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, 12th November, 2026 at 5.15 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors S Everett (Chair), J Fry, D Heneghan, B Jones (Vice - Chair), C Joyce, A Kemp, J Lowe, J Rust, D Sayers and A Ware

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34B:

Councillors Collop and Colwell

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:

Councillor Morley – Portfolio Holder for Finance

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mark Whitmore - Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection
Carl Holland – Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Greg Pearson – Principal Policy Advisor

25 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Moore and Bone.

26 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the previous meeting held on the 17th September 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

27 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was none.

28 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

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

Councillors Collop and Colwell were present under Standing Order 34b (remotely).

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

There was none.

31 **SPECIAL EXPENSES 2027 - 2028**

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The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer presented the proposed King's Lynn Special Expenses budget for 2027/2028. He explained that the estimated budget for 2027/2028 was £708,000 and that the estimated equivalent Council Tax base was 11,214.9, compared with 11,063.2 in the previous year. At full cost recovery, the Band D charge would be £63.14.

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer explained that, owing to the anticipated Council Tax referendum limits, only 50p of the proposed increase would be allocated to Special Expenses. This would result in a Band D charge of £56.49. Approximately £633,000 would therefore be collected from King's Lynn Council Tax payers, with the Borough Council providing a subsidy of approximately £74,600.

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer explained that Fairstead Community Centre remained within the budget, with running costs of approximately £21,000 and income of approximately £15,000. He also provided clarification on other changes within the budget, including the increase in costs associated with dog bins, which reflected the recovery of historic inflation and revised fees rather than solely an increase in current-year costs. Other areas of expenditure had predominantly increased as a result of inflation.

Members discussed the proposed budget and sought clarification on the Council Tax charge, the level of subsidy provided by the Borough Council and the scope to bring forward new schemes. The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer explained that the budget was fully utilised and consequently no new schemes had been included. Although the transfer of South Lynn Community Centre had reduced overall costs, the Special Expenses budget continued to require a subsidy from the Borough Council. Inflationary pressures and unpredictable costs could also limit the funding available for new schemes over the next two years.

Councillor Joyce sought clarification on the Business Rates liability for South Lynn Community Centre. The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer confirmed that the Purfleet Trust was

responsible for the running costs and Business Rates liability, subject to the relevant valuation arrangements.

Councillor Joyce also commented on the budget for the upkeep of the pavilions and questioned the basis on which the costs were calculated, noting that King's Lynn residents contributed towards the upkeep of the pavilions through Special Expenses. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Morley, highlighted that the Borough Council subsidised Special Expenses and agreed to investigate the calculations further and provide a response to the Committee.

Councillor Joyce referred to allotments within the unparished area and highlighted that one of the allotment sites was self-managed. The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer confirmed that self-managed and directly managed allotments were identified separately and that there was a reduced charge for self-managed allotments.

Councillor Heneghan sought clarification on the number of dog bins within the unparished area of King's Lynn and raised concerns regarding the ongoing cost implications of installing additional bins. The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer confirmed that there were 139 dog bins within the unparished area, which were emptied at varying frequencies according to usage, including weekly, fortnightly and twice-weekly collections. He explained that the approximately £44,620 dog-bin charge included collection costs, staffing, a vehicle and replacement bags. The increase in costs reflected previous fee freezes and the move towards inflation-based charging, with the catch-up increase being applied rather than phased in.

Councillor Heneghan questioned whether the associated costs restricted the provision of additional dog bins. The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that there was no general flexibility within the charges but asked Councillor Heneghan to provide details of any specific locations where additional provision was considered necessary so that these could be investigated. Councillor Heneghan agreed to provide the relevant information.

Councillor Sayers asked whether town-centre and park lighting had been converted to LED and whether all available cost-saving measures were being pursued. The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer were unable to confirm the extent of the LED conversion at the meeting and agreed to clarify the position. It was noted that conversion to LED lighting should reduce future costs.

In response to a further question from Councillor Sayers, the Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer advised that South Lynn Community Centre had been leased to the Purfleet Trust. The removal of the Community Centre from the Special Expenses budget had removed approximately £76,000 of annual expenditure and £33,000 of income, which had previously resulted in a net cost of approximately £43,000.

