CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 5 December 2016 at 9.00 a.m.

Members Present:

Cabinet: Councillors J Fuller (Chairman), Y Bendle, M Edney, L Hornby, C Hudson and K Mason Billig

Non-Appointed: Councillors D Bills, C Foulger, M Gray, N Legg, T Lewis and M Wilby

Officers in Attendance: The Chief Executive (S Dinneen), the Director of Business Development (D Lorimer), the Director of Community Services (P Boyce), the Director of Growth and Localism (T Horspole), the Community Capacity Manager (K Gallagher), the Planning Policy Manager (A Nicholls), the Senior Conservation and Design Officer (C Bennett), the Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer (K Mitchell), the Policy Officer – Revenues and Benefits (P Chapman), and the National Management Trainee (S ???)

2501 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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<th>Member</th>
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<td>Cllr J Fuller</td>
<td>The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register (minute 2506)</td>
<td>Member of the CIL Review Panel</td>
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2502 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on Monday 24 October, and Thursday 17 November 2016 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

2503 URGENT ITEM – COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2017/18

The Subject of the Decision

The Chairman confirmed that this item was to be considered as a matter of urgency, due to the statutory requirement to annually adopt a new Council Tax Support Scheme, and the timescales involved. Members noted that the Cabinet would be making recommendations to the Council, to be considered at its meeting on 12 December.

Cllr Y Bendle introduced the report, explaining that this was the first year where no amendments to the scheme were proposed. Officers believed the current scheme to be still fit for purpose and appropriate in the current financial climate.

During discussion, members noted that calls upon the discretionary fund, were sometimes an indication that changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme might be required. The Policy Officer confirmed that there had been no common themes to evidence that changes were required for 2017/18.

The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL makes a Council Tax Support Scheme for 2017/18 to operate in the same way as the 2016/17 Scheme.
The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that a fair scheme is in place, which is appropriate to the current climate.

Other Options Considered

None

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which sought Cabinet endorsement of an officer response to Easton Parish Council, regarding a draft Neighbourhood Plan for the parish.

The Planning Policy Manager outlined the key points of his report, explaining that whilst officers were broadly supportive of the objectives of the Plan, some amendments had been proposed.

Members noted that some of the recommended amendments related to specific policies, and that a detailed prioritised list of the desired infrastructure for Easton, had also been suggested. Cabinet agreed that the Plan sought positive outcomes for current and future residents, however, did require more focus on infrastructure and delivery.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To endorse the report as the response to the Easton Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Consultation, specifically noting the points raised in section 4 of the report.
The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the Plan is effective in terms of delivery and is in line with the vision and objectives of the community.

Other Options Considered

None.

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS AND BOUNDARY AMENDMENTS FOR HARLESTON, HINGHAM, AND LODDON AND CHEDGRAVE CONSERVATION AREAS

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Senior Conservation and Design Officer, which proposed amended conservation area boundaries, and conservation area appraisals and management guidelines, for Harleston, Hingham, Loddon and Chedgrave conservation areas.

The Senior Conservation and Design Officer presented his report, outlining the proposed changes to boundaries, and key consultation responses. Members noted the feedback received from the Planning Policy and Regulation Policy Committee.

The Decision

RESOLVED: 1. TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL approves and adopts the amended conservation area boundaries for Harleston, Hingham and Loddon and Chedgrave Conservation areas;
2. TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL approves and adopts the conservation area appraisals and conservation management guidelines for the conservation areas of Harleston, Hingham, and Loddon and Chedgrave.
The Reasons for the Decision

To support the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

Other Options Considered

None

2506 THE SELF-BUILD AND CUSTOM HOUSEBUILDING REGISTER

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer and the Planning Policy Manager, which sought Cabinet approval, with regard to the administration of a register of people wishing to build their own homes in South Norfolk.

The Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer outlined the salient points of his report.

Members noted the feedback received from the Housing, Wellbeing and Early Intervention Policy Committee, and Cllr Y Bendle explained that the Committee had contemplated introducing a registration fee, however it had not been felt appropriate at this stage, as fees were not being introduced elsewhere in Norfolk. It was noted that there had been more people registering in South Norfolk, than elsewhere in the county. The Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer added that an appropriate fee to cover costs, if introduced, would be £70.00.

Referring to the CIL exemption on self-build properties, some members expressed concern that the system was open to abuse. Cllr Lewis explained that he did support the principle of self-build, suggesting that the scheme could create a large demand, however, he did have some reservations as to how the scheme would work, and he did not support the exemption from CIL.

Cabinet noted that the Government’s Housing White Paper, due out in mid-January 2017, would provide more detail on policy and how the scheme would work in practice.

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The Decision

RESOLVED: To agree that:
1. A registration fee is not introduced, but that the position is reviewed in 12 months’ time;
2. A local connection test is introduced, on the basis of:
   • Having lived in South Norfolk for 6 of the previous 12 months, or
   • Having lived in South Norfolk for 3 of the previous 10 years, or
   • Having a current contract of permanent employment where the job is mostly located in South Norfolk
3. A financial resources test is not introduced.

The Reasons for the Decision

Encouraging housing growth to benefit local people.

Other Options Considered

• To introduce a registration fee
• Not to introduce a local connection test
• To introduce a financial resources test

2507 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Community Capacity Manager, which sought Cabinet approval of the South Norfolk Corporate Social Responsibility Statement, and the Making the Community Your Business document.
Cllr C Hudson introduced the report, explaining that the documents formed a key part of the Council’s Business Plan, and supported growth and prosperity in the District.

The Community Capacity Manager outlined the key elements of her report, explaining that South Norfolk was in an excellent position to lead by example. In response to a query concerning fair wages for employees, she explained that the document did not provide a detailed definitive list for businesses, however, did encourage apprenticeships and learning.

In response to a query concerning the awarding of contracts, the Chief Executive suggested that the document could be fed in to the procurement process, however, stressed that this would not be an overriding factor.

Cabinet members welcomed the approach, but noted that there were a small number of typographical errors which required amendment.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To approve the South Norfolk Corporate Social Responsibility Statement and the Making the Community Your Business document, subject to minor amendments.

The Reasons for the Decision

Encouraging businesses to thrive, whilst maximising the positive impact they have on the community.

Other Options Considered

None
Members noted that this item was deferred to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

CABINET CORE AGENDA

Member noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Chairman reminded members that this was the last Cabinet meeting before Paula Boyce, the Director of Community Services, was to leave the Council to take up a post at the Norfolk Waste Partnership. The Chairman thanked Paula for all that she had done during her time at the Council. Both Cllrs Bendle and Mason Billig referred to her many achievements and the excellent working relationship she held with members. On behalf of the Liberal Democrats, Cllr T Lewis referred to Paula's calm, sensible and helpful approach, and wished her well in her new role.

The Director of Community Services thanked members for their kind words.

(The meeting concluded at 9.56 a.m.)

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Chairman