

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK****COUNCIL**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 12th April, 2018  
at 6.30 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn  
PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs C Bower (Chairman)  
Councillors B Ayres, Miss L Bambridge, A Beales, R Bird, R Blunt, A Bubb, Mrs S Buck,  
Mrs J Collingham, J Collop, Mrs S Collop, C J Crofts, I Devereux, Mrs S Fraser,  
P Gidney, R Groom, G Hipperson, P Hodson, M Hopkins, M Chenery of Horsbrugh,  
M Howland, G Howman, H Humphrey, C Joyce, P Kunes, A Lawrence, B Long,  
C Manning, G McGuinness, Mrs K Mellish, G Middleton, J Moriarty, Mrs E Nockolds,  
T Parish, D Pope, C Sampson, Miss S Sandell, M Shorting, Mrs V Spikings,  
Mrs S Squire, M Storey, T Tilbrook, A Tyler, D Tyler, Mrs E Watson, D Whitby, A White,  
Mrs M Wilkinson, Mrs A Wright and Mrs S Young

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Beal, A Morrison, P Rochford,  
T Smith, M Taylor, J Westrop and T Wing-Pentelow

C:82 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by Father Ling.

Former Councillor and Deputy Mayor Bill Dawes was remembered in the prayers.

C:83 **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 February 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

C:84 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**C:85 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

C:86 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

C:87 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Under Standing Order 9, the Mayor invited the following public questioners:

**1 Mr Robert Raab**

When is the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Planning Department ever going to Stop Rubber Stamping Council's Planning Permission to Build

More Housing on Council Land without Frist looking at the Increase of the Infrastructure that would be Needed ?

Councillor Blunt gave the following response:

“Good Evening Mr Raab, thank you for your question.

Firstly, I am very concerned you believe that the King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Planning Department, rubber stamp any planning application. We have a planning department that is highly professional and every recommendation made by it is carefully considered and justified.

Secondly as regards planning applications made by the Borough on Council land are not decided by officers but by the Planning Committee. The officers will make recommendations but the final decision is made by the members of the Planning Committee.

Lastly, with consultation of portfolio holder for Regeneration, I would like to draw your attention to the infrastructure changes introduced to support development of new homes in the Borough on Council land in the recent years:

- A new access road, roundabout and signal controlled junction from Edward Benefer Way to Lynnsport
- A new pumping station and improved surface water drainage which reduces flood risk to Lynnsport and wider area of The Walks etc.
- Improved power supply to homes and businesses in Lynnsport area
- Doubling of car parking capacity at Lynnsport Leisure facility which serves residents of the entire Borough and beyond and was much needed due to customer demand.
- Habitat management on 12 acres of land that was previously inaccessible scrub and is now a managed wildlife habitat and nature reserve
- A new hockey pitch and a new 4G football/hockey pitch
- 4 new outdoor hard tennis courts
- New cycle paths at Lynnsport and Nar Ouse Regeneration Area (NORA)
- New playground area at Lynnsport.
- Tree planting, habitat creation and the installing of hard paths for access by all including less abled.
- Creation of managed new park at NORA
- New footbridge across the River Nar to access new park.

Need I go on.”

By way of supplementary Mr Raab asked how come Fairstead needed a new surgery as it would get more housing in the future, and the NHS had no money for new surgeries.

Councillor Long responded that the Council was not the body responsible for the provision of healthcare facilities, but he drew attention to the discussions which were being held with the senior Partner at Fairstead Surgery.

## 2 Mrs Jo Rust

The night shelter based at the Purfleet Trust supported 43 people and provided a warm and secure bed for two nights a week. Does the council know where these people will be sleeping now?

Councillor Lawrence gave the following response:

“As I have previously mentioned the Council has jointly commissioned a number of new services that are now in operation. One of these delivered by Genesis is a rough sleeper outreach service – a team that actively seeks to engage people, clearly something that can be challenging for those who for a variety of reasons don't appear to want to engage . This new team is now actively working with identified rough sleepers. For some people the solution will not be permanent self-contained housing. Referrals to other services including drug and alcohol recovery services; or health services; and/or access to temporary housing may be the first priority. Efforts are being made to engage with other organisations in the area particularly the Purfleet Trust to ensure those in greatest need are approached and offered appropriate assistance by the new team.

As I have previously acknowledged we all need to be better prepared in relation to the provision of severe weather emergency provision. Officers are in contact with the Churches together group, and plan to meet to discuss future arrangements with other key stakeholders.

