local government under the provisions of the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015.

Reason for Decision

To comply with the requirements of the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014

CAB94 **ASSET MANAGEMENT - LAND DISPOSAL AT SUTTON ESTATE, BURNHAM MARKET**

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Cabinet considered a report which explained that the Borough Council owned a parcel of land that had the potential for residential development, plus an adjacent residential property. The report set out proposals for these sites and recommended to Cabinet that the properties were marketed for sale, and disposed, if an appropriate price was secured. The council would be seeking a purchaser/developer that would deliver the housing development in line with the planning permission secured.

In discussing the report and proposals Councillor Sandell as ward members sought assurance that in selling the land the planning permission received would be adhered to. It was confirmed that in selling the plots it would be made clear that was what was sought to be delivered on it. It was also confirmed that there was no covenant on the property being sold.

RESOLVED: 1) That the disposal of the land asset, and property, is progressed along the lines set out within the report.

2) That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director Property & Projects to market the site, consider offers received, and finalise disposals terms for the site, and property, detailed within the report, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Property.

3) That authority is granted to the council's Legal Services provider to progress the necessary transfer, or any other associated, documentation through to completion.

Reason for Decision

The disposal of the assets identified within this report will contribute significantly to the funding of the council's capital programme thereby helping to deliver some of its corporate objectives. In addition, the sale of this site will provide an opportunity for the private sector to invest in the local economy and deliver a number of housing units

The meeting closed at 4.05 pm