

BROADLAND CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Broadland Cabinet of Broadland District Council, held on Tuesday, 13 June 2023 at 6.00 pm.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: S Holland (Chairman), N Harpley (Vice-Chair), S Beadle, M Booth, J Davis, S Riley and D Roper

Officers in Attendance: T Holden (Managing Director), D Lorimer (Director of Resources), J Sutterby (Director of People and Communities), P Courtier (Director of Place), E Hodds (Chief of Staff), M Pursehouse (Assistant Director of Individuals and Families), R Fincham (Assistant Director of Finance), H Mellors (Assistant Director of Planning), C Lawrie (Assistant Director of Transformation and ICT/Digital), P Harris (Place Shaping Team Manager), Banham, R Dunsire (Strategic Housing and Independence Senior Manager), C White (Democratic Services Manager) and J Overy (Democratic Services Officer)

Also in Attendance: Councillors: S Catchpole, S Clancy, J Coppelstone, L Douglass, J Emsell, K Kelly, M Murrell, P Newstead, N Starling and F Whymark

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr D Roper declared an 'other interest' in respect of minute number 4 - Greater Norwich Local Plan: Proposed Examination Submission on the Requirement for Gypsy and Traveller Pitches and Allocation of Sites for Gypsy and Traveller Pitches, as two of the areas concerned fell within his County Council ward.

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

10. STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE, RISK AND FINANCE REPORT FOR QUARTER 4 2022/23

The Assistant Director for ICT/Digital and Transformation introduced the performance section of the report, which provided an overview of the Quarter 4 Council performance against the key outcomes set out in the Delivery Plan for 2022/23.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 3.30 which showed the overall performance against targets at year end. This showed that 27 delivery measures were Green, having met or exceeded the targets set within the Delivery Plan. Four were Amber, having not met their targets by minimal amounts but were within the tolerances set.

One measure was rated Red (staff retention), having not met its target and was outside of the tolerances set. This would be subject to close monitoring by the Management Team.

Members were also asked to note areas where performance had been particularly strong, such as supporting vulnerable residents and businesses across the District.

The Assistant Director for Finance introduced the finance section of the report. Members were advised that the Revenue Dashboard overview at paragraph 3.6 showed an overspend on core services of £452,000. The overspend was mainly across two key areas: temporary accommodation and cost increases in staff and fuel under the Waste Contract.

However, there had also been a significant increase in the Council's investment income with a favourable variance of £957,803 over the figure anticipated when the budget had been set. This additional income had offset the overspend on core services and meant that overall the Council would be able to add to its reserves this year by around £435,000.

There was one request in the report to carry forward £60,360 of the underspend to employ a licensing contractor in 2023-24 to ensure enough resource was available to meet the high level of demand for licensing work in the current year.

The paper also reported on the Capital Programme, which showed a spend of £14.4m in 2022-23. Key areas of this had been investment in the Broadland Food Innovation Centre, as well as the purchase of the Horizon Building. Many of the projects in the Capital Programme were long-term projects that took some time to come to fruition and, therefore, it was requested that £4.3m of unspent capital funding be carried forward into 2023/24.

A member noted the very healthy financial position of the Council, but that the budget for temporary accommodation had been exceeded by £238,000 which she saw as the biggest risk to the Council's finances and something that urgently needed addressing. She also suggested that some of the items listed in the Delivery Plan had been listed under the wrong Portfolios and she also expressed concern that transformation projects and programmes (MT23) had been reassigned as ongoing business as usual, rather than being Portfolio Holder led.

In response to some further points raised by members the Leader noted that the

Overview and Scrutiny Committee had already debated transferring the £435,000 positive variance in investment income to the Temporary Accommodation Reserve and that the proposal had been lost and that Cabinet was not the forum for this issue to be revisited.

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development thanked officers for an excellent report and noted that it provided a baseline for the new administration to use when drafting its new Delivery Plan, which would be done in a measured and considered way to ensure the ongoing high performance of the Council.

In respect of a query about feedback from staff since they had been relocated in the Horizon Centre, the Managing Director advised members that feedback had been extremely positive; staff were enjoying the ease of access, the open office environment and the vibrancy and buzz in the building. Both long-term staff and those that had been newly appointed had been wholesome in their praise for the environment that we now worked in.

