Growth and Localism Committee

Members of the Growth and Localism Committee:

Cllr F Ellis (Chairman)
Cllr P Allen
Cllr D Bills
Cllr M Edney
Cllr J Overton
Cllr B Riches
Cllr B Spratt

Agenda

Date
Thursday 22 January 2015

Time
2.00 pm

Place
Blomefield Room
South Norfolk House
Swan Lane
Long Stratton Norwich
NR15 2XE

Contact
Sue Elliott
tel (01508) 533685
South Norfolk District Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton Norwich
NR15 2XE

Email: democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk
Website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

If any member of the public wishes to speak on a non-confidential item, they may do so at the discretion of the Chairman

If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance

Large print version can be made available
1. To report apologies for absence and identify substitute voting members (if any);

2. To deal with any items of business the Chairman decides should be considered as matters of urgency pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent business may only be taken if, "by reason of special circumstances" (which will be recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency;

3. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members;
   (Please see guidance form and flow chart attached page 4)

4. Minutes of the meeting of Growth & Localism Committee held on 23 September 2014;
   (attached – page 6)

5. Economic Strategy - Update;
   (Verbal Update)

6. Community Grant Scheme 2015/16;
   (report attached - page 12)

7. Capital Grants Update;
   (report to follow)

8. Update on the Market Towns Initiative (MTI);
   (report attached – page 16)

9. Date of Next Meeting;
   5 March 2015
**Working Style of Cabinet Policy Committees**

**Member Leadership**
Members of the Committees will take the lead in understanding the direction provided by Cabinet and delivering work to Cabinet requirements. Whilst recognising political allegiances, members will work in a collaborative manner with officers and cabinet portfolio holders to consider the relevant issues when developing Council policy.

**Collaborative Working**
All meetings of the Committees will be constructive and conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and trust. Officers will commit to supplying meetings with information relevant to making informed decisions on policies and matters. Members will commit to thoroughly reading and understanding papers, raising questions that are pertinent to the issues at stake. Members will, where feasible, agree definable actions to be taken forward by officers to develop policy, rather than having items for noting or simply to discuss.

**Frequency and Nature of Meeting**
Each Committee will have at least 3 formal, public meetings per year. In assessing items delegated by Cabinet for review, the Committee may decide that it wishes to meet on a more or less frequent basis.

The Committee may also hold informal meetings should it require in order to progress specific items in detail. However, if the Committee is meeting to determine whether to refer items for Cabinet approval, the meeting should follow the Council’s Standing Orders and thus be subject to a formal agenda, be held in public and the meeting recorded.

Informal meetings may be held in any manner suitable for conducting business (e.g. via meeting, conference call, circulation of information via e-mail, or site visits); while relevant information will be supplied by officers where appropriate, these meetings will not be subject to a formal agenda or minutes. Where business of the Committee is undertaken through informal meeting, all members of the Committee will be provided opportunity to participate. Members will expect to be able to participate in a free and frank exchange of views when deliberating subjects.

**Training**
Members commit to undertaking development – for example, attending formal training sessions, or reading relevant background material, in order to properly equip themselves to deliver their expected role fully.

**Accountability**
The Policy Committees will be accountable to Cabinet. They will not be able to make decisions themselves, but can recommend decisions to Cabinet. Cabinet may review whether the Committees are discharging their duties effectively, and may receive progress reports on how the Policy Committee is working to discharge its duties.

**Work Programmes**
The Work Programmes for the Policy Committee will be established by Cabinet. Members of the Committee will not be able to raise items to be included in the work programme. Where topics have been identified for inclusion in the work programme, the Committee will work to identify how it will discharge its responsibilities, including the resources required to do so.

**Managing Time**
However the Committee is meeting, it will attempt to conclude the business of each meeting in reasonable time. The Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the meeting stays focused on pertinent issue, and does not become side-tracked on issues that are not relevant to the policy under consideration, or those that should be discussed by a separate committee.
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A G E N D A

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

Item 3

When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.

Does the interest directly:
1. affect yours, or your spouse / partner’s financial position?
2. relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner?
3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council
4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own
5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in

If the answer is “yes” to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.

Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?

If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.

Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be an other interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.

Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.

FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF.
PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST INSTANCE
DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

What matters are being discussed at the meeting?

Do any relate to an interest I have?

A  Have I declared it as a pecuniary interest?

OR

B  Does it directly affect me, my partner or spouse’s financial position, in particular:
   • employment, employers or businesses;
   • companies in which they are a director or where they have a shareholding of more than £25,000 face value or more than 1% of nominal share holding
   • land or leases they own or hold
   • contracts, licenses, approvals or consents

NO

YES

The interest is pecuniary – disclose the interest, withdraw from the meeting by leaving the room. Do not try to improperly influence the decision.

If you have not already done so, notify the Monitoring Officer to update your declaration of interests.

The interest is related to a pecuniary interest. Disclose the interest at the meeting. You may make representations as a member of the public, but then withdraw from the

YES

NO

The interest is not pecuniary nor affects your pecuniary interests. Disclose the interest at the meeting. You may participate in the meeting and vote.

