COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of South Norfolk Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 7 July 2014 at 7.30pm

Members Present: Councillors Allen, Bell, Bendle, Bills, Dale, Dewsbury, East, Edney, Ellis, Foulger, Fuller, Goldson, Gray, Hornby, C Kemp, Kiddie, Lewis, McClennning, Mooney, Neal, Overton, Palmer, Pond, Riches, J Savage Smith Spratt, Walden, Ward, Watt, Webster, Weeks M Wilby and Windridge


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

3239 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr M Gray declared an “other” interest in the matter referred to below:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Minute No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Nature of Interest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3242 (vi)</td>
<td>Geldeston, Ellingham Mill and Langley Abbey Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans</td>
<td>As a member of the Broads Authority</td>
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3240 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 19 May 2014 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3241 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman was very sorry to report the deaths of former councillor, Rev Clive Hudson, and John Flemming, a surveyor with CNC.

Members paid tribute to Rev Hudson who had served as a District Councillor for the Harleston ward from 1999 to 2007. He sat on numerous committees and was Chairman of the Council during 2003/04. Cllr M Gray referred to Rev Hudson as a
man of many talents who presented a compassionate and tolerant nature at all times. Cllr G Walden felt it had been a privilege to have been his friend for so many years.

Members then paid tribute to John Flemming, who had passed away suddenly, at the age of 36. Cllr D Bills explained that Mr Flemming had been a popular employee and was held in high regard by colleagues and customers alike. His thoughts were with Mr Flemming’s friends and family at this difficult time.

Members then stood and observed a minute’s silence in memory of both Rev Hudson and Mr Flemming.

Turning to his engagements, the Chairman gave mention to the Lord Mayor of Norwich Celebration and Street Procession, and the Royal Norfolk Show, both of which he had found to be particularly enjoyable. Cllr Walden reminded members that the Norfolk Village Games County final, an event that was organised by Active Norfolk, was to be held the following Sunday. He had recently attended the Active Norfolk Youth Games, a sporting event for young people with disabilities and had been thoroughly impressed with the organisation, the coaches, carers and over 200 athletes that had taken part.

The Chairman announced, that in celebration of his 75th birthday, he would be performing a parachute jump, in support of his two chosen charities, “Nelson’s Journey” and “nelsonspirit” and he welcomed sponsorship from fellow members.

He further announced that a special meeting of the Council was to take place on Monday 28 July to consider the Long Stratton Area Action Plan; further details of the arrangements would follow shortly.

### 3242 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET

**(i) Performance Risk and Revenue Budget Outturn 2013**

Cllr J Fuller presented the recommendations from Cabinet, which sought Council approval for budget virements, slippage requests and movements in reserves.

It was unanimously

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<td>a)</td>
<td>Approve the budget virements which exceed £100,000 in accordance with the rules of financial governance;</td>
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<td>b)</td>
<td>Approve the slippage requests as outlined in section 9 of the report;</td>
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<td>c)</td>
<td>Approve of the movements in reserves as outlined in section 10 of the report.</td>
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(ii) Capital Outturn Report for 2013/14

Cllr J Fuller presented the recommendations of the Cabinet with regard to capital outturn for 2013/14 and the financing of the capital programme over the next 3 years.

Cllr T Lewis asked when the Council might reach a stage where the capital programme was spent as intended, as opposed to being in a permanent state of slippage.

Cllr Fuller empathised with Cllr Lewis’ comments, but stressed that formal procurement procedures needed to be followed on occasions, which did unfortunately sometimes lead to delays. He referred to the excellent progress made on a number of capital projects.

It was unanimously

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<td>a) Approve the slippage requests summarised in 3.1 of the report;</td>
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<td>b) Approve the financing of the amended Capital programme</td>
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<td>for the next three financial years.</td>
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(iii) Annual Treasury Management Outturn Report 2013/14

Cllr Fuller presented the recommendations from the Cabinet concerning the Treasury Management activity for 2013/14, and he drew members’ attention to the 6.3% gross return on investment properties, which he found particularly pleasing.

Cllr Fuller then paid tribute to the service given to the Council by the former Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, Mr A Radford. He referred in particular to his financial leadership which he believed had contributed to the current enviable financial position of the Council. Members joined Cllr Fuller in wishing Mr Radford every success for the future.

It was unanimously

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<td>a) Approve the actual 2013/14 prudential indicators.</td>
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<td>b) Note the treasury activity in quarter four and that it complies</td>
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<td>with the agreed strategy;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c) Agree to increase the maximum term for deposits with RBS</td>
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<td>Group to 2 years as outlined in section 8 of the report.</td>
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(iv) Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan – South Norfolk Business Plan 2014/15

Cllr J Fuller presented the recommendations from Cabinet regarding the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan – South Norfolk Business Plan 2014/15.

