

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL

Minutes from the Meeting of the Environment and Community Panel held on Tuesday, 14th April, 2026 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors Collop (Chair), Heneghan, Kemp, Kunes (Vice Chair), Long, Sandell and Ware

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor de Whalley – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity

MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillor Devulapalli (remotely)

OFFICERS:

Siobhan Cleeve – Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture

Stuart Ashworth – Assistant Director for Environment and Planning

Mark Whitmore – Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection

Jemma Curtis – Regeneration Programmes Manager

Dave Robson – Environmental Health Manager

Ged Greaves – Climate Change Manager (remotely)

Emma Hodds – Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer

EC68: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Colwell, Moore and Portfolio Holder, Councillor Rust.

EC69: MINUTES

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

EC70: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

EC71: URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

EC72: MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34

Councillor Devulapalli was present pursuant to Standing Order 34B remotely on Teams.

EC73: **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

There was none.

EC74: **CABINET REPORT - SOUTH LYNN COMMUNITY CENTRE**

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The Regeneration Programmes Manager presented the report as included in the agenda highlighting the key areas.

The Chair thanked the Regeneration Programmes Manager for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel as summarised below.

In response to concerns raised from Councillors Kemp and Long, the Regeneration Programmes Manager confirmed that the building would remain available for community use, with the hall and community rooms continuing to be accessible for events and activities, and that the Trust would work with existing charities such as Little Discoverers and Headway to ensure continuity.

In response to a question from Councillor Long, the Environmental Health Manager agreed to confirm alternative premises for business continuity in case of emergencies.

Councillor Devulapalli raised questions about accessibility and the Regeneration Programmes Manager explained the centre was in better condition, had disabled access and was accessible in terms of walking and cycling with connected footpaths and direct bus routes.

Councillor Heneghan commented that the proposed location would be more accessible for residents and was appropriately situated. Councillor Heneghan added that the current site was not within a community hub, so accessibility was not considered to be an issue.

RESOLVED: That the Environment and Community Panel support the recommendation to Cabinet, as set out below.

Cabinet resolves:

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

EC75: **CABINET REPORT - REQUIRED CHANGES TO THE EXISTING CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND FINANCIAL PENALTIES POLICY AS A RESULT OF THE RENTERS RIGHTS ACT 2025**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection presented the report as included in the agenda highlighting the key areas.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel as summarised below.

Councillor Long questioned the loss of local flexibility and potential impact on the rental market and the Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection confirmed that the Act mandates strict enforcement leaving little room for local discretion and that the Council must comply to avoid legal difficulties.

In response to further questions from Councillor Long regarding fines and tenant compensation, the Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection explained that civil penalties were retained by the Council to support enforcement, while tenants could seek compensation under the Act.

Councillor Ware asked about the appeals process for landlords and the Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection confirmed that landlords had the right to appeal penalties to the first-tier tribunal, which could amend or quash fines if appropriate. The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection confirmed further detail, including the appeals process for landlords under the Renters Rights Act, would be provided after the meeting.

Councillor Kemp requested a summary of the main changes under the Renters Rights Act. The Assistant Director for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection referred the Panel to the tables within the report and reminded Members that there was a recording to a Member Briefing session on the Renters Rights Act.

The Chair stated that she supported the item but had some reservations based on discussions with landlords.

RESOLVED: That the Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet, as set out below.

It is recommended 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.

EC76: **CABINET REPORT - RAILWAY ROAD EXTENDED AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA REVOCATION**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity presented the report for revoking the Railway Road Air Quality Management Area due to sustained improvements in nitrogen dioxide levels.

The Chair thanked the Environmental Health Manager and Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel as summarised below.

Councillor Long asked about the future of monitoring equipment. The Environmental Health Manager confirmed that the main air quality monitoring stations would remain operational, while the number of diffusion tube locations had been reduced, resulting in annual savings of approximately £1,200.

Councillor Kemp raised concerns about the impact of planned housing growth and the need for ongoing monitoring. The Environmental Health Manager explained that major developments had been considered, air quality remained a material planning consideration and monitoring would continue to validate the revocation decision.

Councillor Kemp advised she would be abstaining on the item.

RESOLVED: That the Environment and Community Panel support the recommendation to Cabinet, as set out below.

Cabinet resolves:

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

EC77: **CABINET REPORT - CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on YouTube](#)

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity introduced the item and gave a presentation to the Panel, a copy which is attached.

The Climate Change Manager presented the report highlighting progress, ongoing challenges and new focus areas such as adaptation.

The Climate Change Manager advised that performance information would be reported to Cabinet quarterly, with an annual update on progress against the strategy and the carbon audits for both the Council and the wider borough. The Climate Change Manager added that updates could also be provided to the Panel, and that the document presented at the meeting would be redesigned into a more accessible format by the Communications team.

The Chair thanked the Climate Change Manager and Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel as summarised below.

Councillor Kunes highlighted the importance of communicating available grants and free installations to residents.

Councillor Long raised concerns about the quality of ECO4 scheme installations and the need for scrutiny of outcomes and better use of local tradespeople.

Councillor Kemp inquired about the biodiversity corridor project and the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity explained ongoing work under the pollinator strategy, the role of the Biodiversity Officer and efforts to improve green spaces and wildflower corridors in response to public consultation.

Councillor Devulapalli asked about engagement with farmers on peatland re-wetting with officers noting the complexity of land drainage systems, the need for coordinated projects, and the availability of national funding for landscape recovery and wetland creation. The Climate Change Manager advised they would investigate current funding opportunities for lowland peat restoration and inform Councillor Devulapalli of any relevant schemes to support local landowners.

Panel Members discussed the challenges of water scarcity, the need for new reservoirs, and the impact of increased housing targets on local resources and flood risk, with officers confirming ongoing studies and the importance of making representations to government regarding local constraints.

RESOLVED: That the Environment and Community Panel support the recommendation to Cabinet, as set out below.

That Cabinet approve the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

EC78: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

Councillor Long suggested adding ECO4 schemes to access progress, the level of complaints received about installations and report the findings to the Panel.

Councillor Kemp suggested adding the new ferry landing stage project to ensure its progress was monitored.

Members of the Panel were reminded that if they had any items which they would like to be considered for addition to the Work Programme to complete the appropriate form.

In response to comments from Councillor Kemp, the Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer confirmed they would have a look at the form with a view to updating and refreshing it and circulate round to Councillors.

Councillor Devulapalli suggested that the form be circulated with every meeting agenda to ensure it was easy to locate.

The Assistant Director for Environment and Planning advised a biodiversity update report would be presented to the Panel at the next meeting scheduled in July following up on the Biodiversity Task Group findings and their implementation.

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme and the Forward Decisions List was noted.

EC79: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel was scheduled to take place on 21st July 2026 at 4.30pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.

The meeting closed at 5.52 pm