COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of South Norfolk Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 23 September 2013 at 7.30pm


Apologies: Councillors McClenning, R Savage and G Walden

Officers in Attendance: The Chief Executive (S Dinneen) The Deputy Chief Executive (A Radford), the Director of Environment and Housing (A Jarvis) and the Director of Growth and Localism (T Horspole).

3196 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following members declared other interests as listed below:

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<th>Member</th>
<th>Minute Number</th>
<th>Nature of Interest</th>
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<td>Cllr M Dewsbury</td>
<td>3199 a</td>
<td>Members of Norfolk County Council</td>
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<td>Cllr T East</td>
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<td>Cllr C Foulger</td>
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<td>Cllr J Mooney</td>
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<td>Cllr M Wilby</td>
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<td>Cllr L Dale</td>
<td>3200 b and c</td>
<td>Director of Mid Norfolk Railway</td>
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<td>(South Norfolk Council Local Plan)</td>
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<td>Cllr C Kemp</td>
<td>3200 b and c</td>
<td>Honorary Solicitor to the Mid Norfolk Railway</td>
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<td>(South Norfolk Local Plan)</td>
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<td>Cllr T Lewis</td>
<td>3200 b</td>
<td>Lives in property adjacent to proposed sites in Trowse</td>
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3197 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 8 JULY 2013

The minutes of the meeting held 8 July 2013 were agreed as an accurate record.

With reference to minute 3191 (b), Cllr M Gray drew attention to the recent announcement by the Coalition Government that a charge for plastic carrier bags in England was to be introduced in 2015.

3198 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman referred members to his engagements listed at page 18 of the agenda.

Members congratulated the Chairman on his Civic Reception, held 20 September at Langley School.

3199 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

(a) Cllrs T East and M Gray

Cllr T East moved the following motion:

“The Secretary of State for Transportation recently highlighted the importance of the Norwich Northern Distributor Road and confirmed it as a nationally significant infrastructure project. His designation of this route as one of national importance would more than validate its current TEN-T status. (TENS = Trans European Network Status)

Millions of pounds of public money has already been approved and granted to Norfolk County Council for the construction of the NDR from Postwick to Taverham and we believe that this planned road will bring enormous economic benefits to Norfolk.

The long-term ambition for the road must be to construct a distributor road joining the A47 to the west of the city with the A47 to the east.

A full and complete NDR would be of enormous benefit becoming a northern bypass for both the city and the county, linking the eastern and western sections of the A47 Southern Bypass either side of the City and it would create a complete east west link to the Midlands from Gt. Yarmouth for those living in the north west of the City and the County.

A full and complete NDR, crossing the Wensum by building a viaduct from escarpment to escarpment to minimise the environmental impact on the SSSIs (River bed and banks only) and the constraints imposed by the European Special Area of Conservation designation (SAC), is the only sensible way forward and it could be funded through the introduction of shadow tolling and from CIL and LEP contributions.

A full NDR would be of enormous benefit to the western parishes generally and particularly the settlements of Costessey, Easton, and Bawburgh in South Norfolk as it would eliminate the need to rat-run through these villages to access the A11, the
Norwich Research Park, Costessey Employment area, the Showground and the Norfolk and the Norwich University Hospital from the North West of the City and the County.

The proposed ¾ NDR which presently terminates at the Fakenham Road in the Taverham area will only exacerbate this long standing rat-run problem which these South Norfolk villages have experienced historically over the last 45 years.

Effectively it would be a northern bypass for both the City and the County, stretching from Postwick to Easton.

Therefore, SN Council RESOLVES to:

- Support further studies into the feasibility of a full NDR by completing the missing link across the Wensum Valley to the A47 Southern Bypass from the A1067 Fakenham Road, Taverham, and inform Norfolk County Council accordingly.”

Cllr T East presented his motion to Council, explaining that originally the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR) had been planned as a northern bypass for the city. He believed that the proposed three quarter bypass from Postwick to Taverham was not a northern bypass and would only redistribute traffic and exacerbate rat-running to the east of the city and the county. He stressed the need for a full and complete NDR, linking the A47 to the west of Norwich with the A47 to the east, improving access between the north west and south of the county, and he called for a feasibility study to this effect. He believed that this would be of enormous benefit to the western parishes, particularly the South Norfolk settlements of Costessey and Easton, eliminating the need to rat run through these villages.

Cllr East wished to alleviate fears that the timing of his motion could jeopardise the delivery of the proposed three quarter NDR. He considered current proposals to have progressed too far to be endangered at this stage.

Cllr M Gray then seconded the motion.

Cllr M Wilby then proposed the following amendments which were duly seconded by Cllr M Dewsbury:

Insert at the beginning “South Norfolk District Council, noting that:”

In the first paragraph, substitute “would more than validate its” with “recognises its linkage with the A47 trunk road, which has”

In the second paragraph insert between “planned road” and “will bring”, “as part of the Norwich Area Transport Strategy (NATS)”

In the third paragraph, delete all after “long term” and replace with “aspiration for all local government bodies and the communities they represent is to have a road network joining the A47 to the West of Norwich with the A47 to the East, both to the North and South of the City”

Omit the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth paragraphs.

Delete all before “Resolves” in the operative paragraph and in that same paragraph, replace “support” with “calls for”, omit “a full NDR” and omit “missing”

Delete the addendum to the motion (detailed in the agenda papers).
Cllr T East accepted all the proposed changes to the motion and it was unanimously
RESOLVED to accept all the amendments proposed.

The motion was then unanimously carried.

RESOLVED: South Norfolk District Council, noting that:

The Secretary of State for Transportation recently highlighted the importance of the Norwich Northern Distributor Road and confirmed it as a nationally significant infrastructure project. His designation of this route as one of national importance recognises its linkage with the A47 trunk road, which has current TEN-T status (TENS = Trans European Network Status).

Millions of pounds of public money has already been approved and granted to Norfolk County Council for the construction of the NDR from Postwick to Taverham and we believe that this planned road, as part of the Norwich Area Transport Strategy (NATS), will bring enormous economic benefits to Norfolk.

The long-term aspiration for all local government bodies and the communities they represent is to have a road network joining the A47 to the West of Norwich with the A47 to the East, both to the North and South of the City.

RESOLVES: to call for further studies in to the feasibility of completing the link across the Wensum Valley to the A47 Southern Bypass from the A1067 Fakenham Road, Taverham, and inform Norfolk County Council accordingly.

(b) Cllrs J C Fuller and M J Wilby

Cllr J Fuller proposed the following motion:

“This Council, acknowledging the important role which the Public House can serve as a focus for our communities:

1. welcomes the continuing success of the Council’s “Community Pub of the Year” Award (now in its fifth year); and

2. supports the continued effective, but sympathetic administration of the business rates discounts available to Public Houses in the District”

Cllr J Fuller cited the success of the Council’s recent Community Pub of the Year event (now in its fifth year), explaining that Brandon Lewis MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, had been present at the Council’s awards. Cllr Fuller gave mention to Cllr S Thomson and Cllr K Weeks, who he felt had been instrumental in the success of the awards over the years. Referring to business rates discounts, Cllr Fuller was proud of the support the Council had given community pubs, local post offices, shops and garages.

Seconding the motion, Cllr M Wilby referred to the extremely high standards of all involved in the competition. Members noted that there had been 5 Neighbourhood
winners, The Waterfront in Diss, The Kings Head in Brooke, the Kings Head in Woodton, the Kings Head in Hethersett and the overall winner, The Green Dragon in Wymondham.

Cllr M Gray proposed that the word “but” in the final sentence be replaced with “and” and this was subsequently accepted by Cllrs Fuller and Wilby. Cllr Gray also referred to the recent permission granted to convert the Public House in Hempnall to residential use, and he suggested that the motion be amended to also reflect the Council’s best endeavours to retain its pubs. Cllr M Windridge agreed that the extent of the marketing of the Queens Head in Hempnall had been disappointing and Cllr Fuller referred to the White Lion in Brooke, where residents had nominated the pub to the Register of Assets of Community Value, pausing any sale and giving the community time to develop a bid themselves. Cllr Gray then, with the permission of the Chairman, withdrew his proposed amendment, suggesting that a separate motion on the matter be brought to a future meeting of the Council.

With 41 votes in favour (and 1 abstention), it was

RESOLVED: This Council, acknowledging the important role which the Public House can serve as a focus for our communities:

1. welcomes the continuing success of the Council’s “Community Pub of the Year” Award (now in its fifth year); and

2. supports the continued effective and sympathetic administration of the business rates discounts available to Public Houses in the District

3200 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET 22 JULY and 23 SEPTEMBER 2013

(a) Treasury Management Report – Quarter 1 2013/14

Cllr G Wheatley explained that a deviation from the agreed strategy, namely a breach relating to the investments in the Lloyds Banking Group, had occurred in Quarter 1. The Treasury Management Committee, had, that very day agreed to increase the counterparty limits of the five main UK clearing banks to £10 million.

Cllr T Lewis suggested that as breaches were inevitable from time to time, it might be more appropriate to report these cases to the Finance, Resources, Audit and Governance Committee or just Cabinet, without the necessity to report to full Council. Cllr K Weeks confirmed his support for the suggestion and Cllr Wheatley agreed to look in to the matter further.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED: To:
1. Approve the 2013/14 prudential indicators for the quarter;
2. Note the treasury activity in Quarter 1 and that it complies with the agreed strategy.

(b) South Norfolk Council Local Plan: Site Specific Policies and Allocations Document: Pre-Submission Version

Cllr J Fuller introduced the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting (tabled at the meeting), held earlier that day. He explained that Cabinet had been very well attended and members had considered representations made from both Trowse and Alpington and Yelverton.

Cllr Fuller had sympathies with the residents of Trowse, where Norfolk County Council was now proposing a new primary school to accommodate not only the houses in the village, but those on the Deal Ground in the Norwich City area.

Members noted that following Council approval, the document would go out to consultation for a six week period to allow for final representations on the “soundness” of the document, before being formally submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

Cllr T Lewis thanked Cllr Fuller for allowing both him and residents in Trowse to voice their concerns at the Cabinet meeting. He explained that whilst he was dissatisfied with the current position for Trowse, he would be voting in favour of the recommendations, to allow for the six week consultation process, during which further representations could be made.

Cllr M Gray then stressed that he knew that both he and other members of the Liberal Democrat Group had reservations over a number of the site allocations, however, he too would be voting in favour of the recommendations, in support of the 6 week consultation process.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED: To:

1. Authorise 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. Agree 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. Authorise 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.

(c) South Norfolk Council Local Plan: Wymondham Area Action Plan: Pre-Submission Version

Cllr J Fuller introduced the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting (tabled at the meeting), held earlier that day. Cllr Fuller explained that due to planning permissions granted since the Preferred Options consultation, two sites 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 deselected these sites, to ensure that numbers did not exceed the 2,200 referred to in the Joint Core Strategy, and members noted that Norfolk County Council had advised that Wymondham High School could not accommodate numbers above this figure. In response to queries from Cllr East, Cllr Fuller explained that the school was land locked, with no room for expansion. Cllr Spratt reminded members that surrounding villages also fed in to Wymondham High School and he had already been alerted to capacity issues.

Cllr Fuller advised members that the Rugby Club were not happy with the changes to their site allocation and had made representations at Cabinet.

Cllr J Mooney was pleased to see the document nearing its final stages which would put an end to any speculative development in Wymondham. He was satisfied that the document protected the strategic gaps between the town and its surrounding villages, that the historic character of the town had been preserved, and that the plan allowed for open space in addition to housing, retail and employment land.

In response to a query from Cllr T Lewis, Cllr Fuller agreed that should material changes be made to this and the Site Specific Policies and Allocations Document following evidence presented during the consultation process, then any new recommendations would need to be considered by the Cabinet and Council.

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

To:

1. Authorise 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. Agree 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. Authorise 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.

(d) South Norfolk Council Local Plan: Development Management Policies Document: Pre-Submission version;

Cllr J Fuller introduced the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting (tabled at the meeting), held earlier that day. He 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 and the National Planning Policy Framework, the document would determine how the Council carried out its development management responsibilities to promote sustainable development.

Cllr Lewis sought clarification regarding the status of policies when considering current planning applications. Cllr Fuller explained that the general consensus was that the closer to adoption, the more weight could be placed upon emerging policies. However some legal advice had suggested that only when the final proposals had been consulted on, could proposed policies be applied.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED: To:

1. Authorise 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. Agree 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 (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012; and

3. Authorise 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.

3201 MONITORING OFFICER REPORT

Cllr J Fuller introduced the Monitoring Officer Report and referred to the proposed course of action arising from the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 and the proposed formation of an Electoral Arrangements Task Group. He drew particular attention to the Boundary Commission’s review of South Norfolk District wards, to take place in 2014-15.

Cllr C Kemp referred to the recommendation at paragraph 6.6 and suggested that the words “support officers” be amended to “work with officers”. However Cllr J Fuller explained that as the nature of this work was “non-political” it was appropriate that members were supporting officers on this occasion.

Cllr C Kemp went on to explain that he had been nominated as Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Task Group. Cllrs Fuller and J Mooney would also serve on this Group, alongside one Independent and one Liberal Democrat member.

Discussion then turned to paragraph 4 of the report, the filming of Council meetings, and some members expressed concerns that the proposed guidance did not provide enough detail in relation to how filming would be monitored and controlled. Cllr Gray queried the extent of the policy and whether it covered just visual or audio recordings. He also suggested that details should be sought regarding the policies in place at other local authorities and the rules applying to parliamentary debates.

Cllr T Lewis suggested that this was an appropriate area for the Scrutiny Committee to consider in more detail. This proposal was supported by Cllr K Weeks and then subsequently full Council.

Cllr W Kemp stressed that members should have nothing to fear from the filming of public meetings; after all the public were permitted to attend in person and witness first-hand meetings in progress.

RESOLVED:

1. To authorise the Director for Environment and Housing to establish the fees and charges for Scrap Metal Licences;

2. To authorise the Environmental Protection Manager, or any officer nominated by them, to undertake all
authority functions given by the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013, except to consider representations to refuse, revoke or vary such licences;

3. To authorise the Licensing, Appeals and Complaints Committee to consider all representations to refuse, revoke or vary Scrap Metal Dealer Licences;

4. To appoint an Electoral Arrangements Task Group, consisting of 5 members in the ratio of 3:1:1, to assess and approve the outcomes of the Polling Districts and Polling Places review;

5. To appoint Councillor Christopher Kemp as Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Task Group;

6. To nominate the Electoral Arrangements Task Group to support officers in the preparation of the Boundary Commission review, through receiving updates on the progress of the review, engaging with the Boundary Commission where required to do so, and assess any documentary evidence prepared by either the Boundary Commission or Officers.

7. That the proposed policy for the filming of Council meetings is considered in more detail at a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee;

8. To note the appointments of the Health and Wellbeing Board Substitute member and Supporting People Member Champions.

3202 CHAIRMEN’S REPORTS

a) Cabinet - Report of the Leader

Members noted the report of the Leader of the Council.

Cllr M Gray asked Cllr Fuller whether when he wrote to the Secretary of State back in November 2011, giving his support for PFI funding for the incinerator at Kings Lynn, was he aware of the £20 million cost to the Norfolk tax payer should the project not receive planning consent, and if so, did he communicate this to his Group when he sought their support for the letter.

Cllr Fuller stated that he could not recall whether or not he had been aware of this cost prior to writing to the Secretary of State.

