

**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, 24th July, 2018 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall,  
Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn**

**PRESENT:** Councillors C Sampson (Chairman), Miss L Bambridge,  
Mrs C Bower, A Bubb, Mrs S Collop, Mrs S Fraser, T Parish, Mrs V Spikings  
(substitute for G Hipperson), M Taylor, Mrs J Westrop and Mrs M Wilkinson

**Portfolio Holders:**

Councillor I Devereux, Portfolio Holder for Environment  
Councillor Mrs E Nockolds, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and  
Health

**Officers:**

Ged Greaves, Senior Policy and Performance Officer  
Duncan Hall, Housing Services Manager  
Honor Howell, Assistant Director

**By Invitation:**

Graeme Stewart and Tracey Ellis, Youth West.

**EC13: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hipperson,  
Hopkins and Lawrence.

**EC14: MINUTES**

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

**EC15: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs Westrop declared a non-pecuniary interest in EC20:  
Youth Investment Fund as she was a Trustee of the Swan Project and  
was involved in the Youth West Partnership.

**EC16: URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

**EC17: MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Pope for all Agenda items.

EC18: **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

EC19: **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MONITORING FULL YEAR 2017-2018 (20 MINUTES)**

The Senior Policy and Performance Officer presented the report which monitored progress against agreed performance indicators for the full year 2017/2018. The Panel was informed that thirteen performance indicators were within the remit of the Environment and Community Panel and these were included in the report. The report showed that five targets had not been met, as set out below, and an action plan was in place to address issues:

- CE2: % of Long Term empty homes in the Borough as a percentage of overall dwellings.
- CE7: % of allocated spend of Flexible Homeless Grant.
- CC6: % of Careline alarms installed within ten days from date of enquiry.
- CC7: Time taken (in weeks) from first visit to completion of work on Disabled Facilities Grants.
- CC8: Time taken (in weeks) from first visit to completion of work on Adapt passported cases with a value under £6,000.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Policy and Performance Officer for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Pope addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He asked for clarification on the figures in the table on page 12 of the Agenda which summarised the Council's current performance levels compared to the previous quarter. The Senior Policy and Performance Officer explained that through the year the figures could increase and decrease so there would be variation.

In response to a question from Councillor Bubb, it was explained that external factors, which the Council had no control over, and could affect performance, were included in the notes and actions section of the performance monitoring report.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel reviewed the Performance Monitoring Report and agreed the actions outlined in the Action Report.

EC20: **YOUTH INVESTMENT FUND (25 MINUTES)**

The Chairman welcomed Graeme Stewart and Tracy Ellis to the meeting who presented the Panel with information on the Youth West

Partnership, as attached. Members' attention was also drawn to the information document which had been circulated with the Agenda.

The Chairman thanked Graeme Stewart and Tracy Ellis for their presentation and invited questions and comments from the Panel as summarised below.

Councillor Mrs Bower asked if anything was planned for Hunstanton. Graeme Stewart explained that the Benjamin Foundation was working in Hunstanton and as the Co-ordinator for the project developed her role she could make contact with Parishes.

Councillor Mrs Fraser asked for more information on how the activities were chosen and asked what plans were in place to ensure that young people were engaged. Graeme Stewart explained that activities included music, dance, drama and other sessions. It was explained that Youth Workers would work with the young people and certain activities would be chosen by them. It was hoped that this would keep young people involved and engaged. The Panel was informed that the Youth West Partnership would be working with the Discovery Centre and in deprived areas in West Norfolk. It was explained that Youth West would also promote projects jointly with their partners where possible.

The amount of funding available for the project was highlighted and Graeme Stewart acknowledged that West Norfolk was rural and diverse and it would unfortunately not be possible to help all areas, but the project had tried to spread out into areas where there was already an active interest, but may have been issues in the ability to provide or sustain a service.

Councillor Mrs Nockolds, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health commented that this project was very good news for young people in the Borough. She explained that the Borough Council already had a Service Level Agreements in place with Freebridge Community Housing relating to the Discovery Centre, Active Norfolk and SWAN. Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed those present that the Council also worked with the Local Cultural Education Partnership and hoped to work with Garage in the near future. Graeme Stewart explained that Active Norfolk was working with the Youth West Partnership regarding the delivery of some activities at the Discovery Centre.

Councillor Mrs Wilkinson informed those present that Fairstead previously had a youth club at the Community Centre, but this was no longer in operation. She asked if there were any plans to re-introduce provision in this area. She also explained that there used to be a mini bus available which could take young people to activities. Graeme Stewart explained that part of the project would include pop up youth clubs, and Fairstead was an area which could be a possibility. The pop up youth clubs would identify if there was a demand in an area and if

more permanent provision would be sustainable. Graeme Stewart reminded the Panel of the budget available and explained that it would focus on 'on the ground' delivery with the help of partners. Year one of the project would be to establish activities and year 2 would look at working with partners, parishes and local communities to look at sustainability and funding options.

The Vice Chairman, Councillor Bambridge commented that the project looked at areas where there was already activity, but what about areas where there was no current activity? She referred to rural and isolated areas where there was no public transport. Graeme Stewart explained that they had looked at isolated communities, and he felt that some may be covered in the hub provision, but referred to the limited funding available. He explained that they could look into options for the future for example access to transport.

