

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel held on
Wednesday, 3rd June, 2026 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall,
Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT: Councillors R Blunt (Chair)
Councillors S Bearshaw, P Bland, B Jones, J Kirk, B Long, S Nash and D Sayers

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Bhondi and
Mrs V Spikings

CP1 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE - CHAIR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR**

RESOLVED: Councillor Long was appointed as Vice – Chair for the
Municipal Year 2026 – 2027.

CP2 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dickinson, Spikings and
Bhondi.

CP3 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a
correct record and signed by the Chair.

CP4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of Interest.

CP5 **URGENT BUSINESS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7**

There was none.

CP6 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Bone was present under Standing Order 34b on Teams.

CP7 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

There was none.

CP8 **CALL INS (IF ANY)**

There were no call-ins to consider.

CP9 **SIGNING OF THE SCRUTINY AND EXECUTIVE PROTOCOL**

The Chair of the Corporate Performance Panel signed the Scrutiny and Executive Protocol.

CP10 **MEMBERSHIP AND STATUS OF TASK GROUPS AND INFORMAL WORKING GROUPS FOR 2026/2027**

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The Democratic Services Officer presented the report and outline the only established Informal Working Group of the Panel was the Constitution Informal Working Group.

The Panel appointed the following Members to the Constitution Informal Working Group: Councillors Osborne, Bearshaw, Dickinson, Ware, Blunt and Nash and Cabinet Members, Councillor Beales and Lintern.

The Democratic Services Officer was asked to contact Group Leaders to obtain an additional nomination for the Constitution Informal Working Group.

RESOLVED: The Constitution Informal Working Group remain established and the Panel confirmed the Membership of the Group

CP11 **ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND DATA PROTECTION MONITORING REPORT**

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The Interim Corporate Governance Manager presented the annual monitoring report for 2025-2026. She reported a 46% increase in MP inquiries a 47% increase in corporate complaints, and a rise in FOI compliance from 61% to 91.2%. The report also covered the number and outcomes of complaints at various stages, the volume of FOI and data subject access requests, and the handling of data breaches.

The team will be implementing a revised data protection policy, have delivered staff training, and established a network of 40-45 information governance leads. A new corporate management system is being introduced to automate and improve the tracking and reporting of complaints, FOIs, and data protection matters.

Councillor Jones question if a data mapping process had been considered. The Interim Corporate Governance Manager explained this

had been partly implemented with the focus more on personal data. She added there was a programme running in parallel on data governance and this will require an audit of data including data mapping.

In response to a question from Councillor Sayers, the Interim Corporate Governance Manager explained the increase in MP inquiries were predominantly from James Wild's office and focused on housing. She provided assurance FOI requests were given an earlier deadline than 20 days to improve compliance.

The Vice – Chair, Councillor Long questioned the reason for an increase in the number of complaints received and if a theme or trend had been identified.

The Interim Corporate Governance Manager advised, common complaint themes identified included customer service, complaint handling and trust, perceived unfairness or bias, and dissatisfaction with operational services.

The panel discussed the need for better learning mechanisms and process improvements to address recurring issues and to clarify what constitutes a valid complaint.

The Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer provided further assurance to the Panel all stage two complaints were overseen by the Executive Leadership Team therefore trends could be identified along with service errors.

In response to Councillor Crofts, the Interim Corporate Governance Officer explained ICO stood for Information Commissioner's Office which is the supervisory authority for Data Protection matters.

The Chair Councillor Blunt questioned what the trend was prior to the last two years and if this was benchmarked against other Local Authorities. The Chief of Staff and Monitoring advised complaints data previously was held inconsistently therefore unable to report on. The Interim Corporate Governance Manager advised data from other Local Authorities was not known however could be looked at for benchmarking.

The Leader, Councillor Beales, commented the Governance Team had brought clarity to the process and identifying trends of complaints. He highlighted there was further resource needed within the team and performance was improving.

In response to Councillor Nash question on the unreasonable complainer's policy and the ombudsman, the Interim Corporate Governance Manager explained there are currently two people on the unreasonable complainers policy and provided assurance these figures would be included in future reports. She provided assurance that all

complaints were handled with the aim of achieving early resolution rather than being escalated through our internal processes or to the ombudsman.

RESOLVED: Members of the Corporate Performance Panel scrutinised the content of the report.

CP12

CABINET REPORT - DATA PROTECTION POLICY 2026

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The Interim Corporate Governance Manager presented the revised Data Protection Policy, highlighting statutory changes from the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, new requirements for data protection complaints procedures, expanded definitions, and the introduction of training and transparency measures, with the panel agreeing to recommend its approval and ongoing monitoring.

The revised policy incorporates changes from the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, including the statutory requirement for a published data protection complaints process by 19 June 2026, updates to the legal framework, and clearer definitions of roles and responsibilities, especially for elected members.

The policy sets out four SMART objectives: establishing a clear complaints process, improving information governance performance, increasing competence and awareness through training, and enhancing transparency and record keeping. Training for both staff and elected members is planned, along with the publication of performance data.

