

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

**CABINET**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 4th February, 2025 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillor A Beales (Chair)  
Councillors M de Whalley, J Moriarty, C Morley, S Ring, J Rust and S Squire

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Anota

**CAB111 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**CAB112 URGENT BUSINESS**

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**APPROVAL UNDER STANDING ORDER 23 THAT RESTRUCTURED CHIEF OFFICER POSTS ARE NECESSARY**

The Chief Executive presented a report which explained that under the Constitution, Cabinet was required to determine that a "chief officer" post was necessary before any step was taken to advertise or fill a vacancy for that post. A chief officer meant the statutory chief officers plus those posts that sit in Tier 2 of the senior management structure, directly reporting into the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive had reviewed Tier 2 of the senior management structure and as a result the Tier 2 posts that were previously referred to as 'Executive Directors' had been removed from the structure. Instead, Tier 2 now consisted of a Chief Operating Officer and a Deputy Chief Executive. This created a reduction from 3 posts to 2.

Approval was therefore sought from Cabinet that the two new posts were necessary before any steps were taken with regards to recruitment into those posts including on an interim basis.

**RESOLVED:** That under Standing Order 23 that the restructured chief officer posts of Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer are necessary enabling the Chief Executive to progress the recruitment of her senior team.

**Reason for Decision**

To provide sufficient capacity and expertise at a senior level to support the Chief Executive and wider organisation in delivering the Corporate Strategy and Council services.

**CAB113 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**CAB114 CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**CAB115 MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors S Collop and A Ware attended under standing order 34.

**CAB116 CALLED IN MATTERS**

There were no matters called in.

**CAB117 FORWARD DECISIONS**

The Forwards Decision List was noted.

**CAB118 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES**

The Panel meetings below considered the items shown:

- Regeneration and Development Panel on Conservation Areas Committee – 22 January 2025.
- Corporate Performance Panel on Members Allowances – 28 January 2025
- Joint Panels on the financial items – 29 January 2025

All comments were taken into account when considering the items.

**CAB119 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE - BURNHAM MARKET**

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Cabinet was invited to consider the report setting out the draft Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review which Council at its previous meeting had approved.

**RECOMMENDED:** That Officers conduct a Community Governance Review in respect of Burnham Market Parish Council to potentially reduce parish councillor numbers using the Terms of Reference attached to the report.

### **Reason for Decision**

Cabinet and Council must agree to the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review to proceed

## **CAB120 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW REQUEST BY PETITION - HILGAY**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

Cabinet considered a report which presented a valid Community Governance Petition received from Hilgay Parish (Ten Mile Bank Ward) electors. The petition requested that Hilgay Parish and its existing wards of Hilgay and Ten Mile Bank were reorganised into two separate parishes with parish councils using the existing parish and ward boundaries.

The Borough Council had a statutory duty to conduct a community governance review to assess and make a determination in respect of the request within the petition.

**RECOMMENDED:** That Officers be requested to conduct a Community Governance Review in respect of Hilgay Parish in line with the Terms of Reference drafted to potentially reorganise the parish into two parishes with parish councils using existing parish and ward boundaries as a guide.

### **Reason for Decision**

BCKLWN have a statutory duty to carry out a Community Governance Review when a valid Community Governance Petition is received.

BCKLWN a statutory duty to agree and publish a Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review to proceed. Once agreed and published, BCKLWN must comply with them.

## **CAB121 THE FINANCIAL PLAN 2024-2029**

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Councillor Morley presented the report which explained that as part of the council tax setting process the Council updates its Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to take account of any changes in financial settlements, inflation on service costs and revised priorities of the administration.

In February 2024 the Council approved its Medium-Term Financial Strategy and set its budget for the financial year 2024/2025. A significant budget gap was identified in 2024/2025 which could be

managed through the use of reserves. However, the indicative position outlined for the period 2025/2026 to 2027/2028 forecast an unfunded budget gap totalling £9.227m.

The report set out the Council's Finance Strategy for the financial year 2025/2026 and provided an update to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) forecast position for the period covering 2024/2029.

The report proposed a new Fees and Charges Policy, a Pay Policy and set out the special expenses for parish and town councils.

Cabinet Members congratulated Members and Officers on the delivery of the budget without cuts to services which it felt placed west Norfolk well for local government review.

