

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

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 26th March, 2026 at 5.00 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillor A Bullen (Chair)

Councillors T Barclay, A Beales, S Bearshaw, P Bland, R Blunt, F Bone, A Bubb, R Coates, Mrs J Collingham, S Collop, R Colwell, M de Whalley, P Devulapalli, A Dickinson, S Everett, J Fry, D Heneghan, P Hodson, B Jones, C Joyce, J Kirk, P Kunes, S Lintern, B Long, J Lowe, A Moore, J Moriarty, C Morley, S Nash, J Osborne, T Parish, J Ratcliffe, S Ring, C Rose, S Sandell, D Sayers, Mrs V Spikings, S Squire, M Storey, D Tyler and A Ware

C:105 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by Father Adrian Ling.

C:106 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anota, Ayres, Bhondi, Crofts, Dark, Lawrence, Rust, Ryves and Tyler.

C:107 **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The minutes from the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

C:108 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

C:109 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor referred to the Local Government Reorganisation announcement.

C:110 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business.

C:111 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

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**1. Question from Rob Archer**

The Mayor invited Rob Archer to ask a question as set out below:

*“It is becoming increasingly difficult to find an appropriate cycle parking spot in Lynn town centre as provision of cycle parking has not kept up with the growth in cycling. Indeed, a significant number of parking hoops have been removed in recent years, particularly on the Tuesday Market Place and the Purfleet. Many others are damaged or in poor condition. The new racks at the library are very welcome but we need more throughout the town.*

*The proposed ‘Active Travel Hub’ at Baker Lane (now refused planning permission) would have been of little use as it is awkward to cycle to and the design meant that around half the spaces would have been unusable. The cancellation of this project and the similar flawed scheme in South Lynn would release considerable funds to redress the situation, possibly with a more functional covered cycle parking area located near the bus or rail stations, along with a significant increase in parking spaces throughout the town centre.*

*I note that the borough council has a ‘Car Parking Strategy’. Would it not be sensible to make this a more holistic ‘Parking Strategy’ and include cycle parking as a clear part of the parking mix? This would enable more strategic planning as to locations and the level of provision, as well as managing and facilitating a modal shift from driving to cycling.”*

Councillor Beales responded by emphasising the importance of cycling provision within the borough. He explained that extensive discussions had taken place with cycling user groups regarding the Lynnsport development, and as part of that project all cycle routes had been resurfaced and upgraded, including the Sustrans crossings into the new estates. He also referred to the proposed new cycle facilities at the Guildhall.

Councillor Beales highlighted that the Town Deal proposals included alterations to the gyratory system and the introduction of several additional cycle paths. He expressed disappointment at the comments made regarding the Baker Lane scheme, noting that it remained an important project for the town. He clarified that the scheme had not been cancelled; rather, the applicant had received a planning refusal, and options for the next steps were now being considered. He further expressed disappointment that the Planning Committee had not supported the application and encouraged Mr Archer to take an active role in shaping the future of the Baker Lane proposals, including contributing views on facilities such as showers and changing areas.

Addressing Mr Archer’s comments on the Car Parking Strategy, Councillor Beales acknowledged that cycle parking should form part of that work and confirmed his willingness to engage with local cycling groups on the matter.

In his supplementary question, Mr Archer thanked Councillor Beales for his response and enthusiasm. He drew attention to the South Lynn Hub, noting that similar issues had arisen there as with Baker Lane. He reiterated his desire to be involved in future discussions and stressed the importance of incorporating the views of cycle users at an early stage. He expressed particular interest in the STARS scheme and encouraged early engagement with relevant groups.

Councillor Beales concluded by noting that the Planning Committee had shared many of Mr Archer's concerns. It was acknowledged that STARS had almost been finalised, making it challenging to revisit certain elements at this stage. However, the good working relationship with Norfolk County Council meant all parties would continue to work together.

## **2. Question from Alison Gifford**

*"May I ask the Mayor whether, now the new library building is open and there is a design prepared to enhance Baxter's Plain and adjacent streets with funding for this apparently secured through the STARS programme, what action the Council will take to bring the derelict post office building back into use?"*

*This area remains blighted by this building which is visibly deteriorating with every month that passes. A scheme was granted planning permission in 2022, and very minor (internal) works were undertaken last year to keep the consent alive, but there is no evidence that the developer has any real intention to take these plans forward.*

*This is a fine historic building. It should be providing good quality housing at the heart of the town as agreed with the approved plans. If left to decline it will continue to mitigate any benefit of the new and proposed regeneration works – and we fear, become impossible to renovate viably.*

*What do BCKLWN intend to do ensure the developer proceeds with the work in a timely manner?"*

Councillor Ring responded to the question stating that it was good to see so many people using the new library and acknowledged that the Post Office was a blight in the area. Councillor Ring provided an update on contact with the owner and potential plans for retail and housing and stated that the Council would be willing to assist where possible to bring the building back into use. Councillor Ring emphasises that the old post office was a key piece in the regeneration of Baxter's Plain and its restoration was important.