Councillor Joyce sought clarification on how much of the approximately £360,000 expenditure on open spaces related specifically to King's Lynn Special Expenses. The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer explained that the allocation was calculated using a range of factors, including area, perimeter, mowing frequency, staffing and equipment, and agreed to provide further clarification on the specific apportionment. The Portfolio Holder for Finance also agreed to consider whether King's Lynn's role in relation to visitors and tourism should be taken into account alongside the existing method of calculating the allocation.

The Committee considered the proposed King's Lynn Special Expenses charge for 2027/2028. The proposal was supported by the Committee, with Councillor Joyce not voting.

RESOLVED: That the Committee endorsed the King's Lynn Special Expenses charge for 2027/2028, as set out at section 2.2 of the report.

Councillor Morley left the meeting at 5:52pm.

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

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Members discussed the forthcoming consultation on the creation of a King's Lynn Town Council and the process for responding to the consultation. The Chair encouraged Members to attend the Electoral Arrangements Committee meeting on 1 December 2026, at which the next stage of the consultation was expected to be considered. Subject to the agreement of the Electoral Arrangements Committee, the consultation was anticipated to commence around 11 January 2027 and run until mid February 2027.

In response to Councillor Joyce, the Principal Policy Advisor explained the legal process for the creation of a Town Council and confirmed that the Borough Council had the power to make a reorganisation order to create a King's Lynn parish or Town Council. The process included the Community Governance Review and further consultation, following which the matter would be considered by Full Council and the necessary reorganisation arrangements progressed.

The Chair reminded Members that they had been granted a dispensation which enabled them to respond individually to the consultation should they wish to do so. It was also confirmed that the Committee could consider submitting a collective response.

Councillor Joyce suggested that the Committee could consider operating more like a parish or Town Council by providing opportunities for public questions and receiving updates from Borough and County Councillors on matters affecting King's Lynn. The Principal Policy Advisor confirmed that the Committee could continue to consider local issues in this way should the Town Council not be established at the end of the Community Governance Review.

Councillor Sayers suggested that the Town Council consultation be included on the Committee's January agenda to provide Members with an opportunity to consider the consultation and formulate a response.

Members discussed concerns regarding safety and antisocial behaviour at the King's Lynn bus station and the difference between reported incidents and public perceptions of safety.

Councillor Heneghan referred to discussions with the Police and other partners and commented that the situation at the bus station appeared to be deteriorating.

Councillor Rust suggested that a safety perception audit be added to the Committee's future work programme, highlighting that residents' perceptions of safety appeared to differ from Police assessments. Councillor Rust explained that such an audit could involve trained external researchers speaking directly with users of the area. She advised that a previous indicative cost had been approximately £5,000, although the scope of the work and an updated cost would need to be established.

Councillor Joyce suggested that consideration could be given to involving local colleges, schools or Police Cadets in undertaking survey work, subject to appropriate supervision. Members noted that this could potentially reduce costs while also providing an opportunity to engage with young people.

Members also discussed environmental measures which could help discourage antisocial behaviour at the bus station. This included consideration of the design of bins, seating and other street furniture which could facilitate prolonged congregation. Councillor Heneghan added that the Police had identified a number of design issues at the bus station which could be considered.

The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection advised that work relating to community safety was already

commencing and agreed to develop further information for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.

It was agreed that the Committee would receive the Police update at its January meeting before determining whether a safety perception audit should be progressed and formally added to the Committee's work programme.

Councillor Heneghan requested an update on the proposed review of play areas and the accessible play project. The Democratic Services Officer advised that the relevant officers had been contacted and that further information was awaited regarding when an update could be brought to the Committee.

Councillor Kemp requested that the King's Lynn Ferry be included on the January agenda, noting that matters relating to funding and timescales remained outstanding. The Democratic Services Officer advised that the Lynn Ferry was already scheduled for consideration by a Joint Panel in January.

The Committee noted the Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Decision List.

33 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

21st January 2027 at 5:15pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 6.14 pm