Cabinet' attention was drawn to the fact that on Appendix 2 of the report the recycling of batteries and small electrical appliances was already underway, but that a commercial food waste recycling service was planned.

The Meeting of the Joint Panels had supported the recommendations.

**Cabinet noted that the final figures would be updated following recent announcement of the final Financial Settlement from Government. These will be updated in the papers for Council.**

### **RECOMMENDED 1**

It is recommended that Council note the revision to the Forecast for 2024/2025 as set out in the report.

### **RECOMMENDED 2**

Council is recommended to approve the Policy on Earmarked Reserves and General Fund Balance and the maximum balances set for the reserves as noted in the report and at Appendix 8 of the report.

### **RECOMMENDED 3**

That Council :

1) Approves the budget requirement of £26,329,130 for 2025/2026 and notes the projections for 2026/2027, 2027/2028 and 2028/2029.

2) Approves the Fees and Charges 2025/2026 detailed in Appendix 4a and 4b and approves the new Fees and Charges Policy at Appendix 4c

3) Approves the Pay Policy at Appendix 5

4) Approves the level of Special Expenses for the Town/Parish Councils as detailed in the report (Appendix 7).

5) Approves a Band D council tax of £152.87 for 2025/2026.

#### **RECOMMENDED 4**

That Council approves a minimum requirement of the General Fund balance for 2025/2026 of £1,316,460 (5% of estimated budget requirement).

#### **RECOMMENDED 5**

Pursuant to Section 25 of the Local Government Act, Council is asked to have due regard to this statement at Section 9 of this report when considering and approving the budget and the level of council tax for 2025/2026.

### CAB122 **CAPITAL STRATEGY 2025-26**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

Councillor Morley presented the Capital Strategy which outlined the principles and framework that shaped the Council's capital decisions. The principal aim was to deliver a programme of capital investment that contributed to the achievement of the Council's priorities and objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan.

It was noted that the Capital Strategy would be updated annually and would be put before Cabinet alongside the Treasury Management Strategy so that it could be approved before the year to which it related began.

The Strategy defined at the highest level how the capital programme was to be formulated; it identified the issues and options that influenced capital spending and set out how the resources and capital programme would be managed.

Members attention was drawn to the addition staffing in the Projects team which would ensure the delivery of information to the Member Major Project Board. The delegations in place to draw down funding for the West Norfolk Property and Housing Companies in order to provide funds for planned projects in order to deliver housing in the borough was noted.

Congratulations were passed to the team for the work to deliver all aspects associated with the report and delivery of services.

The Meeting of the Joint Panels had supported the recommendations.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the Capital Strategy 2025/2026, as attached to the report, be approved.

**CAB123 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2025-26**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

Councillor Morley presented the report which explained that the Council was required to receive and approve a Treasury Management Strategy Statement; Annual Investment Strategy; and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement which covered:

- The Treasury Management Strategy
- Capital plans, including prudential indicators
- A Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy
- An Investment Strategy

The report covered the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) Prudential Code, The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the MHCLG Investment Guidance.

The Council's Treasury Advisor, Link Asset Services, provided a template document for the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, which was fully compliant with CIPFA's code and MHCLG's guidance. The Council had used this template in preparing this report.

The report looked at the period 2024-2029, which fitted with the Council's Financial Strategy and Capital Programme. Officers of the council had prepared the report based on their views of forecasts for interest rates, and had used information provided by the council's Treasury Management Advisor, Link Asset Services.

It was noted that the Treasury Management report would now be reported to the Audit Committee for monitoring quarterly.

The Meeting of the Joint Panels had supported the recommendations.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/2026 be approved including:

- treasury indicators for 2025-2029.
- The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2025/2026
- The Investment Strategy 2025/2026

**Reason for the Decision**

The Council must have approved a Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2025/2026 by 31 March 2025.

CAB124 **MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2025-2029**

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The Assistant Director Central Services presented a report which informed members that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, all local authorities were required to appoint an independent remuneration panel (IRP) to advise on the terms and conditions of the scheme for Members allowances every 4 years. Local authorities must have regard to the recommendations of their IRP before making decisions on the Member's Allowances Scheme.