Councillor Parish referred to Heacham and explained that they used to have a youth club and all the facilities were still there. Graeme Stewart explained that Youth West had worked with the Benjamin Foundation to identify areas on where to establish provision. He explained that if there was an opportunity, and funding to support it, it was something that could be looked at.

Councillor Mrs Spikings asked if the project was limited to West Norfolk, or if they worked across boundaries. She provided an example of provision which was available close to her Ward, but across the border in Wisbech. Graeme Stewart explained that the funding had been awarded for West Norfolk, but it was something that could be looked into. The Chairman, Councillor Sampson suggested that Councillor Mrs Spikings pass on the relevant information to Graeme Stewart.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Collop, Graeme Stewart explained that the amount of young people that could be accommodated at each session was dependant on the amount of Youth Workers and Volunteers available and safeguarding best practice. Councillor Mrs Westrop commented that activities in Downham Market had started in June and there was a waiting list for some activities such as music because they were very popular.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health, Councillor Mrs Nockolds asked if Youth West worked with the National Youth Agency regarding training. She also referred to National Youth Week in November and asked if there were any opportunities for Youth West during this Week. Graeme Stewart explained that the Youth Worker training was linked with Momentum and it was hoped to make training courses locally available in King's Lynn.

**RESOLVED:** (i) The report was noted.  
(ii) Representatives from Youth West be invited to provide a further update to the Panel in Year 3 of the Project.

EC21: **HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY (60 MINUTES)**

The Housing Services Manager gave a presentation on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping, as attached. The Chairman thanked the Housing Services Manager for his presentation and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Mrs Spikings referred to information provided that there was not enough housing supply for social housing. She commented that she was aware of some social housing which had been boarded up, or demolished in Welney and asked why this was happening when there was such a demand for social housing. The Chairman, Councillor Sampson commented that Welney was an isolated area and people may have issues with transport. Councillor Mrs Spikings commented that the refurbishment of the housing stock in Welney had fractured the local community.

Councillor Taylor asked for information on how many rough sleepers were local and expressed concern that because King's Lynn had a good process in place for dealing with and supporting homeless people it may attract people from other areas. The Housing Services Manager commented that this was a concern for the night shelters and that it could give validity to a certain type of lifestyle. He explained that the situation would be carefully monitored.

Councillor Mrs Spikings provided information on someone who was sleeping rough near the A47 and agreed to pass on information to the Housing Services Manager.

Councillor Mrs Westrop made reference to the duty to care leavers and she explained that some had complex needs. She asked if there was any flexibility with regards to local connection for care leavers. The Housing Services Manager explained that there was legislation relating to this and that some care leavers did not feel disadvantaged if they were placed outside the County.

Councillor Taylor asked the Housing Services Manager if he felt that the Council had the resources available to deal with monitoring, reporting and delivery of services relating to homelessness and rough sleeping. The Housing Services Manager explained that some new funding had been available from Central Government, as they had recognised this as a priority. He explained that homelessness grants were also available and the Council also worked with Norfolk County Council on provision for the area. Funding had been used to commission new services and retarget resource to where it was needed.

The Vice Chairman, Councillor Bambridge informed those present that she had requested that this update be brought to the Panel following the introduction of the Act. She reiterated comments made regarding Registered Social Landlords having empty properties and that she was concerned about this. She also referred to earlier comments made by Councillor Spikings about empty social housing in villages and how it should be made available if there was a demand.

In response to a question from the Vice Chairman, Councillor Bambridge about if the Council received enough funding, the Housing Services Manager explained that West Norfolk was recognised as a high demand area for private rented homes. He commented that situations could change quickly which could impact the amount of resources available and required. He commented that ways to be bold and work to make a difference to landlords and tenants needed to be looked at.

Councillor Mrs Spikings suggested that a Task Group be established by the Panel to look at funding, issues and how organisations could work together to address homelessness, rough sleeping and the availability of social housing.

The Chairman, Councillor Sampson commented that the presentation provided to the Panel highlighted how complex the process was and the wide range of issues that the Council had to deal with and agreed that the establishment of a Task Group was a good idea.

The Housing Services Manager welcomed the suggestion of a Task Group. He commented that it was important for all organisations to have a joined up approach and work together

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor Devereux referred to the House of Lords Select Committee on the regeneration of seaside towns which he suggested as useful background reading.

Councillor Mrs Westrop referred to the effect of the roll out of Universal Credit and she felt it would have a big impact on social housing tenancies and the ability for people to pay rent and that resources would need to be put in place to deal with issues.

The Chairman, Councillor Sampson suggested that it may be useful for the Environment and Community Panel to have a look around Broad Street and the Housing Services Manager agreed that this could be arranged. He also suggested that Members could visit the Park Homes.

**RESOLVED:** (i) The Panel noted the report.  
(ii) A tour of Broad Street be arranged for the Environment and Community Panel.  
(iii) A Task Group be established to look at Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and the availability of Social Housing.

(iv) A report be presented to the next ordinary meeting of the Environment and Community Panel to agree the Terms of Reference and operation of the Task Group.

EC22: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

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.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

EC23: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel was a special meeting of the Panel and would take place on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> August at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.

**The meeting closed at 8.10 pm**