I reiterate that we are focussed on addressing the issue of rough sleeping, and will continue efforts in relation to new approaches and developing new plans over the warmer months ahead.”

By way of supplementary Mrs Rust asked how many people had to die on the streets before the council accepted that proper funding should be in place for a night shelter, rather than relying on charity and volunteers.

Councillor Lawrence responded that there was a team of officers in place working to eradicate rough sleeping.

The Mayor drew attention to the reception she had recently hosted to thank those volunteers assisting at the night shelter including Mrs Rust and Councillor Bambridge.

C:88

### **CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**

i

#### **Corporate Projects and Assets - Councillor A Beales**

Councillor Beales presented his report. He responded to questions on the King's Lynn Football Club and the request to vary the length of the

lease in order to obtain funding for an all weather pitch for the club in order to help with the damp ground conditions at the club. He explained that this was not a reflection on the flooding in the Walks which was designed to release pressure in the river.

Councillor Beales disagreed with Councillor J Collop on his demand to be included in meetings with the Football Club as it was in his ward, and stated that it was a multi ward and Borough wide issue not an individual ward issue which was not steeped in secrecy and would be dealt with in accordance with the Constitution. Councillor Beales then responded to questions on the levels of charges incurred by the Club.

In response to a question regarding the Football Club charging for parking on the Car Park, Councillor Beales gave assurances that free parking would be maintained for the Walks.

In response to a request to be able to influence the names of the streets in the new developments to reflect Councillors who had passed away, Councillor Beales explained this was not possible as the developments streets had been named early on to assist with services etc.

ii **Development - Councillor R Blunt**

Councillor Blunt presented his report, giving an update on the legal challenge for the Gayton Mill Planning decision where the original appeal had been quashed and the High Court had awarded costs to the Borough.

At members request Councillor Blunt agreed to look into whether he could break down the figures he presented in his report to show the number of new dwellings approved

iii **Housing and Community - Councillor A Lawrence**

Councillor Lawrence presented his report and in response to a question on his meeting with Freebridge Community Housing confirmed it was not regarding empty homes.

In response to questions on the new support arrangements in place for homelessness and rough sleepers, Councillor Lawrence explained that the assessments would take differing amounts of time dependent on the information supplied by the clients, and the different elements would work together to focus on crisis intervention. Those new elements had been put into place following the award of funding for housing reported previously. He welcomed Councillor Collop or any other members to come to Housing by appointment and see the work being carried out.

iv **Environment - Councillor I Devereux**

Councillor Devereux presented his report. In response to the point raised that a request had been unsuccessful with the nomination of a memorial bench under the recycling scheme for the Late Councillor Gourlay, Councillor Devereux explained that it had been made independently which was out of the Council's control.

In response to a question on street lighting of cycle paths, Councillor Devereux drew attention to the list of assets he had referred to at the previous meeting and suggested if there was a specific question to approach him directly.

In response to a question on the use of single use plastics, Councillor Devereux commented that he had already asked the question of officers to look into what was being used by the Authority. He also confirmed the straws used for the flags for the promotion of the Lottery were not single use as they would be reused in promotions.

Councillor Devereux explained that the sales target for brown bins which enabled workable rounds for the bin collections had been exceeded. The rounds would be kept under review with additional numbers of bins being included. He also confirmed that recycling levels in the Borough varied.

In regard to the collection of fly tipping following the introduction of charges by the County Council, Councillor Devereux explained there was a van and operatives collecting fly tipping as had been the case previously. The Borough was the waste collection and the County was the disposal authority. He also explained that he could not comment on previous year's levels as he was not then the portfolio holder.

v **Facilities and IT - Councillor Mrs K Mellish**

Councillor Mrs Mellish presented her report. In doing so, Councillor Mellish complimented Councillor Mrs Bower on her year as Mayor which was coming to an end. She acknowledged the fact that the year had been the first of the savings introduced for the Civic Team, and the move of the Parlour from the Council Chamber. Despite concerns which had been voiced with the proposed savings, the Mayor and Team had worked hardtop make sure the concerns didn't come to fruition. Councillor Mellish asked for thanks to be put on record to the Mayor and Civic Team for delivering for the year.

