

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, 21st November, 2024 at 5.15 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor S Everett (Chair) , D Heneghan, B Jones, (Vice Chair) C Joyce, J Rust, and A Ware

PRESENT ON ZOOM, UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillor Bone, Collop, Colwell, Kemp and Sayers.

Councillor Jones was appointed as Vice-Chair for the Meeting.

38 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Lowe and Wilkinson.

39 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes from the meeting held on the 26th September 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

40 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

41 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

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

Councillor Bone, Collop, Colwell, Kemp and Sayers were present under Standing Order 34.

43 **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

There was none.

44 **KLAC TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection introduced the report and outline the recommendations. He brought to the Committee's attention the revised Terms of Reference which were approved by Cabinet on the 5th November 2024. He outlined to the Committee the report included Terms of Reference to be approved for the Funding Priorities and Opportunities Informal Working Group and the KLAC Planning Sub-Group and for the Committee determine changing the Planning Sub-Group to an Informal Working Group. He explained this would mean the meeting would not be streamed and live on YouTube.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director for the report and invited comments and questions from the Committee.

Councillor Rust commented as the KLAC Planning Sub-Group make decisions on supporting or objecting to a planning application within the King's Lynn Area she felt it was right to be open to the public and live streamed.

Councillor Heneghan agreed with Councillor Rust comments and added continuing the KLAC Planning Sub -Group provided transparency and residents were entitled to hear Members opinions and views on planning applications within the King's Lynn Area.

Councillor Ware referred to Parish Council's being open to the public in regard to planning application and added she felt the KLAC Planning Sub-Group should be live stream and an open meeting too.

The Chair, Councillor Everett agreed with the Members of the Committee that the Sub-Group needed to be open and transparent to the public.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Kemp agreed the Sub-Group should be held as an open meeting and streamed live as it would demonstrate KLAC opinion on planning applications. She sought clarification if it was to be decided the Planning Sub-Group be a Committee or remain a Sub-Group Committee.

The Chair, Councillor Everett referred Councillor Kemp to the recommendations and outline Members present at the meeting agreed to keep as the KLAC Planning Sub-Group.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Bone commented Planning was an important function and was scrutinised by the Public and felt it was the utmost importance it remained transparent as the Planning Sub-Group and not an Informal Working Group. He added it should be continued to be open to the public and live streamed as recommendations from the Sub-Group were put forward to planning.

Councillor Collop commented she was the Chair of the KLAC Planning Sub-Group and felt there was no need for it to be changed.

RESOLVED:

- 1) For the King's Lynn Area Committee to note the new King's Lynn Area Committee Terms of Reference approved by Cabinet on the 5th November 2024.
- 2) To approve the KLAC Funding Opportunities and Priorities Informal Working Group Terms of Reference.
- 3) To approve the Terms of Reference and decided for Planning Sub-Group Committee.

45

SPECIAL EXPENSES

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The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer presented the Special Expenses report for 2025/2026. She brought to the Committee's attention it was difficult to determine the Special Expenses before the Council set its own budget. She referred to the recent changes of the Committee to an Area Committee and how this impacted the decisions around special expenses.

She highlighted to the Committee the main changes in the Special Expenses which included Footway Lighting decrease of £4,050, Open spaces increase of £12,950, Bus Shelter increase of £10,700 and Gaywood Remembrance Service increase of £2,000. She added the Parish Partnership Traffic Calming decrease of £640 had ceased.

She highlighted section 3 of the report which related to new schemes and brought to the Committee's attention that there were new proposals for schemes separately on the agenda and funding to support these was available from the funds available to KLAC.

Councillor Heneghan sought clarification on the increase of £6.64 a year which was above the notional split of £5.00 increase and the implications of the Committee agreeing the £6.64 increase.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officers referred the Committee to 2.2 of the report. She explained the calculated estimates for 2025/2026 totalled £662,240 and the revised tax base totalled 11,192.1. She explained the estimate divided by the tax base created an average Band D charge of £59.17. She added the Band D charge for 2024/2025 was £52.53 and therefore this equalled an increase of £6.64. She brought to the attention of the Committee that the Borough Council were only allowed to increase Council Tax by £5.00 and added some context in comparison to the Borough Council's net revenue budget of around 24 million pounds.. The Assistant Director explained in further detail the £5.00 needed to consist of the Borough Council's costs as well as Special Expenses. She explained the Borough Council would need to consider decreasing the £6.64 by

the Borough Council's subsidy. She highlighted to the Committee the Borough Council could not continue to subsidise and advised Special Expenses would need to be reviewed and the services included, along with identifying the services discreet to King's Lynn. She concluded that eventually Members of the Committee would decide what Special Expenses included.

Councillor Rust commented public conveniences were paid from Special Expenses and suggested visitors from outside the King's Lynn area were reliant and benefiting from them. She added going forward, the Committee may ask for these public conveniences to be removed from the Special Expenses.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer confirmed that was correct however she believed public conveniences were looked at a number of years ago and a proportion was charged to the Borough Council and the other proportion was part of the Special Expenses. She added as part of the detailed review the proportion would need to be considered to ensure it was still correct.

