

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

29 November 2018

COUNCILLOR BRIAN LONG – LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

For the period 6 September to 19 November 2018.

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Combined Report for October and November

Potential of Further Joint Working

Myself, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive had a joint meeting with Leaders and Chief Officer of Breckland and South Holland Districts further exploring opportunities for possible merger of management teams.

The report looking into this did identify the potential for a number of savings, mainly from us working with Breckland at the expense of their original ties. Savings identified were discussed with Cabinet Colleagues and whilst savings still need to be found for 20/21 year I was not convinced that sharing our management and the capacity they bring to project delivery was not the way to achieve savings.

August Monitoring Report

As at 31/8/18 the monthly budget monitoring report noted a favourable variance of £30,350. As per previous months this amount has been included into balances that are accruing to fund revenue cost pressures budgeted for 2020/21.

I am pleased to announce turnover savings of £106,290 have been achieved so far against a target of £125,866 for the whole year.

I will continue to advise council as the year progresses of any further changes.

Energy Efficiency

The Salix energy efficiency project has now ended. Following the end of this agreement the budgeted contributions to the energy efficiency reserve are

now no longer required and as such a saving of £21,100 was included within this month's monitoring report. We will of course continue with the schemes started utilising the Salix funding and going forward will utilise the REFIT project for energy saving measures. This has advantages of allowing a longer payback period than the Salix scheme.

Staff Wellbeing

This year as previous years' staff and members have had the opportunity to have a "flu jab" either at the office or by obtaining a voucher to use at Boots Chemist. This year take up was good with 121 having the injection in the office and 61 vouchers being issued.

It is noteworthy that variety of Job this year meant that staff and members over 65 had to have a different vaccine, which was not available via the scheme, however over 65s do qualify for a flu jab from their doctors.

Emergency Planning

This month I took a day out of the office to be involved with "Operation Springboard" a multi-agency training exercise for Emergency Planning. The exercise concentrated on the recovery phase after a tidal surge and extreme weather event affecting the whole East Coast. The benefits of such a process do allow each agency to think and plan should anything of this nature occur. Preparation and readiness for such events are an important in how deal with the real emergencies as they unfold.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Housing Borrowing Cap

It was announced at the Conservative Party Conference that the borrowing cap for Local Councils to invest in Social Housing stock is to be lifted. This will enable new build Council Housing Stock to be built. I will of course advise as further detail becomes available.

Negative Revenue Support Grant

For several District Councils the revenue support grant received from Central Government was not just going to be reduced to zero over the next few years but was due to become a payment back to Central Government. Following ongoing negotiations and support from the District Councils Network, Government has indicated that "Negative RSG" is now not going to happen. Again I will advise as further detail comes available.

Revenues and Benefits Software Upgrade

As part of the move to new software within Revenues and Benefits department some functionality between this system and our "OneVu" platform has been lost, this should be restored during December. Both systems are working however interaction between them has been reduced.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

In addition to my usual round of Cabinet and Portfolio meetings I have also attended the following:

September / October

Mini Meet In The Market Place
Classic Car Day
Hunstanton Soap Box Derby
Discovery Centre Open Day for Freebridge Community Housing
Environment and Community Panel
Regeneration and Development Panel
Protected Landscape and Planning Conference
Meetings with Sir Henry Bellingham MP
Norfolk Leaders Meeting
Kings Lynn area consultative Committee
Kings Lynn Internal Drainage Board
Norfolk Enterprise Festival
Various Meetings - Freebridge Community Housing
Water Management Alliance
Norfolk Emergency Planning Exercise
Mayors Design Awards
Meeting with Hunstanton Mayor
Meeting with Downham Market Mayor
Yes I can Event

November

Remembrance Sunday Events including Beacon Lighting
Kings Lynn Internal Drainage Board.
Kings Lynn area transport meeting
Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership
Freebridge Board Meeting & Appraisal
Norfolk Coast Partnership –Trust
Regenerating Seaside Towns – LGA
Meeting with Cambridgeshire Mayor
Meeting with Cllr Wilkinson (Breckland) - Business Rates on Public Toilets.