2212 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following members declared an ‘other’ interest in the matters detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Minute No.</th>
<th>Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Cabinet Members</td>
<td>2216 and 2217</td>
<td>Members declared that they had received lobbying material in respect of Alpington and Yelverton and the Wymondham Rugby Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr T Lewis</td>
<td>2216</td>
<td>Cllr Lewis lives adjacent to one of the proposed sites in Trowse.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2214 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 22 July 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2215 SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES DOCUMENT: PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which sought members’ approval on the contents of the pre-submission version of the Development Management Policies Document before going out to consultation on the soundness and legal conformity of the document, and then being formally submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

Cllr Fuller stressed that the Development Management Policy Document played an important part in the Council’s emerging Local Plan. Alongside the policies of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the document would determine how the Council carried out its development management responsibilities to promote sustainable development. He explained that, alongside the JCS and the NPPF, the document contained appropriate policies to reflect the nature of South Norfolk, and he referred in particular to landscape protection, the protection of strategic gaps, the need for a mix of different housing types and the southern bypass protection zone.

The Director of Growth and Localism stressed the importance of the document and the need for policies to be clear and precise. The Planning Policy Manager added that the document was very specific to South Norfolk and that it complimented, but did not repeat, the policies set out in the JCS and NPPF.

Cllr Wilby thanked staff and members for what had been a lengthy process in reaching the pre-submission stage. Cllr M Gray gave special mention to Cllr D Blake, who had chaired the Local Planning Steering Group and had been instrumental in the development of the document.

The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL:

1. Authorises the Director of Growth and Localism to make any further necessary minor corrections, factual updates, formatting changes and other non – material changes that are identified prior to the publication of Development Management Policies Document;

2. Agrees the publication of the Development Management Policies Document (incorporating any later suggested modifications approved under recommendation 1) for representations to be made by statutory bodies and members of the public, over a 6 week period, in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012; and

3. Authorises the Director of Growth and Localism, in consultation with the Leader and the Environment, Regulation and Planning Policy Committee, to review the Pre-Submission representations made following the close of the representations period, prior to the presentation of the final Submission version to Council in February 2014.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure robust Development Management Policies which are distinctive to the South Norfolk area.

Other Options Considered

- To alter or delete proposed policies
- Not to progress the document through to adoption

2216 SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN: SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES AND ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT: PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which sought Cabinet and Council’s agreement on the contents of the Pre-Submission version of the Site Allocations Document, before going out to consultation on the soundness and legal conformity of the document.

The Chairman outlined the background of the report, explaining that from 1500 sites originally proposed, only approximately 200 remained. The Director of Growth and Localism informed the meeting that the Council had been through 4 rounds of consultation, officers had attended over 60 separate events, with over 4000 attendees. All sites had been considered against a common assessment framework and all reasonable alternatives had been considered, which he believed had resulted in an effective and deliverable plan, which met the requirements of the Joint Core Strategy and was consistent with national policy. He stressed that representations made during the 6 week consultation process needed to address issues of soundness and the legal conformity of the document.

Mr J Guin, a member of a community group in Trowse, then addressed the meeting. He referred to Norfolk County Council’s quick and rapid change in approach to development in Trowse, which would quadruple the size of the school, increasing noise and traffic in a very important conservation area. There was, he advised, an enormous amount of concern within the village which had resulted in a petition with over 350 signatures and numerous letters of concern (these letters were
subsequently presented to the Chairman at the meeting). He had serious doubts as to the soundness of Norfolk County Council’s sudden change in approach and he stressed the need for an extensive consultation process.

Mrs L Fabre, the Chairman of Trowse Parish Council concurred with the views of Mr Guin. She feared that the village would be drowned by development; she had concerns regarding the number of houses proposed, the proposed new school, and the potential loss of allotment land to accommodate the new school. Whilst the Parish Council accepted that the village needed to take a share of development, she reminded members that the village was set within a conservation area, which she considered important to preserve.

