

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**

**CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel held on  
Tuesday, 1st February, 2022 at 4.30 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall,  
Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Moriarty (Chair)  
Councillors B Ayres, J Collop, I Devereux, J Kirk, C Morley, S Nash,  
E Nockolds, C Rose, A Ryves and D Tyler

**Portfolio Holders:**

Councillor Mrs A Dickinson – Finance  
Councillor B Long – Corporate Services (Finance)  
Councillor G Middleton – Business, Culture and Heritage

**Under Standing Order 34:**

Councillor M de Whalley  
Councillor A Ryves (Zoom)

**Officers:**

Alexa Baker, Monitoring Officer  
Becky Box, Assistant Director, Central Services/Management Team  
Representative  
Michelle Drewery, Assistant Director, Resources (Zoom)  
Duncan Hall, Assistant Director, Housing, Regeneration and Place  
(Zoom)  
Honor Howell, Assistant to the Chief Executive (Zoom)  
Nathan Johnson, Public Open Space Manager (Zoom)  
Karl Patterson, Housing Development Officer (Zoom)  
Wendy Vincent, Democratic Services Officer

CP80 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Lawrence and  
C Manning.

CP81 **MINUTES**

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The minutes of the Corporate Performance Panel held on 8 December  
2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CP82 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs E Nockolds declared an interest as a Member of the  
Alive Management Board of Directors.

CP83 **URGENT BUSINESS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7**

There was no urgent business.

CP84 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor A Ryves was present under Standing Order 34.

CP85 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no Chair's Correspondence.

CP86 **REVIEW OF WASTE COLLECTION CONTRACT PERFORMANCE - STAGE 1**

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The Chair advised that this item would be deferred to a future meeting, date to be advised.

CP87 **SUMMARY OF 2020/2021 OUTTURN POSITION OF ALL COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES**

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The Assistant Director, Resources set out in summary the outturn for 2020/2021 for West Norfolk Housing Company, West Norfolk Property Company and the interim update for Alive West Norfolk.

The Panel was informed that West Norfolk Housing Company Ltd Accounts had been audited and published to Companies House. The Company achieved a surplus after taxation of £211, 594 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The Panel was also informed that West Norfolk Property Company Ltd draft accounts were with the Accountants for preparation. The Company had only been actively trading for four months of the year and provisionally reports a surplus after tax of £8,014.

The Assistant Director, Resources advised that Alive West Norfolk draft accounts were with the Accountants for audit which was expected to be completed in January

The Assistant Director, Housing, Regeneration and Place advised that he was a Director both West Norfolk Housing and West Norfolk Property Limited and there were also other Directors of those companies present in the room on via zoom.

The Assistant Director, Housing, Regeneration and Place provided background information as to why West Norfolk Housing and West Norfolk Limited companies were set up.

Housing Development Officer provided an overview of the performance against the broad objectives for West Norfolk Housing and West Norfolk Property Limited (a copy of the presentation is attached).

The Assistant Director Resources, Assistant Director, Housing, Regeneration and Place and the Housing Development Officer responded to questions and comments from the Panel and Members attending under Standing Order 34 in relation to both West Norfolk Housing and West Norfolk Property Limited as set out below:

- Contract with Broadland Housing Association which guaranteed a fixed income for the Borough Council.
- Role and differentiation of West Norfolk Housing and West Norfolk Property Limited.
- Right to Buy Scheme/Right to Acquire Scheme available to tenants.
- Review on governance of the council owned companies.
- Advice from tax advisers on tax efficiencies.
- Benefits of setting up the companies to provide emergency accommodation when required.
- Provision of a good standard of private rented accommodation.
- Importance of transparency when setting up the council owned companies.
- Future scrutiny role of council owned companies.
- Councillor involvement with council owned companies.
- Sustainability/regulation/assurance of West Norfolk Housing Company and objectives.
- Improvements for state of the Private Rented Sector.

In response to questions from the Chair regarding settlements received from Central Government and payment of Corporation Tax, Councillor Middleton, the Portfolio Holder for Business, Culture and Heritage explained that West Norfolk Housing Company was set up as a housing association not for profit which had different tax benefits associated to it than West Norfolk Property which is a limited co, which the council is the 100% shareholder due to pay its corporation tax on money earned over course of year. If the Borough Council decided to retain the ownership of properties within the council's assets as opposed to a different company it would still be due to pay the same rate of tax as income through revenue of that.

Councillor Mrs Dickinson, Portfolio Holder Finance added that if the council owned and operated its own housing stock as it did historically there would be a requirement to operate a housing revenue account which was complex. The Portfolio Holder for Finance commented that

with the operation of properties historically there was a Right To Buy Scheme but with the regime with companies there was no such scheme.

