

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, 8th September, 2020 at 3.00 pm in the Remote Meeting on Zoom and available for the public to view on WestNorfolkBC on You Tube - Zoom and You Tube

PRESENT: Councillors 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 B Long – Leader of the Council

Councillor E Nockolds – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health.

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34: Councillors P Kunes, C Morley, T Parish and A Ryves.

OFFICERS:

Martin Chisholm – Assistant Director

Lorraine Gore – Chief Executive

Ged Greaves – Senior Policy and Performance Officer

Nathan Johnson – Public Open Space Manager

Dave Robson – Environmental Health Manager

Henry Saunders – Climate Change Officer

BY INVITATION: Robin Price – Water Resources East.

EC110: **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair informed the Panel that the meeting was being broadcast live on You Tube. [The recording of the meeting is available here.](#)

EC111: **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There was none.

EC112: **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

EC113: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

EC114: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

EC115: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Kunes – Items EC118, EC119 and EC120.
Councillor Morley – Item EC119.
Councillor Parish – Items EC117, EC118 and EC119
Councillor Ryves – all items.

EC116: **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

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The Panel was informed that EC124: Amendments to the Refuse and Recycling Contract had been withdrawn from the Agenda.

The Chair explained that he had received correspondence which he would forward to the relevant officers. He had also received correspondence from Members regarding the start times of meetings.

EC117: **PRESENTATION FROM WATER RESOURCES EAST**

[Click here to view the You Tube recording of this item.](#)

The Chair welcomed Robin Price from Water Resources East to the meeting.

The Panel was provided with an overview of the work carried out by Water Resources East. A copy of the presentation is attached.

The Chair thanked Robin Price for the update and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Kemp referred to an area east of Harding's Way which could be a potential wetland area. Robin Price explained that he would be interested in hearing about any areas that the Council could put forward as possible wetland areas or reservoirs.

In response to questions from Councillor Squire, Robin Price explained that with regards to develop on flood plain, Water Resources East agreed that it was not good to develop on flood plain area and would work with organisations as appropriate. He also explained that Water Resources East worked with the relevant organisations and landowners to encourage better water quality.

Councillor de Whalley referred to conversion of agricultural land into wetland and Robin Price explained that Water Resources East worked with the relevant Wildlife Trusts on potential projects.

Councillor Morley referred to Environment Agency statistics that in 2040 water would be at a deficit. Robin Price explained that if nothing was done then there would be a deficit, so the time to act was now. He also explained that Water Resources East also worked with water companies regarding the amount of water lost to leaks and it was noted that this region had one of the lowest leakage levels nationally.

In response to a question from Councillor Parish regarding rainwater harvesting, it was explained that this was encouraged where possible. He also referred to wildlife transferal when water was moved, and Robin Price explained that an open water transfer test and various risk assessments were carried out before any water was transferred.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Long explained that he was the Deputy Chair of a branch of ADA and Chair of an Internal Drainage Board. He acknowledged the importance of water management in the area, especially in areas such as Welney. He explained that it was important to have an overarching holistic view to deal with water management schemes. He thanked Robin Price for attending the meeting to provide the Panel with information on the role of his organisation.

In response to a question from the Chair, Robin Price explained that Water Resources East were not a statutory consultee for Planning Applications.

RESOLVED: The information was noted.

EC118: **BALLOON AND LANTERN POLICY**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

The Public Open Space Manager presented the report which was included in the Agenda.

The Chair thanked the Public Open Space Manager for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Squire commented that it was important that the policy applied to all council land, not just for those that hired land/facilities. She also supported the addition of a ban of flying rings on Borough Council beaches. She acknowledged that it would be difficult, but she would like to see fines introduced.

Councillor de Whalley supported the addition of banning flying rings. He also explained that there was a risk of using flying rings near all water courses.

Councillor Kunes explained that he had researched this issue and was now aware of how much of an impact balloons could have on all types of wildlife.

Councillor Bubb commented that 'mass' should be replaced by 'all' with regard to balloon releases. The Public Open Space Manager explained that he could look at the wording. The Assistant Director reminded the Panel that the Council had no enforcement powers in this area, instead the Councils role was to advise, educate and inform. They also needed to be sensitive, but at the same time making sure that the Councils message was well known.

Councillor Bambridge explained that this was a good first step and it should be reviewed in a couple of years time to see if it could be expanded further.

Councillor Parish suggested that a press release be issued to raise public awareness.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Long referred to the sale of balloons on council land. The Assistant Director reminded those present that street traders should have a licence and it would be difficult to restrict the sale of balloons, however it could be included in future Mart agreements if it was something that the Panel wanted to take forward.

It was clarified that 'mass' release referred to more than one balloon.

Councillor Squire explained that the Norfolk County Council Balloon and Lantern Charter website provided information on alternatives to balloon and lantern releases and access to publicity materials.

