

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

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 31st October, 2024 at 5.00 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall,
Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT: Councillor P Bland (Mayor)

Councillors B Ayres, T Barclay, M Bartrum, A Beales, S Bearshaw, R Blunt, F Bone, A Bubb, A Bullen, R Coates, Mrs J Collingham, S Collop, R Colwell, M de Whalley, T de Winton, P Devulapalli, S Everett, D Heneghan, P Hodson, B Jones, A Kemp, J Kirk, P Kunes, A Lawrence, S Lintern, B Long, J Lowe, J Moriarty, C Morley, S Nash, J Osborne, J Ratcliffe, S Ring, C Rose, J Rust, A Ryves, S Sandell, D Sayers, Mrs V Spikings, S Squire, M Storey and A Ware

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Anota, P Beal, J Bhondi, C J Crofts, S Dark, A Dickinson, T Parish, D Tyler and M Wilkinson

C:49 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by Rev Canon Ling.

C:50 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 August 2024 were agreed by the Council and signed by the Mayor.

C:51 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Bone declared a non pecuniary interest in the Homelessness Strategy as he had been involved in its development in a work capacity.

C:52 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

C:53 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

C:54 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF LICENSING COMMITTEE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

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Councillor Beales proposed that Councillor Moriarty be appointed to the position of Chair of the Licensing Committee and Councillor Sandell be appointed to the position of Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year. This was seconded by Councillor Ring.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Moriarty be appointed to the position of Chair of the Licensing Committee and Councillor Sandell be appointed to the position of Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year.

C:55 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions or petitions.

C:56 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES**

i **Cabinet: 17 September 2024**

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Councillor Rust proposed CAB46:Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, spoke in support of the strategy which had been developed to end homelessness person by person. This was seconded by Councillor Jones.

RESOLVED: That recommendation CAB46: Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, from the Cabinet meeting on 17 September 2024 be approved.

ii **Cabinet: 17 October 2024**

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Councillor Beales proposed the recommendation 3 of CAB59: Hunstanton bus station and library proposals from the Cabinet meeting on 17 October 2024, seconded by Councillor Ring.

Councillor Long supported the scheme which would deliver affordable homes. He drew attention to the fact that the decision to progress the scheme had already been taken and Council was only be asked for the Capital Programme to be amended.

Councillor Ryves proposed an amendment to the recommendation: "That the affordable homes will be prioritised to those with a connection with Hunstanton firstly, then those with connections with neighbouring villages before being made available across west Norfolk."

This was seconded by Councillor de Winton who considered that primarily local people should be considered as tenants.

Councillor Beales drew attention to the fact that at the Cabinet meeting Councillor Parish had suggested the same thing to which it had been explained that under the choice based lettings scheme there needed to be a need in the area, so a Housing Needs Review was to be undertaken in Hunstanton.

Councillor Long spoke against amending the previously resolved Cabinet decision.

Councillor Bone drew attention to the housing needs of people across the borough. He did not support the amendment.

Councillor Rust did not support the amendment which she considered would be at the expense of those in need.

In summing up on the amendment Councillor Beales supported the comments from Councillor Rust, in that it was a question of housing need and the limitation to Hunstanton was not possible within the current policy.

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost.

In debating the substantive, Councillor Colwell supported the recommendation, in particular the provision of the new toilets.

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

RESOLVED: 3) That the Capital Programme be amended to include Hunstanton Bus Station Proposed Housing Scheme based on the initial cost estimate of £4m to be funded from affordable housing funding held and ringfenced by the Council of £2.2m and internal borrowing against the capital receipts from the eventual sale of the affordable housing units estimated to be £1.8m.

C:57 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

- i) Councillor B Jones proposed the following Notice of Motion (3/24), seconded by Councillor Ring.

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Youth Council

“The borough council believes that it is vital to engage young people in decisions that affect their lives and services that they receive. They are a huge part of our communities, but they are often left out of discussions about how to make things better now and for the future. Our future belongs to them and it is essential that their voice is heard and, that they feel included in the democratic process. Our local democracy will be stronger for it. It has been noted that Youth Advisory Board have a youth Council and that the QEH also are making strides for youth provision but we would like a joined up approach to avoid duplication of work.

In support of this, council resolves:

To acknowledge the work already been done by various youth agencies;

To commit to establishing a cross-party working group - led by the council youth champion and by the cabinet member for people and places - to meet with partner youth agencies to explore if setting up a borough youth council would provide the right vehicle for youth ideas to be fed into the council's policies”.

