CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 4 December 2017 at 9.00 a.m.

Members Present:

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

Apologies: Councillors J Fuller and B Stone

Non-Appointed: Councillors D Bills, F Ellis, M Gray, N Legg, T Lewis, G Minshull and V Thomson

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 Head of Early Help (M Pursehouse), the Assistant Director – Resources (P Catchpole), the Head of Business Transformation (H Ralph), the Accountancy Manager (M Fernandez-Graham), the Planning Policy Manager (A Nicholls), the Senior Conservation and Design Officer (C Bennett) and the Housing and Enabling Strategy Officer (K Mitchell)

2596 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr K Mason Billig welcomed back Cllr M Edney, who had recently taken some time away due to illness. She explained that Cllr J Fuller had sent his apologies, as unfortunately he had a meeting in London which he was required to attend.

Cabinet agreed that in the absence of Cllr Fuller, Cllr Mason Billig should act as Chairman for the duration of the meeting.
The Chairman explained that this was the Planning Policy Manager’s (Adam Nicholls) last Cabinet meeting, before leaving the Council at the end of December. Cabinet agreed that Mr Nicholls would be sorely missed, and wished him well in his new role at Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

Members also noted that this was the last Cabinet meeting for Tim Horspole, as the Director of Planning and Environment. The Chairman thanked Mr Horspole for his service to the Council, referring to his patient and supportive approach to members.

**2597 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held 30 October 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**2598 GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION: GROWTH OPTIONS**

**The Subject of the Decision**

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which sought Cabinet approval to agree the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) Issues and Options paper (Regulation 18) for public consultation, commencing in January 2018.

The Planning Policy Manager presented his report to members, and outlined the key issues. Members noted that views concerning the allocation of growth and the future of the Norwich Policy Area (NPA) were sought through the consultation. The Planning Policy Manager stressed that there would be no “preferred” sites at this stage, as this would depend on the chosen distribution strategy.

Members were informed that the consultation document would be widely publicised, with a number of roadshows taking place across the Greater Norwich area, and meetings for parish councils held at South Norfolk House. Members recognised that they played a key role in informing residents and the Chairman urged members to liaise with their local parishes.

Cllr M Gray expressed concern at proposals to allow small windfall sites to be developed adjacent to development boundaries, on sites that were not in the Local Plan. The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Housing White Paper had indicated that the Government was minded to introduce this approach, and members noted that concerns were raised as part of the Council’s
response to that consultation. Comments regarding this approach were welcomed through the Regulation 18 consultation. In response to a further query, the Planning Policy Manager explained that windfall sites could technically count towards a local authority’s five-year land supply, however, numbers were expected to be minimal, and this approach should be treated with caution.

In response to a query regarding the potential for a new settlement in Mangreen, members were informed that this site had not been put forward by landowners. During discussion, it was suggested that with only 7,200 new homes being required across the whole of the GNLP area, and with the potential for growth in more rural locations, there may not be a need for a new settlement in the South Norfolk district.

The Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLVED:</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Agree the Greater Norwich Local Plan Regulation 18 Growth Options (Appendix 1), the New Settlements Topic Paper (Appendix 2) and the Interim Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix 4), for consultation;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Delegate authority to the relevant Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for The Economy and External Affairs, to:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Agree for publication, in advance of the start of the public consultation, the Site Proposals document, and specifically the proposed sites in South Norfolk; and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Agree any necessary minor corrections and presentational/formatting changes to the Growth Options, New Settlements Topic Paper and Interim Sustainability Appraisal and other documents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reasons for the Decision

To provide residents, consultees and infrastructure providers, the opportunity to comment on the draft proposals of the Local Plan.

Other Options Considered

None

Cab Min 04/12//17CLW
2599 UPDATE TO THE SOUTH NORFOLK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which presented members with the updated South Norfolk Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1 to the report), for approval.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Local Development Scheme set out the timetable and details of the Local Plan production. Members noted details of the updates, and in particular, plans to cease work on the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan, as this work was being progressed through the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

The Decision

| RESOLVED: | To agree the updated South Norfolk Local Development Scheme (attached at Appendix 1) and to bring it into effect immediately. |

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the Local Development Scheme is up to date, in line with statutory requirements.

Other Options Considered

To continue to work on the South Norfolk Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan.
CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS AND BOUNDARY AMENDMENTS FOR BAWBURGH, DICKLEBURGH, HEMPNALL, MULBARTON AND SCOLE CONSERVATION AREAS

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Senior Conservation and Design Officer, which proposed amended conservation area boundaries, appraisals and management guidelines for Bawburgh, Dickleburgh, Hempnall, Mulbarton and Scole conservation areas.

The Senior Conservation and Design Officer briefly outlined the proposed changes to each of the conservation areas.

The Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLVED:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) approves and adopts the amended conservation area boundaries for Bawburgh, Dickleburgh, Hempnall, Mulbarton, and Scole Conservation Areas;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) approves and adopts the conservation area appraisals and conservation management guidelines for the conservation areas of Bawburgh, Dickleburgh, Hempnall, Mulbarton, and Scole.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reasons for the Decision

To support the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

Other Options Considered

None
2601 THE SELF BUILD AND CUSTOM HOUSEBUILDING REGISTER

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer, regarding the future operation of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding register.

The Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer presented his report and outlined the current position with regard to the numbers on the register, and the number of planning permissions required and granted. He further explained that following recent government guidance, legal advice had indicated that the Council could no longer justify applying a local connection test to applicants, and that this should be abolished and backdated to July 2017. Members noted that this change would result in a further 15 planning permissions being required arising from base period 2.

Cabinet noted that the Housing, Wellbeing, Leisure and Early Intervention Policy Committee had recommended that the Council continued to collect data to establish who on the register had a local connection test, but for monitoring purposes only. The Committee had also suggested, that as there was currently no direct link between those planning permissions granted and individuals on the register, that officers contact all applicants to establish how many had been successful in acquiring a plot of land in South Norfolk, on which to build a house to live in. Cabinet agreed with these recommendations, also agreeing that officers should also enquire as to how many housebuilders had started work on site.

Some members were sceptical as to how the scheme directly impacted upon planning permissions for self-builds, as it was likely that those planning permissions granted would have come forward in the absence of a register. It was noted that more sites suitable for self-build would come forward through the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

Concerning the Registration Fee and Financial Resources Test, Cabinet agreed that any benefits to their introduction, were outweighed by the disadvantages and risks.
The Decision

RESOLVED: That:

1. The local connection test is abolished, backdated to 28 July 2017
2. No registration fee is introduced.
3. No financial resources test is introduced.
4. For monitoring purposes only, the Council:
   (a) Continues to collect data to establish who on the register has a local connection to South Norfolk;
   (b) Contacts all applicants to establish how many have been successful in acquiring a plot of land in South Norfolk on which to build a house to live in, and how many of these have started work on site;
5. The position is reviewed in 2 years’ time unless circumstances provide reason for earlier review.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure a meaningful register, whilst adhering to statutory requirements.

Other Options Considered

To introduce a registration fee and/or a financial resources test.
Not to collect additional data for monitoring purposes.

2602 USING SECTION 106 RECEIPTS AND AFFORDABLE HOME OWNERSHIP

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer, regarding the using of Section 106 receipts to acquire properties for affordable home ownership.
The Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer presented his report and outlined the proposed arrangements.

Cllr Y Bendle commended the report and the innovative approach to spending S106 funds, whilst ensuring properties were available where there was a real need.

Cllr T Lewis, on behalf of Cllr V Bell (who was unable to attend the Cabinet meeting), suggested that, as the monies available had resulted from the Queens Hill development, these funds be reinvested in the Costessey area. The Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer explained that currently there were eight 3 bedroomed houses available in Costessey, with no current buyers, however, a current need for this property type had been identified in Diss. He suggested that officers could consider purchasing 2 bedroomed properties in Costessey, during the scheme’s next phase.

The Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLVED:</th>
<th>To agree that:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) The Council uses S106 receipts to acquire properties for affordable home ownership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) The properties are acquired and owned by Big Sky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Sales are on a shared ownership or shared equity basis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that S106 funds are used to provide affordable housing in areas that need it most.

Other Options Considered

None.
2603 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2018/19

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Head of Early Help, which presented Cabinet with proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2018/19.

The Head of Early Help presented his report, explaining that the proposed changes to the Scheme, would reflect the changes to the Housing Benefit rules.

Cllr Y Bendle commended the proposals, explaining that the proposed changes would in no way dilute the original principles of the scheme, which were to incentivise work while protecting the most vulnerable, and to enable the efficient management of the scheme.

The Decision

RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL agrees the proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2018/19.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure a fair scheme which continues to incentivise work and protect the most vulnerable.

Other Options Considered

None.
2604  SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL RESPONSE TO NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET CONSULTATION 2018/19

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Head of Business Transformation and the Accountancy Manager, regarding South Norfolk’s response to the Norfolk County Council Budget Consultation for 2018/19.

The Head of Business Transformation outlined the key areas of the Council’s response to members.

During discussion, it was suggested that the response should include a reference to the proposed cuts in bus subsidies, which was likely to impact on bus services in the District. The Chief Executive suggested that it would be appropriate to reference this alongside the request for a balanced approach to resources, across both urban and rural areas. In response to a further request, Cabinet also agreed that under “Driving Economic Growth and Prosperity”, reference should be made to the Hempnall roundabout, alongside the Long Stratton bypass.

The Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLVED:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To agree the letter from the Leader of South Norfolk Council to the Leader of Norfolk County Council, subject to additional comments regarding cuts to bus subsidies and a reference to the new roundabout at the Hempnall crossroads.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reasons for the Decision

To work collaboratively with Norfolk County Council to deliver on key savings which can be made across a wider scale.

Other Options Considered

None.
2605 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Subject of the Decision

Cllr G Minshull, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, presented his report to Cabinet, outlining the recommendations of the Committee, made following its consideration of Member Grants, at its meeting on 15 November 2017.

Members noted that the Scrutiny Committee had concluded that the Community Action Fund (CAF) had worked well, with the total budget being spent at its first meeting in July. There were however a few concerns relating to the Member Ward Budget, and members noted that the majority of this budget for 2017/18, remained unspent.

Cllr G Minshull explained that some members were finding it difficult to spend their allocated budget, and when advice was sought from officers in relation to ideas / projects, they were often dissuaded from spending their Member Budget, in favour of other funding sources, such as Go For it Grants. The Chief Executive stressed the need to ensure that this advice was helpful and appropriate in each case.

Cllr M Edney reminded members that it was possible to pool Member Ward Grants, with that of fellow members, should projects require higher levels of funding. He stressed the need for members to take responsibility for completing decision notices correctly, and to ensure delivery of projects, once funds had been paid. He welcomed the suggestion that any unspent monies should be allocated to the CAF.

Members discussed the deadline for Member Grant spend, and it was agreed that 1 January was an appropriate cut-off date, however it was accepted that some flexibility would be required on occasions.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To agree the recommendations outlined at paragraph 3.1 of the report.
The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure compliance with the scheme, and that monies are spent effectively.

Other Options Considered

None

2606 GREATER NORWICH JOINT FIVE YEAR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN 18/19 – 22/23

To note that the Greater Norwich Joint Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan 2018/19 – 2022/23, would be considered at a future meeting of the Cabinet.

2607 FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF STREET LIGHTS

To note that the Future Management of Street Lights would be considered at a future meeting of the Cabinet.

2608 CABINET CORE AGENDA

Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda

2609 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was

RESOLVED: To exclude the public and press from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 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 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended)
2610 REVIEW OF BUILD INSIGHT COMPANIES AND FUTURE PLANS

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the *exempt* report of the Chief Executive, which outlined the opportunity to expand the Build Insight Companies, through a joint arrangement with Norfolk Property Services.

The Chief Executive advised members of the background to the report, explaining that a partnership with NPS would provide immediate access to existing NPS customers, and a national presence, both of which would help to accelerate the generation and level of profits to be made.

The Assistant Director – Resources, outlined the financial forecast for the proposed partnership, with effect from April 2018 (as tabled at the meeting).

Cllr T Lewis agreed that the proposals were the appropriate way forward, however he stressed the need for caution when involved in future commercial ventures. The Chairman agreed that caution should be exercised at all times, but reminded members of the need for local authorities to be more commercial, and that with this came an element of risk.

The Decision

RESOLVED:

To agree:
1. To sell 50% of the shares in the Build Insight companies to NPS and to enter into a joint arrangement;
2. To delegate to the Chief Executive as the Managing Director of the Build Insight companies, in consultation with the Shareholder’s Representative, the finalisation of the Shareholders Agreement and associated legal documents and the financing arrangements with regard to establishing a neutral balance sheet position for all three Build Insight companies.
The Reasons for the Decision

To maximise and accelerate the delivery of profits.

Other Options Considered

- To close the companies and set up new companies with Norfolk Property Service
- To continue with the Council being the sole trader
- To look for another external partner.

(The meeting concluded at 10.44 am)

___________________________
Chairman