

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, 3rd September, 2019 at 5.00 pm in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor C Sampson (Chair), L Bambridge, C Bower, A Bubb, A Bullen, S Collop, M de Whalley, A Kemp, J Kirk, J Lowe, S Squire and M Wilkinson.

Portfolio Holders:

Councillor I Devereux – Portfolio Holder for Environment
Councillor P Kunes – Portfolio Holder for Commercial Services
Councillor E Nockolds – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health

Officers:

Ged Greaves – Senior Policy and Performance Officer
Vicki Hopps – Environmental Health Manager (Commercial)
Honor Howell – Assistant Director
Dave Robson – Environmental Health Manager (Environment)
Robert Wiseman – Greenspace Officer

Other Members Present: Councillors J Moriarty and A Ryves

Present Under Standing Order 34: Councillor Parish.

EC26: **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There was none.

EC27: **MINUTES**

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

EC28: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

EC29: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

EC30: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Parish: Item – EC32 Climate Change.

EC31: **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

EC32: **CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Environmental Health Officer presented Members with information on how the Council was addressing Climate Change issues (as attached). He explained that going forward, updates on progress would be presented to the Panel as appropriate and the Panel would be involved in developing the relevant Policies.

The Chair thanked officers for their report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

The Assistant Director clarified that the Single Use Plastics Informal Working Group had been established by the Environment and Community Panel and was made up of Councillors, with officer support. There had also been some officer groups set up to look at climate change and recycling. Updates on their work would be provided to the Panel as appropriate.

Councillor de Whalley felt that it was important that there was central co-ordination, which would be undertaken by the Major Projects Board. He suggested that there should also be a dedicated officer contact. He asked if the officer groups would have Member input. The Environmental Health Officer explained that the first task of officers would be to conduct the Council's Carbon Footprint Audit. Then the Panel would look at developing policy and strategies as required and considering any decisions prior to their submission to Cabinet. The Environment and Community Panel could also request updates from the officer groups as required.

Councillor de Whalley also commented that he was concerned about transport emissions as the report had indicated that they had increased. He stated that the King's Lynn Transport Study did not consider climate change mitigation and he asked how the Council would work to reduce transport emissions. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the King's Lynn Transport Study was addressing issues with the highways networks, capacity and congestion in King's Lynn and the wider climate change transport impacts of this would be considered as part of the whole district review.

Councillor de Whalley asked for timescales for the work required. The Environmental Health Manager explained that it was anticipated that the Council's Audit would take approximately four months to complete and an intern from the UEA would be brought in to lead on the Audit

process. Timescales for the Local Enterprise Partnership work was unknown at this stage.

Councillor Squire asked why the Council's Local Plan did not require all new builds to be fitted with solar panels. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the Local Plan Task Group was looking at the impact of climate change and potential policies. The Environmental Health Manager suggested that Councillor Squire could ask the Local Plan Task Group what was being done to address climate change, and now was the opportune time as the plan was currently under review. The Chair stated that the requirement of solar panels could make the cost of development too high for some developers and too expensive for some purchasers.

Councillor Squire also commented that there was a lack of forestry and more planting should be carried out. The Senior Policy and Performance Officer explained that the Council had adopted a Tree and Woodland Strategy and this would be looked at as part of the Audit work. The Greenspace Officer also commented that the Council did work with the local community on initiatives such as community projects and tree planting.

Councillor Kemp referred to a report from the Department of Business which stated that King's Lynn and West Norfolk had the largest increase in emissions because of considerable gas installations. She also commented that another power station was planned which would increase the impact. The Environmental Health Officer commented that British Sugar was the current largest point source, with emissions from the power station likely to add going forward, also with Centrica B which was yet to be built. The Environmental Health Officer explained that these were national infrastructure projects over which the Council had no control.

Councillor Kemp asked how the Council could reduce emissions going forward. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the first stage would be to look at the Council's carbon footprint and then the District impact. Consideration would need to be given to what the Council could control and influence.

