

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

CABINET

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on
Tuesday, 17th September, 2024 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber,
Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT: Councillor A Beales (Chair)
Councillors B Anota, M de Whalley, J Moriarty, C Morley and J Rust

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Ring and S Squire

CAB38 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting on 30 July 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CAB39 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CAB40 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

CAB41 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

CAB42 **MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors S Bearshaw and T Ryves (Zoom) attended the meeting under standing order 34.

CAB43 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

There were no called in matters.

CAB44 **FORWARD DECISIONS**

CAB45 **MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES**

Environment and Community Panel – 3 September 2024

EC29: LAHF (Local Authority Housing Fund) Round 3 - Supported

EC31: Air Quality Action Plan - Supported
Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy – previously supported 16 July 24.

Regeneration and Development Panel – 10 September 2024

RD42: Exempt – Strategic Land Acquisition - Supported

CAB46 **HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY**

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Councillor Rust presented the report which explained that all housing authorities were required by law to produce a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy once every five years. The report set out the process by which a new Homelessness & Rough Strategy had been developed and how progress would be monitored and evaluated.

Before publishing the strategy, housing authorities had the power to carry out a review of homelessness services in their district.

A Homelessness Review was carried out in the autumn/winter of 23/24, was published in April 2024, and laid the foundation for developing an effective strategy: led by data and supported by professional and lived experience. The Homelessness Review considered the current situation and analysed the reasons, causes and wider factors affecting homelessness in this area. The Homelessness Review and its findings were endorsed by the Environment and Community Panel on 9th April 2024.

The new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 responded to the issues identified in the review and provided a framework for responding to homelessness in Borough. It replaced the 2019- 2024 strategy. The draft strategy was considered by the Environment and Community Panel on 16 July 2024.

In presenting the report Councillor Rust confirmed she was proud to bring the report which was informed by the review of partners and people with lived experience of homelessness and rough sleeping. It was aimed at ending homelessness person by person. The report was written with the worst case scenario of no Government money coming forward.

The Housing Services Member re-iterated that it was a new strategy with the input from partners, and understood the views of those with lived experience, she thanked all those who had had input and the Senior Housing Manager for producing the report.

The Chair commended the work and re-iterated the thanks given for all those involved.

RECOMMENDED: That the 2024-2029 Strategy is adopted and that the role of the Environment and Community Panel group “Homelessness and Housing Delivery Task Group” in overseeing the delivery of the Action Plan within the strategy is endorsed.

Reason for Decision

The Council has a statutory duty to produce a homelessness strategy (Homelessness Act 2002) setting out the issues it faces locally and what it is doing to prevent homelessness. The Council’s commitments to preventing homelessness are set out in the Corporate Plan.

CAB47 AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN REVISION

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Councillor de Whalley presented the report which put forward a revised Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for adoption in relation to the Railway Road/ London Road Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The revised AQAP followed statutory guidance LAQM PG (22) issued by DEFRA. The mitigation measures had been reviewed and updated with input from Norfolk County Council Highways and Public Health departments.

A review of the Gaywood Clock showed Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels had improved and an AQMA was no longer required at that location.

Councillor de Whalley explained that although the Gaywood AQA was being revoked as per the government guidelines, monitoring would take place on Queen Mary Road in the near future to monitor the Florence Fields area development for air quality.

Councillor Beales drew attention to the debate that took place at the Environment and Community Panel meeting. He reminded members that the monitoring could be reviewed in the future.

Councillor Morley questioned the word “revoke” and whether it should be suspend. The Environmental Health Manager explained that it was a legal requirement when the area was in compliance it must be revoked, but did allow for continued monitoring with the additional monitoring at Florence Fields.

Councillor Moriarty reminded members that the Environment and Community Panel would ensure there was no complacency in the matter and continue to monitor.

RESOLVED: 1) That the Air Quality Action Plan for Railway Road/ London Road attached as Appendix 1 to the report be adopted.

2) That the existing Gaywood Air Quality Management Area be revoked.

Reason for Decision

The Council is required to update the AQAP every five years. The Gaywood Clock AQMA no longer exceeds the National Air Quality Objective annual mean objective for Nitrogen Dioxide and should be revoked.

CAB48 LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND - ROUND 3

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Councillor Rust presented the report which provided information on the funding offered to BCKLWN in August 2024 through Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Round 3. The programme had been established by the Ministry Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to support Local Authorities to acquire homes to accommodate households with housing needs who had arrived in the UK Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes and provide temporary accommodation homes for homeless households.

