BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

CABINET

Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 21st July, 2025 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors Beales (Chair), Bland, de Whalley, Lintern, Moriarty, Ring (Vice Chair), Rust and Squire.

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillor Parish (remotely).

OFFICERS:
Kate Blakemore – Chief Executive
James Arrandale – Deputy Monitoring Officer
Honor Howell – Assistant Director, Transformation and Change
Siobhan Cleeve – Head of Leisure
Karl Patterson – Housing Development Manager
Richard Allen – Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture
Andy King – Senior Housing Manager

CAB27 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Morley.

CAB28 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the meetings held on 10th June and 7th July 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

CAB29 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

CAB30 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Moriarty, Lintern and Ring declared an interest in Item 13 – Council Tax Discounts and Premiums Resolution. A dispensation for this item had been granted by the Standards Committee. Councillors Moriarty and Lintern left the room during consideration of the item and did not participate in the vote. Councillor Ring remained in the room during consideration of the item, however he did not participate in the debate or vote on the matter.

CAB31 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

CAB32 **MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Parish for CAB37: Changes to Social Housing Allocations Policy (remotely).

CAB33 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

There were no called in matters.

CAB34 **FORWARD DECISIONS**

The Forward Decisions List was noted.

CAB35 **MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES**

Cabinet took into account the following recommendations from the Panels during consideration of the relevant items:

Corporate Performance Panel 2 July 2025:

- Leisure Facilities Feasibility Study
- 2025 Staff Cost of Living Pay Award

Environment and Community Panel 8 July 2025

- Social Housing Allocations Policy.

CAB36 **2025 STAFF COST OF LIVING PAY AWARD**

Click here to view the Recording of this item on You Tube.

Cabinet noted that the Corporate Performance Panel had considered this report and supported the recommendation.

Councillor Ring introduced the report outlining the reasons for the proposals and asked Cabinet to note that the Trade Unions had been consulted and supported the proposals.

Councillor Rust commented that she was pleased that the Trade Unions were in support of this.

The Chair, Councillor Beales indicated his support for the proposals.

The Chief Executive, Kate Blakemore outlined the timescales involved.

Councillor Lintern referred to the report which stated that many other Norfolk Local Authorities had adopted this process. It was confirmed

that Broadland and Breckland had localised processes and that any successor Unitary Authority would have to make its own decision on the procedure to be followed.

RECOMMENDED:

1. That with effect from 1st April 2025 the Council agrees to adopt the National Joint Council for Local Government Services annual cost of living pay award, as determined by the national pay bargaining process on an ongoing basis.

2. That the Council agrees that its 2025 cost of living pay award should match the award agreed via the NJC national pay bargaining process.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To implement an annual cost of living pay increase for employees which is consistent with the outcomes of the national pay bargaining processes undertaken by the National Joint Council for local government.

CAB37 **CHANGES TO SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

Click here to view the Recording of this item on You Tube.

Cabinet noted that the Environment and Community Panel had considered this report and supported the recommendations.

Councillor Rust presented the report highlighting the Policy review had accounted for changes in legislation and changes to the homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. She outlined the consultation and feedback that had been received and considered. Councillor Rust explained that following feedback the criteria for one in ten properties to be allocated to people in work had been removed to make it fairer to those not in work. Processes for care leavers had also now been formalised.

Councillor Parish addressed Cabinet under Standing Order 34 and stated that the removal of the one in ten allocations to those in work did not reflect the consultation results. He stated that it was important to incentivise people to work.

Councillor Rust explained that all feedback had been considered and greater weight had been given to those that had lived experience of the housing processes. She confirmed that this did not prevent those in employment from applying as they would still be eligible. Councillor Rust referred to a recent legal case where the one in ten policy had been challenged as indirect discrimination.

The Senior Housing Manager referred Cabinet to the full Equalities Impact Assessment which was included in the report.

RESOLVED:

To recommend that the revised Home Choice Allocations Policy (with changes as set out in paragraph 1.3) is adopted by Full Council.

RECOMMENDED:

To adopt the Home Choice Allocations Policy.

REASON FOR DECISION:

The new policy fulfils the council's legal responsibilities, aligns with the borough's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and seeks to make the fairest use of a limited local resource.

CAB38 **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Click here to view the Recording of this item on You Tube.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer outlined the report and explained that this was a non-executive function, therefore it should be Council, rather than the Cabinet developing the processes and procedures. It had originally be recommended that Full Council establish a Working Group to carry out this function.

