

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

COUNCIL

Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 27th November, 2025 at 5.00 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor A Bullen (Chair)

Councillors A Beales, S Bearshaw, P Bland, R Blunt, F Bone, A Bubb, S Collop, R Colwell, S Dark, M de Whalley, T de Winton, P Devulapalli, S Everett, D Heneghan, P Hodson, A Jamieson, B Jones, C Joyce, A Kemp, J Kirk, P Kunes, S Lintern, B Long, A Moore, J Moriarty, C Morley, S Nash, J Osborne, T Parish, J Ratcliffe, S Ring, C Rose, J Rust, A Ryves, S Sandell, D Sayers, Mrs V Spikings, S Squire, M Storey and A Ware

C:70 PRAYERS

Prayers were led by Father Ben Almond.

Council held a minutes silence in respect of Honorary Alderman Ted Benefer.

C:71 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anota, Ayres, Barclay, Bhondi, Coates, Crofts, Dickinson, Fry, Humphrey, Lawrence, Lowe and Tyler.

C:72 MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes from the meeting held on 2nd October 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to page 234, paragraph 7 Councillor Heneghan to be replaced by Councillor Lintern.

C:73 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Long declared an interest as a Trustee of Marshland St James Village Hall and as a Member of the Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership.

Councillor Jamieson declared an interest as Chair of the Norfolk Coast Partnership.

Councillor Squire declared an interest as a Member of the Norfolk Coast Partnership and the Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership.

C:74 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The Mayor provided detail of an event he had attended to commemorate a fishing fleet tragedy which had taken place 150 years ago and a rededication of the memorial in King's Lynn.

The Mayor also informed Council that Emma Hodds, subject to item C78 was sitting in the public gallery.

C:75

URGENT BUSINESS

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1. Waiver of the Six-Month Attendance Rule – Councillor Don Tyler.

Councillor Beales proposed and Councillor Blunt seconded the recommendation as set out within the report.

RESOLVED: 1. Council approved the waiver of the six-month attendance rule provided for within Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act for Councillor Don Tyler due to illness.

2. That the extension of the permitted non-attendance time period for a new six-month period, to expire on 26th May 2026.

2. Vote of Thanks to Monitoring Officer – Alexa Baker

Councillor Beales proposed a vote of thanks to Alexa Baker, Monitoring Officer as this would be her last Council Meeting. Councillor Beales expressed appreciation for Alexa Baker, acknowledging all the help and support she had provided to Members.

Councillor Parish seconded the vote of thanks and wished Alexa Baker every success for the future.

Full Council thanked Alexa Baker and gave her a round of applause.

RESOLVED: The Council place on record their formal thanks to Alexa Baker for all her help and support and wished her well for the future.

3. Second Homes Council Tax Agreement

Councillor Beales announced that a deal had now been reached with Norfolk County Council regarding the Second Homes Council Tax Levy stating that 25% would return to the borough for the benefit of local residents.

Councillor Beales thanked all those involved in the negotiations, particularly Councillor Jamieson, and noted that while some details were still to be finalised, the principal agreement had been secured.

C:76

PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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1. Public Question from Mr Alastair Kent

The Mayor invited Mr Alistair Kent to ask his question as set out below:

“Thousands of houses are in the pipeline for areas of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk. Given that present developments such as the Broad Oaks Estate on the edge of Downham Market are likely to be typical, these houses will be built cheek by jowl with tiny gardens and few significant green open spaces where children can play or residents could, for example, develop community gardens or aspire to an allotment. Given that access to such open spaces has been proved to benefit physical and mental health, what requirements will be imposed on developers to ensure that there is significant provision of such green spaces that are proportionate to the size of the development, and not mere tokens too small to be of significant benefit to the community.

Councillor Moriarty responded to the public question as set out below:

“Good Afternoon Mr Kent, and thank you for a rather thought-provoking question. Before I go into some detail on the Council’s position and tackle the specific points you make, I do want to give my personal perspective on this issue. Perhaps I should give you some assurance at the outset that it is the council’s position which prevails and trumps my personal views. But, for what they are worth, here goes.

I am conscious that I need to tread carefully as some might argue I belong to a privileged generation and what do I know about house buying for first time buyers today. But I too was once a first time buyer, and in 1983 we bought a small cheek by jowl house, postage stamp size garden and a tiny second bedroom with room for a cot and wardrobe, or a single bed. It is what we wanted and what we could afford. Like the majority of first timer buyers in our age category, and this is still true today, we moved on in a couple of years. I was very glad such housing was available then, and were we in the same position today I would be very grateful for this council’s position on stepping in if necessary when the market fails and I look forward to our new Housing Needs Assessment to be published in 2026 which will help inform so many decisions and policies.

Back to your question, first in general terms and then the specific steps which got us to where we are today.

It is always a balance between making the best use of land, as Government planning policy explicitly requires, while still safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. So as the council we will look at developing houses at an appropriate density that provides an efficient use of land, but also suitably reflects the wider locality. There are also specific policies in the new Local Plan, which require a certain amount of public open space, play areas, and in some cases allotments, for residential developments. The amount required reflects the advice provided by 'Fields in Trust' and their suggested nationally recognised standards for outdoor playing space.

So to the specifics:

1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - The NPPF which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, states that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. It goes on to set out how this should be taken forward in a local plan.
2. Our Local Plan
 - Accordingly, our Local Plan contains policies for each site allocation it makes and sets out the policy requirements. The policy for the site allocation to south of Downham Market includes provisions for outdoor play space. There is also provision for a master plan, landscaping, allotments, protection and enhancement of public rights of way within the site, protection of existing protected trees, ecological studies, and ensuring the development is fully integrated into the surrounding walking and cycling network. The site you refer to is still to be built out, but judging from the plans I have seen, there is a lot of green allocated space.
3. Windfall Sites
 - Outside of sites specifically allocated by the Local Plan for housing, the Local Plan contains development management policies. These are there to guide and inform windfall sites, which are those not specifically allocated which may come forward. These cover a whole host of matters including the provision of recreational open space for residential developments, green infrastructure, the protection of local open space, and environmental assets.
 - To highlight the point Policy LP22 - Provision of Recreational Open Space for Residential Developments, sets out that all new residential development will be expected to make adequate provision for open space to recognise the importance open space has on health and wellbeing for all residents. It goes on to set the standards out which are in accordance with the fields in trust best practice. Schemes of 20 new homes or greater will

provide 2.4 hectares of open space per 1,000 population comprising approximately 70% for either amenity, outdoor sport, and allotments and 30% for suitably equipped children's play space.

- It is worth noting that the Local Plan which was adopted earlier this year went through a lengthy preparation process and a detail examination before being found sound and adopted. This involved many consultees including Sport England, Downham Market Town Council, Denver Parish Council, and local residents.
- Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan (this includes the Local Plan and any neighbourhood plan covering that area) , unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- The Local Plan can be viewed online to help with awareness and implementation and understanding we have produced an interactive planning policies map and an interactive version of the whole Local Plan and, following this meeting, I will email you a link

Councillors are not complacent, we are also residents and we specifically have a responsibility to be watchful and alert to the benefits offered by ensuring the provision of proportionate green spaces for a variety of uses in developments in the Borough as they come forward."

By way of supplementary, Mr Alastair Kent asked if rewilding, as had happened in areas in Downham Market, which resulted in a haven for wildlife and biodiversity could be considered at Hardwick Road Cemetery.

Councillor Moriarty agreed to respond to Mr Kent in writing.

2. Public Question from Mr Andrew Riley

The Mayor invited Mr Andrew Riley to ask his question, as set out below:

"Being happy and healthy at work shouldn't be a luxury, yet too often people struggle because workplace cultures create distance just when support is most needed. From my experience over the last decade supporting people with mental health problems and disabilities in work, I've seen that the right support from employers can be as effective, if not more, than interventions from services or clinicians.

Right now, workplaces and therefore services and the wider economy in West Norfolk are being hit by high sickness levels, from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital through to this Borough Council itself.

Alongside the impending improvements in conditions promised through the Employment Rights Bill, Sir Charlie Mayfield's Keep Britain Working review for the Labour Government sets out a national programme to:

- improve staff retention
- support workers with health conditions, disabilities and neurodivergence
- promote healthier, longer working lives

This is not only to help individuals, but to strengthen our economy by clawing back lost productivity.

Phase one asks employers to sign up as 'Vanguard employers' to the Healthy Working and Workplace Health Provision standards. A number of councils and major national employers, including several based locally, have already committed to doing this.

These standards promote better use of shared health and disability data, early prevention, and more active support for conditions such as mental ill-health and musculoskeletal problems. They also include testing alternatives to GP fit notes, which can sometimes keep people off work for longer than is necessary when the right workplace support could help them stay in or return to work sooner.

There is so much more that can and should be done to keep people happy and well in work. That benefits everyone: vulnerable residents, working people, pensioners, and business owners.

My question is:

As one of the area's biggest employers, will this administration commit to signing up as a Vanguard employer, showing leadership locally? Will the Leader write to other borough and county council leaders to encourage them to seek Vanguard employer status, particularly in any future establishment of Unitary Council(s) in Norfolk, so that more employers in West Norfolk are encouraged to support residents with thriving, and not just coping, at work?"

Councillor Rust responded to the question, as set out below.

"More than 60 major and many small employers are joining forces with the government to tackle the rising tide of ill-health that is pushing people out of work and holding back growth.

The joint effort, developed in response to Sir Charlie Mayfield's Keep Britain Working Review, will drive action to prevent ill-health, support people to stay in work, and help employers build healthier, more resilient workplaces.

Published today, the landmark Review sets out the stark reality facing the UK:

- One in five working-age adults are now out of the labour force – 800,000 more than in 2019 due to health reasons
- The cost of ill-health that prevents work equals 7% of GDP – nearly 70% of all income-tax receipts
- UK employment among disabled people stands at 53%, below leading OECD nations
- Employers lose 85 billion a year from sickness, turnover, and lost productivity

In response, the government will partner with employers to reshape how health issues and disabilities are managed in the workplace with the launch of employer-led Vanguard.

The Vanguards - including household names such as British Airways, Google, Sainsbury's, Holland and Barrett alongside Mayoral Combined Authorities and SMEs – are early adopters who will develop and refine workplace health approaches over the next three years to build the evidence base for what works.

They're committing to embracing the report's healthy working lifecycle - which aims to reduce sickness absence, improve return-to-work rates, and increase disability employment rates – which the government will work towards developing into a voluntary certified standard by 2029.

It builds on the work the government is doing to give businesses the skilled workforce they need by investing 1 billion annually in disability employment support by the end of the decade – giving people the skills and opportunities to move out of poverty and into good, secure jobs as part of the Plan for Change.

As a Council We've signed up to become a Marmot Place. Of the 8 Marmot Principles one is to create fair employment and good work for all, another is to strengthen ill health prevention and another enable people to maximise their capabilities and control their lives. I think these link with the aims of Vanguard and the efforts to tackle ill health.

You might be aware of specific issues relating to women that can stop us from being in the workplace – domestic abuse and menopause. Our Council has actively worked with our Trade Union partners to establish a Menopause Policy and we've become White Ribbon Accredited, both things which will support women to remain in the workplace and maximise their capabilities and control their lives. Lost revenue and productivity costs attributed to menopause are estimated

at approximately £1.5 billion to £11 billion annually in the UK, while those attributed to domestic abuse amount to approximately £14 billion annually in England and Wales.

Three deliverables

1. A Healthy Working Lifecycle

Establish, with employers and providers, a Healthy Working Lifecycle which defines the practices that drive the best outcomes in reduced sickness absence, improved return to work rates and better participation and inclusion of disabled people. Develop the Healthy Working Lifecycle as a certified standard, which becomes the basis for general adoption of a common, outcome-based philosophy around work, health and disability across the UK.

2. Better Workplace Health Provision (WHP)

Build, with existing providers and practitioners, the support employers and employees need to deliver the Healthy Working Lifecycle, focusing initially on new 'stay in work' and 'return to work' plans within the lifecycle, and on improving faster access to support. Work with providers and practitioners to ensure this provision is affordable and effective, and establish certified standards for a multi-provider marketplace that expands access to high-quality support for all employers.

3. Evidence of what works to underpin incentives for adoption

Create a Workplace Health Intelligence Unit (WHIU) to aggregate and analyse data, guide continuous improvement and provide leadership, as a movement HQ, across the new system. Develop the WHIU into a high-value data asset to guide certification and provide the evidence base to support targeted incentives – financial, operational, legal, and cultural – to accelerate adoption.

- Managing sickness absence We've got a clear procedure that helps people stay in work where possible and supports them when they're ready to come back. That includes return-to-work interviews, wellness plans, and making sure nobody feels left on their own after time away.

- Managing stress in the workplace We've introduced a Corporate Guidance Note on Managing Stress in the Workplace, which sets out how we can all spot and respond to stress more effectively. Alongside this, we use the Stress Risk Assessment (Stress Checker) tool to help identify issues early and put the right support in place. We also offer Managing Stress and Resilience workshops to all employees.

- Practical health support Staff can access funded physiotherapy (in the centre of King's Lynn) when they need it, we provide seasonal flu vouchers to help reduce illness, and our Vivup Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is there for confidential access to a 7 day-a-week GP service for employees and for their dependents under the age of 18.

- High Impact Health Conditions

A risk assessment approach to support employees to engage with their teams for support to manage specific health conditions, such as asthma and anaphylaxis.

- Trauma support (TRiM) We already offer in-house, fully qualified TRiM for type one trauma and have done for three years now. From December 2025 we're expanding this to cover type two and secondary trauma. That means more people will get the right (NICE recommended) support when they are dealing with difficult incidents in the course of their work.

- Mental health awareness (and this builds on the Wellbeing, Sickness Absence and Mental Health First Aid training that all line managers attended in 2020) All of our line managers completed REACTMH training in November 2025. This gives them the tools to spot when someone might be struggling and to have supportive conversations early on. Vivup also offers a 24/7 confidential freephone helpline and access to every employee to funded, fully qualified counselling. This can be in person if employees prefer.

- Occupational Health We make use of Occupational Health services not just during employment, but even before someone starts with us. That way, new colleagues can get the right support from day one and we can understand the support and adjustments we can consider to help our employees to work. This OH service is now remote, so employees who might be struggling with physical health can access really easily.

- Alive offer joining incentives to employees to access facilities to help them to pursue a healthy lifestyle.

- The Equalities Working Group has sub-groups looking into specific employee support needs, such as neurodiversity.

- Monthly wellbeing events We run regular wellbeing events, and a lot of these are based on physical health elements as well as on the Five Ways To Wellbeing principles. For example:

- November 2025: In Body health checks linked to International Men's Day

- December 2025: NHS Health Checks offered to staff, plus our Food Bank Collection for Purfleet

- January 2026: continuation of the Food Bank Collection for Purfleet. Staff Long Service Awards.

- February 2026: Staff Recognition Events. Pet Photo Competition and Voting.

- March 2026: Menopause Awareness sessions planned to support colleagues and raise understanding."

Mr Riley did not have a supplementary question.

C:77

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES

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(i) Electoral Arrangements Committee – 4 November 2025

Councillor Beales, seconded by Councillor Everett proposed the recommendations from the Electoral Arrangements Committee held on 4 November 2025.

RESOLVED: The recommendations from the Electoral Arrangements Committee held on 4 November 2025 in relation to the below items, were approved by Council:

- 4. Burnham Market Community Governance Review – Next Steps

- 5. Hilgay Community Governance Review – Next Steps

(ii) Cabinet – 11 November 2025

Councillor Ring, seconded by Councillor Rust, proposed the following recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting held on 11 November 2025.

CAB89: Review of Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy

CAB94: Quarter 2 – 2025/2026 – Budget Monitoring

RESOLVED: The recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 11 November 2025 in relation to the below items, were approved by Council:

CAB89: Review of Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy

CAB94: Quarter 2 – 2025/2026 – Budget Monitoring

Councillor Morley, seconded by Councillor Bone, proposed recommendation CAB90: Council Tax Support: Final Scheme for Working Age People for 2026/2027 from the Cabinet Meeting held on 11 November 2025. Councillor Morley spoke in support of the recommendations.

Councillor Kemp spoke in support of the support being made available for those in deprived areas and those affected by the cost of living.

Councillor Osborne spoke of the importance of helping the most vulnerable residents of the Borough.

Councillors Rust spoke in support of the proposals.

Councillor Bone, as seconder of the recommendations, spoke in support of the proposals.

Councillor Dark spoke in support of the proposals and highlighted the additional support provided to residents such as the discretionary hardship scheme.

RESOLVED: The recommendation from the Cabinet meeting held on 11 November 2025 in relation to CAB90: Council Tax Support: Final Scheme for Working Age People for 2026/2027 was approved by Council.

Councillor de Whalley, seconded by Councillor Ring proposed recommendation CAB91: Adoption of Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy from the Cabinet meeting held on 11 November 2025.

Councillor de Whalley spoke in support of the recommendations.

Councillor Kemp spoke of the importance of providing open space and the impact on health and wellbeing of residents.

Councillor Bone spoke in support of the proposals and the importance of biodiversity.

Councillor Colwell referred to the consultation which had taken place and was pleased that Gaywood River and rewetting Peat Land had been included.

Councillor Squire commented that this was a living document and served as a blue print for diversity by promoting ideas and the art of the possible.

Councillor Long was pleased that the Strategy included practical action and informed Council of the million trees scheme.

Councillor Devulapalli welcomed the strategy and hoped that it would be promoted.

Councillor Ring commented that it was important to protect the planet for future generations and indicated his support for the recommendations.

RESOLVED: The recommendation from the Cabinet meeting held on 11 November 2025 in relation to CAB91: Adoption of Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy was approved by Council.

C:78

APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

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Councillor Beales, seconded by Councillor Ware, proposed the recommendations as set out in the report.

Councillor Beales provided an overview of the recruitment process and thanked Members and officers who had been involved.

Councillor Beales spoke highly of Emma Hodds, stating that he had been impressed with her during the interview process.

Councillor Beales also spoke highly of Michelle Drewery and highlighted the good work that she had carried out during the interim period.

Councillor Beales stated that both Emma Hodds and Michelle Drewery had been outstanding during the recruitment process and recommended their appointments to Council.

Councillor Ware endorsed the comments made by Councillor Beales.

Full Council congratulated both of the Appointees with a round of applause.

RESOLVED:

1. That the postholder of Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer be confirmed as Emma Hodds, to commence on the date agreed between the postholder and the Chief Executive.
2. With immediate effect, that the post of interim Deputy Chief Executive (including Section 151 Officer) be confirmed as permanent and for Michelle Drewery to continue in this role.

C:79 **APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL RETURNING OFFICER**

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

Councillor Beales, seconded by Councillor Ring, proposed the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. The Chief Executive is appointed to act as the Local Returning Officer for the Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority Mayoral Elections.
2. The amendment to the Scheme of Delegated set out at section 2.3 of this report is approved so that the Chief Executive is delegated authority to act as Local Returning Officer for all relevant elections conducted within the Borough Council area.

C:80 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

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(03/25) Submitted by Councillor Kirk

Councillor Kirk requested withdrawal of the following Notice of Motion and indicated that a revised Notice of Motion would be submitted to the next Full Council meeting.

“This Council notes that:

- It declared a climate emergency in 2021 and set a corporate net zero target for 2035.
- Policies include the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan, decarbonisation of 11 council buildings, Norfolk Net Zero Communities pilot, Eco Flexible Eligibility Scheme, and £3.8m spent on solar, heat pumps, and EV points.
- These unfunded mandates raise council tax and divert funds from local services — hitting the poorest residents hardest.

This Council believes that:

- Its first duty is to protect the poorest and most vulnerable residents, not to chase costly net zero targets.

This Council resolves to:

- Scrap all net zero policies and targets immediately, including the 2035 target, Climate Change Strategy, building decarbonisation programme, and Eco Scheme.
- Publish a full audit of net zero spend within 3 months and consult residents on priorities for the savings.”

RESOLVED: The Mayor agreed that the Notice of Motion be withdrawn.

(04/25) Submitted by Councillor Sayers

In proposing the Notice of Motion, Councillor Sayers requested an alteration to resolution four of his Notice of Motion. The alteration is set out in bold below.

Councillor Ratcliffe seconded the alteration.

“This Council notes that:

1. "Fleecehold" refers to properties sold as freehold where homeowners remain liable for annual estate management charges to private companies for roads and communal areas councils would traditionally maintain through council tax.
2. One million homeowners across 20,000 estates face escalating charges with no meaningful ability to challenge unreasonable fees or poor service.
3. Eighty percent of new freehold properties by the 11 largest housebuilders now include estate management charges, making fleecehold standard industry practice.
4. Research shows the average new-build home comes with 157 defects, up 96% since 2005, yet residents pay twice - through council tax and private estate charges.
5. The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 received Royal Assent in May 2024, but most provisions await secondary legislation. The High Court dismissed a judicial review challenge on 24 October 2025, removing obstacles to implementation.
6. The property management sector remains unregulated, leaving residents with no recourse against excessive charges.

This Council resolves to:

1. Request the Leader writes to the Secretary of State urging immediate implementation of secondary legislation and regulation of property management.
2. Establish support for affected residents through information and signposting to campaign groups.
3. Engage with developers to discourage fleecehold arrangements and require transparent costings.
4. **Urge the Planning Committee to give consideration, where legally permissible and appropriate, to requiring adoption agreements for roads and communal areas through Section 106 agreements, and to discourage fleecehold agreements through planning policy.”**

RESOLVED: The alteration to the Notice of Motion was agreed.

Councillor Ratcliffe, as seconder of the Notice of Motion spoke in support of the Motion.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Beales thanked Councillor Sayers for highlighting this issue and proposed that under Council Procedure Rule 7.12, the best and most appropriate response would be for this Motion to be referred to another Council Body so that further research and detail could be considered. Councillor Beales proposed that the Motion be referred to the Local Plan Task Group, who would then formulate recommendations for Cabinet and Full Council to consider as necessary.

Councillor Beales also confirmed that he would write to the Secretary of State to ask for a timetable of Secondary Legislation.

Council were invited to debate the proposal to refer the matter to the Local Plan Task Group

Councillor Heneghan supported referral to the Local Plan Task Group so that a proper response could be considered.

Councillor Long commented that he supported referral to another Council Body and a Policy Development Panel would be the correct avenue for this.

Councillor Beales commented that the Local Plan Task Group was the most appropriate body to consider this in the first instance.

Councillor Joyce supported Councillor Beales proposal and highlighted that the Notice of Motion affected some residents in his Ward.

Councillor Kemp commented that action needed to be taken on this issue.

Councillor Bone supported referral to the Local Plan Task Group as more time was required to investigate this complex issue.

Councillor Blunt as a Member of the Local Plan Task Group agreed that referral to the Local Plan Task Group was the best way to take this Motion forward.

RESOLVED: That the Notice of Motion be referred to the Local Plan Task Group for consideration.

COUNCIL ADJOURNED FOR A COMFORT BREAK FROM 6.25PM TO 6.35PM

C:81

CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS

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Councillor Beales moved the Cabinet Members Reports.

Councillor Kunes asked about the Electric Vehicle Charging points at the Depot and asked if proper charging points would be installed. Councillor de Whalley confirmed that dedicated charging points for the Council's Electric Vehicle fleet were to be installed, funded by grants, to improve efficiency and data collection, with ongoing upgrades to support future fleet requirements.

Councillor Heneghan stated that the River Ouse area was underutilised and regeneration in this area was overdue. She asked for timescales on the Regeneration plans for this area and how it would be funded. Councillor Ring referred to the recent Masterplan Stakeholder Meeting where good feedback had been provided to the consultants. Councillor Ring explained that work had been commissioned for the Quay dryside area as part of the Town Deal Board funding and work was due to start in the New Year. Improvements to the Custom House would be subject to Planning Permission and it was hoped that the process would commence in April 2026. With regard to the Devils Alley and King Staithe Square area, Council was informed that this was in the early design phase and would be subject to public consultation.

Councillor Kemp asked for an update on the Ferry and Councillor de Whalley explained that new ferry infrastructure plans were nearing completion and would be shared with stakeholders in due course.

Councillor Squire responded to a question from Councillor Parish regarding Water Quality, explaining the complexity of pollution sources, ongoing investigations, and the need for year round testing and real time data. Councillor Squire agreed to keep Council updated on progress.

Councillor Dark referred to the Notice of Motion relating to climate change, which had been withdrawn earlier in the meeting and stated that if this was approved it would undermine the long standing work of Councillor and Officers committed to improving the environment. Councillor Beales reaffirmed the Council's commitment to its climate emergency declaration and carbon action plans, assuring that there were no plans to reverse these policies and highlighting ongoing support for climate and biodiversity initiatives.

In response to a question from Councillor Sayers, Councillor Squire outlined the risks of lithium battery fires in waste streams due to incorrect disposal, the need for public awareness, and the forthcoming allocation of extender producer responsibility funding to enhance recycling services.

Councillor Spikings referred to the recent changes to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding Governance arrangements. She requested that the one year review of the new scheme be brought forward to take place after the first funding round. Councillor Moriarty

explained the recent changes to the CIL funding, the review process, and efforts to make the application process easier for parishes.

In response to a question from Councillor Everett, Councillor de Whalley confirmed that the transition to LED street lighting was ongoing, with improvements in energy efficiency and maintenance. He asked Councillor Everett to provide him with detail of specific units which had issues. Councillor de Whalley also invited feedback from Councillor Everett on how the website could be improved.

Councillor Blunt thanked Councillor Beales for his welcome to himself as new Leader of the Conservative Group and Councillor Sandell as Deputy Group Leader. Councillor Blunt asked about the working relationship between the Borough Council and Norfolk County Council as significant work was required in the lead up to Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution. Councillor Beales provided an overview of the different approaches taken by the Borough and the County and stated that there were good officer working relationships which were vital in the lead up to Local Government Reorganisation. Councillor Beales highlighted the cultural issues and that relationships would be important for whatever came next. Councillor Beales highlighted the huge amount of work required in the lead up to Local Government Reorganisation and the potential for increased Member and Officer resources.

In response to a question from Councillor Kemp, Councillor Beales stated that the permit and planning permission had now been granted for the Wisbech Incinerator.

Councillor Ratcliffe referred to work planned on the Hunstanton Sea Defences, the significant rainfall recently and asked for detail of properties in the Borough that were at risk of flooding. Councillor Squire explained that the Borough was a vulnerable area and approximately 25 homes were flooded each year, but over 25% of properties in West Norfolk were at risk of flooding.

Councillor Sandell referred to Councillor Rust's Council report and the number of unauthorised encampments in the area. Councillor Rust explained that the Borough was listed on 'van life' website encouraging people to the area.

In response to a question from Councillor Ryves, Councillor Ring provided detail of the Guildhall CIO and the work that would be carried out to look at funding opportunities to bridge the funding gap.

In response to a question from Councillor Blunt, Councillor Beales acknowledged the recent Scrutiny Governance Review which had been considered by the Joint Panel, and the Joint Panel preference to maintain the status quo in terms of Governance arrangements, and focus on strengthening training, work programming and the relationship

with the Executive. Councillor Beales agreed that the Constitution Informal Working Group would be the correct forum to consider issues.

In response to a question from Councillor Collop, Councillor Ring provided detail of the Football Foundation Study which had concluded that the area was six 3G pitches short of meeting need and potential funding opportunities were now being looked at.

In response to a question from Councillor Sayers, Councillor Squire provided detail of the Extended Producer Responsibility and the grant funding which would be available, noting that this did not over costs. Joint initiatives were being considered by the Norfolk Waste Partnership.

Councillor Long referred to Councillor Morley's Report and the source of information relating to the Internal Drainage Board funding. Councillor Morely explained that information had been made available from the Association of Drainage Board Authorities and encouraged those Members that sat as Council representatives to feedback any information available relating to finances and funding to assist in preparation of the Council's Budget setting process.

Councillor Devulapalli referred to the Asset Management review and asked if consideration could be given to alternative uses to sites rather than disposal, for example creating green spaces. Councillor Ring explained that all assets that were to be sold would be available for all to purchase. He explained that ideas for repurposing would be considered if appropriate, but it was critical that the historical portfolio underwent review.

C:82 **MEMBER'S QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

The meeting closed at 7.38 pm