

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Environment and Community Panel held on
Tuesday, 5th September, 2017 at 6.00 pm in the Education Room - Town
Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT: Councillors C Sampson (Chairman), Miss L Bambridge, A Bubb,
J Collop (substitute for M Wilkinson, Mrs S Collop, Mrs S Fraser, G Hipperson,
J Moriarty, T Smith, Mrs J Westrop and D Whitby

Portfolio Holders

Councillor I Devereux - Portfolio Holder for Environment

Councillor B Long - Leader of the Council

Councillor Mrs E Nockolds – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and
Health

Officers:

Becky Box – Policy, Performance and Personnel Manager

Sarah Dennis – Partnership and Funding Officer

Lorraine Gore – Executive Director

Ray Harding – Chief Executive

Dave Robson – Environmental Health Manager

Robert Street – Group Accountant

By Invitation:

Jo Maule – Community Action Norfolk (CAN)

Michael Deakin - Shelter

EC28: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Wilkinson.

EC29: MINUTES

RESOLVED: The Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a
correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EC30: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

EC31: URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

EC32: MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34

There was none.

EC33: **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

EC34: **ADVICE SERVICES**

The Executive Director introduced Jo Maule from Community Action Norfolk and Michael Deakin from Shelter who had been invited to the meeting to provide an update on the provision of Advice Services.

A copy of their presentations are attached.

The Chairman thanked Jo Maule and Michael Deakin for attending the meeting and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

In response to a question from Councillor Moriarty, it was explained that Shelter could provide assistance on preparing budgets by going through customer's bank statements. If gambling was a problem this would be identified and if the person had a serious issue they would be referred on for the help they needed.

Councillor Moriarty referred to the referral routes into CAN and the small amount of referrals from WNDIS and KLARS. It was explained that this could be because issues could be resolved by the organisations own advice provision, or the service user could have gone direct to the Citizens Advice Bureau. Jo Maule confirmed that WNDIS and KLARS were part of the advice hub so were aware of the services which could be provided through CAN and Shelter.

Councillor John Collop felt that some people could leave it too late before asking for help and could be taken advantage of. He asked what assistance could be provided to people who did not understand basic financing. Michael Deakin explained that budgeting advice was offered and could be provided when circumstances changed to try and prevent them getting into difficulties. Shelter could also ask for creditors to freeze credit accounts whilst they planned finances.

The Panel was informed that there was an Advice Hub Partnership and regular forum meetings were held so that organisations could be kept up to date with upcoming issues and risks.

Councillor Mrs Westrop referred to the services available in Downham Market and explained that most residents tended to access services through the Library. She asked if the library could be considered as a referral route through to CAN. Michael Deakin explained that options,

such as offering training on the use of the online advice network and referrals portal could be offered. It was confirmed that work had been carried out in Downham Market as part of the outreach work.

RESOLVED: (i) The update was noted.
(ii) That a further update be received in thirteen months.

EC35: **SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT**

The Environmental Health Manager presented his report which outlined the roles and responsibilities relating to surface water flooding. He provided information on the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. He provided details on the roles and responsibilities of Norfolk County Council, Environment Agency, Anglian Water, Internal Drainage Boards and the Borough Council, as detailed in the report.

The Chairman thanked the Environmental Health Manager for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Hipperson raised concern regarding responsibility for small scale development which would include the filling in of dykes and use of pipes which were insufficient for the drainage required and could result in localised flooding. The Environmental Health Manager explained that Planning Officers would be required to ask the relevant Internal Drainage Board or Norfolk County Council for advice and could place conditions on Planning Permissions as required. He explained that it was important for the Planning Committee to ensure that proper advice had been received to prevent development going forward without adequate provision. He suggested that if the Panel would like more information on the process they could invite representatives from Planning or Norfolk County Council to a future meeting as required.

Councillor Bubb raised issues regarding an area of localised flooding in his Ward. The Environmental Health Manager advised that Councillor Bubb take photos of the problem area and send them to Norfolk County Council. He could also ask the Parish Council to make representations or contact his Norfolk County Councillor.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

EC36: **WEST NORFOLK STRATEGY GROUP UPDATE**

The Policy, Performance and Personnel Manager provided the Panel with a presentation on the West Norfolk Strategy Group, as attached. She explained that the West Norfolk Partnership had been operating, albeit in different formats, since 2001. The overall understanding of the Partnership was the same since it was formed and the aim was to join up the public sector partners to look at joined up working and projects.

