

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**GOVERNANCE TASK GROUP**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Governance Task Group held on Wednesday, 4th September, 2019 at 2.00 pm in the Meeting Room 2-1 - Second Floor, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn

PRESENT:

Councillors J Collop, I Devereux, A Kemp, B Long, G Middleton and J Moriarty

Officers - T Huggins - EELGA, R Harding, L Gore, D Gates and S Winter

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED: That Councillor I Devereux be appointed Chair of the Task Group and Councillor J Moriarty was appointed Vice-Chair.

2 MEMBERS PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34

None

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4 INTRODUCTION OF EELGA REPRESENTATIVE - TERRY HUGGINS

Ray Harding introduced Terry Huggins from the EELGA who was acting as an advisor to the Council to facilitate the discussions on governance models available for the Council to consider. Mr Huggins was previously the Chief Executive of Breckland and South Holland Councils.

5 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for the Task Group had been agreed by the three group leaders and were included with the agenda. The Task Group noted them.

In discussing the attendance of members of the Task Group the issue of substitutes was raised and it was agreed that members would not generally send a substitute if they were not able to attend as the group felt that a sub would not be as well informed as members of the group.

6 GOVERNANCE MODEL - REVIEW PLAN - REPORT FROM TERRY HUGGINS EELGA

Mr Huggins presented his report which explained that the Council had a Code of Corporate Governance. A revision to this was being recommended to Council on 5th September 2019. It set the parameters which would guide the review.

He explained that the review was about the model of providing governance. There was no single model which was considered best for delivering good governance. The law provided for three basic models and there were any number of variations of these basic models and at least one example of a hybrid version.

The Task Group was reminded that the model of governance did not of itself ensure good or poor governance of the Council but was about behaviours, practices and policies. The aim of the review was to consider how the existing governance model aids the Council to achieve its adopted Code of Good Governance and where it might be hindering this and what improvements were needed.

The report set out a suggested timetable of work for the Group, and a discussion took place on whether to look at areas of governance before other sections of work. It was suggested that those structures which had already been discounted would not then involve site visits.

It was suggested that as the members of the group had read the background information it could come up with what was working well or not, however Mr Huggins explained that he was trying to prevent members making their mind up in the early stages before looking at what models were available.

The timetable suggested an all members stakeholder meeting to be held in November, task groups monthly, that suitable authorities for site visits or conference/skype calls would be looked at to take place during December (not restricting it to only Norfolk) and following further Task Group meetings culminating in a further all member seminar to discuss the Task Group's finding and gauge members opinions. Reports would then be submitted through the Councils Panels Cabinet and Council.

It was suggested that officers be engaged in the process to gauge their opinions and was noted that stakeholders and partnerships would be consulted as part of the implementation process. Reference was made to the liaison by the Leader with Hunstanton and Downham Market Town Councils, so it was suggested that a slot in the process could be added for some members of the Task Group to get feedback as ideas developed.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Following liaison regarding dates, the following timetable of dates has been sent out by way of meeting requests. NB: subject to potential disruption in the event a General Election was called:

22 October 2019 – Task Group - 2pm MR 2:1
 5 November 2019 – All member session – 5.30 pm – Town Hall
 19 November 019 – Task Group – 2pm MR 2:1
 9 December 2019 – Task Group – 2pm MR 2:1

Site Visits/skype etc tbc

28 January 2020 – Task Group – 2pm MR 2:1
 26 February 2020 – Task Group – 2pm MR 2:1
 24 March 2020 – All member briefing – 5.30pm – Town Hall

The meeting closed at 2.45 pm