

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel held on
Wednesday, 21st June, 2023 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall,
Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT: Councillor S Dark (Chair)
Councillors R Blunt, P R Blunt, Devulapalli, A Dickinson, B Jones, Lintern,
B Long, S Nash, Osborne, C Rose, Sayers and Mrs V Spikings (substitute for
Councillor A Lawrence)

Portfolio Holders:

Councillor M de Whalley, Climate Change and Biodiversity
Councillor A Kemp, People and Communities
Councillor J Moriarty, Development and Regeneration/Deputy Leader

Observing:

Councillor S Bearshaw

Officers:

Alexa Baker, Monitoring Officer
Becky Box, Assistant Director, Central Services
Lorraine Gore, Chief Executive
Honor Howell, Assistant to the Chief Executive
Wendy Vincent, Democratic Services Officer

CP1 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR
2023/2024**

RESOLVED: Councillor J Osborne be appointed Vice-Chair for the
Municipal Year 2023/2024.

CP2 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Lawrence and
Councillor A Beales, Portfolio Holder for Business.

CP3 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Corporate Performance Panel held on 5 April 2023
were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CP4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

CP5 **URGENT BUSINESS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7**

There was no urgent business.

CP6 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

There were no Councillors present under Standing Order 34.

CP7 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

There was no Chair's correspondence.

CP8 **CALL-IN (IF ANY)**

There were no call-ins.

CP9 **2022/2023 FULL YEAR CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR MONITORING REPORT**

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The Corporate Governance Manager/Assistant to the Chief Executive explained that the corporate performance monitoring report was in place to monitor progress against agreed performance indicators for the year 2022/23. The Panel was informed that the report contained information on the corporate performance monitoring undertaken for 2022/23.

Members were informed that the report was presented to the Corporate Performance Panel on a quarterly basis. It was explained that the indicators were put in place by the Assistant Directors, Management Team as well as the Portfolio Holders and that the indicators monitored the key Council services and impacts on boroughwide issues and were also linked to the Corporate Business Plan priorities.

The Panel was advised that the monitoring report featured a summary sheet to highlight specific performance issues where indicators were not met or near to agreed targets. For 2022/23 the overall position was that 36 targets had been met, 7 indicators were near to target and 11 indicators required improvement.

The Corporate Governance Manager/Assistant to the Chief Executive provided context to the report and explained that a range of performance indicators were monitored across all Directorates demonstrating corporate assurance to continuously improve services. In the past 12 months the Council had seen national challenges that could not have been predicted when the Corporate Business Plan was

first set and examples included the cost of living crisis and the conflict in Ukraine which resulted in increased interest rates and high levels of inflation which had impacted on the Council's services and the residents, visitors and the businesses which the Council serve. It was highlighted that one area where the cost of living had adversely impacted was the housing service and that over the next few months more updates would be received and it was noted the Council was seeing an increase in the number of people presenting as homeless and that there was a shortage of homes to let which had resulted in the increase of bed and breakfast as emergency accommodation and that there were also longer stays in bed and breakfast accommodation.

The Panel was advised that external factors had also had an impact across the Council's forward facing services so those with a very direct interaction with residents like revenues and benefits, Lily, the Council Information Centre, Care and Repair had all seen an increase in those services and to try and meet some of the demand, the Council formed a cost of living project group which had provided a cross service approach to supporting those who were experiencing difficulties and to co-ordinate the communication to residents.

Members' attention was drawn to page 22 of the report which provided a snapshot of the areas where the target not been achieved and needed improvement and those that were near target. It was noted that further on in the report was the full range of indicators which included those in the summary and were under the headings of the Corporate Business Plan.

The Chair invited the Deputy Leader to address the Panel. The Deputy Leader thanked the Chair for the opportunity but did not have any comment to make.

The Panel was invited to ask questions or comment on the report.

Councillor Long commented on the demands on housing within the last 12 months and referred to indicator 2.11 of the report quoting the number of homes to be built target of 102 actual to date was 60 and asked what the likelihood was of units being completed to be not too far away from the target or did the new Administration have other ideas for the delivery of new homes in West Norfolk. In response, the Corporate Governance Manager/Assistant to the Chief Executive explained that there had been delays with house building due to the external factors, availability of materials and workforce, etc and that the Assistant Director had indicated that the programme would be back on track by the end of June 2023. The Corporate Governance Manager/Assistant to the Chief Executive undertook to obtain the results and circulate to the Panel for information.

