

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

CABINET

Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 30th June, 2020 at 3.00 pm in the Remote Meeting on Zoom and available for the public to view on WestNorfolkBC on You Tube - Zoom and You Tube

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

CAB131 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 May 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CAB132 **APOLOGIES**

None

CAB133 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

CAB134 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

CAB135 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chair reported receipt of the resignation, for personal reasons, from his Cabinet position of Environment by Councillor Ian Devereux. He thanked Councillor Devereux for the work he had done in this role and wished him well.

The Chair also reported notification from Norfolk County Council asking for representatives to attend the King's Lynn Area Transport Group which they had set up by their Cabinet. The Chair reported that the following Cabinet Members would attend those meetings: Councillor Blunt – Development, Councillor Nockolds Deputy Leader and Health and Well Being and himself as the Leader.

CAB136 **MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

The following Councillors attended under standing order 34:

Councillor A Dickinson – to observe
 Councillor C Joyce – KLIC Inquiry
 Councillor A Kemp– KLIC Inquiry & Covid 19 Recovery Strategy
 Councillor C Morley - Covid 19 Recovery Strategy
 Councillor J Moriarty – KLIC Inquiry & Standing Orders amendments
 Councillor A Ryves – KLIC Inquiry
 Councillor M de Whalley – to observe

CAB137 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

None

CAB138 **FORWARD DECISIONS**

The Forward Decision list was noted.

CAB139 **MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES**

The following comments were received from the Panels for items on the agenda:

Extract from Corporate Performance Panel : 3 June 2020 – Urgent changes to Standing Orders

“RESOLVED: The Panel proposed that the Solicitor should draft amendments to the proposed changes to Standing Orders for remote meetings, to be incorporated into the report for Cabinet on 30 June 2020, addressing the following matters:

- 1) Standing Order 4.10 – A relaxation of this clause so that the Chair has discretion to decide whether a Member can continue to participate in the Meeting.
- 2) Standing Order 4.11 – A relaxation of this clause to allow further time.
- 3) Standing Order 34 – To take account of Members who wish to observe the meeting when there are exempt items.”

Joint Panels Meeting – 25 June 2020 – Covid 19 Response strategy.

The comments from the Joint Panels had been distributed and read by Cabinet Members.

CAB140 KLIC INDEPENDENT INQUIRY

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The Chair introduced Alison Lowton, a legally qualified experienced investigator for public sector organisations, who had been shortlisted and attended an interview with the group leaders and the chief executive on 8 October 2019 and had been appointed to undertake the inquiry.

Ms Lowton presented her report to the Cabinet. She informed Members that she had read all the papers relating to the inquiry including those of the Audit Informal Working Party which had carried out an investigation and had been impressed with the work carried out. She explained that her report advised that pursuing a further inquiry would undermine the work already undertaken. She reminded Members that she would have only been able to access any current councillors or officers, and that over time memories faded. She did not consider that there would be anything further to learn from doing so. She acknowledged that there would always be unanswered questions from some members, but she felt that the outstanding issues were not material and her recommendation was that no further action be taken.

The Chair thanked Ms Lowton for her report.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Ryves commented that he was surprised that the report did not uncover as much information as possible or take it further than the working group had done. He considered that Ms Lowton had not exercised her duty to explore the outstanding issues and felt that a further investigation should take place.

Councillor Long reminded Members that it would be for full Council to decide if it was not happy with the work carried out. He reminded Councillor Ryves of the need for courtesy, and that this was not the opportunity for debate.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Kemp drew attention to the fact that the report did not look at the relationship between the Borough and NWES. She considered that the Audit Working Group should have been able to speak to NWES. She considered that the working Group should be able to continue their investigation.

Councillor Long reminded members that it wasn't for Cabinet today to decide that as it was to go to Council for consideration. He commented that it was for Audit to decide upon their future arrangements, but drew attention to the comments of the Independent Person that there was no point in continuing when lessons were learned and the building was there, set up and working.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Joyce commented that he considered there were still a number of questions to be asked of NWES and Councillors past and present which he considered wouldn't go away. He confirmed the Council would make its decision on it but he considered having a single investigator was a "white wash".

Councillor Long reminded members that Ms Lowton's appointment had been agreed by all 3 group leaders. He acknowledged that there had been mistakes made by the Council but the report encouraged learn from the mistakes and move on.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Moriarty asked where the scrutiny of the report would be undertaken to which Councillor Long explained that if Audit decided to do so they could but it would be debated at Council. Councillor Moriarty reminded Members that the Motion to Council had been done in conjunction with the Leader, but he considered the terms of reference of the review had not been carried out. Ms Lowton had indicated there was no need for further review, but he considered it an error of judgement not to carry out the review in full. He acknowledged Council would decide.

RECOMMENDED: That the findings of the KLIC Independent Inquiry as set out in the report attached to the agenda be recommended to Council.

Reason for Decision

In accordance with Council minute C:86 to present the outcome of the KLIC Independent Inquiry.

