CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Tuesday 6 May 2014 at 9.00 am.

Members Present:

Cabinet: Councillors J Fuller (Chairman)

D Bills, Y Bendle, K Kiddie G Wheatley and M Wilby

Non-Appointed: Councillors Allen, Blake, Blowfield, Dale, Ellis, Legg, Lewis, Palmer, Riches, R Savage, Walden and Weeks

Officers in Attendance: The Deputy Chief Executive (A Radford), the Director of Environment and Housing (A Jarvis), the Director of Growth and Localism (T Horspole), the Head of Finance (D Lorimer), the Planning Policy Manager (A Nicholls), the Head of Business Improvement (P Kearsey), the Communities and Active Life Manager (I Lambert), the Business Improvement Manager (S Pontin) and the Senior Planning Officer (S Majoram)

Also in Attendance: Two members of the public.

2277 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr J Fuller declared an “other” interest in the matter referred to below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Minute No.</th>
<th>Nature of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cllr J Fuller</td>
<td>2286</td>
<td>As a former member of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2278 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
2279 REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA WORKING

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Communities and Active Life Manager, which outlined proposals to improve neighbourhood working, to include the creation of a Community Action Fund and a Members’ Ward Budget.

Cllr M Wilby explained the background to the report, advising Cabinet that the Growth and Localism Committee and the Scrutiny Committee had endorsed the proposals as the preferred option moving forward. He briefly outlined the proposed Community Action Fund and Members’ Ward Budget, and he drew attention to the Neighbourhood Fund which would continue to run in parallel.

The Director of Growth and Localism acknowledged that the Your Neighbourhood, Your Choice (YNYC), had not attracted a wider understanding with the public and that engaging residents in the process had proved difficult at times. However, he believed the new proposals delivered a simple yet refined scheme, which would develop and engage communities, whilst involving all members of the Council.

The Communities and Active Life Manager explained in more detail the proposals. He advised members that funding pots could be amalgamated and pooled across ward boundaries to support larger projects if desired. He stressed that the Members’ Ward budget and the Community Action Fund would be member led, with limited officer involvement.

The Chairman stressed that it was important to note that the source of funding behind this initiative was the New Homes Bonus. He believed the proposals would allow engagement with communities at grass root level and capture the more rural villages in the District, which would not necessarily benefit from the current Market Towns Initiative.

Cllr T Lewis advised Cabinet that the Scrutiny Committee had endorsed the recommendations of the report, but had stressed the need for all members to be made fully aware of the 3 strands of funding now in place. Cllr Wilby confirmed that a briefing note would be forwarded to all members after the Council AGM, via an edition of the Members’ Bulletin.

Following queries from members, Cllr Wilby confirmed that parish councils would be eligible recipients of the Community Action Fund. Referring to the criteria which stated that funding would not be paid to individuals, he considered that adequate alternatives were in place, should organisations not have, or wish to open, business accounts.

The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

- the implementation of the new way of neighbourhood working;
- adoption of the revised Ground Rules
The Reasons for the Decision

To act as a catalyst for community empowerment, encouraging communities to influence and improve service delivery in ways that closely reflect local needs and increases social capital.

Other Options Considered

None.

2280 LONG STRATTON AREA ACTION PLAN PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION

The Subject of the Decision

Members noted that it was anticipated that the proposed pre-submission version of the Long Stratton Area Action Plan, would be considered at the Cabinet meeting in June 2014, followed by the Council meeting in July.

2281 LONG STRATTON AREA ACTION PLAN: EXPLORATION OF THE POTENTIAL USE OF COMPULSORY PURCHASE POWERS FOR LAND AT LONG STRATTON

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, regarding the benefits to the Council in exercising its powers of compulsory purchase to help implement the Long Stratton Area Action Plan (AAP).

The Director of Growth and Localism reminded members that in order for the Long Stratton AAP to be considered “sound” at the Independent Examination, it must be demonstrated that the proposals contained within it were viable and deliverable. He explained that with land currently under a number of ownerships, compulsory purchase powers would speed up the process and eliminate a number of difficulties and risks. The Chairman added that the process would not only provide more certainty, but would ensure value for money for residents of the District.