Councillor Long asked if there was any political comment from the Deputy Leader or other Portfolio Holders to the second part of his question regarding the direction of the new Administration. In

response, Councillor Morley explained that looking at this indicator was an indicator of performance of the last Admin but in mitigation the total number of homes year 544 and was a reasonable number but was disappointing that only 80 were affordable which equated to 15% delivered this year. The goal for the new Administration was to increase the amount of affordable housing.

Councillor Mrs Spikings commented that it was important to look at the level of affordable housing on a year by year basis and informed the Panel that she was aware a large number of affordable homes in Outwell which had been granted planning permission and added that there were also large streams of affordable housing planning permissions approved.

Councillor Mrs Spikings advised that there was a crisis with Freebridge with a significant amount of voids and gave examples in Outwell and added that the Council should progress discussions to resolve the issues and that some of the voids were liveable.

In response to a question from Councillor Blunt on time taken to process things and post Covid would improve or any implication on working processes post covid and people working from home, the Corporate Governance Manager/ Assistant to the Chief Executive explained that the process time for Revenues and Benefits was heavily impacted by resource being diverting to process Covid Business Grants, Fuel Grants, etc. The Panel was informed that the Revenues and Benefits Team was now back to full capacity and it was expected improvements would be noted in the number of days to process applications.

Councillor Dickinson commented that it would be useful for all Councillors to be informed of the number of housing voids in their wards. In response, the Chief Executive explained that the Council could follow the point up with Freebridge Community Housing with regarding the statistics for the number of voids in each work. Members were advised that there was an all Councillor briefing scheduled with Freebridge Community Housing. Councillor Dickinson commented that as this report was received by the Panel on a quarterly basis might this be something which could be presented as part of the report. In response, the Chief Executive advised that Freebridge Housing would prepare this information for their Board and would therefore follow up the request with Freebridge Community Housing.

Councillor Jones commented that he had a number of constituents within his ward waiting for adaptations grants to buildings for their children what else could be done to speed the process up. In response, the Chief Executive explained that this was an integrated housing adaptations team again the care and repair team were impacted by Covid and there were some delays and also getting contractors to undertake work but this was currently in the middle of a

tender for that but would follow up the request on what were the delays and what actions had been put in place.

Councillor Long commented that the amount of car parking tickets purchased which was always a good sign of economic activity within King's Lynn had outstripped expectations over the past year and in excess in the performance of the year before was the Council minded to think that this was a general sign of recovery following the Pandemic or the events and other things put on the town to attract people were doing what they were supposed to do and asked Cabinet Members present if they thought the events were worthwhile and they had driven those figures. The Deputy Leader advised that this was not within his portfolio but was aware that conversations and briefings had been held with officers to look at parking figures and that everything was up for discussion and was not in a position to confirm or agree that it was down to events but that they contributed and would come back in due course with a fuller answer to the Chair in due course.

In response to questions from Councillor Jones on the number of cyber security incidents reported, did the Council monitor what exactly made up that monitoring as cyber attacks were happening all the time, the Chair suggested that officers responded via email to the Chair.

Following questions from Councillor Devulapalli in relation 2.5.4 improving mobility and social inclusion and 2.5.5 creating and maintaining good quality places that make a positive difference to people's lives, did the Panel receive an overview of people who did not drive in King's Lynn for whatever reason and their mode of transport to get about, the Monitoring Officer explained that it might be information collated by the County Council that could be obtained.

Councillor Osborne referred to 2.5.4 improving mobility and social inclusion and added that there was a massive increase in bed and breakfast accommodation and asked what plans were in place to reduce the number and for example planning permission granted for the Crown Hotel in Downham Market and what facilities were in place to build to help reduce the number.

Councillor Mrs Spikings informed the Panel that the permission granted in Downham Market was the crown hotel still being worked on and believed was a house in multiple occupation and also referred to Elme Hall, Emneth which were advertising accommodation to rent a room.

The Chief Executive explained that early comment regarding voids and social housing properties were linked in with this discussion. The demand on private rented and currently there seemed to be a shortage of private rented accommodation and that all the factors together had put pressure on housing need and the need to use additional bed and breakfast accommodation but that the Council was working through various options to and continue to work with registered providers alongside West Norfolk Housing Company. It was noted that the

Environment and Community Panel on 20 June there had been discussion on funding for property to address housing needs in particular cohorts.