Councillor Kemp spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor Beales proposed the following amendment to final section of the Motion, seconded by Councillor Sayers :

To acknowledge the work already been done by various youth agencies and to commit the Council's Youth Champion and the Cabinet Member for People and Communities to meeting with officers and with partner youth agencies to explore if setting up a Borough youth council would provide the right vehicle for youth ideas to be fed into the council's policies.

Councillor Jones accepted the amendment which then became the substantive motion. Council debated the substantive with Councillors supporting the Motion drawing attention to the Youth Advisory Board which already existed and the hospital Youth Council which was being set up. A comment was made that all wards should be involved, High Schools and members of the Youth Parliament covering west Norfolk and Breckland.

Councillor Kemp declared a non pecuniary interest as a member of the Youth Advisory Board and a Governor at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

RESOLVED: “The borough council believes that it is vital to engage young people in decisions that affect their lives and services that they receive. They are a huge part of our communities, but they are often left out of discussions about how to make things better now and for the future. Our future belongs to them and it is essential that their voice is heard and, that they feel included in the democratic process. Our local democracy will be stronger for it. It has been noted that Youth Advisory Board have a youth Council and that the QEH also are making strides for youth provision but we would like a joined up approach to avoid duplication of work.

To acknowledge the work already been done by various youth agencies and to commit the Council’s Youth Champion and the Cabinet Member for People and Communities to meeting with officers and with partner youth agencies to explore if setting up a Borough youth council would provide the right vehicle for youth ideas to be fed into the council’s policies.

ii) Councillor A Ware proposed and spoke in support of the following Notice of Motion (4/24), seconded by Councillor Sayers who spoke in support of it:

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“White Ribbon Motion

Violence and cruelty to women, whether mental, verbal or physical, and whether occurring within the workplace or outside of an organisation, is a serious, prevalent and preventable issue.

The Government has pledged to halve violence against women and girls in the next decade and has recently announced new police and justice system initiatives to achieve this. Working towards the same goals, White Ribbon UK is a charity which focuses on interventions in this area. It issues Accreditation to organisations which work towards transformational change within their staff culture, systems and communities.

Achieving White Ribbon Accreditation would demonstrate this Council’s commitment to its residents in preventing and combating the harmful culture, attitudes and behaviours around toxic masculinity that perpetuate gender inequality and violence against women and girls.

This Council will therefore actively seek to gain White Ribbon Accreditation, and it will adopt policies, instigate projects and activities and work with partners to achieve this.”

Council debated the Motion with members supporting it and confirming their understanding of the language used which could also be attributed to females as well as males. Questions were also raised about the evidence that the campaign showed a decrease in domestic violence to women and children, and what accreditation actually meant and what were the practical steps to be taken. Members were urged to support the motion to show not all men were the same, and to not remain silent on domestic violence.

In summing up Councillor Ware urged Council to support the Motion.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be adopted.

Council adjourned at 6.20pm, and reconvened at 6.31pm.

iii) Councillor A Kemp proposed the following Notice of Motion (5/24), and spoke in support of it seconded by Councillor de Whalley:

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“Wisbech

Incinerator

This Council maintains its opposition to the Wisbech Incinerator. Not only is there no need for this facility due to overcapacity in the East of England, but the facility would lead to a breach of the Proximity Principle impacting on West Norfolk. The latest research confirms the anti Climate Change effects of incineration. The previous Conservative Government had said it would halt new incinerators. Council asks the Leader to write to the Labour Government and ask for the consents to be reviewed and withdrawn.”

Councillor Long drew attention to the fact that the Council already had a policy decision on incineration and the Wisbech incinerator so it was not necessary for it to have been re-submitted to Council, the Leader could have written a letter.

Members were reminded what happened to the borough’s waste, and encouraged to increase re-cycling.

The seconder of the motion spoke in support and gave detailed statistics.

RESOLVED: This Council maintains its opposition to the Wisbech Incinerator. Not only is there no need for this facility due to overcapacity in the East of England, but the facility would lead to a breach of the Proximity Principle impacting on West Norfolk. The latest research confirms the anti Climate Change effects of incineration. The previous Conservative Government had said it would halt new incinerators. Council asks the Leader to write to the Labour Government and ask for the consents to be reviewed and withdrawn.

C:58 **CABINET MEMBER'S REPORTS**

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Councillor Beales moved the Cabinet Members reports en bloc.

Councillor Morley gave an update on his report following the publication of the 2023/24 statement of accounts.

In Councillor Anota's absence Councillor Long asked for all councillors to be briefed on the situation with the borough's cemeteries filling up or not being able to be used and the implications for the council.