RESOLVED: The Panel supported the following be recommended to Cabinet:

1. Change the wording in the Code of Conduct to include a ban on mass release of balloons and sky lanterns by anyone on Borough Council land.
2. Include the ban on mass release in the Terms and Conditions of Hire, presently under development.
3. Borough Council to sign up to the Norfolk County Council Balloon and Lantern Release Charter.
4. Provide and promote links to alternatives to the mass release of balloons and sky lanterns such as those provided by the RSPCA.

5. To ban the use of flying rings on Borough Council Beaches and liaise with the friends of Horsey Seals to encourage public education including retailers.
6. To establish a Code of Conduct for the ban on flying rings.

EC119: **CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

The Environmental Health Manager presented the draft Climate Change Policy.

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

Councillor Kemp proposed that an Informal Working Group be set up so that Members could input into the commitments being put forward. This was seconded by Councillor de Whalley.

In response to questions from Councillor Kemp, the Environmental Health Manager explained that the Panel was being presented with the Policy and the Strategy and Action Plan would follow once the Policy had been adopted and this is where specifics would be included. He referred to the Green Infrastructure Group which were assisting with development of the Strategy and flood risk was more of a planning issue so should be raised through the Local Plan.

Councillor Squire referred to the wording 'adapting' within the policy and commented that it should be amended to 'preparing' in order to be more proactive.

Councillor Morley commented that the Policy should recognise the action that the Council had already taken and felt that the Policy should make more of a commitment rather than just identifying, understanding and reviewing. The Environmental Health Manager explained that there would be an action plan and strategy which would provide more details and provide detailed equality impact assessments.

Councillor de Whalley commented that the Policy needed further development and asked for further clarification of certain items and definitions within the Policy document.

In response to a query from Councillor Bambridge it was explained that currently the Policy was programmed for review every three years. Councillor Bambridge also commented that it was important to get public involvement in the strategy and action plan.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Bower commented that there should be a preamble in the Policy to promote what the Council had already done to address Climate Change.

Councillor Bullen commented that it was important that work was carried out with other organisations, neighbours and Norfolk County Council.

The Panel discussed the proposal put forward regarding the creation of an Informal Working Group. Concern was expressed that there had been no Member involvement in the creation of the Policy and that Members should have the opportunity to input into the action plan and strategy.

Councillor Kunes asked for clarification on what the role of the Informal Working Group as he felt that it was important that adoption of the Climate Change Policy happened as soon as possible so that the next stage of work could be carried out.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Long reminded Members that a Climate Change Policy had been presented at the request of the Council, following a Notice of Motion which had been referred to Cabinet and would be going back to Council. Cabinet had requested that the Policy be created, and the Leader stressed that it was important not to delay adoption of this Policy as it was vitally important to all. He did not want formation of an Informal Working Group to cause a delay in this. He commented that once the Policy had been adopted then the Panel could have input into the action plan and strategy.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Panel recommend to Cabinet that the Climate Change Policy be adopted.
2. That an Informal Working Group be set up to monitor the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

EC120: **AIR QUALITY MONITORING - ANNUAL REPORT**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

The Environmental Health Manager presented the Air Quality Monitoring Annual Update.

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

Councillor Morley asked if lockdown had positively impacted air quality and it was explained that there had been some reductions, and these would be analysed. Councillor Morley also commented that plans for

Southgates could have an impact on air quality on London Road. The Environmental Health Manager explained that there had been improvements in this area, but nothing would be revoked prematurely. The Action Plan would also be monitored and amended if required in relation to the King's Lynn Transport Strategy.

Councillor de Whalley referred to monitoring on PM2.5 particles and calibration of equipment to ensure recordings were accurate. The Environmental Health Manager referred to the annual report which was available on the Borough Council's website. He also explained that there was quality control and assurance in place.

In response to a question from Councillor Bubb, the Environmental Health Manager explained that background maps were used to measure background levels. He also provided information on the monitoring carried out and transboundary pollution.

Councillor Bambridge referred to HGV and buses in the town centre and the impact this could have on air quality.

Councillor Kemp asked about industrial sources and diesel cars and felt that PM2.5 particles should be monitored and asked if funding was available to provide this service. The Environmental Health Manager explained that he had applied for funding in the past but had not qualified. Councillor Kemp referred to bus movement and it was explained that this would be looked at as part of the King's Lynn Transport Study.

The Environmental Health Manager encouraged Members to view the full report which was available on the Borough Council's website at https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20137/air_quality/169/air_quality_information and showed the location of monitoring stations.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

EC121: **SCRUTINY AND THE EXECUTIVE PROTOCOL**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

The draft Scrutiny and the Executive Protocol was presented to the Panel.

RESOLVED: The Panel recommended that the Scrutiny and Executive Protocol be adopted by the Council.

EC122: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

RESOLVED: The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

EC123: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel would be held on 20th October 2020.

The Chair requested that Members of the Panel forward him their comments and views on the start times of meetings.

EC124: **EXEMPT AMENDMENTS TO REFUSE AND RECYCLING CONTRACT (FOOD WASTE)**

This item had been withdrawn from the Agenda.

The meeting closed at 5.45 pm