

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

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 29th November, 2018 at 6.30 pm in the Assembly Room,
Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT: Councillor N Daubney (Mayor)
Councillors B Ayres, Miss L Bambridge, P Beal, R Blunt, Mrs C Bower, A Bubb,
Mrs J Collingham, J Collop, Mrs S Collop, I Devereux, Mrs S Fraser, P Gidney,
G Hipperson, M Hopkins, M Chenery of Horsbrugh, Lord Howard, M Howland,
G Howman, H Humphrey, C Joyce, P Kunes, B Long, C Manning, J Moriarty,
A Morrison, Mrs E Nockolds, T Parish, C Sampson, M Shorting, T Smith,
Mrs S Squire, M Taylor, T Tilbrook, A Tyler, D Tyler, Mrs E Watson, D Whitby,
Mrs M Wilkinson and Mrs S Young

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Beales, R Bird,
C J Crofts, R Groom, P Hodson, A Lawrence, Mrs K Mellish, P Rochford,
Miss S Sandell and M Storey

C:46 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by the Rev Canon Ling.

C:47 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 6
September 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the
Mayor.

C:48 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None

C:49 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

C:50 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

C:51 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Under Standing Order 9 the Mayor invited the following Public
Questioners to pose their questions:

1) Question from Jo Rust

“Elizabeth Truss, MP for SWN, recently claimed that "We are not making cuts to local authorities. What we have done is give them more revenue raising powers so that decisions can be taken locally"

Some local authorities have been forced to declare technical insolvency as councils struggle to weather the financial pressure caused by budget cuts.

How close is our borough council to this happening here?”

Councillor Long responded welcoming the fact that the Government were allowing councils to control their destinies, he drew attention to the fact that many of the problems in the county were with those providing the children’s and adult services which the Borough Council did not have responsibility for . For the statutory services which the Council did provide he considered that as the authority was soundly managed it was able to continue to provide them.

By way of supplementary Mrs Rust asked if the additional revenue raised had been sufficient to plug the central government funding cuts?

Councillor Long responded that so far, yes it had been as the council was carrying out house building and commercial properties which would deliver homes for people in west Norfolk for sale and rent.

2) Question from Francis Bone

“The guildhall is a jewel in the crown of the borough council and King’s Lynn. As a building that has this total significance and international interest why has the council not entered in dialogue with LArCH, Lynn Art, Culture and Heritage Group who want to work with the council with its team of experts including people who help raise bids to support the campaign to find the best outcome to the benefit of not the town but also the country.”

Councillor Mrs Nockolds responded:

“I believe the Guildhall Complex is not the only jewel we have in King’s Lynn & West Norfolk.

I am not sure what you mean about consulting with the stakeholders of the complex.

We have held many discussions with all the groups but at an individual level. As each group, who uses the Guildhall, have different needs and ideas I prefer it this way.

I also believe the Council are looking at the wider picture of all our Heritage buildings and the future of our town centre in a creative way

and to build on our strengths we have already. Towns are not just about shopping. Culture and Heritage plays a unique role in creating a sense of place.

You may be aware that the Council has implemented a feasibility study as to whether King's Lynn needs a Creative Hub. We have held a consultation evening and now we are asking the public to complete a survey.

Would a Hub provide inspiration and experiences for young creators, offer opportunities and resources for start-ups, or to enable networking and attract more people to town.

We already have a Creative company producing a new Active Reality project which combines with the light projectors, named REVEAL. It has been designed by over 30 young creators half of which live and work in West Norfolk.

In other words Culture means different things to different people."

3) Question from Michael de Whalley

"I understand the Council, having failed in its only Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid, is considering handing over the lease for the Guildhall of St. George to a retired property developer, who intends to establish a niche art gallery specialising in contemporary landscape. Given compelling research by Professor Woodcock claiming the Guildhall to be the only remaining theatre in which William Shakespeare played, and that the venue now attracts performers such as Ian McKellen, should the Council reconsider its position and make a second HLF bid to develop the Guildhall, in conjunction with local community groups, as a theatre of National and International importance?"

Councillor Mrs Nockolds responded as follows:

"I am fully aware of the importance of the St. Georges complex hence it has been a Hall for Hire since 2010. I have been attending performances there since 1973. Due to our SLA with the KL Festival I am a representative on the Board so am aware of the forthcoming Shakespeare Festival. I have also had a discussion with the organiser of the drama event at which he announced the visit of Ian McKellen who is also travelling the country with his drama company.

I have read the document which suggests that Shakespeare could have visited the Guildhall, the document does not give any proof of his visit.