Councillor Rust commented she endorsed the Open Spaces increase and thanked the Open Spaces team for their work. She referred to the recommendations and questioned as part of options considered in the report was to recommend no changes were made to the Special Expenses for 2025/2026 and sought clarification if this suggestion was something the Committee do as the review has not been done and the Committees priorities may change, and the review may provide clarity.

The Assistant Director for Resources and the Section 151 Officer commented the review would provide clarity but reminded the Committee there were schemes under consideration and reminded the Committee to consider if there were any ongoing revenue implications which may have to be included in Special Expenses and a contribution from KLAC's funding.

Councillor Rust sought clarification that it was only bus shelters which were an ongoing revenue implication as they need to be maintained.

The Assistant Director for Resources and the Section 151 Officer confirmed Norfolk County Council part funding was from the bus shelters from the parish partnership scheme. She confirmed Norfolk County Council made it clear they would not pay for ongoing costs such as maintenance.

Councillor Heneghan asked for further details on the reasoning of £61,970 being spent on pavilions.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer clarified these were facilities such as toilets on sports grounds.

Councillor Ware sought clarification on closed churchyards.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer explained the Borough Council were responsible for the maintenance of closed churchyards. She added open churchyards were maintained by the Church of England.

The Chair, Councillor Everett referred to £366,560 for Open Spaces and asked for further detail of what this included.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer confirmed this did not include car parks but was for the maintenance of the Walks, Tower Gardens etc.

The Chair, Councillor Everett asked if Central Government have set the national percentage increase yet.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer confirmed the percentage increase was not yet known. She added the provisional settlement was expected to be announced around the 18th December when the consultation would begin and the Borough Council has the opportunity to respond. She explained the Government would then make an announcement in response to the consultation when the final settlement is confirmed.

Councillor Joyce commented the outturn for 2024/2025 was higher than the charge for 2025/2026 with a high taxbase around 3% and an increase of 11% per Band D Council Tax because the Borough Council wants to remove the subsidy from the Special Expenses.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer confirmed that was not correct. She explained the subsidy could not be calculated until the Borough Council had set out their own Budget.

Councillor Joyce commented further if the Special Expenses include pavilions, then if the Borough Council collects the income from the sports fields, then the pavilions should not be included in Special Expenses and should be paid for by the Borough Council. He added there was a £20,000 reduction in community centres from 2024/2025 to 2025/2026 and questioned why this was proposed.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer commented one of the community centres still has Borough Council staff working in and therefore the calculation was the income from renting that space out was supplemented to ensure there was no loss in the Special Expenses. She added she was unable to confirm exact details however there was some income to the Special Expenses from pavilions.

In response to Councillor Kemp under Standing Order 34, the Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer confirmed she was unable to provide a figure to reduce the Council Tax charge for Band D

property as the Borough Council Budget was not yet confirmed and would not be until February 2025. She added further the Borough Council was unable to breach the £5 increase without a referendum therefore a review would need to be conducted. She commented there was the potential for open spaces to be the Borough Council expense which would be part of the detailed review as previously mentioned.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Kemp asked if Members of the Committee could be included in the review.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer confirmed Members would be included in the review and added KLAC needed to understand Special Expenses services and costs and that they are affordable.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Collop thanked Councillor Morley for the Gaywood Remembrance Service being included in the Special Expenses and stated residents of Gaywood were relieved the Remembrance Service was included in the Special Expenses.

Members of the King's Lynn Area Committee discussed and agreed including the word 'proposed' into the recommendation.

RESOLVED: That the Committee endorse the proposed Special Expenses charge for 2025/2026 as set out in section 2.2 of the report.

46

PARISH PARTNERSHIP BIDS

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The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection presented the report to the Committee which was for the Parish Partnership Scheme and highlighted to the Committee the deadline of 6th December 2024. He explained there had only been one application submitted with costings by Councillor Kemp and Councillor Joyce which was for a Fixed VAS Speed Sign 20mph on Wisbech Road. He added he had included the other three applications which did not have costings. He outlined the recommendations which included these three applications to be submitted in 2025/2026 for delivery in 2026/2027. He reminded the Committee of the budget for KLAC and advised once there was the KLAC Support Officer in place, this Officer would be able to assist with the Parish Partnership Applications.

Councillor Heneghan commented her application was one which was not costed for three red light cameras, and she was disappointed she was unable to get the costings in time from Norfolk County Council as she had contacted them on numerous occasions for the relevant details. She added she had followed the correct process and did not feel her application should be delayed.

Councillor Rust commented her application for a Gold Standard Bus Shelter was also not costed and explained she first submitted it prior to the Scheme opening. She added she had submitted it to the appropriate organisation and expected to receive a costing from this. She commented she wanted to change the recommendation and proposed to accept all of the uncosted applications and worked hard before the deadline of the 6th December 2024 to ensure they are delivered this time and not delayed further. She confirmed she would send details of a company who deals with the red lights to Councillor Heneghan for costings.

Councillor Joyce commented he understood Councillor Rust comments but added a cap needed to be put in place for application which did not currently have costings. He added Norfolk County Council would know the costings in question. He commented further a figure or estimate would need to be added to the recommendations before agreeing the proposed recommendation.

Councillor Rust confirmed she had previous communication about the gold standard bus shelter and acknowledged the gold standard bus shelter was more expensive than a standard one. She commented further if the costings for a gold standard bus shelter exceeds the cap she would compromise and apply for a standard bus shelter.

Councillor Heneghan commented she had hoped there was more support and guidance with contacting Norfolk County Council and added she did not know how to navigate round this process. She expressed her concern for accepting the uncosted applications without a cap.

The Assistant Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer confirmed the budget in question was the £81,000 which had been allocated to KLAC. She advised there was £15,000 of that budget allocated to capital spend only and the remainder could be revenue or capital. She added there was £32,000 in funds which were being held as part of the Discovery Centre balances which was marked for projects which KLAC would bid for in the future. She provided a quote for two ended bus shelter from 2021 which was around £4,500 plus VAT and reminded the Committee to consider inflation but hoped this provided an estimate for their debate.

The Chair, Councillor Everett, provided context of the cost of a bus shelter in a London Borough but added the cost would differ due to the area. He added he agreed with the reservations from other Members of the Committee to accept the uncosted applications without a limit and what would happen if the applications were accepted, and the costs exceeds the cap.

Councillor Rust reminded the Committee as this was the Parish Partnership Scheme, 50% would be funded from Norfolk County Council.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Kemp referred to Officers from Norfolk County Council which could be contacted to retrieve quotes for the uncosted applications. She commented she was concerned Officer time would be paid for these applications by the KLAC Budget.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Colwell brought to the Committee's attention he was aware there was a new highways engineer who had been appointed from the 2nd December 2024 which would be the reasoning of the delay in response from Norfolk County Council as there had been a vacancy of Officers. He commented he was shocked by the increase in the costs of items which had been put forward in the last 18 months. He added further he was cautious to accept the uncosted applications due to them being unknown.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Bone commented his application at the time did not include costings however he has now received them. He explained his application was for eight bollards on Stonegate Street to stop cars parking on the pavement and the costs received were £100 per bollard plus 50%. He added there would be no ongoing costs to this application and felt it should not be deferred to next year.

Councillor Ware commented her concerns and added there was further elements to be considered with a bus shelter such as expenses for the live time, damages, insurance, and maintenance. She commented further she was concerned the cap would not be enough to cover the costs of all the application and questioned if there was an order of priority.

Councillor Heneghan suggested Councillor Rust proposal was accepted with a cap of £10,000.

Councillor Joyce proposed the cap for the Borough Council to pay for the uncosted application exceed £10,000 and the cheapest are priorities first.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Kemp commented all the application should be approved as the Committee has the funding and residents approval, and all applications would serve a useful purpose.

The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection commented it was down to Members to decide on the uncosted applications with the timescale in mind and understand the revenue cost of the application. He added if the recommendation was to be amended, the Committee would need to understand if it was decided to prioritise the least expensive to most expensive. He reminded the Committee Norfolk County Council were to make the final approval of the applications. He added the KLAC Officer role would be a dedicated Officer resource and the reasoning it would be funded from KLAC budget.

The Vice-Chair, Councillor Jones proposed the recommendation be amended to “To consider for approval the three uncosted bids for submission in 2024/2025 for delivery in 2025/2026 subject to the cost to the Borough Council being no more than £15,000.”

Councillor Ware seconded the recommendation.

RESOLVED: 1) To consider for approval, subject to budget availability, the fully costed scheme.

2) For approved schemes that the sponsoring Councillor submits the bid to Norfolk County Council

3) To consider for approval the three uncosted bids for submission in 2024/2025 for delivery in 2025/2026 subject to the cost to the Borough Council being no more than £15,000.

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

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Councillor Rust referred to the to be scheduled list on the Work Programme and commented some items had been on there for some time. She suggested an Officer to attend a KLAC meeting to provide the Committee with information on the cost of streetlights and litter/dog waste bins.

Councillor Ware asked for a Public Toilet in Gaywood to be added onto the Work Programme.

Councillor Joyce asked for the Bus Station to be added to the Work Programme and Officers from Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Constabulary to attend the meeting.

Councillor Kemp asked for an Officer from West Norfolk Transport and Norfolk County Council to speak to the Committee about the provision of buses to the medical centre and the Doctors Surgery.

RESOLVED: The Committee’s Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Decision List was noted.

48 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for **23rd January 2025** at **5:15pm** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place.**

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm