CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 18 July 2016 at 9.00 a.m.

Members Present:

Cabinet: Councillors M Edney (Chairman for the meeting), Y Bendle, L Hornby, C Hudson, K Mason Billig

Apologies: Councillor J Fuller

Non-Appointed: Councillors D Bills, M Gray and T Palmer

Officers in Attendance: The Director of Business Development (D Lorimer), the Director of Growth and Localism (T Horspole), the Director of Community Services (P Boyce), the Accountancy Manager (M Fernandez-Graham), the Governance and Business Manager (L Mickleborough), the Projects and Performance Manager (A Mewes) and the Senior Governance Officer (E Goddard).

2473 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS – SOUTH NORFOLK ON SHOW

The Chairman referred to the South Norfolk On Show event, that had taken place the previous day. The event had been a huge success, with over 6,500 visitors, and Cabinet expressed its thanks to all staff involved. Cllr C Hudson added that the event was an excellent example of the Council working with local communities, and underpinned everything that was good about South Norfolk.
2474 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on Monday 13 June and Thursday 30 June 2016, were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

2475 PERFORMANCE, RISKS AND REVENUE BUDGET POSITION REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/16

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Accountancy Manager, the Projects and Performance Manager, and the Senior Governance Officer, which detailed the Council’s performance against strategic measures, risk position and the financial position at the end of the first quarter for 2016/17, and sought approval for other consequential matters.

The new style report, with an integrated and corporate priority based approach, was welcomed by members.

The Projects and Performance Manager summarised the report, explaining that overall the performance, finance and risk management of the Council, remained positive during Quarter 1. He explained that 24 performance measures had met or exceeded target, with only 1 measure not meeting its stretch target. He drew attention to one new risk that had been added to the Strategic Risk register, relating to the Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution Deal and members also noted the positive variance on the revenue budget of £587K and the £0.8m spend on capital, against a budget of £1.2m.

The Projects and Performance Manager drew attention to a number of areas of exceptional performance, as detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the report. With reference to LI 263, ‘the Number of Missed Bins per 100,000 collections’, he explained that this indicator had failed to hit the stretched target due to the significant changes to the service back in June. This dip in performance had been expected, and the number of missed bins was already reducing. Members noted that it had been estimated that half the number of missed bins reported during the quarter had been as a result of customer error.

Members’ attention was drawn to MI 1041, ‘the number of Housing Benefit Claimants and Council Tax Support claimants moving into Work’, which was currently being baselined to determine a target. The Projects and Performance Manager informed members that officers felt that this measure was no longer appropriate due to the significant drop in the number of people claiming Job
Seekers Allowance in South Norfolk. Members noted that officers would propose a replacement measure in the next quarterly report to Cabinet.

Discussion followed regarding the recommendation to delegate the Council’s debt enforcement service to Breckland District Council. The Accountancy Manager explained that this would result in Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP), (of which Breckland District Council was a member), providing the service. ARP had exceeded the success of Breckland’s previous arrangements, resulting in higher levels of income and fewer complaints. Members noted that currently a private company was employed to carry out the Council’s debt enforcement action.

Referring to the performance measures in her portfolio, Cllr K Mason Billig explained that the number of missed bins in its worse week was still only 0.78% of all those collected, and she was pleased that the number of missed bins was already reducing. Concerning the cost of waste collection per household, she explained that the increase in costs had also been as result of route optimisation, and that she expected these costs to stabilise. Turning to recycling rates, she explained that unfortunately rejected materials from the kerbside bin recycling service continued to impact on performance, but the Council was continuing to work with its partners to educate residents and cut down on the level of rejected materials.

Cllr Y Bendle praised those staff working in areas under her portfolio and made particular reference to LI 323, 'the Increase in the Number of Vulnerable People Supported to Maintain Independence in their Own Homes’. Members noted that 601 people had been supported during the first quarter, which was an increase of 13% on the same quarter the previous year. She advised members that David Bensley, the new “Handy Person” had commenced working for the Council on 1 July, and that it was hoped that through working with partners, a debt advisory officer would soon be appointed to work out on site in the community. In response to a query from Cllr T Palmer, Cllr Bendle assured members that the Council was very aware of the good work carried out by the Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABs), and she encouraged both the CABs and the Council to work in partnership, alongside the Early Help Hub.

Cllr L Hornby expressed his satisfaction with performance within his portfolio, referring in particular to the time taken to determine planning applications and the performance of CNC Building Control.

Referring to the income at the Wymondham Leisure Centre, Cllr C Hudson advised that it would take time for the full benefits of the changes to be realised, and was confident that income projections would be achieved within a year. He urged members to support the recommendation to enter in to a lease with Norfolk County Council for land for a new All-Weather Pitch, next to the Long Stratton Leisure Centre, this being the first phase in the improvements to leisure provision in Long Stratton.
It was

The Decision

RESOLVED:

a) To note the 2016/17 performance for the first quarter and the combined efforts across the Directorates to deliver the Vision of the Council.

b) To note the current position with regard to risks and to accept the actions to support risk mitigation.

c) To note the capital and revenue position and the reason for the variances on the General Fund.

d) In accordance with Section 9EA of Local Government Act 2000 and regulations 4 and 5 of the Local Authorities (arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012, to approve the delegation of the debt enforcement service to Breckland Council, as outlined in paragraph 2.3.3 of the report.

e) To agree that the Council enters into a lease for land next to Long Stratton Leisure Centre in order to build the 3G All-Weather pitch as outlined in paragraph 3.5 of the report.

f) To agree that the Council lend £55,000 to Big Sky Property Management Ltd and purchase share capital of £100,000 in Big Sky Ventures Ltd for it to buy the same amount of share capital in Big Sky Property Management Ltd, as outlined in paragraph 3.4 of the report.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that processes are in place to improve performance, that the management of risks is sound.
To ensure that appropriate revenue budgets and reserves, and the capital programme are in place and are aligned to the Council’s priorities.

Other Options Considered

None

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The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Housing Access and Standards Manager, which proposed a number of changes to the Council’s Housing Allocations Policy and Scheme.

Cllr Y Bendle explained that the current scheme had been in operation for four years and had been successful, however, small amendments were required to ensure that the policy remained fit for purpose, met the needs of people in South Norfolk, and was compliant with recent Government guidance.

The Director of Community Services advised members of the proposed changes to the Home Options Policy (outlined at Appendix 2 of the report), and guided members through two scenarios which demonstrated how the amendments to the scheme would work in practice.

Members welcomed the changes to the policy and scheme.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To approve the proposed policy changes to South Norfolk Council’s Housing Allocations Policy and Scheme, as summarised in paragraph 3.2 and detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the policy and scheme meets the needs of the people of South Norfolk, and is compliant with Government guidance.
Other Options Considered

None

2477 CABINET TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

The Subject of the Decision

Members noted that following the changes agreed at the Council’s AGM on 23 May 2016, the Policy Committees had taken on the work of the current Task and Finish Groups, originally set up by Council in June 2015. It was therefore considered appropriate to disband these Task Groups.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To agree that the following Task Groups be disbanded:
- Broadband, Growth and Infrastructure
- Leisure and Community Facilities
- Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan

The Reasons for the Decision

The task groups are no longer required

Other Options Considered

None
Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda.

(The meeting concluded at 9.35 a.m.)

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Chairman