Councillor Squire responded to Councillor Collop's question on the implications for fly tipping of the NCC introduction of time slots for the delivery of waste or recycling to centres around Norfolk. Councillor Squire responded that the level of fly tipping would be closely monitored and the matter raised at the Fly Tipping Group she attended. She encouraged people to contact the county council to express its dissatisfaction with the decision.

In response to a question from Councillor Kemp on the report drawn up on the West Lynn Ferry, Councillor de Whalley explained that it had yet to be received, but when it was the he would report the key recommendations.

Councillor Devulapalli asked for some information on the Re-fit programme issues which were mentioned in the report. Councillor de Whalley responded that Ameresco were having to revisit the heat pumps installed to some buildings as they weren't meeting expectations.

Councillor Bubb asked whether the survey of the ferry terminal had considered disabled access, to which it was confirmed that the feasibility study didn't look at alternative landing points as any added journey times would make it unviable.

Councillor Ware asked what was being done to ensure the vital homelessness budgets were protected. Councillor Rust responded that the funding provision in the borough was not impacted hugely because the council had registered providers which could also access other areas of funding, but the NCC cabinet was considering a consultation item in January on support schemes.

Councillor Bearshaw invited Councillor de Whalley to the meeting of the Transport Informal Working Group which was looking at the Ferry.

Councillor Blunt asked whether there would be formal consultation on the Grimsby to Walpole Grid through the Local Plan Task Group.

Councillor Moriarty confirmed had would come back on a vehicle to be able to do this.

In responding to Councillor Osborne's question on solar panels on car parks, councillor de Whalley responded that the issue would be considered alongside the car park strategy review in the near future.

Councillor Kemp asked if the Ely junction upgrade was being pressed with the Government. Councillor de Whalley confirmed it was.

Councillor Moriarty undertook to liaise with Councillor Coates regarding the level of planning appeals allowed.

In response to a question from Councillor Everett, Councillor de Whalley confirmed that he was continuing to lobby for a further rail station at south Lynn.

Councillor Heneghan in congratulating Councillor Jones and Bone and colleagues on their 100 mile walk in aid of the Pizza Project, asked Councillor Rust if the project would be supported across the borough. Councillor Rust responded that it was an NCC project, but that Councillors Everett and Wilkinson had also supported the project with their councillor funding for Fairstead. She reminded Members that this was the sort of project KLAC could look to support going forward.

Leaders' questions

In response to a question from Councillor Long, Councillor Beales confirmed the joint group leaders meeting taking place the following week.

Councillor Beales confirmed that following the item of urgent business taken at the recent Cabinet meeting for the purchase of property, the exchange had now taken place. He also reported that following a discussion with Councillor Kunes regarding cemeteries, his suggestion was being progressed. With regard to Devolution, Councillor Beales confirmed that he had met with Norfolk Leaders on the issue, and the County may sign a lower level 2 tier deal, but it was too early for any decisions to be made on the matter, but that he would update Council when possible.

Councillor Bone asked what advice could be given to support pensioners with pension credit deadlines coming up. Councillor Beales suggested that Councillor Rust would be best placed to provide a written answer on the subject.

Councillor Kemp asked if the Leader had raised the issue of funding for the west Norfolk Community Transport bus from south Lynn to the new doctor's surgery. He undertook to do so.

Councillor Kemp also asked whether discussions on a dental school in the county were including the college of west Anglia as there was a

real need in the area for it. It is confirmed there was a real need for it in this area, Councillor Beales referred it to Councillor Rust to respond in writing as she was involved in the subject.

In response to a comment from Councillor Bubb on the sound in the room, Councillor Beales explained that with the financial challenges the council was facing different options and re-organisations were being considered, and urged the council to “make do” until final decisions had been taken. He drew attention to the fact that an AI camera had been trialled which worked in the council chamber, but not in the Assembly room.

In response to a question from Councillor Everett on the issue of buses from South Lynn and the Drs surgery and how the Leader was raising the profile and encouraging the county council to fund earlier or later services in the borough, Councillor Beales informed members that the council had hosted a strategy meeting at the town hall with Norfolk Leaders and raised the profile of the needs of the area including improvements to the gyratory system, as the borough was not the transport authority.

Councillor Lintern asked how affected parishes could benefit from the solar farms being developed in the area. Councillor Beales acknowledged that if the schemes were going to get approval, the companies must engage with local communities who must see some benefits in them. He encouraged parishes to ask them to mitigate their impact on local communities.

C:59

MEMBERS QUESTION TIME

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Councillor Long asked if the Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee would extend good wishes to Councillor Parish following his car accident. Councillor Lintern confirmed she would do so.

The meeting closed at 7.33 pm