The Chair thanked Members for this meaningful contribution which was appreciated.

In conclusion, the Chair summarised the points/concerned raised by the Panel as set out below:

- No of current housing voids.
- Increase cost in bed and breakfast accommodation and significant impact on individuals and cost implications for the Council.
- Private Rented Accommodation situation.
- Building of correct type of property for the rental market.
- Borough Council relationship with the Night Shelter

The Chair proposed that prior to the next sifting meeting officers be asked to provide detail plans to resolve the above issues prior to the winter months.

The Chair invited comments from the Deputy Leader.

The Deputy Leader commented that this was an excellent idea and informed Members that a Housing Needs Assessment update was underway and that it may be prudent for the Panel to consider it and undertook to find out timing from officers and email the Chair with details.

It was agreed by the Panel that this item would be considered under the work programme discussions.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Governance Manager/Assistant to the Chief Executive for the report.

RESOLVED: The Panel reviewed the 2022/23 performance monitoring report.

CP10

CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING REPORT (OCTOBER - MARCH)

[Click here to view a recording of this item on You Tube](#)

The Monitoring Officer presented the Corporate Business Plan Monitoring report looking backwards to 2019 to 2023. The report set out the update against priorities and objectives as set out in the Appendix.

The Panel was invited to ask questions or comment on the report.

In response to questions from Councillor Mrs Spikings on staff sickness figures, the Assistant Director, Central Services explained that the Annual Sickness Absence Monitoring Report was currently being drafted to be presented to the Joint Safety and Welfare Committee and added that the report could be made available to the Corporate Performance Panel for information.

Following questions from Councillor Osborne on 3.1 and the survey being conducted by Norfolk County Council to increase walking, cycling and sustainable transport, the Monitoring Officer explained that the Borough Council did input into the work. Councillor Mrs Spikings highlighted the importance of car users which were needed in rural areas to being able to travel from one place to another and that any proposals were not to the detriment of rural areas. The Monitoring Officer advised that as part of the Town Board there was a Active and Clean Connectivity project which was focussed on King's Lynn and not borough wide but was part of the Norfolk County Council Strategy and made reference to the LCWIP and several of the projects being progressed would link into the Active and Clean Connectivity project and outlined other joint work with Norfolk County Council. The Chief Executive added that if it would be useful to the Panel more detail could be made available on how the Borough Council engaged with Norfolk County Council.

Councillor Morley commented that this was an end of term report and was disappointed that the Climate Change Action Plan did not have a resolution and other actions did not indicate a status report on those that were either completed, still on track, progress, ongoing, etc.

The Chair, Councillor Dark referred to 3.1, progress update provided and commented that the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and that there were 79 agreed actions and that currently 21 had been completed, 3 were on track and 41 actions were in progress, 2 were stalled and 12 actions were yet to start and asked Councillor Morley if further detail was required in relation to the plan. In response, Councillor Morley commented that the Corporate Business Plan was important and that a full end of term status report would have been helpful which set out the current position, action and going forward in future years. The Chair added that Climate Change was not being looked at in isolation and advised that the Chief Executive was the lead officer in the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership and that if the Council were to go into that level of detail it would be necessary to look at how the work would link into the wider jigsaw. In conclusion, the Chair commented that the climate change work would come through the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity would look forward to receiving it in due course.

The Chair thanked the Monitoring Officer for the report.

RESOLVED: The Panel supported the recommendation to Cabinet as set out below:

That Cabinet considers and comments on the final position on delivery against the Corporate Business Plan.

CP11 **UPDATE ON HUNSTANTON PROMENADE WASTE WATER - WITHDRAWN**

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At the invitation of the Chair, the Monitoring Officer outlined the reason why the item had been withdrawn from the Agenda and that it would be considered at the next meeting on 24 July 2023.

CP12 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL NOMINATION TO HUNSTANTON SAILING CLUB**

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The Chair explained that previously the Borough Council had been invited to appoint a representative in an observer role only to the Hunstanton Sailing Club Sub-Committee. Councillor Rose had been appointed previously.

The Panel was invited to consider if the Council wished to continue to appoint a representative.

Councillor Long provided background as to why there was a Borough Council representative on the Committee and commented that now the Sailing Club had fulfilled the terms of the grant from the Council was beneficial to appoint a representative and if so added that in his opinion it should be a Ward Councillor.

Councillor Rose added that he was happy to continue to be a representative.