The Leader of the Council commented that he wished for this process to be as transparent and open as possible, therefore a formal Committee or Task Group should be established by Full Council and the recommendations to Cabinet should be amended as such. He reminded Cabinet that this Committee would take forward the proposals for Hilgay and Burnham Market, but would then be involved in the creation of a King's Lynn Town Council, so transparency was critical.

In response to a question from Councillor Moriarty, the Deputy Monitoring Officer agreed to clarify allowances and mileage claimable by Members involved in the formal Committee.

In response to a question from Councillor Lintern, the Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed that the timescales for the Burnham Market and Hilgay review would be slightly delayed whilst the proposals were considered by Full Council. It was confirmed that the recommendations from this meeting would be considered by Full Council on 31st July, and if approved, proposals would be developed for presentation to Full Council in October 2025.

RECOMMENDED:

1. That a formal Committee be created by Full Council, to take forward Community Governance Reviews and the Terms of Reference for the Burnham Market and Hilgay Community Governance Reviews be amended accordingly.
2. Council be invited to appoint a Chair of the Committee as the two Community Governance Reviews are currently ongoing.
3 To note the creation of a Governance Framework for the administration of CGR processes.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To enhance the Council's governance for CGR's, better reflecting the non-executive nature of this function, consistent with wider local government practice.

CAB39 **COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS AND PREMIUMS RESOLUTION**

Click here to view the Recording of this item on You Tube.

Cabinet noted the dispensation granted by the Standards Committee at their meeting on 16th July in relation to this item.

Councillors Moriarty, Lintern and Ring declared an interest in this item. Councillors Moriarty and Lintern left the room during consideration of this item. Councillor Ring remained in the room, however he did not participate in the debate or vote on the matter.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager presented the report to Cabinet and outlined the Councils powers in relation to Council Tax discounts and premiums and the proposals within the report which recommended the levels of discounts to be applied.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager outlined the types of properties eligible, the levels of exceptions and the financial implications and impact of premiums. It was confirmed that the impact of the premiums would continue to be monitored.

Councillor Squire commented that she was pleased that exceptions were made in certain circumstances. The Revenues and Benefits Manager confirmed that exceptions related to age restrictions and unusual circumstances, for which case was considered on its individual circumstances.

The Leader, Councillor Beales commented that exceptions were considered in detail and he was pleased to see some element of discretion within the scheme to account for unusual circumstances. He reminded Cabinet that revenue from this scheme was ringfenced for homelessness prevention.

In response to a question from Councillor Rust, the Revenues and Benefits Manager explained that there had not been a significant reduction on the amount of Long Term Empty Properties as a result of the implementation of this scheme, however she agreed to monitor levels.

RECOMMENDED:

1. The following discounts and premiums are recommended to Council for 2026/2027:

Class A Second Homes Discount for 2026/2027:

- No reduction, i.e. a 0% discount:

Class B Second Homes Discount for 2026/2027:

- No reduction, i.e. a 0% discount, plus
- An additional premium of 100%, which will only be applied subject to agreement being reached with Norfolk County Council by no later than 30 November 2025 to return a share of their additional revenue raised from the Second Home Premium of no less than the percentage allocation for 2025/2026

Class C Empty/ Unfurnished Discount 2026/2027:

- 0% for both the initial and follow on periods

Long-Term Empty Property Premiums (Levy) for 2026/2027:

- 100% for properties empty between one and five years,
- 200% for properties empty longer than five years, and
- 300% for properties empty longer than ten years.

Class D Uninhabitable Properties for 2026/2027:

- 25% for 12 months starting on the day the property becomes uninhabitable; then:
- 0% once the 12 month period has expired.

2. Cabinet and Council note and consider the government guidance of November 2024 as included at Appendix D

REASON FOR DECISION:

To ensure the discounts, premiums and exceptions policy for Second Homes and Long-Term Empty properties are agreed for 2026/2027.

CAB40 **LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND - ADDITIONAL ROUND 3 FUNDING**

Click here to view the Recording of this item on You Tube.

Cabinet noted that a General Exception Notice had been published with this report as it had not been advertised on the Forward Decisions list for 28 days.

Councillor Rust presented the report and the successful application for funding to provide three temporary accommodation units and one unit for Afghan refugees.