The Assistant Director, Housing, Regeneration and Place explained that with West Norfolk Housing there was a particular technical reason for the corporation tax liability which was being addressed to limit liability. With regard to West Norfolk Property Limited the council needed to ensure that due taxes were paid and that any approach to it involved ensuring that the Borough Council minimised liability and ensure that all taxes due were paid and this was explored in the Business Plan.

Councillor Middleton, Portfolio Holder for Business, Culture and Heritage made an overall comment and outlined the further opportunities/benefits that the council could unlock through having the two companies.

Councillor Morley commented that it would be helpful to all Members to be provided with a decision logic tree which explained the roles and benefits of the two companies council owned companies to accompany the governance report which was endorsed by the Panel.

The Assistant Director, Resources provided clarification In response to questions from the Chair regarding corporation tax at 4.1 of the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Ryves whether the Borough Council was subject to tax if it owned house, the Assistant Director, Resources undertook to provide a respond direct to Councillor Ryves.

The Assistant Director, Resources reiterated that the Council had a Right to Buy Scheme as had been covered by the Housing Development Officer.

The Chair thanked officers for attending and providing the Panel with an interesting and informative presentation and portfolio holders for their contribution to the discussion.

**RESOLVED:** The Corporate Performance Panel noted the outturn for West Norfolk Housing Company, the provisional outturn for West Norfolk Property Company and the interim update for Alive West Norfolk.

CP88

**REPORT OF THE INFORMAL WORKING GROUP - REVIEW OF THE UNREASONABLE COMPLAINANTS POLICY**

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The Monitoring Officer presented the report which set out the work of the Informal Working Group (IWG) established to consider Councillor

Nash's proposal to change the Unreasonably Complainants Policy so that the Panel may consider whether to recommend some or all of the proposed changes to Cabinet.

The Monitoring Officer outlined the key issues and options considered as set out in the report.

The Chair thanked Councillors Ayres for chairing the IWG and colleagues for the work undertaken

Councillor Ayres, Chair of the IWG, commented that the changes clarified and simplified the document and made it more user friendly.

Councillor Long, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services addressed the Panel and commented that from a Cabinet point of view after seeing the report work of the IWG, if any recommendations from the Panel mirror those contained within the document, personally Councillor Long could see no problem with the proposed changes and undertook to discuss with Cabinet colleagues and the Monitoring Officer separately.

The Chair thanked Councillor Long for his comments.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Ryves addressed the Panel and commented that from the documentation it appeared that the role of Members had been reduced markedly. In response, the Monitoring Officer explained that the role of Members had been increased. There had been a number of removals in terms of consultees to try and streamline the process but there was the inclusion of Members at the Appeal stage, by referring the matter to Standards Committee, which would increase Member involvement in the process.

The Chair gave Councillor Ryves assurance that this would enable greater Member involvement that previously.

The Chair proposed that all the changes to the policy set out at Appendices 1 and 4 be accepted by the Panel. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Ayres and after being put to the vote was agreed by the Panel.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel recommended to Cabinet all the proposed changes set out at Appendices 1 and 4 of the report.

CP89

### **CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY**

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The Chair proposed that the Informal Working Group with the current membership and Chair to look at the Corporate Complaints Policy in one meeting via zoom, with support from the Monitoring Officer. The

proposal was seconded by Councillor Ayres and on being put to the vote was agreed by the Panel.

**RESOLVED:** The Informal Working Group undertake a review of the current Corporate Complaints Policy in one meeting via zoom and present any proposed changes to a future meeting of the Panel.

CP90 **IMPROVEMENT IN ATTAINMENT IN WEST NORFOLK - POSITION STATEMENT**

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The Assistant Director, Central Services presented the position statement circulated with the Agenda and explained that it was likely to be 2024 before meaningful data could be presented to the Panel for comparative purposes.

In response to questions from Councillor Devereux regarding the resource involved, whether it was at the same level going forward as in the past and if there were any particular demands the council ought to consider addressing over and above that, the Assistant Director, Central explained that the resource within the team were at the same level but had been used in a different way during the Pandemic. It was further explained that the team was now looking at workloads in relation to attainment and starting to review these alongside the Youth and Retaining Pledge, to ensure the attainment programme complimented that programme, with the aim of having a programme in place to commence with the new academic year in September 2022.

In response to questions from Councillor Nockolds in relation to assistance to age groups, programme and sustainability, the Assistant Director, Resources advised that the focus would be on GCSE students so that these were in the best possible position for transition from secondary school.

The Assistant Director, Central Services explained that there was an issue to address with younger age groups, but that the challenges were significant so focus would be placed on where the council's limited resources could have the biggest impact going forward.