The Panel was provided with detail of the operation of the West Norfolk Partnership, projects which had been carried out and future plans.

The Chairman thanked the Policy, Performance and Personnel Manager for her presentation and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

In response to a question it was confirmed that a postcard had been produced which would include details of all the partners involved in the Partnership and details on working in West Norfolk, including the website address for the jobs site. Work on refreshing the website would be carried out in the future.

The Vice Chairman, Councillor Bambridge asked for detail on the cost of the Partnership to the Borough Council. The Policy, Performance and Personnel Manager explained that the Borough Council supported the Partnership through organisation and administration of meetings. Projects would be supported through joint partners or grant funding if possible.

The Panel was informed of potential funding streams which could become available in the future and the Policy, Performance and Personnel Manager explained that the team kept a watching brief on potential funding streams.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Westrop regarding the Mental Health work stream and potential activities, the Policy Performance and Personnel Manager explained that this project was in its early stages and things like broad brush activities to raise awareness and specific ideas would be looked at.

The Chief Executive commented that in addition to the formal side, working together to support each other was a strength in West Norfolk and spin off benefits were achieved, for example the Borough Council's handypersons service provided relief cover to the handyperson at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Meetings were also a good opportunity to talk through issues and future plans.

Councillor Bubb commented that there were not any 'welcome to West Norfolk' signs around the Borough and it was explained that this was something that the Branding Group could look at.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

EC37: **LOCAL LOTTERY PROPOSALS**

The Executive Director presented the Cabinet report which detailed the proposals for introducing a Local Authority Lottery. The Panel were invited to make any appropriate recommendations to Cabinet, who

would be considering the report at their meeting on 6th September 2017.

The Executive Director provided information on the company that could provide the Local Lottery model and other Local Authorities who had introduced a Lottery. Those present were reminded that a review of financial assistance grants had been carried out and budgets had had to be reduced, the Local Lottery was an idea to supplement this and provide a route for organisations to raise funds. The report set out the model which could be used and the Panel was informed that it would take at least sixteen weeks to get the necessary licences in place. It was therefore proposed to launch the Lottery in 2018.

The Executive Director informed the Panel that the report also set out how people could play the lottery and how the money was distributed. She also highlighted the Financial Implications as set out in the report.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director for her report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Smith referred to recommendation four, which would require two named officers to hold Gambling Licences. He asked that if officers would prefer not to hold Licences could they be held by a different member of staff. The Executive Director confirmed that this would not be a problem.

In response to a further question from Councillor Smith, it was confirmed that the website design was a template and Members could look at examples from other Local Authorities if they wanted an idea on how the website would look. It would be made clear on the website the percentage of funds which would go to the good causes. The Executive Director explained that there was the opportunity for Lottery winners to donate their winnings back to the good causes.

Councillor Mrs Collop raised concern about the large management fee and that the top prize had never been won. She also commented that people should be able to purchase tickets on the day instead of sales being stopped the day before the draw. The Executive Director explained that people could buy tickets in 1, 3, 6 or 12 month blocks, however payments could be cancelled if required. She explained that the model available from Gatherwell set out the percentage fees, including the management fee. She explained that the Lottery provider would pay the money to the good causes on a monthly basis.

In response to a question from Councillor Bubb, it was explained that a client account would be operated so it would be protected if the company was to fail.

Councillor John Collop raised concern that people could get in debt through gambling, he also felt that the management fee was high. He felt that the set up costs and annual costs should come from the

management fee instead of a separate fee payable by the Council. He also stated that because you would have to buy tickets in blocks you would have to remember to renew or cancel. He did not think that a Local Lottery was something that the Council should encourage.

Councillor Moriarty commented that the report stated that a tender exercise was unnecessary, but he felt that it was necessary and referred to the Borough Council's Contract Standing Orders and reference to secure competition of all contracts irrespective of source of funding. He also explained that the value of the contract was important and should consider the life expectancy of the contract, not just the initial start-up costs. He explained that the Contract Standing Orders also stated that all contracts over the value of £10,000 should be advertised on the Borough Council's website. Councillor Moriarty felt that all service providers should be invited to tender for the supply of the Local Lottery.

