

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

**COUNCIL**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 29th July, 2026 at 5.00 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillor S Bearshaw (Chair)

Councillors A Beales, P Bland, F Bone, R Coates, S Collop, C J Crofts, A Dickinson, S Everett, J Fry, D Heneghan, P Hodson, H Humphrey, B Jones, C Joyce, A Kemp, J Kirk, P Kunes, S Lintern, B Long, A Moore, C Morley, J Ratcliffe, S Ring, C Rose, J Rust, A Ryves, S Sandell, D Sayers, Mrs V Spikings, S Squire, M Storey and A Ware

**C:25      PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by Father Adrian Ling.

The Mayor informed Council that this would be Father Adrian's last Council meeting and thanked him on behalf of the Council.

Father Adrian thanked the Council for the privilege and wished Councillors well.

**C:26      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anota, Ayres, Bhondi, Blunt, Bubb, Bullen, Collingham, Colwell, Devulapalli, Lawrence, Lowe, Moriarty, Nash, Osborne, Parish, Pidcock, Tyler, de Whalley, de Winton and Chief Executive Kate Blakemore.

**C:27      MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The minutes from the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to Councillor Devulapalli's apologies being added.

**C:28      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Long referred to the Notice of Motion being discussed later in the meeting and declared that he was disabled.

**C:29      MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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The Mayor informed Council that Father John would be taking over the position of Mayors Chaplain.

C:30 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business.

C:31 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no petitions or public questions.

C:32 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES**

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**(i) Electoral Arrangements Committee – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

The Leader, seconded by Councillor Everett, proposed the recommendation from the Electoral Arrangements Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

The Leader, Councillor Beales presented the recommendations from the Committee which were to proceed to second round of public consultation. Councillor Beales noted that the Electoral Arrangements Committee had asked for information on the precept to be included in the second consultation round and as a result of the additional information that was required, Councillor Beales proposed an amendment to the recommendation, in that the final consultation document, including the precept information, be presented to the Electoral Arrangements Committee for final sign off.

Councillor Long agreed that the final consultation document should be considered by the Electoral Arrangements Committee and supported the amendment put forward by Councillor Beales.

Councillor Joyce agreed that information on precepts was important, but noted that it would be up to the Town Council to set the precept.

Councillor Kemp spoke in support of the recommendations and the importance of keeping residents informed on the detail.

Councillor Ratcliffe spoke in support of the proposals and hoped that good local people would stand to represent the Town Council once formed.

Councillor Fry supported the proposals and stressed the importance of transparency throughout the process.

Councillor Ryves spoke in support of the proposals and noted that transfer of assets and ownership of assets would need to be considered.

Councillor Everett, as seconder, thanked the officers involved in analysing the first round consultation responses and supported the recommendations, as amended by Councillor Beales.

In summing up, Councillor Beales informed Members that they would be kept up to date on progress and could attend the Electoral Arrangements Committee meetings under Standing Order 34 as required. He also explained that the Section 151 officer would be engaged in the financial aspects.

**RESOLVED:** The recommendations from the Electoral Arrangements Committee meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026 were approved by Full Council, as set out below:

1. Recommend to Full Council that Officers should proceed to the next stage of the review, including undertaking a second phase of public consultation, including potential precept for 2027/2028.
2. Delegate Authority to the Interim Corporate Governance Manager to make the required arrangements for the second consultation phase, including finalising the draft recommendations, communication and engagement activity, subject to final approval from the Electoral Arrangements Committee.

**(ii) Cabinet – 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2026**

Councillor Ring proposed the recommendations from Cabinet relating to the West Norfolk Racket and Community Sports Hub. He explained that funding had already been allocated through the Capital Programme and that the recommendation before Council was to increase the allocation in order to secure additional external funding and deliver a project that would provide significant benefits to the residents of King's Lynn.

Councillor Ring outlined the facilities that would be provided as part of the development and explained how the proposals responded to identified local demand. He also highlighted the wider community benefits of the scheme, including improved inclusivity, accessibility and social value. In addition, he reminded Members that a planning application for an Adapted Sports Hub on the adjacent site had been submitted, which would further enhance the benefits available to local communities once the developments were completed.