Cllr T Lewis, local member for Trowse, advised members that the village was likely to lose its school due to Norfolk County Council’s failure to make adequate educational provision at the Deal Ground. He had sympathies for the developers at Trowse; they would be paying for an educational provision to accommodate a need at the Deal Ground, where developers had got off “scot free”. He stressed the need for the document to be reconsidered by Cabinet and Council, should there be material changes to it following the consultation process.

The Planning Policy Manager reminded members that originally, proposed sites for development in Trowse had attracted objections from Norfolk County Council due to the educational provision, and had therefore been deleted. However, with the approval of development on the Deal Ground site, the County Council now sought a new primary school in the vicinity. The current school at Trowse lay land locked and following a number of discussions with the County, a new school was proposed in the village, in addition to a reduced number of houses. He stressed that the allotment site to accommodate the school had been pushed by the developers, not by the Council, and explained that the proposed allocation did not include any development on the allotments. The Director of Localism and Growth also reminded Cabinet that the Council had a duty to cooperate with statutory bodies such as the County Council.

Cllr M Gray urged members to take heed of the lessons learnt at Queen’s Hill in Costessey, and to ensure that any proposed site could accommodate future educational needs in the area.

The Chairman then invited Mr P Thirkettle of the Alpington and Yelveton Housing Action Group to address the meeting.

Mr Thirkettle stressed that he wished to see any development in Alpington contained within the centre of the village, adjacent to existing development. He referred to the proposed site 803 and outlined a number of factors which he felt made this site unsuitable. He drew attention to the boundaries of the site which broke the current boundary of Wheel Road, leading to a fear of additional development at a later stage. He also referred to the potential increase in traffic movement outside of the primary school and whilst he noted that plans had been made to accommodate the parked cars on this road, he explained that many feared that this would lead to an increase in speeding in the area as the current parked cars acted as a speed calming measure. Turning to the alternative sites, he considered site 804 to also be unsuitable due to the distance from the village and the absence of a footpath. Site 004 however, was considered to be more suitable as it would ensure that development was contained within the core of the village,
would further enhance existing development and would not lead to the loss of high
grade agricultural land.

The Director of Localism and Growth explained that all the points raised by Mr
Thirkettle had been addressed in the assessment of sites. He stressed that whilst
he acknowledged that Mr Thirkettle was one of 51 members of the Action Group,
there was no universal support amongst residents for any one of the proposed
developments in the village. He reminded members that all sites were assessed
against a strict criteria and consistent framework.

Cllr M Gray explained that Wortwell Parish Council had recently identified some
potential amenity land to create a village green with a small number of houses
around the edge and he wondered if these proposals could be built in to the Site
Allocations Document. The Director of Growth and Localism suggested that this
would be a material change at this stage but suggested that Cllr Gray provided
more information outside of the meeting.

The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL:

1. Authorises the Director of Growth and Localism to make
   any further necessary minor corrections, factual
   updates, formatting changes and other non-material
   changes that are identified prior to the publication of the
   Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document;

2. Agrees the publication of the Site Specific Allocations
   and Policies Document (incorporating any modifications
   approved under recommendation 1 above), for
   representations during a 6-week period, in accordance
   with Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning
   (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012; and

3. Authorises the Director of Growth and Localism, in
   consultation with the Leader and the Environment,
   Regulation and Planning Policy Committee, to review
   the Pre-Submission representations made following the
   close of the representations period, prior to the
   presentation of the final Submission version to Council
   in February 2014.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure planned and co-ordinated development, allowing residents to be involved
in shaping their communities.

Other Options Considered

- To change the site selection
- Not to progress to adoption
2217 SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN: WYMONDHAM AREA ACTION PLAN: PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which sought Cabinet and Council approval on the contents of the pre-submission version of the Wymondham Area Action Plan (WAAP), before a 6 week period of consultation on the soundness and legal conformity of the document.