Councillor Morley commented that the Youth and Retaining Pledge was a good idea but was underfunded and expressed concern that after reading an article earlier that day that Norfolk was not included on the list of 44 investment areas as part of the Levelling Up Fund.

The Chair added that he was conscious that the although the broader sense of education was not within the remit of the Panel, in previous years a NCC officer had presented useful data on attainment to the Panel and asked if there was any mileage in requesting that officer to attend a future meeting to present data on how students were

performing in West Norfolk. In response, the Assistant Director, Central Services undertook to raise this with the NCC officer and explore what data was available that would be useful to the Panel.

**RESOLVED:** 1) The Panel noted the position statement.

2) The Assistant Director, Central Services liaise with the relevant officer at Norfolk County Council to ascertain if there was any meaningful data that could be presented to the Panel at a future meeting.

CP91 **CABINET FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

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The Chair referred to an article published in relation to the local MP and highlighted the importance of the Panel calling in items to scrutinise.

The Chair invited the Panel to forward any items for consideration for the future work programme.

Councillor Ayres asked if the Panel should look at the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Procedures and Conditions Review. In response, the Democratic Services Officer commented that she would check if this was on the Environment and Community Work Programme and respond direct to Councillor Ayres.

CP92 **WORK PROGRAMME**

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The Chair invited the Panel to forward any items for consideration on the future work programme.

Town Deal Board - the Chair provided feedback from a meeting with the Chief Executive and explained that an all Member Briefing Session on the make-up of the Board, their Governance Arrangements and processes be arranged at a date to be advised.

CP93 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel will be held on 3 March 2022 at 4.30 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.

CP94 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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**RESOLVED:** That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CP95 **EXEMPT REPORT: PRESENTATION ON BOROUGH COUNCIL FLEET MANAGEMENT**

The Public Open Space Manager gave a presentation and responded to questions and comments from the Panel.

**RESOLVED:** The Public Open Space Manager be invited to attend the meeting of the Panel on 3 March for a question and answer session.

CP96 **EXEMPT REPORT: KLIC REPAYMENT PLAN**

An update be obtained from the Assistant Director, Property and Projects and emailed to the Panel.

CP97 **EXEMPT REPORT: TOWN DEAL BOARD**

The Chair provided feedback from a meeting with the Chief Executive and explained that an all Member Briefing Session on the make-up of the Board, their Governance Arrangements and processes be arranged at a date to be advised.

**The meeting closed at 6.25 pm**



# Performance overview for Housing Companies

511

Karl Patterson  
Duncan Hall  
1<sup>st</sup> February 2022



# West Norfolk Housing

## Background

### Mission Statement

- Work with the Council to address gaps in provision for those in greatest need, particularly vulnerable homeless households
- Ensure investment opportunities are taken in our area
- Innovate and deliver where others may not

512



# West Norfolk Housing

## Business Plan objectives

- ***“The delivery of a new temporary accommodation facility in King’s Lynn”***
  - Delivered in February 2019
  - Accommodates 7 homeless families
- ***“Developing 12 new build affordable housing units on 3 identified Council owned sites in King’s Lynn”***
  - Not progressed due to planning and viability issues

513



## Business Plan objectives

- ***“A programme of developer completed section 106 affordable homes acquisitions – arising from working with the Council on its major housing development programme – to be acquired by West Norfolk”***
  - 31 properties acquired to date – 24 for rent and 7 shared ownership
  - A further 16 to be delivered at NORA 4
- ***“Act as a partner to the council to ensure no opportunities to invest in affordable housing are lost”***
  - Worked with the Council to deliver Emergency Accommodation to rough sleepers throughout the pandemic
  - In discussions with local charity about assisting with an existing specialist housing scheme
  - S106 fall back



# West Norfolk Property

## Business Plan Objectives

- ***“Increase the supply of high quality rented homes to meet the needs of a growing population in the King’s Lynn & West Norfolk area”***
  - 27 properties let since November 2020. Further 52 to be delivered on NORA 4
  - 3 year tenancies
  - Management and maintenance contracted to Touchstone Property Management in November 2021
- ***“Encourage quality improvements in the general private rented sector offer in the local area”***
  - More likely as portfolio increases
- ***“Offer diversity in tenure by supporting new private rented sector housing”***
  - Demand to date has been very high indicating shortage within sector



# West Norfolk Property

## Business Plan Objectives

- ***“Maximise profit and income back to the Council to create revenue streams that can support the Borough Council’s other wider priorities”***
  - Quality offer and long term tenancies expected to reduce turnover
- ***“Help promote employment and economic growth”***
  - Helps the council to accelerate delivery

516



