BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

COUNCIL

Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 27th March, 2025 at 5.00 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor P Bland (Mayor)
Councillors T Barclay, P Beal, A Beales, S Bearshaw, P Bland, R Blunt, F Bone, A Bubb, A Bullen, R Coates, Mrs J Collingham, R Colwell, C J Crofts, M de Whalley, P Devulapalli, S Everett, D Heneghan, C Joyce, A Kemp, P Kunes, S Lintern, B Long, J Moriarty, C Morley, S Nash, T Parish, S Ring, C Rose, J Rust, A Ryves, D Sayers, S Squire, M Storey and A Ware

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Anota, J Bhondi, S Collop, S Dark, A Dickinson, P Hodson, H Humphrey, B Jones, J Kirk, A Lawrence, J Lowe, J Osborne, J Ratcliffe, S Sandell, Mrs V Spikings, D Tyler and M Wilkinson

C:105 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by Bishop Norman Banks.

C:106 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the meetings held on 13 and 27 February 2025 and 19 March 2025 were approved as a correct record.

C:107 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

C:108 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

C:109 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

C:110 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Public Question from Mary Davies

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"I have recently had the distressing experience of my sister being moved into a Care Home against her will, and as a direct result of me raising serious concerns about her Rights and Care, the Home banned me from visiting her. Broken hearted, her health rapidly deteriorated and she died in the Home.

Along with the associated anguish and stress which affected my own health too, it was extremely challenging trying to obtain active support and guidance. I felt isolated and powerless whilst my sister pleaded my help in her vulnerable situation.

The Care Quality Commission was recently described as "not fit for purpose" by Health and Social Care Secretary, Wes Streeting. Every year, over two and a half million elderly people in the UK are affected by abuse in one form or another, in their own homes or in Care Homes, but these issues are shockingly overlooked. West Norfolk has a high and increasing proportion of elderly residents.

The Borough LILY service provides support to help tackle Loneliness and Social Isolation in our community, but what vital support can the Borough Council provide to ensure the wellbeing and safety of the elderly and residents of Care homes, to support those of us who have concerns for our loved ones in care and to ensure protection for anyone in similar circumstances to which I have referred.

Supplementary Question

The Borough Council is to be commended for signing up to the White Ribbon Promise to prevent men's violence against women and girls

I am now an active supporter of Hourglass, the UK-wide charity dedicated to protecting older people and building a safer ageing society.

Will the Borough Council also sign up to the Hourglass Oath to fight against the abuse, harm, exploitation and neglect of older people?"

Councillor Rust gave the following response:

"I am so sorry to hear of your distressing and upsetting experience. I offer my sincere sympathy at the distress that you went through after your sister was moved. I actually sent your question to the cabinet member at Norfolk County Council because it is a county function to fund provision of care homes for residents who are eligible. It does not fall under the remit of the borough. The Care Quality Commission (CQC), regulates and monitors care homes and they are meant to ensure that they meet quality and safety standards. The CQC use something called Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) to monitor a service and they focus on Safety, effectiveness, care, responsiveness and leadership. Their inspection reports are public, meaning that members of the public can access them to help them make informed choices

about care services. If the standards are not met the CQC can take enforcement action. So while our Lily service, who do amazing work over a variety of different areas, including reducing social isolation and loneliness, they wouldn't be able to offer specific advice on concerns over the care provided by a care home. If you called our Council Information Service, I'm confident that they would signpost you to the CQC for complaints and concerns.

I have personally signed up to the Hourglass Oath and pledged to fight against the abuse, harm, exploitation and neglect of older people. In addition to that, as an organisation, we are working to become a marmot place and to reduce health inequalities and I have requested that as a part of that we also look into becoming an ageing better community which will work to make our workplaces, homes and communities inclusive of older people and build an age friendly movement so that society sees ageing in a more positive and realistic way."