CAB141 **ANTI MONEY LAUNDERING POLICY**

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Cabinet considered a report which explained that Regulated Authorities must have provisions in place relating to 'Money Laundering', as a Local Authority the Council was not legally obliged to apply the provisions of the Money Laundering Regulations 2007. However, as a responsible public body, the Borough Council who do not undertake any such regulated activities should employ policies and procedures which reflected the essence of the UK's anti-terrorist financing, and anti-money laundering regimes. Such legislation had been considered by professional bodies, resulting in best practice guidance being issued that required local authorities to establish internal procedures to prevent the use of their services for money laundering. As part of the work being undertaken by the Internal Audit Department in respect of anti-fraud, anti-corruption / bribery this is a new policy being introduced to enhance the Council's controls and mitigation to the risk of serious fraud / money laundering. The report provided information regarding

the proposed policy and procedures including roles and responsibilities and the particular criminal offences/activities that relate to money laundering.

In response to questions from Cabinet Members J Hay, Fraud Investigator explained that he was working with the Norfolk Fraud Hub to ensure best practice and introduce officer training on the subject. He was also going to ensure the policy was promoted internally to raise awareness.

RECOMMENDED: That the Anti-Money Laundering Policy and the associated procedures that are contained/attached within the policy and the appendices be approved.

Reason for Decision

To introduce the anti-money laundering policy and the associated procedures as a new policy, as the council do not currently have any policy or procedures in place for anti-money laundering purposes. This policy looks to provide a clear process for officers/members who wish to report suspicions of money laundering and to the same end helps to raise suspicions of serious crime to the relevant responsible officers and other organisations (the National Crime Agency – NCA). As well as to protect officers/members who may have a suspicion and may require assistance to prevent further offences and/or obtaining guidance to prevent themselves from inadvertently becoming ‘involved’ in money offences.

CAB142 **COVID 19 - RECOVERY STRATEGY**

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The Chair introduced the report containing the Covid 19 recovery strategy which was a high level strategy. In doing so he drew attention to the fact this was the biggest single issue the council had had to deal with and stressed the importance of getting back to a new “normal”. He thanked all the officers who had stepped up and did all the things that needed to be done during the pandemic.

The Assistant to the Chief Executive explained that the report had been presented to the joint scrutiny panels on 25 June and the comments were published to Cabinet.

The document outlined the planning work that was now underway to support the recovery from COVID-19 for the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk. It was noted that this work was critical to support the borough’s residents, the economy and businesses during this challenging situation.

The proposed recovery strategy would support the borough's residents, the economy, businesses and our staff and members, review the delivery of public services and consider the financial resilience of the council and how it would need to operate differently in the new normal, learning the lessons from the pandemic.

The recovery strategy had the following themes which drew upon a Recovery Impact Assessment undertaken as part of the Norfolk Resilience Forum's recovery work:

- Finance
- People
- Economy
- Health and social care
- ICT

Under standing order 34 Councillor Kemp expressed concern about the high level of infection in the area and the associated health issues, she drew attention to a county health sub committee which had been set up and asked the council to focus on this element.

The Chair concurred that the health elements were important and should not be underestimated.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Morely commented that he felt a greater focus could be given in the strategy on the areas of deprivation in the borough. He drew attention to the elements of learning opportunities, training and aspiration and asked how they linked with the strategy.

The Chair confirmed that the Borough needed to continue to work with its partners such as the health authority and education authority to help deliver.

The Assistant to the Chief Executive confirmed that the references made were work that was ongoing such as the Attainment Programme with schools, and the issue of deprivation was something that the council was acutely aware of and would be included in plans going forward.

The Chief Executive also drew attention to the education and attainment elements already included in the Corporate Plan.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds welcomed the inclusion of the health and wellbeing elements as much work was ongoing on this front, working closely with partners.

Councillor Blunt concurred on the need to know the detail of the deprivation in the borough which was different in different parts. He stressed the need to know the issues and how they could be tackled.

Councillor Lawrence welcomed the report and drew attention to what had been achieved throughout the pandemic, the fact that a lot had been learned which would help improve things going forward.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposed Recovery Strategy attached to the report be adopted.

Reason for Decision

To establish the council's policy framework for the recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic and how the council will focus its resources.

CAB143 **URGENT UPDATE TO STANDING ORDERS RELATING TO COVID 19**

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The Monitoring Officer presented a report containing draft amendments to the Standing Orders within the Borough Council's Constitution to reflect recent legislation enabling local authority meetings to be conducted remotely. The draft amendments were presented to the Corporate Performance Panel on 3 June 2020 which resolved the amendments be submitted to Cabinet with three identified changes, which were incorporated into Appendix 1 to the report.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Moriarty who had chaired the Corporate Performance Panel when it considered the item drew attention to the fact that the changes to the standing orders were a moveable feast. He also drew attention to the fact that some people may need to be able to move around during a meeting but would still be present in the meeting so the Chair's discretion was vital.

RECOMMENDED: That the draft amendments to the Standing Orders attached as Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Borough Council's Standing Orders reflect the most up-to-date legislation and capture the key requirements for how the Borough Council will conduct its remote meetings.

The meeting closed at 4.02 pm