

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

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 6th August, 2019
at 3.30 pm in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Saturday Market Place,
King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT: Councillor B Long (Chair)
Councillors R Blunt, I Devereux, P Gidney, P Kunes, A Lawrence, G Middleton
and E Nockolds

CAB24 RAY HARDING, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chair drew attention to the fact this was the last Cabinet meeting the Chief Executive Ray Harding would be attending before his retirement. Cabinet wished him a long and happy retirement.

CAB25 MINUTES

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CAB26 URGENT BUSINESS

Cabinet **RESOLVED** that as the new Governance Task Group did not yet have Terms of Reference, in order to permit the Group to commence its work, the Chief Executive would draft Terms of Reference, to be agreed with Group Leaders before its first meeting.

CAB27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Middleton declared a non pecuniary interest in the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee item as the previous Chair of the Audit Committee.

CAB28 CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE

None

CAB29 MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34

Councillor A Dickinson for the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee
Councillor D Pope for all items on the agenda

CAB30 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

The delegated decision on small grants had been called in, considered by the Corporate Performance Panel on 22 July 2019. The call in was not upheld and the decision had been implemented.

CAB31 **FORWARD DECISIONS**

The Forward Decision list was noted.

CAB32 **MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES**

None

CAB33 **REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE 2018-19**

Councillor A Dickinson, Chair of the Audit Committee presented the report to Cabinet.

The Internal Audit Manager explained that the item had been presented to Audit Committee. It provided the results of the 'Review of the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee' for 2018-19 and confirmed that the Committee was fulfilling its stated purpose which was 'to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affected the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process'.

It was noted that the only 2 items which had a "no" in the CIPFA questions asked were those that CIPFA were reviewing for future years as many other local authorities had the same responses and they were not considered relevant and it was confirmed that they did not prevent members from challenge in the meetings.

Councillor Middleton who was Chair of the Audit Committee for the period being examined thanked officers and members for their assistance and involvement during his time as Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the evidence presented in the report as confirming that the Audit Committee operated effectively during 2018-19 be agreed.

Reason for Decision

To ensure the Council continues to meet its obligations under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

CAB34 CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Chief Executive presented the report which explained that the Code of Corporate Governance was last reviewed and approved by Council in 2015. The code had been refreshed following the publication of CIPFA guidance.

At its meeting on 11 March 2019, Audit Committee agreed to recommend the code to Cabinet.

The principles from 2012 and 2016 were discussed and it was noted that they had been reviewed and were established across all the public sector and the Government so all organisations were judged against the same rules.

Under standing order 34, Councillor Pope asked why the report had been brought, and after it being confirmed that it was a requirement for the Council to do so, stressed that it was important for the Council follow the principles as he considered the Council would not be in the situation it was in if they had been followed.

The Chair disagreed with his comment about the situation the Council was in, and reminded members that a review was still underway.

RECOMMENDED: That the Code of Corporate Governance be approved.

Reason for Decision

To detail the council's commitment to good corporate governance.

CAB35 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT - CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY

Councillor Middleton presented a report which proposed the establishment of a Strategic Partnership Agreement between the borough council and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). The agreement whilst at a high level commits both parties to work together for mutual benefit on strategic issues with a 'cross border' dimension such as investment in key road and rail infrastructure (A47, A10, King's Cross to King's Lynn rail) and on skills development.

This agreement sought to build on existing partnership working to share information, data and evidence and to develop a coordinated approach to the Local Growth Fund.

Regular meetings would be held and where appropriate a joint funding approach may be taken, also in conjunction where possible with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP).

Joint approaches to government may also be taken forward, for example with regards to funding for major infrastructure investment.

The Chief Executive explained that the CPCA still held the old LEP's funding which it was possible to apply for its use in the borough. He reiterated the importance of the links with Cambridgeshire, particularly with the overlapping links for housing in the Wisbech area. It was noted that West Suffolk were also looking to have the same relationship with the CPCA.

Councillor Devereux asked if there would likely be greater collaboration on flood control as there would be more water coming down the Ouse. It was noted that such items could be raised in the meetings with the CPCA.

Under Standing Order 34 Councillor Pope commented that the area was only likely to receive a small amount of funding through this route, but if it was not costing the borough anything to do so it should sign up.

The Chair reported that with the link with the NALEP there was greater control over things within the borough, but new arrangements for the CPCA it was possible to push west Norfolk's priorities with the Mayor.

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Partnership Agreement attached at Appendix 1 to the agenda be endorsed and signed up to.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the borough council and the CPCA establish a firm strategic basis for mutually beneficial joint working.

CAB36 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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB37 PARKWAY ACCELERATED CONSTRUCTION SCHEME

The Major Projects Manager explained that on the 18th September 2018 Cabinet received a report on a Central Government programme for Accelerated Construction. This report gave an update on the Parkway sites, which was one of those schemes and requested

authority to purchase the College of West Anglia (COWA) land, secure the Homes England funding and approve expenditure prior to a further report on the overall viability of the scheme due on 12 November 2019.

Cabinet debated the item and the detail of the proposals along with the potential wider benefits to the town of the scheme. It was noted that specialist reports would be prepared as part of the planning process.

In response to a question on the provision of apprenticeships, it was explained that as part of the partnership with Lovell's apprenticeships were created and promoted over a number of different skill areas and had been very successful.

It was noted that there would be areas of trees and natural habitat around the site.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Pope asked if the item had been considered by the Major Project Officer Board to which it was confirmed it had. He asked if the ground conditions would be a serious hold up to the scheme to which it was confirmed that meetings had already taken place with the IDB and Anglian Water on the issue, so it shouldn't hold it up.

It was agreed that the completion of the arrangements to purchase the land should be included in the recommendations.

RESOLVED: 1) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Assistant Director Regeneration and Property and the Corporate Projects & Assets Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to negotiate terms and complete the purchase of the College of West Anglia site, to deliver the COWA site in conjunction with the adjacent Council owned site, and the Legal Services Manager be given delegated authority to conclude the transaction.

2) That Officers seek planning permission in line with the proposals outlined in the report.

3) That Officers be authorised to spend up to £400,000 designing the infrastructure for the scheme of which £200,000 will be funded from a grant from the Norfolk Business Rates Pool and the remaining £200,000 from the Homes England grant.

4) Officers be authorised to spend a further £1,663,000 on costs associated with the housing schemes that can be reclaimed from the Homes England grant once secured.

5) That a report be brought to Cabinet by 12 November 2019 on the financial viability of the scheme, before entering contracts to build.

Reason for Decision

- To ensure that the opportunity presented by the Accelerated Construction Programme to accelerate housing delivery in the Borough will be fully realised and will ensure that the Council will be able to bring forward sites on land it owns at a pace that would ordinarily not have been achievable.
- To continue with significant delivery of sustainable housing over a 4-5 year period.
- To improve the road network for King's Lynn.
- To achieve a commercial return for the Council (through capital and revenue receipts).
- To stimulate economic activity in the local area through direct and indirect activity.
- To create apprenticeships.

CAB38 **BUSINESS RATES HARDSHIP RELIEF - REQUEST TO RECONSIDER A REFUSAL TO AWARD RELIEF**

The Revenues and Benefits Manager presented a report which set out an appeal against the decision on an application for Business Rates Hardship Relief. Cabinet considered the case and confirmed the previous decision not to award further relief.

RESOLVED: That following the review of the application no Hardship Relief be awarded.

Reason for Decision

To ensure the decision regarding Hardship Relief is reviewed. The Hardship Relief guidelines state Cabinet can be asked to reconsider any decision regarding Hardship Relief.

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm