CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 30 October 2017 at 9.00 a.m.

Members Present:

Cabinet: Councillors K Mason Billig (Chairman for the meeting) Y Bendle, L Hornby and B Stone

Apologies: Councillors M Edney and J Fuller

Non-Appointed: Councillors V Bell, D Bills, F Ellis, M Gray, C Hudson, N Legg and T Lewis

Officers in Attendance: The Chief Executive (S Dinneen), the Director of Growth and Business Development (D Lorimer), the Director of Planning and Environment (T Horspole), the Director of Communities and Well-Being (J Sutterby), the Accountancy Manager (M Fernandez-Graham), the Planning Policy Manager (A Nicholls), the Policy and Partnerships Delivery Manager (T Cooke), the Business Improvement Programme Manager (A Mewes), the Senior Economic Growth Coordinator (D Disney) and the Senior Governance Officer (E Goddard)

2586 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed three new members of staff to the Council:

- Jamie Sutterby, the Director of Communities and Well-Being
- Simon Hawken, the Operations Manager at Ketteringham Depot
- Charles Pratt, the Senior Management Accountant.
2587 MINUTES

Referring to minute number 2578, the Response to the Waveney First Draft Local Plan (July 17), third paragraph, the Chairman requested that the word "exasperate" be amended to "exacerbate".

Subject to the above change, the minutes of the meeting held 9 October 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2588 PERFORMANCE, RISKS, REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET POSITION REPORT FOR QUARTER 2 2017/18

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Accountancy Manager, Business Improvement Programme Manager, and the Senior Governance Officer, which detailed the Council’s performance against strategic measures, risk position, and the revenue and capital position for Quarter 2 2017/18.

Cllr B Stone commended the report to members and was pleased to report that corporate risk capacity remained positive, that there was a positive variance on the revenue budget of £1.11 million and that £2.29 million had been spent against a capital budget of £3.44 million. With regard to strategic measures, performance remained good, although three measures had failed to hit stretched targets.

The Business Improvement Programme Manager outlined the Council’s performance under each of the Council’s corporate priorities.

Referring first to Economic Growth, Productivity and Prosperity, he outlined performance relating to start-up businesses, business rate collection and property rental income. Members noted that LI 758, ‘External Funding Identified and Brought in to the Local Economy’ was below the quarter 2 target, however, three new pooled business rate projects for approximately £530,000 was anticipated for quarter 3, which would bring performance back in line.
Turning to Health and Well-being, the Business Improvement Programme Manager referred to the increase in leisure centre memberships, the work of the Early Help Hub and Community Connectors, and housing and council tax benefit claims. He explained that HE 1604, the % of households prevented from becoming homeless had failed to reach the stretched target set, but that this was mainly due to the reduction in cases coming forward. Cllr Y Bendle explained that the high level of prevention work had reduced the number of cases, and that those still coming forward were the more complex ones. She hoped that a more appropriate measure could be found that would more accurately demonstrate the performance of the service. Cllr Bendle also applauded the progress that had been made by the community connectors and commended the work of all staff across the service.

Under Customer Focus, the Business Improvement Manager then gave mention to the good performance relating to resources, staff and IT and digital services.

Concerning performance under Place, Community and Environment, the Business Improvement Programme Manager referred to the number of affordable homes delivered, the Long Stratton bypass and the reduction in the cost of waste collection. The number of missed bins had failed to hit target, but this had been due to a number of vehicle breakdowns resulting in capacity issues, an increase in garden waste tonnage, and fewer agency staff being available to cover holidays and sickness. Members noted that these issues had since been addressed.

The Decision

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<th>RESOLVED:</th>
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<td>a) Note the 2017/18 performance for the quarter and the combined efforts across the Directorates to deliver the vision of the Council (detail contained in Appendix 1 of the report).</td>
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<td>b) Note the current position with respect to risks and accepts the actions to support risk mitigation (detail contained in Appendix 2).</td>
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<td>c) Note the capital and revenue position and the reason for the variances on the General Fund (detail contained in Appendices 3 and 4).</td>
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<td>d) Note the decision to commission works on the Wymondham Digital Heritage Trail and approve expenditure of £116,550 in order to deliver the project as referred to in paragraph 3.1.</td>
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<td>e) Endorse the decision of the Leader of the Council to participate in the bid for a one year pilot of 100% business rates retention as outlined in paragraph 3.2.</td>
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f) Approve an ongoing “overdraft” facility to Big Sky Developments Limited of £500,000 as outlined in paragraph 3.3.
g) Approve additional funding to Big Sky Property Management Ltd of £575k to enable it to buy two homes at Rosebery Park as referred to in paragraph 3.3.

The Reasons for the Decision

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

Other Options Considered

None

2589  TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTER 2 2017/18

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Accountancy Manager, which detailed the treasury management activity during the first six months of 2017/18, the position on investments as at 30 September 2017, and performance against prudential indicators required under the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

The Accountancy Manager outlined the key issues arising from his report, explaining that investments had risen £5.5 million from 1 April 2017 to £39.8 million at 30 September 2017. Cash had also increased by £4.1 million from 1 April 2017 to £27.6 million as at 30 September, and members were advised that this position was typical for the current time of year.

Referring to the Treasury Management Code of Practice, members noted that the Code was currently being reviewed by CIPFA, and that the Council had recently responded to the relevant consultation.
The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL

a) Notes the treasury activity between April and September and that it complies with the agreed strategy.
b) Approves the 2017/18 prudential indicators for the first six months of the year.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure a balanced portfolio in terms of risk, rates and liquidity.

Other Options Considered

None

2590 SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK JOINT LOCAL PLAN – REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION (AUGUST 2017)

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which invited Cabinet to comment on, and agree the Council’s response to the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan.

The Planning Policy Manager presented his report and drew attention to the key points of the Council’s response. He explained that little growth was expected in the north of Mid Suffolk, but that Diss would remain an important service centre for the area.

Members noted that the response emphasised the importance of the A143 and A140 links to accommodate future growth, and also indicated some support for small scale infill development in rural areas. The Planning Policy Manager stressed the
importance of continuing to engage with Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, through the Duty to Co-operate Group, to consider strategic cross-border planning matters.

The Decision

**RESOLVED:** To agree the South Norfolk Council response to the Regulation 18 consultation on the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan, outlined at Appendix 1 of the report.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the impacts of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan on the South Norfolk District, are fully considered.

Other Options Considered

None.

2591 **PLANNING IN HEALTH: AN ENGAGEMENT PROTOCOL BETWEEN LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES, PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SECTOR ORGANISATIONS IN NORFOLK**

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which invited Cabinet to consider and adopt the Norfolk Health Protocol.

In presenting his report, the Planning Policy Manager explained that the protocol set out how councils and Health bodies would engage with each other to ensure a “no surprises” approach to housing development, healthcare data and early help/social prescribing. He acknowledged that in the past, the level of co-operation between Planning and Health bodies had not always been ideal. Members noted that the protocol would be reviewed and updated regularly.
Cllr Y Bendle commended the report to members, and felt the protocol to be a positive step forward in ensuring co-operation between the organisations. She accepted that the Council could do little to address the GP shortage across Norfolk, but stressed the need to concentrate on areas where it could make a difference. Cllr B Stone referred to Maple Park at Poringland, where Council built properties were accessible to the disabled and allowed for future adaptions. Members agreed that the Council should do all it could to encourage commercial developers to do the same.

Cllr N Legg welcomed the protocol, but was concerned that the NHS would fail to deliver on its obligations. The Chief Executive explained that part of the problem was that Health organisations were very fragmented, adding that the Norfolk and Waveney Sustainable Transformation Plan was an important programme looking at ways of providing more sustainable services. Part of this would involve finding more coherent ways of working together, both inside the NHS and with partner organisations.

During discussion, Cllr M Gray expressed his support for the protocol and queried whether doctors’ surgeries could benefit from section 106 or CIL monies, as many of them were private businesses. The Director of Growth and Localism advised that as private organisations they could not, and also reminded members that such funding could only contribute to the direct impact of any development.