The Council had been offered grant of £1.7m to acquire 8 homes to be used for temporary accommodation for homeless households and 4 properties for Afghan households (Total 12). This was subject to acceptance of terms by the Council through a Memorandum of Understanding. The purpose of the report was to seek approval to accept the grant and inform the Cabinet of the requirements of the grant funding and potential delivery options.

Councillor Rust commented that she had visited some of the properties recently purchased in the recent round of funding. She informed Cabinet that the Environment and Community Panel had asked if the Council had considered purchasing older properties, to which she explained that the risks with older properties was greater and they needed to meet certain energy efficiency standards as well as having to be purchased in tight the timeframes. She made reference to the hope to eradicate homelessness in the Borough.

Councillor Morley suggested that recommendation 6 be changed to the cabinet agrees to the principle of offering four properties acquired through the fund. Councillor Rust responded that there was a legal requirement to provide home for people who had fled from Afghanistan. Previously the council had offered properties with no uptake, but whilst there were no takers, they were converted to stock.

The Housing Services Manager reminded Members that it was a stipulation of the funding requirement to allocate to those Afghan families in Home Office accommodation. She drew attention to the Lettings Policy which had been agreed and ensured consistency

across the 3 rounds. She also confirmed that in the previous rounds the properties had been transferred to the housing stock.

Councillor Morley acknowledged that the EIA had made it clear.

Councillor Beales commented that the size of the allocation was one of the larger in the country related to the delivery of houses through the companies. He drew attention to the benefit of quality homes such as those now being built. He drew attention to the additional units to be able to offer homes to homeless persons and the social value to this.

RESOLVED: 1) That the Council enter a Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG based on the prospectus for the Local Authority Housing Fund (see appendix to the report). Authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Place) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing People and Communities to agree the final terms of the Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG.

2) That the Council accept the total sum of £1,694,876 offered to the Council by MHCLG under the Local Authority Housing Fund to deliver the programme understanding the match funding requirements as set out in the report and attached prospectus.

3) That, subject to agreement from West Norfolk Housing Company, the properties will be acquired by West Norfolk Housing Company, funded by the grant, debt financing and other available funding.

4) That Authority be delegated to Assistant Director Resources & S151 Officer in consultation with the portfolio holder for Finance to agree terms with West Norfolk Housing Company for the transfer of properties on the Council's developments including arrangements for deferred consideration if necessary.

5) That West Norfolk Housing Company be requested to work with the Council to deliver the properties through the fund.

6) That Cabinet agree to the principle of allocating 4 properties acquired through the fund to eligible Afghan households.

7) That Authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Place) to alter the proposed Florence Fields tenure mix, originally agreed by Cabinet on the 17th January 2023, where necessary, to facilitate the disposal of properties previously identified as Private Rent and/or Open Market Sale, to West Norfolk Housing Company (WNHC) as affordable housing

Reason for Decision

The recommendations will ensure that the opportunity presented by the Local Authority Housing Fund to deliver affordable housing in the borough will be fully realised and will help to relieve pressures on the council's homelessness services.

CAB49 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB50 **STRATEGIC LAND ACQUISITION**

In the event that it is intended to make a key decision at least 28 days before the Cabinet meeting is impracticable due to special urgency, the local authority obtain the agreement of the Chair of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee (Corporate Performance Panel) that the making of the decision is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred (Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012).

Councillor Long, Chair of the Corporate Performance Panel had given agreement to this.

The matter will therefore not be subject to call in.

Councillor Beales presented the report which explained that over several years the Council had undertaken a number of strategic land acquisitions, particularly in King's Lynn, to help facilitate regeneration initiatives for the town.

The report presented set out another proposed land and property acquisition that was located at one of King's Lynn's main gateways into the town.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Bearshaw addressed the Cabinet reporting on the Regeneration and Development's support of the recommendations in the report.

Cabinet endorsed the recommendation.

RESOLVED: That the acquisition of the property interests set out within the report be approved and that Delegated Authority be given to the Assistant Director Property & Projects, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture, to complete the transaction.

Reason for Decision

The acquisition of these property interests not only fits well with the borough council's regeneration ambitions in the immediate vicinity of

the proposed property acquisition, but also Norfolk County Council's proposals for the local highway network.

The meeting closed at 6.37 pm