In debating the report of the Panel the Leader drew attention to the elements of the report which members had indicated they did not support:

- Public Service Discount (PSD) – Members were not in support of the suggested at 20%. A debate was held on the fact that the report stated that allowances should encourage people from all backgrounds to become councillors, and those that do so should not suffer unreasonable financial consequences as a result. It was noted and discussed that the Corporate Performance Panel had proposed that 0% PSD be applied. Cabinet considered that an element of PSD should be applied, it was therefore proposed that 5% was an appropriate level of Public Service Discount (PSD).
- The IRP recommendations regarding the ICT Allowance was not supported as members provided considerable resources in support of their council work.
- The recommendations on SRAs for Licensing and Appeals Board and Committee Vice Chairs were not supported as they were considered a reduction in allowance.
- IRP recommendations on larger group deputy leader, other opposition group deputy leaders SRAs were not supported.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Ware addressed the Cabinet and drew attention to advice received from the Government that they would welcome an increase in allowances for members in order to attract good councillors to the role.

Members drew attention to the impact that being a councillor had on family life.

Cabinet extended their thanks to the Independent Panel for their deliberations.

**RECOMMENDED:** 1) That the content and recommendations of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel dated November 2024 be noted.

- 2) The Members Allowances for 2025-2026 set out in Table 3 of this report are approved.
- 3) That the Members' Allowance Scheme 2025-2029 attached as Appendix 2 be approved to come into effect on 1 April 2025 for a period of four years, subject to being updated with the Members Allowances approved at recommendation 2 above.
- 4) That following the 2025-26 year, indexation be applied to Members Allowances for 3 years in line with the percentage increase to the national joint council for local government pay services pay grades spinal column point 43.
- 5) That the Chief Finance Officer be delegated to approve non-material revisions to the Members' Allowance Scheme, including the levels of allowances to reflect the current figures after indexation has been applied.

#### **Reason for Decision**

To comply with the requirements of The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and set the allowances for 2025/29.

The Cabinet has had regard for the recommendations of the IRP and is recommending to Council Changes to the recommendations on the items set out in the report, including the reduction of the public service discount (PSD) from 20% to 5% as it was deemed appropriate to have a level of PSD, but not as high as that recommended by the panel.

The Cabinet noted that it is important that some element of the work of members continues to be voluntary, but that in accordance with the issued guidance, this must be balanced against the need to ensure that financial loss is not suffered by elected members, and further to ensure that, despite the input required, people are encouraged to come forward as elected members and that their service to the community is retained. Cabinet considers that a 5% public sector discount is the appropriate balance.

#### **CAB125 CONSERVATION AREAS COMMITTEE**

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The Conservation Areas Advisory Panel was set up in 1994 in accordance with PPG15 which was no longer a valid piece of planning guidance.

The new NPPF 138 stated “. Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. The



primary means of doing so should be through the preparation and use of local design codes, in line with the National Model Design Code.”

The report recommended that the Panel be disbanded.

The report had been considered by the Regeneration and Development Panel and the recommendations supported.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the Conservation Areas Advisory Panel (CAAP) be disbanded.

### **Reason for Decision**

The CAAP panel has been in existence for a long time and while the input of the panel has been invaluable, the National Planning Policy Framework now places greater emphasis upon specialist advice on design, which this panel are not qualified to deliver.

## CAB126 **CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND RESOURCES 2024-2029**

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Councillor Morley presented the report which:

- revised the 2024/2025 projections for spending on the capital programme
- set out an estimate of capital resources that would be available for 2024-2029
- detailed new capital bids that were recommended to be included in the capital programme for the period 2024-2029
- outlined provisional figures for capital expenditure for the period 2024-2029.

Cabinet noted that the exempt elements of the report would be the subject of further work, therefore did not exclude the press and public to debate.

The new 3 tiers of bids for the capital programme were included as part of the report.

The Meeting of the Joint Panels had supported the recommendations.

**RECOMMENDED:** 1) That the amendments to capital schemes and resources for the 2024-2029 capital programme as detailed in the report be approved.

2) That new capital bids as set out in section 5, table 6 of the report, are to be funded from available capital resources and included in the capital programme 2024-2029 as detailed (subject to pending approval from SLT) of the report be approved.

**Reason for Decision**

To report amendments, rephrasing and resources to the 2024-2029 Capital Programme. Cabinet chose not to exclude the press and public to discuss in detail the exempt elements as further detailed consideration of those would be made at a later date.

**The meeting closed at 7.41 pm**