

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Environment and Community Panel held on Tuesday, 20th June, 2023 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors S Collop (Chair), J Bhondi, P Bland, A Bullen, P Devulapalli, A Dickinson (substitute for P Kunes), S Everett (substitute for M Bartrum), H Humphrey, J Ratcliffe, S Sandell and A Ware.

OBSERVING: Councillor S Bearshaw

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:

Councillor J Moriarty – Portfolio Holder for Development and Regeneration

Councillor M de Whalley – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity

OFFICERS:

Alexa Baker – Monitoring Officer

Martin Chisholm – Assistant Director

Lorraine Gore – Chief Executive

Andy King – Housing Strategy Officer

Nikki Patton – Housing Strategy Manager

Karl Patterson – Senior Housing Development Officer

EC1: APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

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RESOLVED: That Councillor Devulapalli be appointed Vice Chair of the Panel for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

EC2: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barclay, Bartrum and Kunes.

EC3: MINUTES

RESOLVED: The Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

EC4: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

EC5: URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

EC6: MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34

There was none.

EC7: CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

EC8: CABINET REPORT - LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND ALLOCATIONS POLICY

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Officers presented the report and provided information on the allocation of properties delivered via the Local Authority Housing Fund, a programme established by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to support Local Authorities to acquire homes to accommodate households with housing needs who had arrived in the UK via Ukrainian and Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes. Information on how allocations would be made based on existing policies and in accordance with housing needs was provided to the Panel along with detail of the tenancy options available. The Panel was informed that the Government allocation had been received in January and Cabinet had agreed to accept the funding and deliver the homes via West Norfolk Housing Company.

The Panel was informed that Government had now announced a second round of funding allocations which would be considered by Cabinet at a future meeting.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and invited questions and comments as set out below.

In response to a question from Councillor Bullen it was explained that allocations would be focussed on the three towns as there would be access to services. Availability and price was also a factor in determining where the homes would be allocated.

In response to a further question from Councillor Bullen, it was explained that the funding was allocated based on the number of arrivals in the area and to meet their needs.

Councillor Ratcliffe asked what support was available for those needing to register for the scheme and it was explained that support and advice

would be provided on how to join the register. Lily had also been involved in working with individuals.

In response to a question from Councillor Ratcliffe, it was explained that the 16 homes to be provided through this scheme were only a small percentage of the housing stock available and it was important to note that it would result in an additional 16 affordable homes being provided in the Borough.

Councillor Bhondi asked for clarification on the types of homes to be provided. Officers provided detail on the match funding requirements and that there would be a mix of housing available, dependant on household needs, with a mix of bedrooms. For the Afghan Resettlement Scheme it was confirmed that four bedroom houses would be provided in accordance with Government criteria.

RESOLVED; That the Panel support the recommendation to Cabinet as set out below.

That Cabinet endorse the approach set out in this report on the allocation of the properties delivered via the Local Authority Housing Fund.

EC9: **APPOINTMENTS TO TASK GROUPS AND INFORMAL WORKING GROUPS**

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The Panel considered the appointment of Members to serve on the Informal Working Groups and Task groups, which had previously been established by the Panel, for the municipal year 2023/24.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Homelessness and Housing Delivery Task Group continues to operate as a 7 Member Task Group and the Democratic Services Officer be instructed to seek Membership of the Task Group from Group Leaders for the 2023/2024 municipal year.

2. That the following Informal Working Groups remain established, with the below Members appointed to them. Additional Members who would like to serve on the Informal Working Groups were to email the Chair and Democratic Services Officer.

- Single Use Plastics Informal Working Group: Councillors Bubb and Devulapalli.
- Climate Change Informal Working Group: Councillor Bubb

3. That the Urban Wildlife Informal Working Group be disbanded as it had concluded its work.

4. That the Tourism Informal Working Group remain established and the Chair liaise with the Chair of the Regeneration and Development Panel to finalise Membership. The following Members from the Panel were interested in sitting on the group:

- Councillor Bullen

EC10: **NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

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The Panel were invited to nominate representatives to participate in the outside bodies and partnerships which fall within the remit of the Panel.

The Panel noted that nominations would be presented to the full Council meeting on 13th July 2023 for consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Panel submit the following nominations to Council:

1. Borough Council/College of West Anglia Liaison Board – Councillor Osbourne
2. King's Lynn and West Norfolk Area Museums Committee – Councillor Bland and non Councillor representative Bill Davidson
3. King's Lynn Football Club – Councillor Bland
4. Norfolk County Council – Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub-Panel – non Councillor Christine Hudson and no nomination for substitute
5. Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Devulapalli and Councillor Bhondi as substitute
6. West Norfolk Community Transport Project – Councillor Everett

EC11: **PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There had been no questions submitted in advance of the Meeting.

EC12: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

The Vice Chair informed the Panel that she would like consideration to be given to the use of pesticides on Council Land. The Assistant Director informed the Panel that he would produce statistics on the Council's use of certain pesticides so that the Panel could explore if this was an issue that needed consideration at a future Panel meeting.

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Decisions List was noted.

EC13: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel would be held on 18th July 2023, time to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 5.08 pm