Cllr M Windridge asked Cllr M Wilby if he thought that it was acceptable that Cllr Windridge’s email to a senior planning officer, dated 20 August, was yet to receive a response. The email was regarding a current planning application from TCI Renewables at Hempnall, and asked whether officers had received guidance on the
matter from Eric Pickles MP, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

In response, Cllr Wilby agreed that this was indeed not acceptable, and agreed to look into the matter further.

Cllr P Allen wished Cllr K Kiddie to thank the Environmental Crime Team for their speedy response in clearing up a large amount of broken bottles and glass, which had been left next to the Kirby Cane and Ellingham recycling centre on the local playing field. She asked whether there had been any progress in prosecutions relating to fly tipping.

Cllr Kiddie explained that prosecutions had been successful in the past, however there had not been enough evidence available in the recent case at Kirby Cane and Ellingham. He agreed to pass on details of the case to Cllr Allen, outside of the meeting.

Cllr B Spratt congratulated the Environmental Crime Team on its excellent response times, suggesting the South Norfolk District was much cleaner and tidier than some other areas.

Cllr T Palmer wished to pass on thanks to officers from the people of Diss, for an excellent job in the refurbishment of the public toilets in the town.

b) Scrutiny Committee

There were no questions from members to the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.

c) Licensing, Appeals and Complaints Committee / Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee – Report of the Chairman

Members noted the report of the Licensing Committee Chairman.

Cllr Thomson drew attention to the homelessness training for members arranged for Friday 11 October at 10.00 am, to be provided by Nigel Brims of nplaw. She further explained that training concerning scrap metal licensing had been arranged for 4.00pm on Monday 7 October. This session was primarily aimed at members of the Licensing Committee, but all members were welcome to attend.

d) Development Management Committee – Report of the Chairman

Members noted the report of the Chairman of the Development Management Committee.
3203 REPRESENTATIVES ON STRATEGIC OUTSIDE BODIES

Members noted both Cllr C Gould’s report (tabled at the meeting), regarding the Broads Authority.

Cllr J Fuller reported that the LGA General Assembly had not met since the last meeting of the Council. He would soon be attending a meeting of the LGA Finance Panel which would be discussing the impacts of welfare reform.

Cllr J Savage explained that he had recently attended the LGA Rural Commission Conference where the Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP had given the opening keynote speech. There had also been an interesting discussion regarding fuel poverty; South Lakeland District Council had recently set up a district wide fuel purchasing scheme. Cllr Savage went on to explain that he had been nominated to serve on the Planning Review Committee of the Rural Commission.

Referring back to the minutes of the meeting held 8 July 2013 (minute 3195), Cllr M Gray asked whether Cllr N Legg had raised the issue of waiting times at GP surgeries at the Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee. Cllr Legg responded that the Committee would not look at individual cases but would consider the matter if such problems were wide spread across the county. He was happy to collate information from members should they be experiencing problems in their wards. Cllr P Allen informed Council that the matter had been raised at the Older People’s Forum where a number of problem areas had been identified. Cllr K Billig stressed that these problems were not common in all wards.

With regard to the Materials Recycling Facility contract, Cllr K Kiddie reported that it was hoped that the range of materials that could be recycled would be expanded by October 2014, to include items such as plastic yoghurt pots, juice cartons and glass. Prior to this, a county wide marketing campaign would be launched for residents. Cllr Kiddie confirmed that the glass recycling banks would be retained, although their usage and viability would be monitored.

Members noted that the brown bin scheme was continuing to grow with 1000 new bins issued over the last year. The Council would also be running a leaf cleaning initiative to be held in the autumn, and he encouraged members to get actively involved.

Referring to his report concerning the Police and Crime Panel for Norfolk, Cllr C Kemp reported that Simon Bailey had been appointed as the new Deputy Chief Constable for Norfolk. In response to a query from Cllr T Lewis, Cllr Kemp confirmed that the enforcement of speed limits was currently seen as low priority. Members noted that operational priorities were set by the Chief Constable.

The Council concluded at 9.14 pm