

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

CABINET

Minutes from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 26th September, 2023 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor T Parish (Chair)
Councillors B Anota, M de Whalley, C Morley, S Ring, J Rust and S Squire

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Beales

CAB34 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 August 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CAB35 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CAB36 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

CAB37 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

CAB38 **MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors A Kemp and J Moriarty (on Zoom) attended under standing order 34.

CAB39 **CALLED IN MATTERS**

None

CAB40 **FORWARD DECISIONS**

The Forward Decisions List was noted.

CAB41 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET FROM OTHER BODIES

The Environment and Community Panel had considered the Housing Standards item on the agenda and made their comments to Cabinet.

The Corporate and Performance Panel had considered the Members Allowances item on the agenda and had submitted their comments to Cabinet.

The comments from both Panels were taken when Cabinet considered each of the reports.

CAB42 UPDATE TO VARIOUS HOUSING STANDARDS POLICIES TO REFLECT PROCEDURAL CHANGES, BEST PRACTICE, CASE LAW AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

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The Housing Standards Manager presented a report which updated the various housing standards policies and guidance to reflect the legislative, best practice and procedural changes, to Housing Standards.

Councillor Parish drew attention to the comments made at the Environment Panel regarding water heaters in rented or HMO properties being provided that gas should not be assumed to be the preferred method of providing heating and therefore, rather than use the word gas, the wording should be amended to encourage environmental friendly heating options. The Housing Standards Manager confirmed that this could be amended to a more generalised wording.

Councillor de Whalley welcomed the inclusion of agricultural dwellings and asked if the heating installed should be economical to run as well as economical to install. The Housing Standards Manager explained that there was a requirement to ensure there was ample heating and following a tribunal case it had to be efficient and economical.

Councillor Squire asked how much enforcement was carried out to which it was reported that there was a timescale under which any improvement to properties were required which if not adhered to could result in financial penalties or legal action.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Kemp asked if any enforcement of standards had been undertaken with social housing as she reported she had a number of issues in her ward. The Housing Standards Manager reported that if any matter was raised the team liaised with the landlord and the problem was usually resolved.

RECOMMENDED: That the changes as detailed within the relevant appendices and in accordance with the recommendation from the Environment and Community Panel, the wording within the policy relating to provision of hot water in bedsits, shared accommodation and HMO's as raised by Councillor Kunes be amended accordingly, be adopted:

Appendix A

A1) To update the HMO amenity standards previously updated 10 years ago at Council on the 27th September 2012. This update is required in order to provide clarity with regards relevant requirements and to ensure that differing types of HMOs are fully referenced.

A2) To adopt and publish standards with regards single family dwellings in order to provide landlords with a convenient and understandable guidance as to what is expected in private rented properties.

Appendix B

To update the adopted statement of principles with regard civil penalties in accordance with the Housing Standards - Financial penalties under the Housing Act 2004 and Housing and Planning Act 2016 previously adopted policy (Council - 22nd February 2018) and to adopt the use of Rent Repayment Orders and Banning Orders.

Appendix C

C1) To update the Unauthorised Encampments Protocol to ensure that the protocol reflects the latest legislation applying to unauthorised encampments and to provide the relevant agencies and the wider public with clear guidance as to how the Borough Council and other agencies will respond to, and manage, unauthorised encampments within the local authority area.

Appendix D

D1) Adoption of amendments to the standard single family caravan site licence conditions for relevant protected sites.

D1) Adoption of amendments to the standard multi-site caravan site licence conditions for relevant protected sites.

Reason for Decision

To bring various policies and procedures up to date in line with operational requirements, best practice and relevant legislation and guidance. This will allow Housing Standards to operate and enforce in respect of various activities more efficiently and transparently.

The amendment is to take into account the recommendation from the Environment Panel.

CAB43 **MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2023/24**

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Cabinet considered a report on Members' Allowances for 2023/24.

The Chair drew attention to the comments made by the Corporate Performance Panel on the report where they had recommended option 4 set out in the report.

Cabinet's attention was drawn to the following options suggested and it was invited to make a recommendation to Council for consideration.

Option	Proposal	Additional Budget Required
Option 1	10.38% increase	£27,566
Option 2	7.04% increase	£10,491
Option 3	5% increase	£62
Option 4	10.38% increase to basic allowances and 5% increase on special responsibility allowances	£20,213/£20,762 (depending on whether ICT allowance is increased by 5% or 10.38%)

In discussing the report cabinet agreed to recommend Option 4 including the ICT allowance increase.

RECOMMENDED: That option 4, including the increase for members ICT allowance (at basic allowance rate) be adopted as the increase for Members allowances with effect from 1st April 2023.

RESOLVED: That a separate report be presented later in the municipal year regarding the process for convening an Independent Review Panel for Members allowances.

Reason for Decision

The Council's Members Allowance Scheme provides for allowances to be updated annually in line with the Officer's cost of living pay award. The recommendation takes into account the comments of the Corporate Performance Panel.

The meeting closed at 6.29 pm