The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet and outlined the background to the report and various stages undertaken in preparation of the WAAP. He explained that due to planning permissions granted since the Preferred Options consultation, two sites shown in the previous version of the document as preferred options had been deselected, namely the Nursery site on Tuttles Lane and land west of Cavick Road. There had also been a change to the allocation at the Rugby Club site, which was now allocated for its existing permission of a care home community, not for general housing. He stressed the importance of de-selecting these sites due to the constrained capacity at Wymondham High School.

The Director of Growth and Localism informed the meeting that extensive consultation on the future of Wymondham had taken place, with four separate rounds of consultation being undertaken. He believed that the resultant document was a long term, effective and deliverable plan, which appropriately addressed the requirements of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS), within the constraints of national policy. He stressed that the proposed 2200 new homes would not emerge in the short term; he expected the new properties to be built within a 13 – 14 year period.

Cllr J Mooney welcomed the document, which he believed protected the strategic gaps between the town and its surrounding villages, preserved the historic character of the town, and allowed for open space in addition to housing, retail and employment land. He hoped that development would not exceed proposals in the JCS, suggesting that Wymondham had taken its share of development. In response, the Chairman confirmed that the Council had to take in to account the views of Norfolk County Council and the constraints on the High School; the proposed 2200 new houses was the absolute maximum.

Cllr C Foulger expressed his concern at the change of allocation for the Rugby Club site. A general housing allocation was required to ensure that the club maximised its return, enabling it to move to an alternative site which would provide a much improved sports facility for the town. He had doubts as to the suitability of site as a care home community, suggesting that its location was too far out of town.

The Director of Growth and Localism assured Cabinet that the Council wished to work alongside the Rugby Club, to assist in their relocation and the improvement of sports facilities in the area. However, due to the planning permissions recently granted elsewhere in Wymondham, the site could no longer be allocated as general housing. The Chairman added that the Council had been creative in still allowing the site to be developed, but without impacting on high school capacity.
Mr P Barry, the President of the Wymondham Rugby Club, then addressed the Cabinet. He explained that the club was a non-profit making organisation run by volunteers, with a current membership of 1200. The current site was too small, and the club was looking to relocate and provide a much improved sports facility for Wymondham and its surrounding area, which would benefit the local community and the High School. The club was dismayed to learn that the existing site had been removed from a general housing allocation; this would seriously damage the ability to maximise any profits from the site and limit the development of much needed sports facilities in the area. He stressed that the planned new facilities could not be delivered with the current proposals for a care home community. He did not consider the small housing allocation to have a huge impact on the local high school and referred to Hethersett High School as alternative educational provision.

Mr P Wootton, a coach to the club, accepted that the Rugby Club was not the only site affected by the permissions already granted. He had great sympathy for all developers affected, but he stressed that the Rugby Club was not attempting to maximise profit for personal gain, but to provide improved facilities for the town. He understood that the issue was complex, but could see no reason why the Council could not make an exception in this case.

The Chairman had sympathies with the Club, but suggested that the Council would be failing in its duty should it disregard the views of Norfolk County Council. He referred to other sites that had been recently deselected and he suggested that the Rugby Club should take comfort from the proposals to maintain development on the site, which would at least provide a capital receipt for the club. With regard to Hethersett High School, he reminded members that this village was having to endure its own expansion and would have its own capacity issues to manage.

The Chief Executive suggested that a further meeting with the Rugby Club, with both her and the Director of Localism and Growth, should take place to explore all the issues further.

Turning to paragraph 3.16 of the report, Cllr K Weeks expressed his concern at the feasibility of delivering a subway underneath the railway bridge in Wymondham. In response, the Director of Growth and Localism explained that negotiations with Rail Track were progressing well and he was confident that the plan would go forward.