Alison Gifford did not have a supplementary question but stated she hoped that the building would be brought back into use.

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**(i) Cabinet – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026**

Councillor Ring, seconded by Councillor Beales, proposed the recommendation from Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 for CAB140: Adoption of the Property Disposal Policy.

Councillor Ring spoke in support of the proposals and outlined the input of the Panels into the Policy including consideration at the Regeneration and Development Panel and the matter being called in for consideration at the Corporate Performance Panel.

Councillor Ring highlighted the key amendments to the policy, and the need for clear asset management as the lack of previous plans and policies had resulted in ad hoc decisions. He explained that the policy provided guidelines for officers and Members, aiming for more effective management of the Council's asset portfolio.

Councillor Parish stressed the importance of not disposing of assets which were valuable to local communities, and ensuring that community representatives were involved in decisions relating to asset disposal.

Councillor Long referred to improper practices in the past.

In summing up, Councillor Ring commented that in the past some assets were unregistered and this policy ensured proper processes going forward.

**RESOLVED:** The recommendation from the Cabinet meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 in relation to the Adoption of the Property Disposal Policy was approved by Full Council, as set out below.

Cabinet resolves to recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Property Disposal Policy attached at Appendix 1, with the following amendments to the Governance Arrangements and Oversight section:

During potential asset disposals portfolio holders, ward members, parish councils and other community representatives where necessary may have confidential/commercial information shared with them. It is important that the constitution is adhered to in this regard in particular "Part 2 – Articles – Rights and Duties of Councillors, paragraphs 2.05 to 2.07".

**(ii) Electoral Arrangements Committee 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026 – Hilgay Community Governance Review – Next Steps.**

The recommendation from the above Committee was proposed by Councillor Beales and seconded by Councillor Ring.

In proposing the recommendations from the Committee, Councillor Beales commented that this was the recommendation from the Committee, however did not reflect his view and he felt that Council should reject the recommendation. He provided background, explaining that there were representation issues and community feedback, with the results of the consultation supporting the establishment of separate councils.

Councillor Beales provided Council with information relating to precepts, assets and the council tax base, noting that there were smaller Parishes, to those proposed, already in existence.

Councillor Lintern shared the concerns of the Electoral Arrangements Committee regarding the number of Parish Councillors and difficulty recruiting, however noted there were smaller parishes in existence and it was important to ensure all residents were represented.

Councillor Heneghan commented that it was important that local views were taken into consideration.

Councillor Osborne explained he would be voting against the recommendation from the Committee and felt that the creation of two Parish Councils was viable.

Councillor Long indicated he would be supporting the creation of two Parish Councils as arrangements were currently not working well.

Councillor Joyce commented that relationships had broken down and there needed to be a split.

Councillor Hodson, as Ward Member for Hilgay commented that there were irreparable differences and he agreed with the separation.

Councillor Parish referred to the correspondence sent from representatives from the Parishes, following the Electoral Arrangements Committee and suggested that the matter be referred back to the Electoral Arrangements Committee for consideration.

Councillor Ratcliffe commented that she had experienced disruption within Parishes and it took a long time to resolve. She supported splitting the Parishes into two.

Councillor Storey, as County Councillor for the Parish noted the recent issues within the Parish and stated that a split benefited both Parishes and the Council should listen to the views of Ten Mile Bank residents.

Councillor de Whalley commented that small parishes could function well and he supported the split.

Councillor Squire commented that local democracy was important.

Councillor Blunt, as a Member of the Electoral Arrangements Committee stated that the Committee had proposed mediation and support to the Parish, which he felt was a good option at the time and he had listened to the debate at this meeting.

Councillor Moriarty commented that it would not be appropriate to refer the matter back to the Electoral Arrangements Committee.

Councillor Ring, as seconded to the proposal explained that if he had attended the Electoral Arrangements Committee he would have voted in favour of establishing two Parishes and acknowledged the existing successful small parish councils in existence.

In summing up, Councillor Beales apologised for not making his views clearer at the Electoral Arrangements Committee. He stated he was not judging either Parish, but felt that they would be better separated and hoped Council would support the split.