Councillor Ring spoke about the Council's ambition in bringing forward what he described as a unique and ambitious project, which had received support from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA).

Referring to the financial modelling, Councillor Ring stated that it was prudent and robust. However, he emphasised that the project's value extended beyond financial returns, highlighting the significant social

benefits it would deliver, particularly for residents living in areas of deprivation.

Councillor Beales seconded the proposals and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Kunes requested that consideration be given to the installation of solar panels on the proposed canopies.

Councillor Ratcliffe spoke in support of the proposals and expressed confidence in the financial management of the project. She also requested that consideration be given to future investment in Alive facilities at Downham Market.

Councillor Sayers supported the proposals but raised concerns regarding traffic and parking implications and light pollution. He also expressed concern about the potential for contamination of nearby rivers from pitch crumb materials.

Councillor Rust spoke in support of the proposals, highlighting their contribution towards improving health and wellbeing, reducing social isolation and encouraging participation in sport. She commended the ambition of the project and noted that it would provide opportunities for a wide range of sporting and recreational activities. Councillor Rust also commented that the proposals aligned with the objectives of the Marmot initiative.

Councillor Long advised that the Environment and Community Panel had been afforded the opportunity to scrutinise the proposals in detail and confirmed his support for the scheme. He noted that the development would remain subject to the granting of planning permission and expressed the hope that the project would be delivered on time and within budget.

Councillor Ryves thanked officers for taking the time to explain both the proposals and the financing arrangements and confirmed that he would support the recommendations.

Councillor Morley commented that the proposal represented more than just a commercial opportunity, highlighting its social value and the need for such a facility within the town.

Councillor Joyce stated that, having listened to the debate, he was supportive of the proposals.

In summing up, Councillor Ring advised that he did not believe solar panels would be a viable option for the canopies. He also responded to Councillor Sayers' concerns regarding contamination, explaining that the courts would be constructed as hard courts. Councillor Ring further advised that the canopies would help to reduce light pollution and reiterated that the proposals remained subject to the planning process.

He noted that an appropriate contingency had been built into the project budget.

Councillor Ring thanked the officers involved for their work in developing the proposals and reiterated the significant community benefits the project would deliver.

In response to comments made by Councillor Ratcliffe, Councillor Ring advised that a new court facility was expected to open in Downham Market in the near future.

**RESOLVED:** The recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2026 were approved by Full Council, as set out below:

1. Approve an increase to the councils contribution from £866,000 to £1,200,000 to fund the scheme, an increase of £334,000.
2. Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to determine the most appropriate financing mix for the councils £1,200,000 funding of the project.

C:33

#### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

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Councillor Bone proposed the following Notice of Motion (06/26):

***The Council notes*** equality, diversity, and inclusion as a core value in what it does and the services that it delivers. It respects the struggles and tribulations that has taken place in history to ensure that people from all backgrounds feel equal and included. Our borough is becoming increasingly more diverse and is better for it. In our very own council chamber, we have people of colour, different faiths, and orientations. We all have a mutual respect and admiration for our community spirit and proud to be our community representatives.

*To ensure that every member of our community feels valued, included, and equal. **This council resolves** in its communications to acknowledge the equality Calendar throughout the year by sending out a welcoming message of acknowledgement or support for every significant event in that calendar. How hard is it to say Happy Diwali, Hanukkah, or Ede. To acknowledge international woman or pride day, Armed Forces Day. Events such as disability or mental health week. Not every event may have value to everyone, but it will have value to someone. It costs nothing for a simple act of kindness but could mean so much to individual members of the community some who may or may not feel marginalised at times.*

Councillor Rust seconded the Notice of Motion and spoke in support of it. She stated that she was proud to support the motion, describing it as

a simple gesture that could help to raise awareness, understanding and respect within the community. Councillor Rust noted that the Borough's residents came from a wide range of backgrounds and faiths and that the motion would send a clear message that everyone belonged within the community. She further commented that Councillors represented all members of the community and that the Notice of Motion provided a straightforward means of promoting significant events and recognising important occasions.

