

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**29 September 2016**

### **COUNCILLOR ADRIAN LAWRENCE - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY**

For the period 28 July to September 2016

#### **Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Home Choice**

The number on the housing register at the end of July was 1,585. 45 applicants were housed into Housing Association accommodation during June.

The number on the housing register at the end of August was 1,578. 47 applicants were housed into Housing Association accommodation during August.

##### **Local Housing Company**

The Council has set up a new housing company. The company is wholly owned by the Council and exists to primarily hold rented housing to help the council fulfil its statutory housing role. The company will use existing and future funding secured through S106 planning agreements to deliver affordable housing. Funding will also come in the form of borrowing arrangements from the Council.

There are a number of proposed development projects and the conversion of some office space controlled by the Council that will see new housing delivered for permanent and temporary accommodation. These projects will help meet the council's ambitions of increasing the supply of new housing, as well as making the best use of the Council's existing assets including development land.

##### **Custom build/ Self-build policy task group**

The work of a new task group has started. The group will be looking at Council policy options and the requirements of new legislation and changes to the planning system. There will also be some strategy and practice options

considered including opportunities to develop serviced plots on Council owned land. The group will also consider other Government initiatives connected with increasing the housing supply including Starter Homes funding opportunities. The group will meet again towards the end of the month.

### **Licensing**

All Hackney and Private Hire drivers currently licensed by the borough council have been invited to attend a workshop on safeguarding, at no charge to them. The workshop will give drivers an overview of how safeguarding can involve the taxi and private hire trades; what child sexual exploitation is; and to give drivers the knowledge and confidence to report concerns. The training course consists of a 1-hour workshop by Breckland Training Services, and has already been offered to taxi drivers by several councils in this area. The workshops will take place at Lynnsport, on 7 September, 27 September, and 13 October

### **Health & Hygiene**

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk has launched a scheme to rate the hygiene standards of local tattoo artists. The Tattoo Hygiene Rating Scheme (THRS) is a voluntary scheme aimed at improving the standards of tattooists; allowing the public to choose a practitioner with high standards of hygiene. The scheme aims to:

- Inform the public about the hygiene standards in the premises at the time of the most recent inspection
- Drive up standards and adoption of best practice across the industry
- Reduce the risk of incidents of infection and of transmission of infectious disease from tattooing procedures

Any registered tattooist in west Norfolk can apply to the borough council to join the scheme. They'll be visited and inspected, and then given a hygiene rating. The rating system runs from 1 to 4, with 1 as the lowest rating, 2 being basic minimum standards of hygiene, 3 as 'Good' and 4 as 'Very Good'

### **Council Tax Support**

The draft Council Tax Support Scheme for 2017/2018 has now been agreed and a six week public consultation on the proposed changes started on 12 September 2016. We are keen to gather views from as many residents as possible in the Borough but in the past we have had problems getting people to engage and give us their comments.

I would like to encourage all Members to get the message out to their

constituents and urge them to respond.

More information and the consultation questionnaire are available on our website at [www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/ctsconsultation](http://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/ctsconsultation) - paper copies can be requested by calling the Council Information Centre.

The consultation responses will be collated and analyzed and brought back to Members as part of the Panel and Cabinet Reports proposing the final Council Tax Support scheme for 2017/2018'.

### **Public Toilets**

Following on from a comprehensive report to the Environment and Community Panel further work is proceeding to review the Council's public toilet provision. I am pleased that the Panel Members recognise the value of public toilets, particularly in our retail and tourism areas. I will be interested to see the suggestions from the Informal Working Group later in the year.

### **Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

Cabinet Meetings  
Meetings with Housing Officers  
Meetings with Licensing Officers  
Portfolio Meetings  
Meeting with Executive Officers