In response to queries, the Planning Policy Manager explained that the timescales involved in exercising compulsory purchase powers would vary, depending on the scale of any objections. Members noted that there would need to be a number of safeguards in place to alleviate the risks involved and the Council was taking expert legal advice. A more detailed report outlining the risks and implications would be presented to Cabinet in June, should members decide to instruct officers to investigate the matter further. With regard to a query regarding funding, the Chairman stressed that this required further consideration, but this could come from a number of different sources, including the City Deal Infrastructure fund, Community Infrastructure Levy and the Council’s own capital resources.
Cllr T Blowfield, the local member for Long Stratton, expressed his support for the recommendations, although he hoped that matters could be progressed without the need for a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO). He suggested that this course of action was an indication of how serious the Council was in delivering a bypass for Long Stratton. The Chairman hoped that it would indeed send a clear message to residents; that the Council was serious with regard to the progression of the Plan, which would deliver at least 1800 new homes and a bypass for the village.

The Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLVED:</th>
<th>To:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) instruct the Director of Growth and Localism to explore the principle and effectiveness of using compulsory purchase powers to help implement the aims and objectives of the Long Stratton Area Action Plan (including the bypass and at least 1,800 homes); and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) agree to a detailed report to the next meeting of Cabinet (16 June 2014) giving details of the legal, financial and timescale implications for the Council of compulsorily purchasing of land in Long Stratton and recommending a course of action for the Council to take.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reasons for the Decision
To ensure all the options are considered with regard to the Pre-Submission version of the AAP.

Other Options Considered
- Not to investigate the CPO process, in relation to the Long Stratton AAP.

2282 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) PROVIDING GUIDANCE FOR THE DELIVERY OF A ‘FOOD AND AGRICULTURE HUB FOR BROADLAND AND SOUTH NORFOLK’

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which highlighted some of the suggested changes to the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Assessing Food Hub Proposals, following a consultation back in 2013.

The Director of Growth and Localism advised members that the consultation draft of the SPD was produced jointly with Broadland District Council. Members noted that the document could not reinvent existing policies, and that it was deliberately not
location specific, as the final SPD would be a material consideration when assessing planning applications wherever they might be across the two districts.

Ian Alston of Lanpro addressed the Cabinet, explaining that he had worked on the food hub proposal for over 6 years and his extensive research had taken him as far as Milan and Vancouver. He fully appreciated that the SPD could not be site specific, however he referred to the proposed site at Easton and its proximity in relation to the Norfolk Showground and Norwich Research Park, suggesting that it was an excellent location and provided a unique opportunity to link education, science and agriculture. A number of organisations had already expressed an interest in that site, including the Norwich Livestock Market and Ardo. His main concern was that the references in the SPD to an initial phase of up to 10 ha would send a restrictive vision and would do nothing to attract the larger organisations that may be looking to expand sometime in the future.

The Senior Planning Officer referred members to paragraph 3.1 of the report, where it proposed an amendment to the SPD, to include “An indicative scale for an initial phase of up to 10 ha is suggested”. Members agreed that in order to address Mr Alston’s concerns, this required further amendment, and agreed that more references to subsequent phases be made.

The Decision

RESOLVED: That the ‘Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) providing Guidance for the Delivery of a Food and Agriculture Hub for Broadland and South Norfolk’ (attached as Appendix B of the report) be agreed for adoption by the Council, subject to a minor textual adjustment.

The Reasons for the Decision

To help provide and evaluate proposals for a Food Hub in a consistent and co-ordinated way, across the JCS area, in line with current policies and legislation.

Other Options Considered

- Not to develop an SPD.
Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which sought approval to make representations to the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR) examination, in the form of a Local Impact Report.

The Planning Policy Manager outlined the salient points of his report. Members agreed that Cabinet should lodge joint representations to the NDR Consent Order with Broadland, Norwich City, and Norfolk County Councils, in order to maximise the effectiveness of the message, that the NDR was a critical part of the future infrastructure for the Greater Norwich area.

During discussion, Cllr T Lewis expressed his disappointment that the section from the A1067 at Taverham to the A47 at Easton/Longwater, was not included in the route. He supported the recommendations of the report, but suggested that the Council’s representations could reflect South Norfolk’s ambitions to complete the missing link.

Officers stressed the importance of supporting the current planning application as it stood, but suggested that the response and/or the Statement of Common Ground, could emphasise the Council’s view that the application was “Phase 1” of the project, and would welcome “Phase 2” to complete the NDR to link with the A47 at Easton/Longwater.

The Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLVED:</th>
<th>To agree:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. That representations be made to the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR) examination in the form of a Local Impact Report expressing the Council’s support in general for the NDR, working wherever possible jointly with the other local authorities in the area (Broadland, Norwich, Norfolk County and the Broads Authority).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To grant the Director of Growth and Localism (in consultation with the Group Leaders) delegated powers to agree the precise contents of the South Norfolk or combined authorities’ Local Impact Report (as relevant) by the deadline given by the Inspector(s).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To grant the Director of Growth and Localism (in consultation with the Group Leaders) delegated powers to agree the precise contents of the South Norfolk Council/Norfolk County Council Statement of Common Ground.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reasons for the Decision
To minimise unnecessary duplication of work and to emphasise that the NDR is a critical part of the future infrastructure for the Greater Norwich area.
Other Options Considered

- Not to make representations or agree a Statement of Common Ground.

2284 GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITIES IN HOUSING SUPPLY: CALL FOR EVIDENCE: SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which proposed a response to the independent review, commissioned by the Department of Communities and Local Government, into the role that Local Authorities could play in increasing the supply of housing.

The Planning Policy Manager presented his report to members, explaining that the consultation gave the Council the opportunity to try to influence the Government to allow greater freedoms and flexibilities for local authorities to make best use of their property assets and expertise. Members noted that the consultation was also aimed at development agencies, in addition to local authorities.

The Head of Finance drew members’ attention to the suggested response to question 3 of the consultation, detailed at paragraph 3.2 of the report, regarding the cap on the number of properties a Council could own before triggering a Housing Revenue Account. Members noted that the Council would need to be mindful of this when deciding how many properties to retain on the proposed development in Poringland, and it was agreed that the Council’s response should suggest a cap of 250.

The Chairman welcomed the proposed response, but suggested that it was not appropriate to include Appendix 1 of the report, as part of the Council’s response, at this stage.

The Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLVED:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To agree the substance of the responses listed in section 3 of the report, subject to minor amendment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. That Appendix 1 of the report is not submitted as part of the consultation at this stage;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To delegate to the Director of Growth and Localism the power to agree and lodge the final Council response (making any appropriate minor modifications or improvements) to the ‘call for evidence’ by the deadline of 23 May.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reasons for the Decision
To take the opportunity to influence Government, to allow greater flexibilities and freedoms for local authorities to make the best use of their property assets and expertise.

Other Options Considered

- Not to submit a response.

2285 PLANNING PERFORMANCE AND PLANNING CONTRIBUTIONS CONSULTATION PAPER

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Business Improvement Manager, which sought Cabinet’s endorsement of a response to a Department of Communities and Local Government consultation paper, relating to planning performance measures and the use of Section 106 Planning Obligations requiring contributions to affordable housing.

Cabinet was pleased to note that the Development Management Team was currently determining 71% of major applications within the statutory determination period (or an extended period agreed with the applicant). Members recognised that this was due to the efforts of staff in the Development Management Team, which had been realigned to allow more flexible working and a team approach to the consideration of major applications.

Discussion followed with regard to the consultation paper’s proposals to change national policy and remove the need for contributions to affordable housing on developments of less than 10. Members agreed that the response should propose that for sites of less than 10 houses, where the provision of affordable housing was not practical or viable, a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing should be sought.

The Decision

RESOLVED: That the comments outlined in the report and in Appendix 2, subject to minor amendments, be submitted as South Norfolk Council’s finalised response to the consultation paper.

The Reasons for the Decision

By responding to the consultation, the Council has the opportunity to influence Government, which could have a positive impact upon the delivery of affordable housing and planning performance.

Other Options Considered
To accept the response as submitted in the report.

2286 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE GREATER NORWICH GROWTH BOARD

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Director of Growth and Localism, which set out the proposed governance arrangements for delivering South Norfolk Council’s growth proposals contained in the Joint Core Strategy, the recently agreed Greater Norwich City Deal and the new Anglia LEP Strategic Economic Plan.

The Chairman drew attention to the Infrastructure Investment Fund and the Local Infrastructure Fund, referring in particular to the Long Stratton bypass and the proposed works to the railway bridge in Wymondham.