Councillor Kemp referred to the King's Lynn Transport Study and asked why the Council was not considering more park and ride facilities. The Environmental Health Manager commented that park and ride was being looked at as part of the study. A car parking study would also be conducted. The Chair informed Members that they had been invited to a Stakeholders Forum for the King's Lynn Transport Study and the Regeneration and Development Panel would receive another update on the Study.

Councillor Kemp commented that Members needed to be able to influence the Policies and the Environmental Health Manager explained that the Audit would be made available to Councillors and

the Environment and Community Panel would have the opportunity to shape and develop policies and strategies as well as considering and decisions prior to their consideration by the Cabinet.

Councillor Parish addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34. He informed those present that he was a Member of the Single Use Plastics Informal Working Group, which was meeting later in the week. He also was a Member of the Local Plan Task Group and he explained that the reason solar panels were not included on all new builds was because it would make the costs of development too high. He felt that the Council should set an example by considering things such as solar panels on their own housing development.

Councillor Parish also commented that he was the tree warden for Heacham, but did not feel that this was acknowledged by the Council.

RESOLVED: The Panel noted the presentation and that updates would be presented to the Panel as appropriate.

EC33: **CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN**

The Senior Policy and Performance Officer presented the report which introduced the high level draft priorities and objectives for potential inclusion in the Corporate Business Plan. He explained that the Panel would have the opportunity to shape the plan.

Members of the Panel broke into two workshop groups to brainstorm ideas to help inform the Corporate Business Plan. The Senior Policy and Performance Officer collated the suggestions of the Panel and would bring back a more detailed report to the Panel at their next meeting.

RESOLVED: (i) The Panel considered and commented on the draft priorities and objectives.

(ii) The Panel to receive a more detailed report at their next meeting.

EC34: **FOOD HYGIENE UPDATE**

The Environmental Health Manager presented the annual update (as attached).

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

Councillor Mrs Collop referred to the introduction of charges for a re-rating food hygiene inspection. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the Food Standards Agency (FSA) had trialled the introduction of a charge in Wales and established a formula which could be used to calculate cost recovery. The Environmental Health

Manager explained that this was the formula which had been used in calculating the fee that the Council would charge. She explained that more information was available in the Delegated Decision report which introduced the charge.

Councillor Bubb commented that he had a problem in that the charge was fixed. He felt that it should be on a sliding scale dependent on the size of the business. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the FSA had said that it would be too burdensome on Councils to have a sliding scale and no other Local Authority calculated their charges in this way.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor Devereux explained that he had been through the process for charging with officers and the Cabinet and in looking at the data, if a sliding scale, dependent on the size of the business was used, it would only make a small difference as other considerations would have to be taken into account, for example the distance travelled to reach the premises.

Councillor Bullen asked what effect Brexit would have on export certificates. The Environmental Health Manager explained that it was difficult to know the impact, but contingencies were in place.

Councillor Kemp referred to the re-rating charges and commented that the cost to be charged by the Council was higher than some others. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the formula used was based on hourly rates and also considered travel time and distance.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

EC35: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

The following items were raised:

- Councillor Kemp referred to a scheme in Hunstanton being led by Councillor Beal regarding recycling packaging from products. The Vice Chair, Councillor Bower commented that she was aware of this project and commended it. The Panel agreed that this should be promoted where possible and it was suggested that an item be included in a future edition of the Members Bulletin.
- The Disability Champion update scheduled for December would slip as Councillor Bambridge had only just been appointed into the role.
- Councillor Kemp agreed to write an article for the Members Bulletin to update Members on the work of the Norfolk County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to which she had been appointed to by the Panel.

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

EC36: **FUTURE MEETING START TIMES**

The Panel discussed the start time of future meetings.

RESOLVED: The Panel agreed that future meetings would start at 6.00pm, with the exception of the meeting scheduled on 15th October 2019, which would likely start at 5.00pm due to the amount of business on the agenda.

EC37: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel would be held on 15th October 2019 (time to be advised), in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.

The meeting closed at 7.21 pm