Councillor Hodson spoke against the Notice of Motion. He stated that, whilst he respected the beliefs of others, he considered the United Kingdom to be a Christian country. He noted his support for Armed Forces Day and expressed concern that the proposals would require officer time, funded through public resources, without delivering any measurable outcomes or tangible benefits to the community.

Councillor Kemp spoke in support of the motion, emphasising the importance of equality and ensuring that all residents felt respected, valued and included. She commented that, although the motion was relatively simple, it would send a positive message to all communities across the Borough.

Councillor Sayers spoke in support of the motion and thanked Councillor Bone for bringing it forward. He disagreed with the comments made by Councillor Hodson and stated that the motion provided a straightforward means of recognising and celebrating the Borough's diverse communities and residents. Councillor Sayers also suggested that the Leader consider appointing Councillor Bone as the Council's Member Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Councillor Heneghan spoke in support of the Notice of Motion and stated that it was an important gesture that demonstrated the Council's recognition of diversity within the Borough. She commented that the motion would help convey the message that all residents were valued members of the community and should feel included.

Councillor Long commented that he did not understand why the Notice of Motion had been brought forward, as he believed the Council already embodied the values set out within it. He expressed the view that the proposals would incur additional costs and were unnecessary, as many of the actions referred to in the motion already formed part of the Council's day-to-day activities. Councillor Long therefore indicated that he would not be supporting the motion.

Councillor Ryves congratulated Councillor Bone on bringing forward the Notice of Motion and confirmed that he would be supporting it. He requested further information regarding the proposed Equalities Calendar, including the types of events that would be included, and also sought clarification on how messages and information would be communicated to residents.

Councillor Morley expressed concerns regarding the proposed methods of communication and the criteria that would be used to determine which events would be considered significant within the Equalities Calendar. He commented that further work was required to clarify the detail of the proposals.

Councillor Ratcliffe spoke in support of the Notice of Motion, explaining that it would help to recognise and support groups within the community who might otherwise feel marginalised or underrepresented.

Councillor Ring commented that the Notice of Motion extended beyond matters of religion and was fundamentally concerned with promoting acceptance, inclusion and community cohesion. He therefore indicated his support for the motion.

Councillor Sandell stated that she was unable to support the motion, as she considered it unnecessary. She commented that she already treated all residents with respect, dignity and kindness and expressed the hope that all Councillors did likewise.

Councillor Coates advised that he had reviewed the Equalities Calendar and considered that many of the events included were not relevant to the Council. He therefore expressed the view that the motion was not appropriate and confirmed that he would not be supporting it.

Councillor Squire expressed disappointment that some Members were not supportive of the motion. She stated that Councillors represented all residents of the Borough and that all communities should be recognised and celebrated. Councillor Squire also commented that Councillors themselves could be subject to abuse and disrespect and that the principles contained within the motion were therefore important.

Councillor Joyce commented that he had wanted to support the motion but felt that the nature of the debate was not conveying a positive message to the public. He stated that Councillors needed to address their own approach before seeking to promote such messages more widely.

Councillor Collop commented that all individuals had feelings and deserved consideration and respect.

Councillor Lintern stated that the motion would not be resource intensive. She noted that the Equalities Calendar already existed and that the proposal simply involved drawing attention to significant events contained within it. Councillor Lintern expressed surprise that the motion had generated such a contentious debate.

In summing up, Councillor Bone expressed the hope that Members would support the motion. He stated that he was surprised that some Members had spoken against it, as the intention was simply to recognise and acknowledge significant events affecting different communities. Councillor Bone commented that many people were fortunate not to have experienced prejudice and discrimination and urged Members to support the sharing of the Equalities Calendar as a simple act of recognition and kindness.

Councillor Bone then requested that a recorded vote be taken on the motion, which was supported by the requisite number of Members.

