

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Environment and Community Panel held on Tuesday, 26th November, 2024 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: S Collop (Chair)

Councillors P Bland, P Devulapalli (Vice-Chair) D Heneghan, A Kemp, J Kirk, V Spikings (Substitute for T Barclay), S Everett (Substitute for R Colwell) P Kunes and S Sandell

Officers:

Martin Chisholm – Assistant Director, Operations and Commercial
Andrew Barrett- Electoral Services Manager
Anthony Drown- Electoral Services Officer

EC48: **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bullen, Colwell, Barclay and Hodson.

EC49: **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes from the previous meeting held on the 8th October 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

EC50: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

EC51: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

EC52: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor de Whalley was present Under Standing Order 34.

EC53: **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

EC54: COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW- BURNHAM MARKET

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The Electoral Services Officer presented the report on the Community Governance Review for Burnham Market. He explained to the Panel the request was for a reduction in Parish Councillors from 11 to 8 Members due to the declining population of Burnham Market. He added this was a formalised reduction through a Community Governance Review which was outlined in the explanatory notes included in the agenda. He added this was a discretionary decision to agree to the review which meant this was a Cabinet and Full Council decision. He referred to the recommendations and added the reason for conducting review was well reasoned and justified.

Councillor Sandell commented as this was within her Ward, she supported and understood the reasoning for the request for a reduction in number of Parish Councillors from 11 to 8. She added she was aware the Parish Council had difficulties with Parish Councillors sustaining on the Parish Council and the reduction in numbers was reasonable.

Councillor Kunes referred to his ward and that Terrington St John currently had two vacancies. He commented going forward this will be an ongoing problem and further request would be received and he supported this review. He added encouragement and advertisement was needed to obtain more Parish Councillors.

Councillor Devulapalli commented the importance of Parish Councils and as the principal body, she sought clarification on what was the minimum number of Parish Councillors which was needed.

The Electoral Services Manager confirmed there was a formula which provided an estimate on how many Parish Councillors were required and suitable for the Parish however this was a guideline. He added further requests from Parish Councils to add or reduce the number of Parish Councillors were to be considered in the future.

Councillor Sandell asked if it was possible to simplify the process and if other Parish Council's made requested it would cost the Borough Council time and money.

The Electoral Services Manager confirmed there had been discussions to conduct a wider Borough Council Review as there was ongoing issues with Parish Councillors not being able to fulfil the number of Parish Councillors

RESOLVED: The Environment and Community Panel supports the recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

That Officers be requested to conduct a Community Governance Review in respect of Burnham Market Parish Council to potentially reduce parish councillor numbers.

EC55: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

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Councillor Kunes expressed his concern for the lack of environmental items on the Forward Decision List and Work Programme. He referred to his request for the Climate Change Informal Working Group to be reformed and a list of items to be considered for the Informal Working Group. He commented there was not enough being done for Climate Change and referred to his time as Portfolio Holder.

Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity, Councillor de Whalley reminded the Panel that it was not the role of the Portfolio Holder to drive the Scrutiny Panels and it was for other Members to put forward items for consideration. He added he was working on reductions in carbon emissions and to improve biodiversity and for example the biodiversity competition.

Councillor Kemp referred to the item which had been requested by Councillor Bullen which was Elder Abuse and the Rights of Care Home Residents and commented it had not yet been scheduled.

The Democratic Service Officer advised the Panel Officers had been contacted in relation to the Climate Change Informal Working Group and Officers and Norfolk County Council had been contacted in regard to the item Elder Abuse and the Rights of Care Home Residents. The Democratic Service Officer confirmed she would circulate the form to add an item to the Work Programme to the Panel.

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme and Forward Decisions List was noted.

EC56: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel would be held on **8th January 2025** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall.**

The meeting closed at 4.44 pm