Councillor Mrs Dickinson commented that the other Hunstanton should be consulted before a decision was made.

Councillor Blunt asked if the representative was needed and if so should be a Ward Councillor.

Councillor Mrs Spikings added that if an appointment was made it should be a Ward Councillor.

Councillor Devulapalli commented that if the Panel determined to appoint a representative should the Hunstanton Sailing Club be invited to decide which Councillor should be appointed.

In response to the comments made above, the Monitoring Officer advised that during next year a review of all Outside Bodies would be undertaken.

Following other comments from the Panel, the Chair proposed that a letter be sent to Hunstanton Sailing Club asking them to confirm if it was beneficial for a Borough Council representative to be on the Committee and if the answer was yes, then consultation be held with Councillors Rose, Beal and Dickinson to determine who the representative would be and to report back to the next meeting on 24 July 2023 which was agreed by the Panel.

RESOLVED: The Chair to write a letter to Hunstanton Sailing Club asking them to confirm if it was beneficial for a Borough Council representative to be on the Committee and if the answer was yes, then consultation be held with Councillors Rose, Beal and Dickinson to determine who the representative would be and to report back to the next meeting of the Panel on 24 July 2023.

CP13 **PANEL DISCUSSION ON COUNCILLOR REQUESTS FROM OPPOSITION MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED**

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The Panel consider the following requests previously submitted by an opposition member:

Housing Needs Assessment

The Chair referred to the discussion under a previous item and commented that it would be useful for the Panel to receive a report prior to the challenges faced during the winter months. Item to be scheduled in consultation with officers to determine timescale.

Relationship with the Shakespeare Trust in relation to the Guildhall

Councillor Blunt informed the Panel that this was an ongoing discussion with the Town Deal Board.

Carnegie Building

Councillor Blunt informed the Panel that this was an ongoing discussion with the Town Deal Board.

Service Level Agreements - Number, examples, administration, creation, legal standing etc

The Panel discussed the different types of Service Level Agreements (SLAs), including contracts.

The Panel discussed and commented that it would be useful for Members to receive an overarching report detailing all the Council's Service SLAs and then Councillors could consider if they wished to look at a specific SLA if required.

The Monitoring Officer provided an overview of the different categories of SLAs.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance commented that a generic SLA was not useful and outlined the reasons why and suggested that each time a SLA was in operation it should be considered by the Panel. In response, the Monitoring Officer advised that this would involve a significant amount of work and resource but could be produced. Members of the Panel commented that a training session would be beneficial.

RESOLVED: 1) The Monitoring Officer to draft an overarching report detailing the categories SLA's held by the Council and also setting out the definition of an SLA to be considered at a future sifting meeting.

2) Housing Needs Assessment - the Panel to receive a report prior to the challenges faced during the winter months. Item to be scheduled in consultation with officers to determine timescale.

CP14 **PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no Portfolio Holder questions.

CP15 **CABINET FORWARD DECISION LIST**

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The Monitoring Officer highlighted the importance of scrutinising Cabinet reports before a decision was made and added the Panel would determine its own agenda.

Councillor Long commented that the following reports should be considered by the Panel at its meeting on 24 July 2023:

- New Corporate Business Plan when available.
- Staff Pay Award.
- Members Allowances
- Council Tax Scheme
- Revenue and Capital Outturn
- Appointment of representatives to inquirate parishes
- Officer Major Project Board Terms of Reference

Councillor Nash commented that the Panel should scrutinise the Procurement Strategy and Regulations.

In response to a question from Councillor Sayers on the Council's investments and associated risks, the Chief Executive explained that a report to Cabinet in February would set out the capital programme, investments, Treasury, etc and explained that an item on investment opportunities was on the forward work programme for the Regeneration and Development Panel.

CP16 **SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

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The Monitoring Officer advised that appointments to the Shareholder Committee would be made at Cabinet on 27 June and then a schedule of meeting dates would be confirmed.

The Forward Work Programme would be included with Panel agendas for Members to determine if they wished an item to be considered.

CP17 **PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024**

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The Panel noted the work programme.

The Chair proposed that the Hunstanton Promenade Waste Water item be expanded to include water quality of Hunstanton and Heacham beaches which was agreed by the Panel.

Housing Needs Assessment, etc discussed under a previous item.

CP18 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that the date of the next meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel will take place on 24 July 2023 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, King's Lynn.

The meeting closed at 6.47 pm