In response to queries from Cllr T Lewis, regarding future borrowing, Cllr J Fuller explained that the new local infrastructure fund would be a mechanism to loan developers funds so that infrastructure could be delivered at a much earlier stage, unlocking growth potential and bringing forward benefits to existing and new committees. He suggested that the proposed new rail bridge/subway at Wymondham might benefit from this fund. He could not rule out any future need for the Council to borrow funds, but he stressed that other funding streams would always be sought, with any borrowing being on a short term basis only.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED: To:

a) Agree the 2014/15 Business Plan attached at Appendix A of the report, for consideration at the 31 July 2014 Greater Norwich Growth Board meeting;
b) Grant the Director of Growth and Localism delegated powers to make any further factual changes to Appendix 1 of the Business Plan, for projects beyond the current 2014/15 Business Plan period.

(v) Cringleford Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Cllr K Kiddie presented the recommendations from the Cabinet, which sought Council approval for the Cringleford Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED: To approves the Cringleford Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

(vi) Geldeston, Ellingham Mill and Langley Abbey Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans

Cllr P Allen welcomed the recommendations from the Cabinet. She was pleased to report that three members of the public had recently come forward to sit on the Kirby Cane and Ellingham Parish Council, which had previously been left inquorate before South Norfolk Council intervention.
It was unanimously

**RESOLVED:** To approve the revised Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans.

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**3243 Recommendations of the Finance Resources, Audit and Governance Committee**

The Chairman explained that Council was being asked to consider recommendations from the Finance Resources, Audit and Governance Committee, as the items were time critical and required a resolution before the next Cabinet meeting on 28 July.

**(i) Annual Audit Report and Opinion 2013/14**

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

To approve:

1. the Annual Report and Opinion of the Internal Audit Consortium Manager;

2. the Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit.

**(ii) Extension to the Internal Audit Contract**

It was unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

To approve the extension of the current contract.

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**3244 MONITORING OFFICER REPORT**

Members considered the report of the Deputy Monitoring Officer, which provided Council with proposals regarding the management of the Council and subsequent amendments to the Constitution following the departure of the Council’s Deputy Chief Executive, and sought member appointments to the Community Safety Partnership and the Saffron Housing Trust.

Cllr C Kemp commended the report to members. Referring to the departure of the Deputy Chief Executive, he added his appreciation to Mr Radford, explaining that it had been a privilege to have worked with him.

With reference to the request for an additional member appointment to the Saffron Housing Trust, Cllr Fuller suggested that this was due to a delay in finalising the new governance arrangements at Saffron, and he nominated Cllr Y Bendle to sit on the
Board if required. It was agreed that the appointment of substitute member on the Community Safety Partnership would be delegated to Group Leaders to decide after the meeting.

In response to queries, the Chief Executive confirmed that the job description for the new Commercial Director was in place and that the mechanisms for recruitment were currently being considered. Cllr C Kemp explained that all queries to the Monitoring Officer should be directed first to Emma Goddard, the Council’s Deputy Monitoring Officer.

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<td>1. Authorise all changes to the Council’s Constitution required in light of the departure of the Deputy Chief Executive, including those highlighted in paragraph 1;</td>
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<td>2. Appoint Chris Skinner, Solicitor at nplaw, to the post of Monitoring Officer;</td>
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<td>3. Appoint Cllr Y Bendle to the Saffron Housing Trust Board, if required;</td>
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<td>4. Delegate to Group Leaders the appointment of a substitute member to the Community Safety Partnership;</td>
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3245 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Members considered the Annual Report of the Standards Committee, which summarised the activity of the Committee in its first full year since the introduction of the new Standards regime.

Cllr C Kemp, as Vice Chairman of the Standards Committee, commended the report to members. He drew attention to the reduction in meetings, believing the move to the new regime to have worked well, with more focus on resolving issues through mediation and informal means.

Cllr P Allen expressed her sincere thanks to Mr Radford, former Monitoring Officer, for his valuable assistance in helping to resolve issues with the Kirby Cane and Ellingham Parish Council.

| RESOLVED:                           | To approve the Annual Report of the Standards Committee, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report. |

3246 CHAIRMEN’S REPORTS

a) Cabinet - Report of the Leader

Members noted the report of the Leader of the Council.

Cllr K Weeks asked Cllr J Fuller what his view was on the plans of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust (WCT), to impose 24 hour parking charges at the Whitlingham Country Park.
Cllr Fuller explained that parking charges at the Park were already a concern, and he now felt it unacceptable that the Trust, as a charitable organisation, was proposing 24 hour charges. He questioned whether this proposal met with the Trust’s charitable activities, as registered with the Charities Commission. He suggested that the Council would no longer be able to financially support the Trust, if such charges were imposed. Cllr L Hornby added that approximately 1800 people per annum, some on limited incomes, were issued with penalty notices from the private parking contractor, ParkingEye, which managed parking on the site. Members noted that ParkingEye retained any monies received through penalty notices and had received an income of approximately £120,000 in the last financial year. Attention was also drawn to the Trust’s accounts, which indicated a healthy balance of just under £1 million in reserves. Cllr Hornby urged the Council to apply any pressure it could to ensure that the Trust amended its practices.

Cllr M Dewsbury, as Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, reminded members that the Scrutiny Committee had, at its most recent meeting, assessed the effectiveness of the WCT and the development of a more targeted and outcome-focused funding agreement. The Committee had debated car parking at some length, and had recommended that the Trust met with relevant officers, along with Cllr S Thomson, to work through a number of issues such as improved signage, security, financial forecasting and improved promotion of the site, before any further financial contribution was made to the Trust from the Council. She confirmed that the Trust had, at the meeting, indicated their desire to move to 24 hour charges and she drew members’ attention to the fact that the Trust was only 2 years in to a 5 year contract with ParkingEye.

Members were generally supportive of Cllr Fuller’s views, and it was agreed that as Leader of the Council, he should formally write to the Chairman of the WCT, outlining the Council’s concerns, stipulating that the Council would consider withholding any further funding to the Trust, should 24 hour parking charges be imposed.

In response to queries from Cllr T Lewis, Cllr J Fuller explained that he was pleased with the funding package allocated to the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) from central government, announced that very morning. He advised that out of the 39 LEPS in operation, the New Anglia LEP received the 10th highest allocation, He further advised that he had been delighted with the news that the government would loan developers over £2 million to fast-track development at the Lodge Farm site in Costessey, which in turn would allow the release of section 106 monies, ensuring that a much larger proportion of the infrastructure on the site could be completed at an earlier stage.

Cllr P Allen requested that more information be provided relating to the reshaping of the Growth and Localism directorate, and the new team structures. Cllr M Wilby confirmed that he would provide Cllr Allen with further details outside of the meeting.

Cllr V Bell referred to problems at the Tower Hill Caravan site in Costessey involving Saffron Housing Trust and the Residents’ Association. There were concerns that the layout of the site did not comply with current fire regulations. Despite raising these issues at Council over a year ago, there had been little improvement and Cllr Y Bendle agreed to look in to the matter further.

Cllr K Smith referred to the new transit travellers’ site at Bawburgh, which she considered to be a real success, giving the police more powers to move travellers on
from unauthorised sites, and she asked whether there were any plans for additional sites in the District. Cllr Bendle explained that there were no current plans for an additional transit site and Cllr Fuller added that the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Document Issues and Options report, would be considered at the Cabinet meeting in July.

In response to a query from Cllr Gray, Cllr Kiddie agreed that a current staff structure chart for the development management team would be forwarded to all members.

Referring back to a motion put before Council by the Liberal Democrat Group (which was subsequently lost with no support from the Conservative Group), regarding the charging of carrier bags in supermarkets, Cllr Lewis asked what Cllr Kiddie’s view was on the current Government’s proposals to introduce such charges. Cllr Kiddie suggested that as a loyal servant of the coalition Government, he would agree with the proposals.

b) Report of the Scrutiny Committee

Members noted the report of the Scrutiny Committee Chairman.

Referring to the most recent meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Dewsbury advised that in addition to the item regarding the Whittingham Charitable Trust (previously referred to at minute 3246a), members were presented with a report regarding the Welfare Reform Agenda and the changes implemented at South Norfolk Council during the first year. She explained that the transition had gone smoothly and credit was due to those officers involved in preventative work and for ensuring that processing figures remained on target, despite high workloads.

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

Members noted the report of the Licensing Committee Chairman.

d) Development Management Committee – Report of the Chairman

Members noted the report of the Chairman of the Development Management Committee. Cllr J Mooney suggested that members’ queries regarding the Five Year Land Supply would be answered at the member training session scheduled for 16 July 2014.

3247 REPRESENTATIVES ON STRATEGIC OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chairman sought to change the way in which members provided feedback on outside bodies in future. He referred to the fact that only “strategic” outside bodies were referred to at Council meetings, suggesting that there needed to be an opportunity to report back on all bodies, if required.

After brief discussion, it was agreed that should members feel that they had feedback on any outside body which required the attention of all members and was significant
enough to be raised within the public arena, a short written report should be submitted to Democratic Services, for inclusion in the next Council agenda. Any other information on outside bodies should be communicated to fellow members via email, or within the Members’ Bulletin if felt appropriate.

Referring to his report regarding the Police and Crime Panel for Norfolk, Cllr C Kemp outlined the Panel’s concern over the Police Commissioner’s decision to “step aside” whilst a managed investigation was carried out into complaints arising from the Commissioner’s claims for travelling expenses. When challenged, the Commissioner had referred to this break as a “voluntary leave of absence”, however, legal advice taken by the Panel had suggested that the Commissioner was acting “ultra vires”. Cllr Kemp advised that at the recent meeting held 4 July, it was announced that the Commissioner would, with effect from 7 July 2014, resume his duties relating to that post.

Referring back to a request made at the last meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, Cllr B McClenning suggested that a presentation from Cllr Kemp to all members regarding the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel, would be beneficial to all.

(The meeting concluded at 9.00 pm)

CHAIRMAN