

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**23 January 2020**

### **COUNCILLOR BRIAN LONG – LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES**

For the period 28 November 2019 to 13 January 2020.

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Budget Monitoring:**

The November monitoring report only showed a small variance from expected position. It was however noted, that departments are holding balances for vacant posts / Staff Turnover. I have agreed that these reserves would be better held centrally with departments bidding for additional funding should monies be required for additional staff / replacements. This should be shown within the next monitoring report as a saving.

We are still holding high general fund balances ahead of budget setting for 20/21, this is prudent given the future uncertainty of funding methodology going forward. However we have received confirmation of next year's funding settlement of revenue support grant and rural services delivery grant, these are in line with last year's settlement and slightly more than expected. This makes budgeting for 20/21 marginally better than expected and this budgeting process will see reports to Cabinet and Panels over the next month.

##### **Town Council Liaison Meetings:**

I continue to hold regular meetings with both Downham Market and Hunstanton Town Council Representatives (both Clerks and Councillors) together with local Borough and County Councillors from each area. These meetings are proving to be helpful in understanding needs going forward and problems and how we can help in sorting them out.

##### **Members Training Sessions:**

It is disappointing that some training sessions are not as well supported as they could be. Recent training sessions for Planning and Treasury Management were however better attended. Professional trainers can be expensive however the more members attend the session the unit cost becomes less and allows more to be got out of the training provided. I would urge all councillors to attend training provided to broaden their knowledge even if they are not involved on a panel or committee that deals with the particular subject.

**Management / Senior Officer Team:**

Restructuring of Senior management has now concluded and all Assistant Directors are now in post. A chart is being circulated to members to show who reports to who, and who covers what areas of operation.

**2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

**Norfolk Working Better Together:**

As you will see from my future meetings to be attended it has been agreed by all of Norfolk's Council Leaders to participate in a focus series of meetings to attempt to achieve the best we can from collaboration with each other from Joint Working to Sharing and managing services. This work has evolved over a number of years and the intention is to really get to grips with getting the very best from Local Government. Whilst I was agreeable to partaking in this process I am aware that we currently are in multiple arrangements and it is not intending to unpick these, but more to get the very best we can from working together and explore further collaboration. I will update further once the series of meetings commence over the next few weeks.

**3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

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

- Liaison meetings with Downham Market and Hunstanton Town Councils
- Meetings with Freebridge Community Housing
- Meeting with MD Great Northern Trains
- Homelessness stakeholder meeting
- Water Management Alliance Meeting
- Norfolk Leaders Meeting
- KLFM Young Hero Awards
- Meeting with James Wild MP – Future High Streets / Towns Fund Bid
- Meeting with Labour Group Leader
- Meeting with Representative of KClimate Concern – Earth Hour
- Members training session – Treasury Management
- Consultation Meeting with Non Domestic Ratepayers and Voluntary Sector

To be attended at the time of writing:

- Various meetings for Norfolk Working Better together
- Meeting with KLFC Chairman
- Meeting with Independent Group Leader / Deputy
- Staff Long Service Awards
- Meeting with Council Apprentices for National Apprentice Week.