Q2 – Robert Shippey

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"A district-wide carbon emissions report uploaded to the council website "West Norfolk emissions" page this month features data for district carbon emissions in west Norfolk for 2019 to 2022. It replaced links to all previous district emissions reports. The 2019 data in that report seems to suggest approx 1.27kilo tonnes of carbon emitted in 2019 in west Norfolk. This directly contradicts the previous reports for 2019 which has now been taken off the website. That listed 2019 emissions at 1.91kilo tonnes and noted that all historic emissions up to 2019 were re-calculated to include an adjusted land-use methodology which resulted in higher calculated emissions - importantly emissions which always existed but were simply missing from calculations. This discrepancy throws into question the data also shown in the latest report for more recent years. Why has the previous report (showing higher emissions levels and updated methodology) been pulled from the website, and which 2019 data is actually correct? The lower levels presented now, or higher levels since removed based on the new methodology?"

Councillor de Whalley gave the following response:

"The government publishes data on territorial carbon emissions annually. The data has a two-year lag and the calculation of the emissions data is affected by adjustments in methodology. As part of a general update to this Council's website, a revised set of comparative data was published. The data set is from an external source; and uses the most recent published data. New statistics will be published by the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero in the summer and this Council's webpage will be updated in due course."

By way of supplementary Mr Shippey asked if the data sets on the website could be updated so the public could see all the information.

Councillor de Whalley explained that the latest data was on the web site, but he would provide a further response in writing.

Q3 – Trudy Clark

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"In January the Council made a decision on how to manage Parkway east / Florence Fen wildlife site. This is to be done with the guidance of NWT, and a management plan submitted by Aaron Brown in 2021, updated May 2023. Aaron is the NWT County Wildlife Sites Adviser. I would like to know when there was last a discussion between Aaron the Council re: this site, and if regular contact is maintained with NWT, as they are to play a pivotal role in advising the Council regarding Parkway east / Florence Fen wildlife site."

Councillor de Whalley gave the following response:
"Regular contact is maintained with Norfolk Wildlife Trust regarding the Florence Fen Site. Since the authority decided to formally have the site designated as a county wildlife site in January this year the council has been in frequent communication with the trust regarding the designation process, to update them on our proposals for the site and discuss with them the management plans. The most recent meeting with Aaron took place on the 19th of March 2025."

By way of supplementary Ms Clark drew attention to dredging of ditches which had been carried out where she said water voles were resident, and that some areas should have been left, she asked who was responsible.

Councillor de Whalley stated that he would respond in writing.

C:111 **VACANCIES ON KINGS LYNN CONSERVANCY BOARD AND INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARDS**

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Council was invited to make nominations to the Southery, Stringside and Stoke Ferry Internal Drainage Boards. No nominations were received.

No nominations were received for the William Cleave Educational Foundation.

Council was invited to make nominations for 2 positions on the King's Lynn Conservancy Board. Councillor de Whalley, seconded by Councillor Moriarty proposed Councillor Bearshaw and Jill Bennett. Councillor Long, seconded by Councillor Blunt proposed Councillor Bubb, Councillor Rose, seconded by Councillor Kemp, proposed Councillor Kemp.

Members were invited to complete the voting slips provided and hand back to S Winter at the end of the meeting. The results of the ballot would be reported the following day.

Following the count on Friday, councillor Bearshaw and Jill Bennett were elected to serve on the King's Lynn Conservancy Board.

RESOLVED: **1) That Councillor Bearshaw and Jill Bennett be appointed as representatives to serve on King's Lynn Conservancy Board**
2) That no nominations be made for the Southery, Stringside and Stoke Ferry Internal Drainage Boards.
3) That no nominations be made to the William Cleave Educational Foundation.

C:112 **ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL**

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Councillor Long presented his annual report from the Corporate Performance Panel.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

C:113 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES**

i **Cabinet: 4 March 2025**

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Councillor Beales proposed the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting on 4 March 2024, seconded by Councillor Ring.