Councillor Moriarty also referred to the Procurement Policy on the gov.uk website and that the overriding requirement was based on value for money unless there was compelling evidence otherwise.

Councillor Moriarty raised concern regarding the set up costs, he explained that the Council had allocated £7,000 for set up costs, but he was aware that other Councils which had introduced a Local Lottery had allocated £10,000. He also commented that other service providers perhaps would hold the necessary licenses and compliance could be done through the service provider, which would be a cost saving to the Council.

The Vice Chairman, Councillor Bambridge commented that she was concerned that existing organisations would not be included in the good causes and asked what the limit was for unused funds to go into the financial assistance scheme.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Long reminded those present of the financial situation that the Council faced and that it was a necessity to reduce some of the grants made to external organisations. The proposal for a Local Lottery would not replace the financial assistance scheme, but would offer the flexibility of choice of signing up to be one of the good causes to raise money. The scheme could be trialled and he felt that the costs involved in the set up were minor compared to the money paid out in grants and without the introduction of such a scheme no organisations would benefit from the potential to raise additional funds. The Leader also commented that the good causes on the website would promote the Lottery to their supporters. The supporters would be able to donate a percentage of their ticket sales to their chosen good cause and have the opportunity to win money themselves, which they could always donate back to the good causes.

Councillor Smith referred to the Equality Impact Assessment and he felt that lotteries targeted low income families. He also asked if

Churches could not be included in the list of good causes as they were often community assets.

The Leader of the Council reminded those present that members of the public, who wanted to donate money to charity, could do so off their own back, the lottery was just another way to raise funds for third party organisations.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health, Councillor Mrs Nockolds, commented that she sympathised with those who did not agree with gambling. She reminded those present that Members had not raised concern with the money awarded to the Council by the Heritage Lottery Fund, which was a fund of money from people playing the National Lottery and had assisted the Council with many projects such as the improvements at the Town Hall and Hunstanton Heritage Gardens.

The Leader of the Council reiterated that the Local Lottery was an enablement tool for organisations to help themselves by using a Lottery facility run by the Borough Council. All good causes would have to meet certain criteria before they would be accepted and the benefit of the good cause would need to be apparent in West Norfolk.

Councillor Mrs Westrop commented that it was a good opportunity for very small charities and organisations to benefit financially, but it was important to ensure that the Council had followed the correct procurement process for introducing a Local Lottery.

Members of the Panel had indicated that they would like to discuss the Exempt Supplementary Paper which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and provided due diligence and additional background information on the preferred supplier.

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.

The Executive Director provided information to the Panel on the preferred supplier and the due diligence which had been carried out and Members of the Panel discussed the information provided.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Councillor Moriarty proposed an amendment to the Cabinet recommendations. He proposed that recommendation one be amended as follows: "That Cabinet recommend to Council that a Local Lottery is established and operated by an External Lottery Manager **following a tendering exercise**". He also proposed that recommendations two to five be deleted. The proposed amendments

were seconded by Councillor Westrop and after being put to the vote the amendment was carried.

The recommendations, as amended, were then put to the vote and supported by the Panel.

RESOLVED: That the Environment and Development Panel make the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1. That Cabinet recommend to Council that a Local Lottery is established and operated by an External Lottery Manager, following a tendering exercise.
2. The criteria for selecting the good causes which can become part of the local lottery detailed in Appendix 2 be adopted.
3. The monitoring and review of applications from good causes to be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health and the Executive Director – Finance Services. In addition Norfolk Community Foundation to provide an independent due diligence review of these arrangements.
4. All monies raised through the local lottery which are not linked to a specific good cause will be distributed through the existing small grants financial assistance application process. Any uncommitted balance at the end of each financial year shall be donated to the Mayors Charity.

EC38: **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members of the Panel were reminded that an eform was available on the Intranet which could be completed and submitted if Members had items which they would like to be considered for addition to the Work Programme.

It was noted that an update on the Sustainability Transformation Plan had been scheduled to come to the Panel in May 2017, but had been postponed because of the Election purdah period. This would be rescheduled onto the Work Programme.

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

EC39: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel would be held on **10th October 2017 at 6.00pm** in the Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.

The meeting closed at 8.38 pm