Members noted that as the accountable body to the Greater Norwich Growth Board, Norfolk County Council would be responsible for carrying much of the financial risks involved.

The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL:

1. Agrees to the dissolution of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership Board and removes the three places from the list of the Council’s appointments to outside bodies;

2. Agrees, subject to the provisions of paragraph 3.6 of this report, the governance arrangements as contained in the Joint Working Agreement for the Greater Norwich Growth Board (appendix 1 of the report), the Infrastructure Investment Fund (appendix 2), and the Local Infrastructure Fund (appendix 3).

3. Agrees to the appointment of the Leader of the Council to be South Norfolk Council’s representative on the Greater Norwich Growth Board.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure arrangements for providing strategic direction, the monitoring and co-ordination of both the City Deal and wider growth programme.

Other Options Considered

None.
DISTRIBUTION OF THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY TO PARISHES AND TOWN COUNCILS

The subject of the decision

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance, which sought approval with regard to a new policy, detailing how the Council would pass on a proportion of the income received from the Community Infrastructure Levy, to town and parish councils.

The Head of Finance briefly outlined the proposed policy to members. In response to queries, she explained that the CIL regulations did not define on what date the Council should record the number of dwellings in each parish; it was proposed that South Norfolk Council took the number of dwellings as at 30 September each year. With regard to those areas that were not governed by parish councils, officers explained that it was unlikely that there would be any development in these areas, however there was a provision for South Norfolk Council to spend any CIL monies on their behalf. With reference to the policy itself, under “How the Funds must be Spent”, third paragraph, members agreed that it was not appropriate to include details of how the District Council could spend CIL funds, and it was suggested that the relevant paragraph be reworded.

Members noted that a parish briefing on the matter would take place at the next Parish Clerks’ Meeting to be held 5 June.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To approve the policy as detailed in Appendix A of the report, subject to minor amendment.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the Council complies with CIL regulations and provides clarity for town and parish councils.

Other Options Considered

- None

BANKING TENDER

The subject of the decision
Members considered the report of the Accountancy Manager, regarding a procurement exercise to obtain a new banking services provider, in conjunction with all Norfolk District Councils, Norfolk County Council, and the Police Authority.

The Decision

**RESOLVED:** To delegate the decision to award a contract for banking services to the Head of Finance in consultation with the portfolio holder for Finance and Resources.

The Reasons for the Decision

To allow flexibility to ensure that the contract award is made in accordance with the timescales.

Other Options Considered

- None

2289 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE, RESOURCES, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 7 MARCH 2014**

The subject of the decision

Members considered recommendations arising from the Finance, Resources, Audit and Governance Committee meeting held 7 March 2014.

(i) Internal Audit’s Charter, Strategic and Annual Audit Plans and Summary of Internal Audit Coverage for 2014/15;

**RESOLVED:**

1. The Internal Audit’s Charter for 2014/15;
2. The Internal Audit’s Code of Ethics for 2014/15;
3. The Internal Audit’s Strategy for 2014/15;
4. The Strategic Audit Plan for 2014/15 to 2016/17;
5. The Annual Audit Plan for 2014/15;
6. The Summary of Internal Audit Coverage for 2014/15;
7. The Performance Indicators for 2014/15

(ii) Working Protocol Between Internal and External Audit for 2013/14 and 2014/15

**RESOLVED:** To approve the Audit Working Protocol.
2290 CABINET CORE AGENDA

Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda.

2291 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was proposed, seconded and

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

2292 EXPANSION OF BUILDING CONTROL

The subject of the decision

Members considered the exempt report of the Head of Business Improvement, which sought retrospective approval for the procurement of a supporting IT solution, to assist the planned growth of the Eastern Regional Building Control Partnership.

Officers outlined the key elements of the report to members, and responded to queries on points of detail. Members, noting the risks involved, endorsed the activity taken by officers and welcomed the forward thinking and entrepreneurial approach to the Council’s business as a route to financial independence.

The Decision

| RESOLVED: | To endorse the actions taken by officers and approve retrospectively the contract award. |

The Reasons for the Decision

To secure significant financial returns to the Council, whilst enhancing the Council’s reputation as one of the most forward thinking authorities in the country.

Other Options Considered

- To withdraw from the contract

(The meeting concluded at 11.00 am)
Chairman