The results of the Recorded Vote are below:

| <b>Councillor</b> | <b>For</b> | <b>Against</b> | <b>Abstain</b> |
|-------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| Beales            | ✓          |                |                |
| Bearshaw          | ✓          |                |                |
| Bland             | ✓          |                |                |
| Bone              | ✓          |                |                |
| Coates            |            | ✓              |                |
| Collop            | ✓          |                |                |
| Crofts            |            | ✓              |                |
| Dickinson         |            | ✓              |                |
| Everett           | ✓          |                |                |
| Fry               |            | ✓              |                |
| Heneghan          | ✓          |                |                |
| Hodson            |            | ✓              |                |
| Humphrey          |            | ✓              |                |
| Jones             | ✓          |                |                |
| Joyce             |            | ✓              |                |
| Kemp              | ✓          |                |                |
| Kirk              |            | ✓              |                |
| Kunes             | ✓          |                |                |
| Lintern           | ✓          |                |                |
| Long              |            | ✓              |                |
| Moore             |            | ✓              |                |
| Morley            | ✓          |                |                |
| Ratcliffe         | ✓          |                |                |
| Ring              | ✓          |                |                |
| Rose              |            |                | ✓              |
| Rust              | ✓          |                |                |
| Ryves             | ✓          |                |                |
| Sandell           |            | ✓              |                |
| Sayers            | ✓          |                |                |
| Spikings          |            | ✓              |                |
| Squire            | ✓          |                |                |
| Storey            |            | ✓              |                |
| Ware              | ✓          |                |                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>19</b>  | <b>13</b>      | <b>1</b>       |



**RESOLVED:** That this Council resolves in its communications, to acknowledge the equality Calendar throughout the year by sending out a welcoming message of acknowledgement or support for every significant event in that calendar. How hard is it to say Happy Diwali, Hanukkah or Ede. To acknowledge international women or pride day, Armed Forces Day. Events such as disability or mental health week. Not every event may have value to everyone, but it will have value to someone. It costs nothing for a simple act of kindness but could mean so much to individual members of the community some of who may or may not feel marginalised at times.

**COUNCIL ADJOURNED FOR A COMFORT BREAK FROM 6.35pm to 6.45pm.**

C:34

**CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**

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Councillor Beales moved the Cabinet Members Reports.

By way of an update, Councillor Beales informed Council that he would be working closely with councillors at Norfolk County Council to strengthen relationships ahead of Local Government Reorganisation. He emphasised the importance of maintaining positive working relationships and advised that he had already held discussions with some Norfolk County Council Cabinet Members, with further meetings due to be arranged. Councillor Beales also reported that he had met earlier that day with the Portfolio Holder for Transport to discuss the ferry service and considered the meeting to have been productive.

Councillor Long asked whether consideration would be given to leasing vehicles rather than purchasing them, given the lifespan of the Council in light of Local Government Reorganisation. Councillor Beales explained that decisions regarding vehicle acquisitions were assessed on their operational merits. He referred to the recommendation made by the Corporate Performance Panel to Cabinet on this matter and agreed that leasing arrangements could be considered where appropriate.

In response to a question from Councillor Heneghan, Councillor Squire agreed to investigate measures that could be taken to improve waste and recycling rates within flats, including any additional support that could be provided.

Councillor Kemp raised concerns regarding ongoing issues experienced by residents in her ward as a result of dust emissions associated with activity at the port. She advised that the issue had persisted for a number of years and that she had recently written to

both the Port and the Health and Safety Executive. Councillor Squire confirmed that officers were investigating the matter.

Councillor Ryves requested that Members be provided with an update on progress towards the new hospital. Councillor Beales advised that he had recently attended the groundbreaking event for the new multi-storey car park and was encouraged to see progress being made. In relation to the wider new hospital programme, he explained that he had recently met with the new Managing Director and agreed to seek an update for circulation to Members.

In response to a question from Councillor Sayers, Councillor Squire confirmed that one new Enforcement Officer was now in post and that a second officer would be commencing employment shortly.

In response to a question from Councillor Kunes, Councillor Ring agreed to investigate the use of solar panels at the Active Travel Hub.

Councillor Heneghan referred to the underutilisation of the pop-up shops at the Purfleet. Councillor Ring agreed to provide Members with an update on planned activity for the site.