Cllr V Bell explained that Costessey had recently been moved from the South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group to the Norwich Clinical Commissioning Group area, and that whilst she understood the reasons for this, it had resulted in the need for much change for many patients involving the building of new relationships. Cllr Bendle explained that this move had been at the request of the surgery in Costessey.

Members agreed that whilst the protocol alone could not resolve all the issues, it was a positive step in the right direction.

**The Decision**

| RESOLVED: | To formally adopt Planning in Health: An Engagement Protocol Between Local Planning Authorities, Public Health and Health Sector Organisations in Norfolk. |
The Reasons for the Decision

To support better liaison and a “no surprise” approach with Public Health and Health Sector Organisations in Norfolk.

Other Options Considered

None.

2592 PLANNING FOR THE RIGHT HOMES IN THE RIGHT PLACES CONSULTATION – SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL RESPONSE

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which invited Cabinet to note and comment on the draft response to the consultation document, Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places.

The Planning Policy Manager summarised the key areas of the proposed consultation response, giving mention to the housing need approach, neighbourhood planning and viability assessments and planning fees.

Cllr L Hornby endorsed the response and explained that the issues had been discussed at some length at the recent meeting of the Regulation and Planning Policy Committee.

The Chairman suggested that as a priority for the Government, local authorities needed to be more flexible with regard to its approach to housing, and that maybe more control should be given to local people who often knew the best places to position new housing. She also expressed some concern at the rising costs of planning applications, not wishing individuals to be further daunted by what could be a complex process.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To agree the proposed South Norfolk Council response (as outlined at Appendix 1 of the report).
The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the Council’s views on this consultation are considered.

Other Options Considered

None.

2593 HOUSING SUPPORT AND REGULATION STRATEGY AND ASSOCIATED POLICIES

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Policy, Partnerships and Delivery Manager, which presented Cabinet with the Housing Support and Regulation Strategy for approval.

The Policy Partnerships and Delivery Manager explained that the Strategy and associated policies were supplementary documents to the South Norfolk Housing Strategy. Its purpose was to outline the Council’s approach to supporting residents to remain in their homes, though advice and support services, and to illustrate the Council’s approach to maintaining the quality of homes, including enforcement activity within the housing sector and its work to minimise the number of empty homes. Members noted that the Housing Well-Being, Leisure and Early Intervention Committee, had considered the Strategy at its last meeting, and had recommended that it be taken to Cabinet for approval.

Cllr Y Bendle welcomed the new Strategy and drew members’ attention to the difficult and sensitive issue of dealing with terminally ill patients, and ensuring that any necessary property adaptations were completed speedily. In response to queries, the Policy, Partnerships and Delivery Manager advised that the assistance given through the early help approach was helping people to stay in their own homes for longer, and that this then delayed the need to move in to sheltered housing.

During discussion, members noted that the standard of accommodation in South Norfolk, compared very favourably with some in other areas, such as in the London boroughs. With regard to enforcement, the Chairman reminded members that this was a daunting prospect for some, and that consideration should be given to the tone of all communications.
The Decision

RESOLVED: To approve the Housing Support and Regulation Strategy, to be included as an addendum to the South Norfolk Housing Strategy 2016-2019.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure a comprehensive and up to date strategy.

Other Options Considered

None.

2594 CAR PARKING PROPOSALS

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Senior Economic Growth Co-ordinator, which sought Cabinet approval for the granting of a new lease to Redenhall with Harleston Town Council, regarding car parking provision within the town.

Cllr L Hornby commended the report to members, explaining that negotiations had been ongoing between the Council and the Town Council for some 18 months, and he was pleased that a proposed lease with terms acceptable to both parties had now been reached.