He emphasised that it was very early days and staff would learn how to use the building and it would naturally adapt and change as this process went on, but the initial feedback remained extremely positive and the Team who had worked very hard to make sure that the move had been as seamless as possible were to be congratulated. More feedback was looked forward to in the next staff survey, but in the interim, there were two large white boards in the office where people were encouraged to write down anything that they felt was not right or any areas where things might be improved, so the Council was responding in real time to ensure that the Horizon Building was the best office environment it could be.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance commended the report and added that the new administration would be providing further enhancement to its offer to residents in terms of well-being and community support. Therefore, given the favourable financial position of the Council he proposed increasing the member ward grant from the £500 to £1,000 and to establish a new £50,000 Community Grant Fund.

The proposal was duly seconded by the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Housing.

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development noted that any underspend in the member ward fund would be added to the Community Grant Fund, so this money would not be lost if not spent by a ward member.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance also confirmed that temporary accommodation would be considered as part of the ongoing review of Council services.

RESOLVED

1. To endorse the revenue and capital position for year-end (variance details in Appendix 1).
2. To approve the revenue and capital slippage requests for use in 2023/24.

3. To endorse the 2022/23 performance (detailed in Appendix 2).
4. To endorse the current position with respect to risks and agree the actions to support risk mitigation (detailed in Appendix 3).
5. To endorse the updates to the Delivery Plan for year-end (detailed in Appendix 4).

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

1. The re-purposing of part of the underspend to establish an increased member ward budget of £1,000 per member, and to establish a budget of £50,000 for a newly formed Community Action Fund Panel.
2. The introduction of a Community Action Fund Panel, with the Terms of Reference to be delegated to the Chief of Staff (Monitoring Officer) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Leader.

Reasons for Decision

To utilise the favourable year-end financial position to increase the member ward budget and establish a new Community Action Fund Panel.

11. GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN: PROPOSED EXAMINATION SUBMISSION ON THE REQUIREMENT FOR GYPSY AND TRAVELLER PITCHES AND ALLOCATION OF SITES FOR GYPSY AND TRAVELLER PITCHES

The Greater Norwich Planning Policy Manager introduced the report, which proposed the allocation of Gypsy and Traveller sites to the Independent Inspectors of the Greater Norwich Local Plan in order to ensure that the Plan met its legislative, regulatory and policy requirements.

Members were asked to note the following amendments and updates to the report:

An amendment to recommendation 5 was proposed to include:**additional** focused consultation sites, to ensure the Greater Norwich Local Plan is found sound through its examination. This would provide clarity that only three sites from the current additional focused consultation would be considered by the recommendation.

Paragraph 3.15 had been revised to confirm that all consultation feedback had been taken into account.

The first bullet point in paragraph 3.15 was amended to confirm 2, rather than 3, additional pitches at the Woodyard site in Foulsham.

Appendix A was amended to delete site GNLP5005 (2 pitches at Strayground Lane), which was now included in site GNLP5028 (Site at Strayground Lane).

Members were advised that a consultation on potential sites had taken place

between January and March 2023 for allocation.

The Greater Norwich Local Plan had a requirement to provide a total of 52 pitches by the end of the Plan in 2038 and more importantly to provide 30 pitches over the current five-year period which ends in March 2027.

The report proposed allocating 35 pitches to 2027 through the allocation of the deliverable sites in Stratton Strawless, Carleton Rode, Foulsham, Wymondham and Cawston and ten developable pitches from 2028 to 2032 at the Ketteringham Depot. The report also anticipated a further 12 windfall sites through the approval of planning applications that had not been previously allocated in the Local Plan. These allocations would place Greater Norwich in a good position to meet its requirement for the supply of pitches.

An additional focused consultation on sites for Gypsies and Travellers in Foulsham, Guestwick and Hevingham was being held from 5 June to 3 July 2023. It was hoped that further hearing sessions would be held with the Inspectors in late July that would lead to consulting on modifications to the Plan during the autumn and, providing that proceeded satisfactory the Council should be in a position to adopt the Greater Norwich Local Plan in the early part of 2024.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised Cabinet that the majority of the Committee had agreed with the proposals in the report. However, one member had expressed concern that local opinion in opposition to one of the sites had been ignored. He added that it was hoped that residents would feel that their views would have influence over any decisions arising from the current consultation.

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development concurred with this view and asked officers to ensure that the consultation process was conducted rigorously.