CAB136: Planning Member Code of Practice

CAB138: Appointments Board/ IDC Terms of Reference

RESOLVED: That the recommendations from 4 March 2025 be approved.

ii **Cabinet: 20 March 2025**

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Councillor Moriarty proposed the CAB159: Local Plan 2021- 2040 Proposed Adoption, seconded by Councillor Blunt. Councillor Moriarty thanked all the members, officers and the public who had contributed to the local plan in order to get it to this stage following and long process by the Local Plan Task Group, through Cabinet and a rigorous Examination process by the Inspectors.

Council debated the recommendations and on being put to the vote it was agreed.

Councillor Beales proposed CAB161: Redundancy and Pay Policy Review (Exempt Report), seconded by Councillor Ring. It was noted that once the policy was approved it would become a public document. On being put to the vote the recommendation was approved.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations from Cabinet on 20 March 2025 be approved.

C:114 **CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**

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Councillor Beales moved the Cabinet Members reports and gave an update on Local Government Review including a letter from the Minster which set out that the LGR would have an outline of a support plan going forward. The final submission would be made in September.

Councillor Ring gave an update on the award of the Rural Prosperity Fund which showed a 40% drop on the previous year. The King's Lynn SPF also showed a 50% drop on previous years.

Councillor Squire gave an update on the contamination being washed ashore on the west Norfolk beaches following the ship collision in the Channel. A large quantity of plastic nurdles were washing up and were being cleared by a joint task force, including the Borough Council. She explained that there would be an option for volunteers to get involved in due course. She praised the work being carried out. In response to a question, she confirmed a claim would be made to the insurers of the ships.

Councillor de Whalley gave an update on the Ferry where officers continued to work with the contractors to bring it back into use. He thanked the officers and the operators for their continued diligence.

Councillor Moriarty gave an update on a letter received from the Minister for Housing and Communities regard the Planning Housing Delivery Test figures which had been challenged by the authority as incorrect. The letter now acknowledged that the figure issued by the Ministry was incorrect and the Council's figures had been re calculated.

Cabinet Members responded to questions on the following subject areas:

- The further engagement of key people and groups on the issue of the riverfront redevelopment.
- The work going on to re-open the ferry for business
- The potential for the imposition of a condition on licensed premises regarding Crime and Disorder, which could be requested for consideration by a Panel.
- The potential for the transfer of council assets into the new authority once agreed, which it was pointed out were in public ownership, but along with all other issues would need to be looked at in due course.
- The increase in costs of dog bins in parishes which was notified after the budgets were set, following which it had been agreed to distribute a draft figure in future years.
- The next steps to combat the health inequalities in King's Lynn, to which it was explained that the gaps in health inequalities were being identified and a raft of measures already in place were being identified linking with Marmot Place work.
- Update on the Youth Council was that a recent meeting was held with the Youth Advisory Board where a number of queries had been raised, with a further one the following week.
- Following the Heathrow substation fire incident, whether there was an emergency plan in place should something happen with the Walpole sub station. The Leader undertook to ascertain what plans were in place.
- Any conditions being imposed on The Garage taking over the lease of the Carnegie Library to prevent it being sold in future times to which it was explained that the protection of assets was paramount.
- The encouragement of MPs to attend the debate on incinerators, a letter would be sent to them. It was hoped that the government proposals on deposit schemes and recycling would help improve proper recycling and mitigate need for incinerators.
- The accessing of funding by bus companies for routes, to which it was explained that companies like the West Norfolk Community Transport ran pilot schemes and could make a strong case to the county council for funding.
- The number of vacancies to industrial and office spaces in the council's new builds within its estate was 2 light industrial units which may be repurposed to suit a different dynamic. Two interim appointments had been made. A list of vacancies would be circulated.
- What was the delay in holding Neighbourhood Planning Referendums, to which information would be sought on the timings.
- Regarding the payment for the solar panel installation on the KLIC building which budget was it coming from, to which it was explained that the cost benefit ratio had been undertaken and it was understood that it was to be funded from the Invest to Save budget.

C:115 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

The meeting closed at 6.55 pm