In response to a question on the level of revenue the Council received from the issuing of enforcement tickets at the hospital. Councillor Mellish explained that the proceeds from the tickets went to the hospital, and the enforcement was dictated by the hospital. The Council was paid to carry out the role. She agreed to pass the contact details of the hospital parking officer to Councillor Mrs Collop.

With regard to a question on the process of the charitable cheques issued by the Crematorium, Councillor Mrs Mellish explained that when authority had been given the recyclable joints etc left post cremation were recycled, the funding for which went to nominated bereavement charities.

In response to a question on the non delivery of a Council Tax bill Councillor Mrs Mellish explained that once posted the bills were in the hands of the Post Office. She encouraged Members to sign up to register to use My Account, which permitted electronic management of billing etc. She confirmed it was attempted to make the eforms as user friendly as possible.

vi **Performance - Councillor P Hodson**

Councillor Hodson presented his report. In responding to a question on what the Borough could do to stop the decline in footfall in the town, Councillor Hodson explained the Council was working with the BID, and were looking to do things such as improving shop fronts to make them more attractive to shoppers. He also reminded Members about the Farmers Market on the Saturday Market Place the coming Saturday which it was hoped that the attendees would also move into the town to shop. He did not consider that the increase in parking charges would affect the footfall in the town as the charges were less than the national average.

He confirmed that the he was looking at the physical arrangements for vessels with the pontoons.

vii **Deputy Leader and Culture, Heritage and Health - Councillor Mrs E Nockolds**

Councillor Mrs Nockolds presented her report. She responded to a questions of the dance hall floor which was awaiting contractors, and explained that the level of fees and charges at Lynnsport were set by Alive Leisure, but had been before the Panel where comments were made on the high levels of increases. Cabinet Members had also expressed concern. Members were advised to contact Alive rather than the Borough with any comments on the fees.

In responding to a question on West Norfolk Wins – Lottery, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that as additional prizes had been donated by Lovells (a TV) and Hughes Electrical (a sound bar). 41 causes had signed up so far, and 23 had so far passed the due diligence being carried out on all of those causes. It was hoped that all would be cleared by the 17 April 2018 go live date.

viii **Leader and Resources - Councillor B Long**

Councillor Long presented his report and drew attention to the 25 years of the Norfolk's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

He agreed to the request that the Town Hall be lit up in Red, White and Blue on 25 June when Councillor Squires and her Crew set off on the round the world boat trip (subject to there not being anything already planned which would not facilitate it).

Councillor Long confirmed that the Monitoring Officer was dealing with a public complaint about a Councillor at an earlier meeting.

In response to a comment expressing disappointment on the results of the Boundary Commission review of the Borough, Councillor Long concurred with the view expressed and acknowledged that their original request for more single member wards and less multi member wards did not follow through in their final submission. He stated that the report would come to the June Council meeting to allow the Council to note the position and make any comments it wished.

In response to the question raised on the statistics from the food bank for 2017, Councillor Long acknowledged that the situation was a national issue and that it was disappointing that people were relying on food banks. He highlighted the fact that the Borough was working with those agencies who could help such as social services, mental health, and was working to get well paid jobs for the area which would mean that extra assistance was not needed.

Councillor Long's attention was drawn to the correct area of the Health service which dealt with property issues.

Following a question on officers responding to Councillors emails, Councillor Long suggested that if no response was received then the matter be raised with the Chief Executive.

In response to a question on the Council's Gender Pay Gap it was report the Borough's was 3.4% which was much better than many others.

Councillor Long gave a brief update on the current situation regarding local authority re-organisation. The investigatory work into the South Holland, Breckland and West Norfolk merge had been put on hold pending any issue of Unitary Status coming forward. He stressed that taking into account the best interests of the taxpayer he believed that an East West split of Norfolk would be the best option rather than a full Norfolk Unitary.

C:89

**MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

None

**C:90      RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES****i            Cabinet: 13 March 2018**

Councillor Long proposed the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting of 13 March 2018, these were seconded by Councillor Mrs Nockolds.

The following 2 recommendations were approved:

CAB132: Non Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy Update

CAB135: Polling District and Polling Places Review - Marshland St James

With regard to CAB134: Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19, Councillor Pope raised the issue of whether the loans taken out for the Housing Transfer were a requirement. In summing up Councillor Long reminded Members this had taken place 10 ago, and the Council had to show borrowing against the stock to enable the transfer to take place on the terms agreed. On being put to the vote the recommendation was approved.

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting on 13 March 2018 be approved.

**The meeting closed at 8.13 pm**