The Senior Economic Growth Co-ordinator outlined the background to his report, drawing attention to a number of proposals that had been considered during negotiations. Members noted that the Co-op in Harleston was contributing towards the Town Council costs, but that this was a separate negotiation, and that the Coop did not form part of the Council’s lease agreement.
Cllr M Gray expressed his disappointment that members from adjacent villages to Harleston had not been included in consultations or discussions regarding the proposals, yet residents in these villages were clearly affected by any car parking changes. He drew attention to the Town Council’s offer of a “peppercorn” lease that had been rejected on the grounds that there were irreducible costs to be covered that were allocated across the District on an equitable basis, and he explained that the Director of Growth and Business Development had provided him with a breakdown of these costs, which he then distributed at the meeting. Referring to these figures, Cllr Gray drew attention to the litter pick and transport costs, suggesting that these needed to be removed as litter picks would be carried out by the Town Council. Staff hours that were associated with this function would need to be reduced or redeployed elsewhere. He was disillusioned with the costs that had been presented and felt they required serious scrutiny. He suggested that it was unacceptable that these costs had been classed as irreducible, especially for a Conservative controlled authority which prided itself on being business like and efficient. He believed that the Council should be working actively to reduce these costs, as any business would have to do if its customer base had decreased. This would then allow for the Town Council to take on the management of the car parks, with a peppercorn rent, and no overhead costs for South Norfolk Council to reallocate.

Referring to the terms of the lease, Cllr Gray queried the fact that there was no mention of periodic increases in rent, and referring to paragraph 4.1 of the report he suggested that as the lease was for the sum of £50,000, any future changes should be reported to Cabinet, not the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

In response, Cllr Hornby expressed his disappointment regarding Cllr Gray’s comments regarding the calculated costs, explaining that the Town Council was fully aware of the costs involved and had already scrutinised these figures. The Director of Growth and Business Development reminded members that these were not new costs and that they were apportioned across all the Council car parks, in line with the principles for car parking, reaffirmed by Cabinet back in October 2016. She advised that it had been agreed with the Town Council that South Norfolk would continue to carry out the daily litter picks in Harleston and the costs associated with this did include the costs of maintaining street cleaning equipment and vehicles. She added that the Town Council had been fully briefed on the costs involved and details of service provision.

Regarding the terms of the lease, the Director of Growth and Business Development referred members to paragraph 3.8 of the report which referred to a “combined index linked annual rental”, and she confirmed that the proposal was for a lease of £37,000, not £50,000 as suggested by Cllr Gray.

Cllr C Hudson referred to paragraph 3.4 of the report which advised that the total running costs of the Council’s car parks was approximately £400,000. With Harleston being responsible for approximately a fifth of these costs, Cllr Hudson had calculated that this equated to £79,000, and with the proposed lease at £37,000, he queried whether the Town Council’s share of costs was to be
subsidised by the tax payer. The Director of Growth and Business Development advised that this was not the case, and that the £400,000 figure quoted, referred to all costs, including rates and ticket machines. In response to a query from Cllr T Lewis, regarding employee costs and enforcement, it was explained that as the car parks remained assets of the Council, these officers would continue to inspect the car parks.

Discussion followed with regard to the lack of “churn” in the Council’s car parks and members were reminded that this was an important factor and formed one of the Council’s principles for car parking across the District. Cllr Hornby reminded members that surveys carried out had indicated that churn was a problem in Harleston. Cllrs Gray and Hudson did not believe this to be the case stating that they had not ever experienced a problem with parking in the town. Cllr Gray did however acknowledge that with more houses being built in the area, this was a concern for the future. Both Cllrs Gray and Hudson were pleased that the current proposal would ensure that free parking would continue, for the time being.

The Chairman felt it important to note that whilst the original proposal from the Council involved car parking charges, there was always an intention to provide 1 hour, or possibly 2 hours of free parking for motorists.

Cabinet noted that members were querying the costs to Redenhall with Harleston Town Council, yet the local members for Harleston were not present. Cllr Gray explained that the Town Council consulted villages in his area and he felt that he had a role to play in addressing the issues that affected the residents in his ward.

After the Chairman had ensured that all those wishing to contribute to the debate had done so, Cabinet indicated its support for the proposals, as outlined in the report.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To agree to the granting of a new lease to Redenhall with Harleston Town Council on the terms set out in paragraph 3.8 of the report.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure the provision of income to cover the irreducible costs of operating car parking services in Harleston.

Other Options Considered

Cab Min 30/10//17CLW
None.

2595 CABINET CORE AGENDA

Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda.

(The meeting concluded at 10.44 am)

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Chairman