Councillor Kemp asked whether Norfolk County Council's funding contribution towards the ferry service was at risk under the new administration at County Hall. Councillor Beales advised that he had discussed the matter with the relevant Portfolio Holder and had highlighted the ferry's social, tourism and heritage value.

In response to a question from Councillor Ryves, Councillor Ring agreed to investigate the potential installation of solar panels at the King's Lynn Innovation Centre (KLIC), Council car parks and the Active Travel Hub.

Councillor Ratcliffe referred to comments contained within Councillor Beales' Cabinet Member Report regarding the usefulness of Cabinet Member Reports to Council. While she considered the reports to be valuable, she expressed disappointment that none had included reference to Downham Market. Councillor Beales acknowledged the point and explained that the preparation of the reports was a time-consuming process and that he was uncertain how widely they were read by Members. He also noted that many councils did not present Cabinet Member Reports to Council. He advised that the matter would be explored further and could be referred to the Constitution Informal Working Group for consideration.

Councillor Spikings advised that the Endoscopy Ward at Wisbech had recently closed. Although the facility was located outside the Borough, she noted that it served a significant number of Borough residents who would now be required to travel elsewhere for treatment. Councillor Spikings confirmed that she had been in contact with the local Member of Parliament regarding the matter. Councillor Rust requested that the

correspondence be forwarded to her so that she could investigate further.

In response to a question from Councillor Collop, Councillor Ring advised that one Football Foundation pitch project was currently progressing through the planning stage and that a planning application would be submitted in due course.

Councillor Kemp referred to the King's Lynn Masterplan and proposals to relocate car parking provision from Boal Quay to South Lynn. She expressed concern that this could reduce convenient parking for shoppers and workers and have an adverse impact on the biodiversity of Harding's Way. Councillor Ring explained that the proposals envisaged parking provision for visitors approaching from that side of the town, which could help reduce congestion within the town centre. He assured Members that any proposals taken forward would be subject to the appropriate planning processes and approvals.

In response to a question from Councillor Ryves, Councillor Morley referred to the positive outcome of the recent audit review of Contract Management. He advised that officers would address the areas identified for improvement and confirmed that social value considerations would continue to be embedded within contract management processes.

Councillor Moore advised that a number of his residents were interested in taking on allotments but faced lengthy waiting lists. He expressed concern that some existing allotments appeared underused or overgrown and asked whether provision could be considered for residents wishing to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Councillor Beales requested that Councillor Moore provide the specific details so that the matter could be investigated.

In response to a request from Councillor Ware, Councillor Ring agreed to circulate the Ground Conditions Survey for Gayton Road Cemetery to the Cemeteries Informal Working Group once it had been received.

Councillor Long supported the suggestion that the Constitution Informal Working Group should review the arrangements for Cabinet Member Reports and suggested that a maximum word count be considered.

In response to a question from Councillor Collop, Councillor Squire explained that invoices relating to brown bin subscriptions had inadvertently been issued incorrectly to a small number of properties. She confirmed that the matter had now been rectified.

Councillor Kemp raised concerns regarding response times to Member Enquiries. Councillor Morley advised that this was an operational matter.

In response to a question from Councillor Sayers, Councillor Rust confirmed that the Council had procedures in place for dealing with unauthorised encampments, including the undertaking of welfare checks. She advised that a more robust approach was being implemented and noted that there were also authorised locations for encampments within the Borough.

Councillor Crofts requested an update on the flats at Southend Road, Hunstanton, following the removal of the local connection restriction. Councillor Ring advised that sales had unfortunately remained slow and that some units were being transferred to the West Norfolk Housing Company for private rental.

In response to a question from Councillor Ware, Councillor Morley welcomed the launch of the Community Fund and advised that applications could now be submitted. He noted that eligibility criteria and application forms were available and encouraged organisations and groups to take advantage of the funding opportunity.

By way of an update from the previous meeting, Councillor Ring advised that the contractor for the Customs House project would be announced shortly and that it was anticipated works would commence at the end of August.

C:35      **MEMBER'S QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

**The meeting closed at 7.36 pm**