Following a show of hands, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To submit to the Independent Inspectors of the Greater Norwich Local Plan that:

1. the Greater Norwich Local Plan should include a minimum requirement of 52 Gypsy and Traveller pitches to meet the full ethnic need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation from 2022 to 2038.
2. in order to ensure the minimum requirement for Gypsy and Traveller pitches between 2022 and 2032 is met, that the Greater Norwich Local Plan should allocate 45 Gypsy and Traveller pitches comprising:
 - a. 35 deliverable pitches from 2022 to 2027 through the allocation of the sites in Stratton Strawless, Carleton Rode, Foulsham, Wymondham and Cawston

and,

- b. 10 developable pitches from 2028 to 2032 at Ketteringham Depot
3. the analysis of historic windfall demonstrates that at least a further 12 windfall pitches can reasonably be expected to meet unmet needs to 2038;

and,
4. the proposed main and additional modifications to the plan set out in appendix 1 which provide the policy changes to enable recommendations 1 and 2 should be considered through the plan's examination.

and,
5. To delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Planning, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, to negotiate further modifications as may be necessary, which may include proposals to allocate one or more of the additional focused consultation sites, to ensure the Greater Norwich Local Plan is found sound through its examination.

Reasons for Decision

To ensure that the Greater Norwich Local Plan met its legislative, regulatory and policy requirements and could be found sound through its Examination in Public.

12. NORFOLK STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK: PLANNING IN HEALTH PROTOCOL

The Place Shaping Manager introduced the report, which sought the endorsement of the Planning in Health Protocol. The Protocol set out how relevant NHS organisations, public health and local planning authorities would jointly consult to ensure that health considerations were adequately accounted for in plan making and the determination of planning applications.

Members were reminded that the Council, as a Planning Authority, had a duty to cooperate on planning matters with other local Planning Authorities on cross boundary strategic issues and that a large part of the work was discharged through the Norfolk Strategic Planning Forum (NSPF).

The NSPF had published an updated Planning in Health Protocol which Cabinet were asked to note and endorse.

The changes to the revised Protocol were mainly procedural in nature and referred to engagement between planning authorities and health bodies and other partners and covered plan making, pre-application discussions, outline planning stages and detailed permission stages.

A Healthy Planning checklist appended to the Protocol was intended to provide a practical tool to assist developers when preparing development proposals and local planning authorities in policy making and in the application process. It also provided a framework for Norfolk County Council Public Health when considering health and wellbeing impacts of development plans and planning applications.

Members were advised that the Protocol had been considered by South Norfolk Council's Cabinet on 12 June 2023, who had asked that to go back to the NSPF for some further work to be done in respect of greater engagement with primary care providers.

Despite this reservation from South Norfolk, members were reminded that the Protocol had been endorsed by Norfolk's Health and Wellbeing Board District Council Subcommittee and by Norfolk's Members' Planning Forum and it was, therefore, recommended for endorsement by Cabinet today.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised the meeting that there was unanimity in the Committee in support of the Protocol, but that there had been concern expressed in respect of the capacity and provision of GPs surgeries. He suggested that it would be beneficial to have some performance measures to accompany the Protocol, so that the delivery of the aims in it could be clearly assessed.

The Leader noted that it would be interesting to see how the Protocol would be developed further in the future.

Following a show of hands, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

1. To notes the new approach to embedding health and wellbeing in spatial planning, and
2. Endorse the revised Planning in Health Protocol.

Reasons for decision

To ensure that health considerations were adequately accounted for in plan making and in the determination of planning applications.

13. FORWARD PLAN

In response to a query the Chief of Staff (Monitoring Officer) confirmed that she would be consulting with the Leader in respect of the alignment of Portfolios and other constitutional matters in due course.

Cabinet noted the Forward Plan.

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business because otherwise, information which is exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as

amended by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, would be disclosed to them.

15. TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PURCHASE

The Strategic Housing and Independence Senior Manager introduced the exempt report, which set out the proposed purchase of temporary accommodation to address the increase in housing demand in the District.

Following extensive discussion, as set out in the exempt minute it was

RESOLVED

To agree the recommendations, as set out in the exempt report.

Reasons for decision

To mitigate the demand for temporary accommodation and implement a financially viable scheme.

16. EXEMPT MINUTES

The exempt minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 18 April 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

(The meeting concluded at 7.16 pm)

Chairman