The Mayor clarified that Councillors would be required to cast a vote on the recommendation put forward by the Electoral Arrangements Committee as set out below:

Option 1:

1. *Hilgay Parish and Hilgay Parish Council to remain unchanged and continue to be a warded Parish Council, comprising of:*
  - *Hilgay Ward &*
  - *Ten Mile Bank Ward*

*This will formally close the Community Governance Review.*

2. *To request that the Monitoring Officer provide assistance to the Parish Council in terms of Governance and Decision Making.*

On being put to the vote this proposal was lost. The Mayor then asked Council to vote on the alternative option presented to the Electoral Arrangements Committee. This was put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:** Full Council agreed to Option 2, as set out below:

**Option 2:**

(A) That Hilgay Parish is abolished, and Hilgay Parish Council is dissolved

(B) That a new civil Parish be formed using the ward boundary of Ten Mile Bank ward, and that the civil Parish be named 'Ten Mile Bank'

(C) That Ten Mile Bank should have a Parish Council, consisting of 5 members, and that it is not warded

(D) That a new civil Parish be formed using the ward boundary of Hilgay ward, and that the civil Parish be named 'Hilgay'

(E) That Hilgay should have a Parish Council, consisting of 9 members, and that it is not warded

(F) Fixed assets (such as buildings and fields) will be allocated to the Council, according to the proposed boundaries

(G) Non-fixed assets to be divided proportionately between both Councils, where it is possible to do so

(H) The initial Parish Precepts would be based on the 72/28 split and would be approximately £25,100 for Hilgay and £9,800 for Ten Mile Bank.

C:113 **REQUEST FOR EXTENSION TO THE SIX MONTH RULE - COUNCILLOR TYLER**

Following publication of the Agenda Councillor Tyler had attended a qualifying meeting within the six month period, therefore this report was withdrawn.

C:114 **REPORT FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER - CONSTITUTION REVIEW**

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Councillor Long, seconded by Councillor Beales proposed the recommendations as set out in the report.

Councillor Long spoke in support of the proposals and outlined the amendments, explaining that the Constitution Informal Working Group had considered them in depth.

Councillor Joyce referred to the amendments relating to the Appeals process for staff and explained that it was important that everyone was treated fairly.

Councillor Devulapalli commented that the Standing Order 34 rules in relation to the Planning Committee were restrictive as notice was required to be given along with a summary of speech.

Councillor Ring commented that the appropriate staff were more qualified to lead on the staff appeals process rather than it coming through the Licensing and Appeals Board.

Councillor Nash felt that Standing Order 34 amendments now presented more barriers.

The Monitoring Officer clarified the amendments to Standing Order 34 in that it was regularising existing practice with regards to Committee Members attending remotely and those sending a substitute if they were unable to attend.

Councillor Parish commented that it was courteous to notify the Chair in advance if you wanted to attend a meeting under Standing Order 34. He also asked if substitutes could be arranged by Group Leaders, rather than limited to the Councillor who was unable to attend.

Councillor Beales commented that the Constitution Informal Working Group debated Standing Order 34 in depth and it was noted that many other Local Authorities did not have this provision. He also felt it was courtesy to notify the Chair in advance if you were attending a meeting under Standing Order 34, and noted that the Chair had discretion in terms of arrangements.

Councillor Long explained that Norfolk County Council did not have an equivalent to Standing Order 34 and that Standing Order 34 was important as it allowed input from back benchers.

**RESOLVED:** Council agreed to the proposed changes to the Constitution included in the report at Appendix 1, 2 and 3, effective immediately.

COUNCIL ADJOURNED FOR A COMFORT BREAK FROM 6.22PM TO 6.33PM

C:115 **ANNUAL REPORT FROM CHAIR OF THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL**

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The Chair of the Corporate Performance Panel presented his report, as included in the Agenda. He thanked all Members of the Panel for their work

**RESOLVED:** Full Council noted the report.

C:116 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

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The Monitoring Officer explained that this Notice of Motion had been rolled over in accordance with Council Procedure Rules, from the January meeting, however things had progressed since then, and had the Notice of Motion been submitted for this meeting it would have been rejected under Council Procedure Rule 7.4.4 in that it would require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

The Notice of Motion was therefore withdrawn.

C:117 **CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**

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Councillor Beales moved the Cabinet Members Reports.

By way of an update, Councillor Ring informed Council that contracts had now been exchanged with Whitbred regarding the Hotel in Hunstanton which demonstrated the desire to widen the tourism season in Hunstanton.

In response to a question from Councillor Heneghan, Councillor Squire explained that the booking system for the waste disposal centre had caused issues and she was aware that there had been less visits since the booking system had been introduced. Incidents of fly tipping were also being investigated.

Councillor Parish read out a letter that he stated had been sent out regarding Heacham Beach Huts and asked if the change in lease was the mechanism for easing future sale of the site and Councillor Ring responded no.

In response to a question from Councillor Sandell, Councillor Ring encouraged Councillors to speak to their Parishes with regard to small pieces of land and register an interest with the Council if they had a community need for it, as part of the wider asset management work.

Councillor Osborne requested an update on events at Downham Market and Councillor Lintern explained that the Council offered help and advice through the Tourism department and would assist to promote with events if the organisation contacted the Council and provided up to date information.

In response to a question from Councillor Long, Councillor Beales offered to visit the sites that were impacted by flytipping. Councillor Beales also agreed to work with Cllr Long regarding of the closure of the gate at Horsley Fields Industrial Estate.

In response to a question from Councillor Parish regarding Heacham Beach Huts Councillor Ring explained that a briefing on this matter would be sent to Councillors in due course.

Councillor Kunes thanked Councillor Beales for visiting sites with him where there had been illegal waste and hoped that the Council would keep putting on pressure. Councillor Beales explained that the Council were looking at actions to be taken forward and would keep Councillor Kunes updated.

In response to a question from Councillor Ratcliffe, Councillor Ring confirmed that the room at Downham Market was available to host Community Bookings and could be booked through Alive West Norfolk.

Councillor Blunt referred to the bid for the town of culture and Councillor Lintern explained that the framework and background to this

was being put together and then an expression of interest would be submitted for 2027/2028.

In response to a question from Councillor Everett regarding the briefing to members on Heacham Beach Huts, Councillor Ring stated he would inform Councillors of when a briefing would be available as soon as he knew.

In response to a question from Councillor Spikings, Councillor Ring confirmed that the Council was in discussion with the administrator dealing with NCP car parks and noted that the land was within the Masterplan area.

In response to a question from Councillor Bubb, Councillor Squire confirmed that unfortunately the MRF could not accept plastic flowerpots for recycling.

Councillor Blunt asked about the local plan call for sites and the need to double the number of sites. Councillor Moriarty explained that the responses to the call for sites would be analysed and he encouraged Councillors to speak to their Parishes to keep them informed of the Local Plan Process and more details would be made available to Councillors throughout the process.

Councillor Spikings referred to a Planning Committee Government Consultation that had been issued today and Councillor Moriarty agreed to find out more information and report back to Members.

*After the meeting, Councillor Moriarty provided the following response:*

*The draft statutory instrument for the Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 were published yesterday. I was not aware that they were again being consulted on, as the link to the consultation had been sent to me after I had left to attend the Full Council meeting.*

*The draft Statutory Instruments followed a previous consultation which was the subject of a special meeting of the Planning Committee, upon which the Council's responses were based. That previous consultation had 17 questions. The current consultation has been honed down to the three questions, and the time period within which to respond to four weeks.*

*Officers will again speak with the Chair (and possibly the Vice Chair, not my call) on how they wish to approach responding to the consultation, bearing in mind the limited number of questions, the technical nature of one of them, and the limited time period within which to frame a response.*

In response to a question from Councillor Collop, Councillor Ring explained that the new spaces would be double plots if possible and Environment Agency guidelines would need to be followed.

Councillor Long referred to the format of Cabinet Members Reports to Council and the list of meetings attended section. Councillor Beales informed Council that the Democratic Services Manager would look at improvements to the report template.

In response to a question from Councillor Blunt, Councillor Moriarty explained that enforcement action did take time and live planning applications and other issues could cause delays. If Members had any issues, they were encouraged to report these directly to Councillor Moriarty.

Councillor Nash referred to the West Winch development and the withdrawal of Hopkins Homes. Councillor Moriarty reminded Council that the planning permission and conditions went with the land, not the developer and the landowner.

In response to a question from Councillor Kunes, Councillor de Whalley agreed that it was good news that the Air Quality Management Area was to be withdrawn due to improvements and he informed Council that this decision would come through the decision-making process shortly.

Councillor Long referred to issues with a pathway at Watlington. Councillor Moriarty confirmed that he had responded to the residents that had contacted him on this matter to provide them with an update.

Councillor Devulapalli asked if Councillor de Whalley had heard about 'trees for the streets' and Councillor de Whalley agreed to look into this.

C:118 **MEMBER'S QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

**The meeting closed at 7.20 pm**