Summing up, the Chairman stressed the need for representations during the consultation process to address issues of soundness. He accepted that if additional evidence was forthcoming, the Council might need to modify its plans. However, he also reiterated the Council’s duty to ensure adequate infrastructure, and to take heed of advice issued by its statutory partners.
The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL:

1. Authorises the Director of Growth and Localism to make any further necessary minor corrections, factual updates, formatting changes and other non-material changes that are identified prior to the publication of the Wymondham Area Action Plan;

2. Agrees the publication of the WAAP (incorporating any later suggested modifications approved under recommendation 1 above), for representations to be made by statutory bodies and members of the public, over a 6-week period, in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012; and

3. Authorises the Director of Growth and Localism, in consultation with the Leader and the Environment, Regulation and Planning Policy Committee, to review the Pre-Submission representations made following the close of the representations period, prior to the presentation of the final Submission version of the Wymondham Area Action Plan to Council in February 2014.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure planned and co-ordinated future development in Wymondham, allowing residents to be involved in shaping communities.

Other Options Considered

- To change the site selection
- Not to progress to adoption

2218 LEISURE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Business Operations Manager, which sought Cabinet approval with regard to the future direction of leisure provision in South Norfolk.

The Business Operations Manager and the National Management Trainee delivered a brief presentation to members, which outlined the current position and the recommendations for the Leisure Enhancement Programme. Members noted the
proposed streams of work and investment, namely Corporate Development, ensuring systems were fit for purpose, Facilities Fit for the Future, making leisure centres community friendly, New Revenue Streams and Maximising Facility Usage, ensuring available facilities and space were utilised effectively, and Working with Community Partners; taking provision to residents and ensuring access to physical activity for all.

Cllr D Bills commended the report to Cabinet. Members noted that traditionally all local authority leisure centres ran at a deficit; to ensure that South Norfolk Council’s leisure provision broke even would be a real achievement.

Members welcomed the report and thought the proposals to be aspirational and exciting, but some expressed concerns at the lack of a firm business case, especially in light of the significant costs of the project. The Chairman suggested that the Cabinet could agree to the proposals in principle at this stage, but that the Leisure Task Group be reformed to consider the proposals in more detail, reporting back to Cabinet in December.

Cllr K Weeks suggested that an external project manager should be appointed to move the project forward.

The Decision

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the strategic direction as shown in the report and summarised in Appendix A;
2. To request officers to identify a suitable property in Diss and report back to Cabinet for approval to acquire a stand-alone fitness facility;
3. To approve the freehold acquisition of Long Stratton Leisure Centre which will involve a nominal payment and all other associated costs (legal, survey etc). Stamp duty may also apply to the transfer of ownership;
4. In principle, to approve the release of the capital budget as outlined in Appendix B of the report, subject to a thorough business case and marketing analysis and that the Leisure Task Group reforms to consider the proposals in more detail, reporting back to Cabinet in December 2013;
5. To agree that any future amendments to the scope of the programme be made in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and the relevant portfolio holder subject to costs remaining within budget.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the Council’s leisure centres and wider leisure provision are fit for the future, meeting the needs of residents, maximising revenue streams and helping residents become fit and healthy.
Other Options Considered

- Do nothing
- Minimal redecoration

2219 FUNDING REVIEW UPDATE

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Funding Manager, which presented members with eligibility criteria to be referred to when determining capital grant applications, along with new advice and guidance on Social Action Projects.

Cllr M Wilby commended the report to members, explaining that the decision to award a smaller number of funding opportunities, but with larger grants, would make a real difference to communities.

Cllr J Fuller suggested that equality and diversity issues needed to be considered as part of the eligibility criteria

Cllr F Ellis concurred that the guidance on Social Action Projects was in line with discussions at recent national meeting she had attended

The Decision

RESOLVED: To agree the

1. Eligibility criteria to be used when determining the capital grant applications, outlined at Appendix 1

2. Guidance and Advice Note on Social Action Projects as outlined in Appendices 2 and 3

3. Neighbourhood Board Ground Rules are updated to reflect the proposed Guidance to ensure that a consistent approach to managing Social Action Projects is in place.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the capital grant process is fair and transparent and that the definition of Social Action Projects is clear for all
Other Options Considered
None

2220 HOUSING STANDARDS REVIEW – GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Housing, Enabling and Strategy Officer, which presented Cabinet with a suggested response to a government consultation on the rationalisation of the framework of Building Regulations and local housing standards.