The Housing Development Manager outlined what had been delivered through the rounds of the Local Authority Housing Fund awards to date. With the additional funding it would bring the total to 46 homes, with 28 currently occupied.

Councillor Ring highlighted the importance of supporting those that needed temporary accommodation or were looking to resettle in the area.

The Chair, Councillor Beales thanked the officers and Members involved for bringing forward these opportunities to increase the housing stock and provide housing for those who needed it.

In response to a question from Councillor Moriarty, it was confirmed that the properties were likely to be located in, or around King's Lynn and, with regard to the temporary accommodation, it would not be known who would be occupying it until it was needed.

Councillor Rust reminded Cabinet of the savings that would be achieved by having additional temporary accommodation provision, rather than relying on bed and breakfasts etc.

RESOLVED:

1. The Council will enter a Memorandum of understanding with MHCLG based on the prospectus for the Local Authority Housing Fund available at Local Authority Housing Fund: Round 3 prospectus and guidance - GOV.UK. Authority is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for People and Communities to agree the final terms of the Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG.
2. The Council will accept the total sum of £568,000 offered to the Council by MHCLG under the Local Authority Fund to deliver the programme, understanding the external match funding requirements as set out in the report and attached prospectus.
3. Cabinet agrees that, subject to agreement from West Norfolk Housing Company, the properties will be acquired by West Norfolk Housing Company, funded by the grant, debt financing and other available funding.
4. Authority is delegated to Assistant Director Finance/Deputy S151 in consultation to agree terms for deferred consideration (if necessary) with West Norfolk Housing Company in relation to the transfer of properties on the Council's developments.

5. The Council requests that West Norfolk Housing Company works with the Council to deliver the properties through the fund.
6. That delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Leader for the acceptance of further funding offered to the Council under the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) or successor programme.

REASON FOR DECISION:

The recommendations will ensure that the opportunity presented by the Local Authority Housing Fund to deliver affordable housing in the borough will be fully realised and will help to relieve pressures on the council's homelessness services.

CAB41 **LEISURE FACILITIES FEASIBILITY STUDY**

Click here to view the Recording of this item on You Tube.

Cabinet noted that the Corporate Performance Panel had considered this report and supported the recommendations to Cabinet, however the Panel wished Cabinet to note that they were disappointed with delaying delivery of improvements to the Oasis, but understood the reasoning behind this.

The Assistant Director, Transformation and Change presented the report and provided Cabinet with the reasons for the proposals, the importance of the facilities, and that the Oasis would be considered as part of the overall Hunstanton Masterplan.

Councillor Ring commented that the Oasis would be considered as part of the wider all encompassing masterplan for Hunstanton. He highlighted the importance of the Hunstanton offer to the visitor economy and the additional work required in Hunstanton, such as works to the promenade.

Councillor Ring provided information on the proposals for Lynnsport and how it was important to provide a facility which delivered for all of King's Lynn and the surrounding area, recognising depravation issues and challenges.

In response to a question from Councillor Lintern, it was confirmed that any changes to the proposals during development of the RIBA phases, would be reported to Members.

Councillor Ring was hopeful that the next RIBA stage for Lynnsport would be presented to Cabinet in December 2025 and there had been early engagement with the appropriate organisations.

Councillor Squire commented that the current layout of Lynnsport was difficult to navigate and she was pleased that improvements overall would be considered.

In response to a question from Councillor Moriarty, Councillor Ring indicated that he was hopeful that Lynnsport proposals could be considered by Cabinet in December and work would continue at pace, whilst being thorough.

The Assistant Director, Transformation and Change commented that consultation with users, stakeholders and partner organisations were ongoing.

RESOLVED:

1. Cabinet noted the 2 x RIBA Stage Reports.
2. Cabinet resolved to progress to RIBA 3 for Lynnsport.

RECOMMENDED:

1. Cabinet recommends to council an amendment to the capital programme of £1,462,184 to progress to RIBA Stage 3.
2. Cabinet and council note that a further report at the end of RIBA stage 3 for Lynnsport will be brought forward in December 2025.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To progress the design and survey work to support the completion of the business case for a major upgrade of Lynnsport, incorporating a swimming pool to replace St James Swimming Pool which is at the end of its economic life, ensuring continuity of provision of sports, swimming and leisure facilities for the residents of West Norfolk residents but also significantly enhancing the social venue and positive impact on resident wellbeing within the community.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm