

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

CABINET

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 23rd April, 2026
at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place,
King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

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

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillors Kemp and Ryves.

OFFICERS:

Kate Blakemore – Chief Executive
Emma Hodds – Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer
Stuart Ashworth – Assistant Director – Planning
Siobhan Cleeve – Assistant Director – Leisure
Ged Greaves – Climate Change Manager
Carl Holland – Assistant Director - Finance
Jeannette Hollingsworth – Environmental Health Manager
Dave Robson – Environmental Health Manager
Mark Whitmore – Assistant Director – Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection

CAB141 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Squire.

CAB142 MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes from the meeting held on 3rd March 2026
were agreed as a correct record.

CAB143 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

CAB144 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

CAB145 CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE

None.

CAB146 MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34

Councillor Kemp – South Lynn Community Centre
 Councillor Ryves – Invited to the meeting for the Audit Committee
 Annual Report from the Chair.

CAB147 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

None.

CAB148 **FORWARD DECISIONS**

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Councillor Moriarty reported that a report on cost recovery for invalid planning applications would be brought through the decision making process later in the year.

Cabinet were informed that Members would be updated regularly via briefings, Cabinet Reports and Scrutiny Panel reports on Local Government Reorganisation Readiness as required.

RESOLVED: The Forward Decisions List was noted.

CAB149 **MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES**

Cabinet noted the recommendations put forward by the Panels in relation to the following items:

Environment and Community Panel – 14th April 2026

Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.
 Railway Road Extended Air Quality Management Area Revocation.
 Changes to the existing Corporate Enforcement Policy and Financial Penalties as a result of the Renters Rights Act
 South Lynn Community Centre.

Corporate Performance Panel – 15th April 2026

Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring

Regeneration and Development Panel – 31st March 2026

Changes to the Local Plan Task Group Terms of Reference
 High Street Rental Auctions
 Custom House Refurbishment

CAB150 **AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

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The Assistant Director presented the report and outlined the remit and work of the Audit Committee, including the requirement for the Committee to undertake a self-assessment and to report annually to Council on its activities. He provided an overview of the Committee's role, which included monitoring the implementation of Internal Audit recommendations, supporting the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement, and undertaking ongoing Member training.

Councillor Ryves, Chair of the Audit Committee, addressed Cabinet and highlighted the Committee's key achievements which included contributing to the development and oversight of the Corporate Risk Register, monitoring Key Performance Indicators, and considering Internal Audit reports and overseeing the implementation of resulting recommendations. Councillor Ryves referred to the Annual Governance Statement and explained that the Committee had worked to make this more 'forward looking' and easier to understand.

Councillor Rust was pleased to hear of the improvements that had been made to make documents easier to understand.

Councillor Ryves thanked all of the officers involved in the Audit Committee.

The Chair thanked the Audit Committee and the Chief Executive for the increased monitoring of Internal Audit recommendations.

Councillor Lintern commented she was pleased to see compliance with policies.

In response to questions from the Chair, it was explained that the recruitment of two Independent Members to sit on the Audit Committee was imminent and remuneration had been benchmarked and would be a set rate per Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDED: That the Annual report of the Chair of Audit Committee be considered and noted by Full Council.

REASON FOR DECISION: It is recommended practice for the Audit Committee to report on its work. To comply with best practice in making the best efforts by the Audit Committee to adopt the principles in complying with CIPFA's "Position Statement: Audit Committee in Local Authorities".

CAB151 **CHANGES TO THE LOCAL PLAN TASK GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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

Cabinet noted that the Regeneration and Development Panel had considered this report and supported the Cabinet Recommendations.

Councillor Moriarty presented the report outlining the requirements and timescale for the new Local Plan. Cabinet were informed that the Local Plan Task Group and Planning Committee had been briefed on this process and an all Member briefing session would be arranged. Councillor Moriarty thanked the officers involved in the Local Plan creation, highlighting the considerable amount of work ahead.

Councillor Lintern highlighted the need for Parish Councils to be kept informed; it was confirmed that briefings would be arranged. Councillor Moriarty explained that this report presented the revised Terms of Reference for the Task Group, which was in effect the first part of the process, with lots of work to follow.

Councillor Ryves addressed Cabinet under Standing Order 34 and drew attention to the implications of Local Government Reorganisation. The Leader explained that responsibility for progressing the Local Plan would transfer to the Unitary Authority on vesting day and that work needed to be advanced in preparation for this transition, noting that progression of the Local Plan was a statutory requirement. Councillor Moriarty commented that the Terms of Reference of the Local Plan Task Group had been designed to be sufficiently agile to enable preparation for Local Government Reorganisation.

RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Local Plan Task Group Terms of Reference (Annex 1 to this report).

REASON FOR DECISION: To recognise the requirements and statutory obligations of the new planning system, as introduced through the 2023 Levelling-Up and Regeneration, and 2025 Planning and Infrastructure Acts.

CAB152 **CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

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

Councillor de Whalley presented Cabinet with information on daily sea surface temperatures, global warming and the climate change emergency.

The Climate Change Manager set out the background to the development of the Strategy and highlighted the work that had been undertaken to address carbon emissions both as an organisation and in the Council's community leadership role in reducing the Borough's

carbon footprint. He also drew attention to section 5 of the draft Strategy, which detailed the activities undertaken to date.

Councillor Rust welcomed the links with the Marmot responsibilities and the positive impact it would have on disadvantaged communities.

Councillor Morley requested more detail on the budget and finances and it was confirmed that a number of projects had been funded and launched already, some projects were already included in the Capital Programme and those that were not already funded would utilise the remaining Climate Change reserve fund. External funding opportunities and opportunities to lever in additional funding would also be looked at.

Cabinet were informed that regular updates would also be provided to the Environment and Community Panel.

Councillor de Whalley commented that many of the projects represented a “spend to save” approach and emphasised the importance of also recognising the social value generated by such initiatives.

Councillor Beales referred to exemplar projects delivered by the Council, including approaches to energy efficiency that would be considered at the Guildhall and within the Council’s Major Housing Programme.

Councillor Ring highlighted the associated health and wellbeing benefits and referred to households that remained reliant on heating oil. He also commented on the quality of infrastructure being incorporated into the Council’s housing developments.

Councillor Rust referred to fuel poverty and that there was a crisis resilience fund available that residents could apply for. Councillor Ring commented that this was not just limited to those in receipt of certain benefits, it was available to anyone who earned up to a certain income.

Councillor de Whalley commented that the Beat your Bills Roadshows would continue to help residents seek efficiencies and signpost to grant funding opportunities.

Councillor Beales suggested that the Finance Portfolio Holder work with the Climate Change Team regarding reporting of finances, as required.

Councillor Beales referred to the show house at Florence Fields, which showcased the efficiencies and high quality of the Councils housing developments.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approve the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure there is a comprehensive and up to date framework for the Council's response to climate change.

CAB153 **RAILWAY ROAD EXTENDED AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA REVOCATION**

[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 to Cabinet.

Councillor de Whalley presented the report and highlighted the improvements that had been made to Air Quality in the area and the objectives that had been met, which was good news for residents. He referred to links with Marmot and the Air Quality Strategy and confirmed that Air Quality Monitoring would continue.

The Environmental Health Manager confirmed that the area had been six years compliant and levels were continuing to fall.

Cabinet welcomed this report and the positive news.

RESOLVED: Revoke Railway Road Air Quality Management Area and revoke Railway Road Extended Air Quality Management Area.

REASON FOR DECISION: Air quality levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) have steadily fallen over the last few years and have not exceeded the legal air quality annual mean limit for the last 5 years within the AQMA. If there have been no exceedances over the previous 5 years, then there is no longer a need to have AQMAs in place.

CAB154 **QUARTER 3 BUDGET MONITORING**

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

Councillor Morley presented the report and outlined the savings that had been achieved and transferred to the General Reserve. He thanked officers for their due diligence and commended their work over the past two years.

Councillor Morley also outlined proposals to work in partnership with Norfolk County Council and the Fire and Rescue Service to take forward an assessment for a potential training school.

The Assistant Director reported on the favourable revenue outturn position and the current position of the Capital Programme.

Councillor Rust congratulated all those involved in the successful renegotiation of loans.

Councillor Beales congratulated the Portfolio Holder and officers on the budget-setting process. He informed Cabinet of his intention to establish a Group to review budget processes, the Community Fund announced as part of the Budget, and the process for submitting budget amendments, in preparation for the next budget-setting cycle.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. Note the forecast outturn for Revenue and Capital monitoring position as at 31st December 2025 for 2025/2026.
2. Agree to update the Capital Programme as set out in section 3 of the report.

REASON FOR DECISION: To keep Cabinet informed of performance against budget for Capital and Revenue 2025/2026 based on Quarter 3 data.

CAB155 **CHANGES TO THE EXISTING CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND FINANCIAL PENALTIES AS A RESULT OF THE RENTERS RIGHTS ACT 2025**

[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 to Cabinet.

Councillor Rust presented the report, which set out the necessary changes required to ensure compliance with new legislation and to achieve national consistency through the adoption of a template policy. It was noted that the policy was being used as an exemplar and had been adopted by many local authorities.

The Environmental Health Manager explained that the legislation was highly prescriptive, which made the required processes clear for officers to follow and enabled the Council to effectively discharge its statutory duties.

Councillor Beales commented that the approach reflected the work of the West Norfolk Housing Company, particularly in relation to the provision of longer-term tenancies.

RESOLVED: That in order to ensure that the council has a robust legally compliant, and consistent approach to enforcement under the Renters' Rights Act, that Cabinet approve:

- 1) The inclusion of an addendum to the current Corporate Enforcement Policy.
- 2) The proposed Civil Penalty Policy.

REASON FOR DECISION: The Renters Rights Act 2025 has significantly changed the landscape for the private rented sector and introduced specific duties on Local Housing Authorities with respect to enforcement protocols and mandatory reporting of enforcement interventions into central government.

CAB156 **HIGH STREET RENTAL AUCTIONS**

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

Cabinet noted that the Regeneration and Development Panel had considered this report and supported the proposal.

Councillor Ring presented the proposal, which sought to bring vacant units at the southern end of King's Lynn High Street back into use. He provided information on national average vacancy rates and advised that there was currently eight vacant units within the designated area, excluding larger units. Councillor Ring outlined the process to be followed and noted that the proposal crossed into Councillor Rust's Portfolio, as delivery would be undertaken by the Empty Homes Officer.

Councillor Rust commented that the proposal was a good example of a collaborative approach and emphasised the importance of bringing vacant units back into productive use.

Councillor Beales commented that the proposal would be funded through Council Tax Second Homes funding and welcomed that the funding would be reinvested locally.

Councillor Moriarty asked whether there was discretion in relation to the type of shop operation. In response, the Assistant Director explained that there was criteria requiring the use to be of benefit to the local community and society. It was also noted that leases would be for a term of between one and five years.

Councillor Lintern asked whether the scheme could be extended to Downham Market and Hunstanton if successful. Councillor Ring responded that this could be considered if a further area was designated, noting that the initial scheme focused on a limited area due to the resource-intensive nature of the work.

RESOLVED: Cabinet to note the content of this report and agree to implement a High Street Rental Auction Scheme subject to following

the national guidance in implementing such a scheme, to initially be applied to the southern section of King's Lynn High Street.

REASON FOR DECISION: The scheme is needed to address the high concentration of long-term vacant commercial units on the southern High Street, which currently undermines the area's economic vitality, appearance and safety.

A High Street Rental Auction Scheme provides a practical tool to bring empty properties back into use and supports the wider aims of revitalising King's Lynn town centre.

CAB157 **SOUTH LYNN COMMUNITY CENTRE**

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Cabinet noted that the Environment and Community Panel had considered the proposal and supported the Cabinet Recommendation.

Councillor Ring presented the report and provided background on the work of the Purfleet Pantry, explaining that the proposal would enable the organisation to continue its operations from premises that were significantly more suitable for its needs.

Councillor Kemp addressed Cabinet under Standing Order 34 in support of the proposal. She outlined the importance of the Purfleet Pantry as a valued asset to the local community and thanked all those involved for ensuring its continued operation. She noted that the new premises were more accessible, in better condition, and benefitted from onsite car parking. She also welcomed that Headway had secured more appropriate premises from which to operate.

Councillor Morley requested that a quantitative analysis of the benefits arising from the move be undertaken, in order to codify the improvements and capture the associated social value.

Councillor Lintern congratulated all those involved in ensuring that the new arrangements worked effectively for all parties.

Councillor Ring also referred to the private investment at St James, which would contribute to the creation of a hub delivering wider community benefits.

Councillor Beales commented that the proposal represented a positive outcome and delivered social value.

RESOLVED: To approve that the Purfleet Trust be provided with a lease for the South Lynn Community Centre.

REASON FOR DECISION: Leasing the South Lynn Community Centre to the Purfleet Trust will secure the use of the building for community benefit, and by doing so will support a trusted local organisation in delivering vital services and enabling this to expand.

The proposal aligns with the Council's strategic priorities in relation to the regeneration of the Southgates area and in supporting vulnerable residents, strengthening local partnerships and ensuring efficient use of public assets which align with the Pride in Place programme and the Marmot principles.

CAB158 **CUSTOM HOUSE REFURBISHMENT**

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Cabinet noted that the Regeneration and Development Panel had considered this report and supported the recommendations to Cabinet.

Councillor Ring presented the report and provided information on the tenancy arrangements and the importance of opening the building for wider public use. He explained that the works would include the installation of a lift and a substantial, sensitively delivered refurbishment of the building.

The proposal before Members was to approve the letting of the contract for refurbishment, and Councillor Ring outlined the tender and procurement process. It was reported that the final tender was expected to be awarded in mid-May, with works anticipated to commence in July 2026 and completion scheduled for July 2027.

Councillor Beales thanked the Neighbourhood Board for the significant funding and support provided to enable the refurbishment to be taken forward.

Cabinet agreed to move into closed session in order to consider the exempt elements of the report.

CAB159 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 or 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB160 **EXEMPT - CUSTOM HOUSE**

Cabinet discussed the exempt elements of the report. Councillor Ring thanked officers for their involvement in bringing this forward.

RESOLVED:

1. To proceed with the Custom House element of the Riverfront Regeneration project based on the RIBA Stage 4 design.
2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place to award the contract to deliver the Custom House Project ("the Main Contract") to the successful tenderer, as identified through the completed procurement process within the approved budget as authorised.
3. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing and Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to approve material changes to the scope of the project and/or variations to the Main Contract that are within the approved budget and in accordance with the Local Assurance Framework for this project.

REASON FOR DECISION: To approve the letting of the contract for Custom House works, which will allow the works to be completed in line with Towns Fund timescales and support the Council's corporate strategy policy to promote growth & prosperity.

The meeting closed at 8.02 pm