Cllr Y Bendle presented the report, explaining that this consultation was an opportunity to influence the quality of the new homes that would be built in South Norfolk.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To approve the response to the Consultation, as outlined in Appendix A of the report, to be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Reasons for the Decision

It is important to respond to the consultation and to attempt to influence government policy, at a time when there will be significant new housing development in South Norfolk.

Other Options Considered

Not to respond to the consultation.

2221 THE DRAFT COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Revenues and Benefits Manager, which sought Cabinet approval to consult on a Council Tax Support scheme for 2014/15.

Cllr Y Bendle commended the report to members, explaining that the draft scheme closely matched the requirements of the overriding principles initially agreed by the member working group back in 2012. One additional feature of the draft was to protect newly unemployed people who had not claimed benefit before by awarding full council tax benefit for 13 weeks whilst they sought alternative employment.
The Chairman, in support of the new draft, suggested that it helped people get back in to work, whilst protecting those that could not work at all. He reminded members that the transitional funding provided by the Government back in 2012 was no longer available.

In response to queries, the Revenues and Benefits Manager explained that only a very small proportion of the discretionary fund available to help those in financial crisis had been spent, although members acknowledged that this might increase without the Government’s transitional funding to cap future bills.

Referring to paragraph 7.1.5 of the report, Cllr Weeks asked how hopeful it was that Norfolk County Council would contribute towards the discretionary pot. The Chairman explained that its contribution could not be confirmed at this stage, and members noted that the scheme would be debated in detail at Scrutiny Committee the following Wednesday.

The Decision

RESOLVED:

1. To agree the draft Council Tax Support Scheme for consultation, as outlined at Appendix 1;
2. That any implications arising from legislation to be reviewed and implemented by the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Policy Panel.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the scheme supports the Council’s priorities, support families, incentives work and is efficient to manage.

Other Options Considered
None

2222 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE, RESOURCES, ACCOUNTS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD 28 JUNE 2013 AND 3 SEPTEMBER 2013

(a) South Norfolk Council’s Annual Audit Report and Opinion for 2012/13

RESOLVED: To approve the Internal Audit Consortium Manager’s Annual Report and Opinion for 2012/13 and the use of its contents to inform the Council’s Annual Governance Statement.
(b) Internal Audit  Consortium Manager’s Annual Report and Opinion for CNC Building Control for 2012/13

RESOLVED: To endorse the Internal Audit Consortium Manager’s Annual Report and Opinion for CNC Building Control for 2012/13.

(c) Finance, Resources, Audit and Governance Committee Self-Assessment Exercise

RESOLVED: To endorse the summary report, detailed checklist and actions identified.

(d) Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit for 2012/13

RESOLVED: To endorse the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit for 2012/13

2223 CABINET CORE AGENDA

Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda

2224 CNC BUILDING CONTROL

The subject of the decision

Members considered the exempt report of the Deputy Chief Executive, which updated members on the integration of CNC Building Control into South Norfolk Council, and sought approval for the release of initial funds to broaden the delivery models available to increase the opportunity to generate income through Building Control and associated services.

The Deputy Chief Executive outlined the key areas of the report and members noted that there had been considerable interest from other local authorities to join CNC.

Cllr D Bills welcomed the report, explaining its proposals to be very important to the future of the service.
The Decision

RESOLVED: To:
1. Approve the proposals contained in the report, with particular reference to advancing a loan and creating a new reserve at the end of the financial year equivalent to the value of the loan; and
2. Approve the establishment of hubs;
3. Accelerate the delivery of these hubs through use of the monies awarded through the Transformation Fund.

The Reasons for the Decision

To maximise opportunities to increase income streams through CNC.

Other Options Considered

As outlined in the report

(The meeting concluded at 12.14 pm)

Chairman