

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

KING'S LYNN AREA COMMITTEE

Minutes from the Meeting of the King's Lynn Area Committee held on Thursday, 18th June, 2026 at 5.15 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors S Everett (Chair), F Bone, S Collop, R Colwell, J Fry, D Heneghan, B Jones (Vice - Chair), C Joyce, A Kemp, A Moore, J Rust, D Sayers and A Ware

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Mark Whitmore, Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection
Charlotte Marriott, Interim Corporate Governance Manager
Scarlet Pettit, Corporate Governance Graduate

EXTERNAL ATTENDEE: Vicky Etheridge, BID Manager

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2026/2027

RESOLVED: Councillor S Everett was appointed Chair for the Municipal Year 2026/2027

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE - CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2026/2027

RESOLVED: Councillor B Jones was appointed Vice - Chair for the Municipal Year 2026/2027

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology of absence was received from Councillor Lowe.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: The minutes from the previous meeting held on the 19th March 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was none.

6 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

7 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

There was none.

8 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

There was none.

9 **KING'S LYNN UNPARISHED AREA - COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW CONSULTATION RESULTS**

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The Interim Corporate Governance Manager and Corporate Governance Graduate presented the results of the first consultation on establishing a Town Council for King's Lynn, highlighting strong resident support, key concerns, and next steps. The consultation ran for six weeks from early February to the end of March, with submissions accepted online, by paper, email, or letter. Information was distributed to nearly 20,000 properties in the unparished area, resulting in 915 individual respondents, surpassing the 1-2% response rate goal.

Approximately 86% of respondents supported the creation of a town council, with the leading theme being the desire for increased local voice and representation, especially in the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Concerns about being absorbed into larger authorities and funding biases were prominent.

Around 10% of respondents opposed the creation of a town or parish council, primarily due to financial concerns such as council tax increases and the lack of a cap on the precept.

Over 86% of respondents favoured maintaining mayoral and civic heritage, citing the importance of historical continuity and civic pride. Opposition was mainly due to cost concerns, with some suggesting the mayoralty could be maintained at reduced expense. Few respondents suggested alternatives to a town or parish council, with options like ward forums and community associations receiving minimal support.

Councillor Rust thanked Officers for the presentation and questioned the financial impact on residents with the chartered trustee model. The Interim Corporate Governance Manager explained that the chartered trustee model would have limited financial impact as it does not deliver services, and further financial modelling will be conducted if a second consultation proceeds.

The chartered trustee model was discussed as an interim arrangement to preserve civic functions and the mayoralty if a parish council was not established, with limited financial impact as it would not deliver services.

In response to Councillor Kemp, the Interim Corporate Governance Manager explained the precept for a new parish council would depend on the assets and services transferred, with the Borough Council funding the initial year if established before unitary status. Provisions such as a parish clerk would also be provided initially.

Councillor Colwell thanked the officers for the presentation and recognised this consultation compared to others done by the Borough Council had received a good response and residents were interested. He questioned if there was an expected drop in responses to the second consultation and potential extended consultation. In response the Interim Corporate Governance Manager highlighted the second consultation was to focus on technical details such as the name, implementation date, election arrangements, precept, civic heritage, and warding. She noted the response rate may dip due to timing, but significant resident interest was still anticipated. She recognised a consultation period of the summer was not best practice but may be required due to time constraints and the deadline of January 2027.

Councillor Sayers questioned the responses for residents not within the unparished area and the impact on the statistic if those responses were removed. The Corporate Governance Graduate advised she did not have the specific data however the highlighted 90% of the responses were from residents from the unparished area.

In response to questions from Councillor Bone and Kemp, the Interim Corporate Governance Manager explained Officers were drafting recommendations based on the consultation feedback, to be presented to the Electoral Arrangements Committee on 29th June and then to Full Council in July. If approved, a second, more technical consultation will follow, with the aim of establishing a new parish council by April 2027, subject to tight legislative timeframes.

Councillor Kemp raised concerns about warding arrangements, especially in deprived areas losing representation under the unitary model. The Interim Corporate Governance Manager confirmed that draft recommendations on councillor numbers per ward would be published, and no ward was proposed to have only one councillor.

Councillor Kemp raised further question about who decides on warding and councillor numbers, with the Interim Corporate Governance clarified that current proposals were drafts developed with an external consultant and will be subject to further input and consultation.

BID BUSINESS PLANS AND PROPOSALS

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Vicky Etheridge from Discover King's Lynn presented the BID's achievements, ongoing consultation, and future plans. She explained that the BID operates as a business-led organisation within a defined town centre area, funded by a levy on business properties, and was preparing for a third term with a ballot scheduled for autumn.

The BID had implemented popular initiatives such as street rangers, Shopwatch and Pubwatch schemes, events like markets and street entertainment, business support, and the Discover King's Lynn app, all aimed at increasing footfall and supporting local businesses

Challenges include financial constraints, the need to adapt to local government changes, and maintaining or expanding services. Priorities for the next five years include continued marketing, events, business support, and acting as a voice for local businesses.

The Bid Manager highlighted the importance of working with the future town council and new authority, as well as exploring ways to expand BID services and foster greater community involvement in the town centre.

Councillor Heneghan inquired about the sustainability of BID services with the BID Manager explaining without Discover King's Lynn there would be a reduction in events and services as it would be down to the Local Authority however there was unlikely to be a budget for this.

Councillor Rust questioned if there was any consideration for a safety perception around King's Lynn as she felt it was to be beneficial with finding out why residents was not coming into the Town Centre. The BID Manager explained a similar question on safety perception was asked in another campaign.

Councillor Colwell commented the app was not promoted and many residents were not aware. He suggested promoting the app and services by providing free WIFI around the Town Centre. The BID Manager explained free WIFI had been explored however it was difficult to implement due to the cost. She agreed this was to be revisited along with the demand and users.

In response to Councillor Fry, the BID Manager commented in the next term it was to be considered on extending the area in which BID covered including with working with businesses and charities.

Councillor Kemp expressed her concerns on the number of vacant units in the Town Centre. The BID Manager explained some vacant properties was from national chains vacating but provided assurance

she was working with estate agents and local entrepreneurs to fill the vacant units.

Committee Members and the BID Manager discussed markets being brought back into the Town Centre, noting the Merchants Market and this bringing additional trade into the town. She noted the difficulty with local businesses being able to attend Markets during the week.

11 MEMBERSHIP OF KLAC'S SUBGROUPS AND INFORMAL WORKING GROUP

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The planning subgroup will continue with Councillors Collop, Ware, and Jones as members, and Councillor Heneghan as a substitute

The play areas informal working group was initially proposed for disbandment but would continue due to ongoing concerns about playground conditions. Councillors expressed concerns about the state of playgrounds and the stalled accessible playground project. It was agreed to maintain the working group, liaise with officers, and add the accessible playground project to the committee's work programme.

Councillor Collop asked why the informal working group had not met recently. In response, Councillor Rust explained that the Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection had successfully secured funding for accessible play equipment in the Walks. She noted that she had attended an event with Officers, where it became clear that additional work was needed to ensure all accessibility needs were fully addressed. However, due to limited Officer capacity within the Open Spaces team, the funding was ultimately lost. She acknowledged that, despite this setback, there remained a strong willingness to progress the project, and that both Councillors and Officers had already undertaken significant work.

Membership for the special expenses informal working group was sought and confirmed, with five elected members – Councillors Kemp, Ware, Jones, Everett and Rust volunteering to participate.

RESOLVED:

1. That the KLAC Planning Sub-Group continues to operate, and Membership of the Group be sought and confirmed by the Committee for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.
2. The Funding Priorities and Opportunities Informal Working Group be disbanded due to having not met and the creation of the KLAC Support Officer will now fulfil this responsibility on behalf of KLAC.
3. The Committee agree the Terms of Reference for the Special Expenses Informal Working Group as set out in Appendix 1 and

Membership of the Group be sought for and confirmed by the Committee for 2026/2027.

4. The Play Areas Informal Working Group remain established with the existing membership and an item be brought to the a future meeting of the Committee.

12 **COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET'S FORWARD DECISION LIST**

It was agreed an item on the accessible playground equipment was to be added to the Work Programme and scheduled for a future meeting.

The Committee noted the Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Decision

13 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

17th September 2026 at 5:15pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 6.42 pm