The importance of this Grade 1 C15th building, which is owned by the National Trust, is the reason the Council are talking to a variety of partners to secure the future of the Guildhall complex.

As soon as I know any news regarding the Guildhall I have made a promise that I will ensure that members of the public will be informed. Negotiations always take a while especially if one wants a good and sustainable outcome.”

By way of supplementary, Mr de Whalley asked whether the Council could give assurance that the plans for the Guildhall weren't the first step in its total commercialisation.

By way of response, Councillor Mrs Nockolds stated that the plans had to be sustainable, and in the best interests of the council tax payer. The interested party was interested in restoring the property and was an advocate for West Norfolk and wanted the building to be somewhere people would visit in King's Lynn.

C:52 **DECLARATION OF VACANCY**

Council considered the report on the declaration of vacancy for the West Winch ward following the non attendance of Councillor Anota for a six month period. On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED: 1) That Council notes that Baljinder Anota has ceased to be a member of this authority;
 2) That Council declares as vacant the office held by Baljinder Anota as a councillor for the West Winch ward;
 3) That Council agrees that as the vacancy has fallen within 6 months of the scheduled Borough Council election on 2 May 2019 the position will be held vacant.

C:53 **CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**

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

As Councillor Beales was not present for the meeting, councillors were invited to send any questions via email.

ii **Development - Councillor R Blunt**

Councillor Blunt presented his report. In response to a question on the increase in applications being made by email and the work being undertaken to assist with this, and the target date for the housing delivery targets, Councillor Blunt explained that an alternative access portal was being investigated. An action plan was being prepared for the target and would be included in the local plan for the next 12 months.

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

As Councillor Lawrence was not present for the meeting, councillors were invited to send any questions via email.

iv **Environment - Councillor I Devereux**

Councillor Devereux presented his report. He updated Members on the new tags for bins not complying with contents which were in place within a week.

Councillor Devereux responded to questions on recycling levels, flytipping and the issue of fly tipping on private land including Freebridge's, the fact that the confetti and streamers used in the Christmas lights switch on had been paper and were environmentally friendly. Councillor Devereux also explained the process for the letting of the new 3 party waste contract which should come into place at the end of the summer 2019.

In response to a question on his membership of the Alive Leisure Trust Board, Councillor Devereux confirmed he had been nominated by the Leader and appointed by Cabinet.

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

As Councillor Mrs Mellish was not present for the meeting, councillors were invited to send any questions via email.

vi **Performance - Councillor P Hodson**

As Councillor Hodson was not present for the meeting, councillors were invited to send any questions via email.

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

Councillor Mrs Nockolds presented her report. In response to a question relating to representations made to protect services at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that she was attending a meeting with the CCG.

Following questions on the cost and details of the REVEAL project, Councillor Mrs Nockolds gave an update of the costs involved and the grant received for the project and the detail on the participants of the projects. She also gave an update on the Norfolk Arts Forum.

viii Leader and Resources - Councillor B Long

Councillor Long presented his report and responded to a question on borrowing taken out which was re-payable shortly by confirming that borrowing was regularly being taken out or repaid as part of the treasury management process, and that all loans offered were only offered to an organisation with a good credit rating.

Following a question on the decision not to pursue work to investigate a partnership with Breckland Council which had not been shared with the opposition members, Councillor Long explained he had held informal discussions and was not minded to pursue the proposal and had made appropriate reports to Council to update Councillors on this.

Councillor Long confirmed that he believed that the additional fee payable for the recycling contract would have to be included in the monthly report. In response to a question on the non attendance of members at the Council meeting Councillor Long confirmed that some members were attending a Conservative party event, or were working. He also responded to a comment made about the disparity of the numbers of women standing in the conservative group by confirming that candidates put themselves forward and there was no discrimination in any way in the process.

Following questions on the situation with Fairstead Drs Surgery, Councillor Long explained that he was due to visit the surgery soon but the Managing Partner was considering his business and commercial issues. He also confirmed that the provision of a surgery in the West Winch Delivery Plan may be considered and was part of discussions and consideration for the Master Plan.

He also confirmed that Universal Credit had come into force on 14 November, and he had not had reported any specific issues arising therefrom. He also welcomed the number of staff who had taken up the offer of a flu jab this year.

C:54 MEMBERS QUESTION TIME

Councillor Middleton and Audit Committee Chairman was asked what questions were asked by the Committee on the NWES loan and the loan to Northampton County Council. He confirmed that questions had been asked and relevant credit checks and due diligence undertaken - he was assured that an update would be given to members in due course.

C:55 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES**i Cabinet: 2 October 2018**

Councillor Long proposed the recommendation from the 2 October 2018 Cabinet meeting and was seconded by Councillor Mrs Nockolds.

In debating CAB70: Council Tax Discounts 2019/20, the Leader accepted the amendment proposed from Councillor Mrs Collop that in recommendation 4 the word Member have “/s” added to take into account multi member wards.

Councillor Dark drew members attention to the multi party decision included to give 100% relief for care leavers and the big impact this would have on those young people.

RESOLVED: That the recommendation from 2 October 2018 as now amended be approved.

ii Special Cabinet: 17 October 2018

Councillor Long proposed the following recommendation from the Cabinet meeting on 17 October 2018, and was seconded by Councillor Mrs Nockolds:

In debating CAB80: Revision to the Local Property Investment Fund Criteria, Councillor J Collop stated that he felt that the majority of any investment should be in West Norfolk. Councillor Joyce expressed the view that all money should be invested in West Norfolk. Councillor McGuinness asked if it was investment of revenue and why was it limited to Norfolk.

In summing up Councillor Long explained that as Norfolk had a business rates pool which meant that the benefits of the pool came to all Norfolk Authorities the Borough Council would receive the benefit. He also confirmed that the lion’s share of any investment would be made in West Norfolk, but the change opened up more opportunities. He reminded Council that any major proposals would have to be reported through Cabinet. On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED: That the recommendation from 17 October 2018 be approved.

iii Cabinet: 13 November 2018

Councillor Long proposed the following recommendations from the Cabinet meeting on 13 November 2018 and was seconded by Councillor Mrs Nockolds:

- CAB 91: West Winch/North Runcton Strategic Growth Area - Infrastructure Delivery Plan
 CAB92: Gambling Act 2005 - Review Of Policy
 CAB94: Corn Exchange Cinema, Councillor Long

In summing up Councillor Long explained that he had received correspondence from the King's Lynn Community Cinema Club raising a point on the usage of the Corn Exchange cinema, but he confirmed it would be run as a commercial cinema alongside the Majestic, which was considered better for the town centre than an out of town facility.

In debating CAB96: Re-Fit - Energy Performance Contract item Council agreed to exclude the press and public to debate the following item, this recommendation was then taken at the end of the meeting.

Exclusion of the press and public

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 paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

- CAB96: Re-Fit - Energy Performance Contract

Councillor J Collop in referring to the contract stressed the need to ensure it was closely monitored. Councillor Long reminded Members of the large amount of CO2 which would be saved by the proposals, and that reports would be made on progress to the Corporate Performance Panel.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations from 13 November 2018 be approved.

C:56

DETERMINATION OF COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS RELATING TO SECOND HOMES AND EMPTY DWELLINGS FOR 2019/2020

Councillor Long proposed and Councillor Mrs Nockolds seconded the recommendations. In debating the recommendations Councillor Long accepted Councillor Mrs Collops amendment to include “/s” after Member in recommendation 7 to take into account multi member wards.

RESOLVED: That under Section 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as enacted by Section 75 of the Local Government Act 2003, Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as enacted by Section 11 and Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and in accordance with the provisions of the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment)

Regulations 2012 and the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 the Council determined:

1. That the council tax discount for Second Homes defined as being within Class A of the Regulations be set at 0% for 2019/2020;
2. That the council tax discount for Second Homes as defined by Class B of the Regulations be set at 0% for 2019/2020;
3. That the council tax discount for Empty / Unfurnished dwellings defined as being within Class C of the Regulations be set at 0% for 2019/2020;
4. That the council tax discount for Uninhabitable dwellings defined as being within Class D of the Regulations be set at the following for 2019/2020:
 - a. 25% for 12 months starting on the day the dwelling becomes uninhabitable; then
 - b. 0% once the 12 month period has expired;
5. That the Levy rate for Long Term Empty Dwellings as defined in the Regulations be set at 100% for 2019/2020;
6. That any period of occupation of less than six weeks shall be disregarded when calculating the maximum period of a reduction or the start date of the Levy;
7. That delegated authority be given for individual applications under s13a Local Government Finance Act 1992 be determined by the Revenues and Benefits Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance and the relevant Ward Member/s.
8. In accordance with Section 11A(6) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as enacted by Section 75 of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Local Government Finance Act 2012, these determinations shall be published in at least one newspaper circulating in West Norfolk before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of the determinations.

The meeting closed at 7.52 pm