The Vice – Chair, Councillor Long requested guidance from the Monitoring Officer if this policy was to be approved by Full Council and not only Cabinet. The Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer referred to the Constitution and confirmed the policy was to be agreed by Cabinet not Full Council.

The Vice – Chair, Councillor Long questioned what steps were being taken to achieve 100% compliance and further questioned if it was known of any Council's that had been fined.

The Interim Corporate Governance Manager confirmed she was unaware of any Council's which had been fined. She added the ICO considers complaints on case-by-case basis and the enforcement actions and notices were published on the website of the ICO.

Councillor Sayers requested that future reports to the panel include detailed statistics on data protection complaints, compliance with statutory timeframes, and outcomes. The panel agreed to monitor

these metrics annually, with the Interim Corporate Governance Manager confirming that service-specific KPIs would be developed.

The Leader, Councillor Beales endorsed the request of future reports to the Panel to monitor data protection complaints, compliance with statutory timeframes, and outcomes

Councillor Nash raised concerns about Councillors being directed to use FOI requests instead of their rights of access to information. The Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer clarified that member inquiries should be handled through the appropriate channels and announced upcoming training to clarify access rights.

Councillor Morley referred to Local Government Reorganisation and recognised the importance of data and included in the capital programme was funds for a hardware refresh. He highlighted the importance of having a common platform in preparation to migrate systems.

The Interim Corporate Governance Manager confirmed the system used was the same as Breckland District Council and further enquires would be made with Norfolk County Council in preparation.

The panel agreed to recommend the policy for cabinet approval, noted the statutory publication deadline, and authorised the Data Protection Officer to update the policy as required by changes in ICO guidance or legislation, with updates to be reported to cabinet.

RESOLVED: The Panel supported the recommendations to Cabinet

Cabinet Recommendation:

1. Approve the Data Protection Policy 2026 at Appendix A, to take effect from the date of this meeting.
2. Note that the data protection complaints procedure required under section 103 of the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (inserting section 164A into the Data Protection Act 2018) will be published on the Council's website by 19 June 2026 in accordance with the statutory deadline.
3. Authorise the Data Protection Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to update the Policy between formal review cycles where required by changes to ICO guidance or legislation, subject to those updates being reported to the next available Cabinet meeting.

CP13

CABINET REPORT - HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND STATEMENT OF INTENT

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The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection presented the updated Health and Safety and Welfare Policy, outlining its structure, legal obligations, and the responsibilities of staff and members, with the Panel discussing the application of case law, support for members under stress, and the separation of internal and regulatory health and safety duties before agreeing to recommend the policy for adoption.

The policy was divided into three parts: a statement of intent, governance arrangements and responsibilities, and further organisational arrangements. It clarified that wholly owned companies must have their own policies and that the policy was concise to allow for easier updates, with supporting guidance to be made available separately.

In response to a query from Councillor Nash on the Women for Scotland Supreme Court hearing and case law; the Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer explained the need to respond to new guidance on equality and diversity. She explained that the council would review its facilities and policies in light of new guidance and case law, with scrutiny committees involved in the process.

In response to a question from the Vice – Chair, Councillor Long, the Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection clarified that the policy covers the council's internal health and safety obligations, while statutory regulatory duties (such as food premises inspections) are managed separately.

Members' roles in both areas were discussed, with emphasis on their inclusion in the internal policy as Members were not employees of the Borough Council however Members used the facilities and engage with residents therefore Members had responsibility. He referred members to page 87 where this was outlined and the Panel were advised guidance and training was to be provided as Members role in this policy was important to be clarified.

Councillor Nash questioned what support was available for Members under stress. The Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer explained support was to be considered on a case to case basis and the Local Government Association provides training on civility in public life and safeguarding for Councillors. The Leader endorsed the Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer comments and advised it may not be formal support but assistance to Councillors was to be provided. He commented in relation to the policy there was a need for an overarching policy as there was good culture however it was not formalised into a policy. He added Officers and Members were all responsible for Health and Safety.

The panel agreed to recommend the adoption of the policy, delegate responsibility for annual administrative reviews to the Chief of Staff,

and require significant changes to be brought back to Council for approval.

RESOLVED: The Panel supported the Recommendation to Council:

Council Recommendation:

To approve the adoption of the Health, Safety & Welfare Policy.

2. To delegate responsibility for approving annual administrative reviews to the Chief of Staff.

3. To note that the policy where significant changes to the policy are made that these will be brought back to council for approval.

CP14 **PANEL WORK PROGRAMME**

RESOLVED: The Panel Forward Decision List was noted.

The panel reviewed the schedule for upcoming meetings, noting a busy agenda for the next month and discussing the inclusion of budget monitoring for quarter one, with adjustments to be made as necessary to manage the workload.

CP15 **CABINET FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

RESOLVED: The Cabinet Forward Decision List was noted.

CP16 **SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

RESOLVED: The Shareholder Committee Work Programme was noted.

CP17 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel was scheduled to take place on 8th July 2026 at 4:30pm in the Town Hall, Saturday Market Place.

The meeting closed at 5.54 pm