YES

NO

You are unlikely to have an interest. You do not need to do anything further.

Have I declared the interest as an other interest on my declaration of interest form?

OR

Does it relate to a matter highlighted at B that impacts upon my family or a close associate?

OR

Does it affect an organisation I am involved with or a member of?

OR

Is it a matter I have been, or have lobbied on?
Growth & Localism Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Growth & Localism Committee of South Norfolk Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Tuesday 23 September 2014 at 2.00 pm.

Committee Members Present: Councillors F Ellis (Chairman), D Bills, M Edney, B Riches and B Spratt

Apologies: Councillor P Allen, J Overton

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors T Lewis, T Palmer, G Walden, K Weeks and M Wilby

Also in Attendance: Two members of the public

Officers in Attendance: The Director of Growth & Localism (T Horspole), the Compliance and Risk Manager (L Mickleborough), the Housing and Public Health Manager (M Swann), the Early Help Development Manager (L Downes) and the Funding Manager (N Cunningham)

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Minute No.</th>
<th>Nature of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T Palmer</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Member of Diss &amp; Thetford CAB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Edney</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Other interest – Member is a Trustee of Homestart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Localism Committee held on 15 April 2014 were agreed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22 UPDATE ON HUB

The Housing and Public Health Manager introduced the item and gave an overview of the history of the Early Help Hub, updating members on the current position. He confirmed that 21 staff from five organisations were currently based at the hub including officers from South Norfolk Council, Children’s Services, Police and the voluntary sector. He advised that staff had been building relationships and gaining a deeper understanding of each other’s roles and as a result staff had already seen an improvement in their ability to work jointly on cases.

Officers had been working on a business process for the hub with the aim that each agency would shortly be looking at how they could align their services and processes to incorporate...
early help. The Housing and Public Health Manager confirmed that a number of cases had already passed through the hub with the new approach demonstrating that a more coordinated approach was successful in helping families earlier. A key part of this work was to develop a more generic approach to working with families. The aim was to develop confidence and skills amongst staff to enable them to offer initial support to families beyond their core business, developing a ‘no wrong door’ approach to service delivery.

With this approach in mind, members were advised that officers were looking at a number of options around joint delivery to improve families’ access to services and coordination of services. Both a Housing Options Officer and a Revenues and Benefits Officer from South Norfolk Council were due to start working in the Job Centre from November 2014. It was also hoped that regular surgeries around employment, drugs/alcohol, mental health, and domestic abuse would be established shortly.

Members were informed that the hub was a DCLG funded programme which the Council had successfully bid for, focusing on the community element of the programme. Although a comparatively small amount of funding, the programme demonstrated that what the hub was achieving in South Norfolk was in line with the Government’s agenda.

Focusing on the future, the Housing and Public Health Manager advised the Committee that an expression of interest had been successfully submitted for the Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) 2015/16. The full bid was due to be submitted on 1 October 2014 with South Norfolk Council taking a leading role. The bid (for £963,000) was focused on continuing the work of the pathfinder in South Norfolk and starting the collaboration and delivery of hubs in Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn in 2015/16. Bids had also been submitted for money to support community development in the other four district areas to support community capacity building in preparation for roll out of collaboration and delivery hubs in 2016/17.

Members discussed the TCA bid and expressed a wish to get involved. The Early Help Development Manager confirmed that officers would keep members informed and would be seeking members’ involvement in the process. She confirmed that South Norfolk Council was acting as a pathfinder at this time and that the intention was to roll this model for early help out across the country in due course.

The Chairman reminded members that the Early Help Hub was not solely about children in trouble, but had a far wider scope, helping individuals, young and old, and families throughout the District by intervening earlier, and thus preventing more serious issues from developing. The Director of Growth and Localism confirmed that this approach enabled officers to ‘work smarter’, preventing more serious problems from occurring, and the need for more drastic intervention by the organisations represented at the hub. This approach would also save money in the longer term. The Early Help Development Manager supported this comment, confirming that officers would be preparing an in depth cost benefit analysis to present as part of the bid, producing clear evidence that the new approach would provide real cost benefits.

Responding to members’ questions, the Early Help Development Manager confirmed that some of the voluntary groups already working as part of the hub were: Stonham Services, (voluntary) Youth Services, DC3 (Diss), Number 7 Diss, Citizens Advice Bureaux, and Homestart. Cllr M Edney expressed his support for the work of Homestart and confirmed he hoped they would continue to receive support through the work of the hub.

Cllr T Lewis expressed thanks to the officers at the hub for the informative drop-in session for members held recently which had been very informative. He asked officers where they anticipated future funding for the hub would come from. Members were advised that the hub was not entirely reliant on central government for funding, and that there was an ongoing
funding commitment from Norfolk County Council. There were various other funding streams available to the hub, including monies from DCLG (Family Focus). There was also funding available from existing budgets for staff already employed. It was stressed to members that in the longer term, the hub was expected to save the Council (and other organisations) money. It was expected that the Early Help Hub would become self-sustaining from 2017.

Members requested that updates be given to members from time to time through the Members’ Bulletin, and that they be provided with a contact number for any referrals to the hub.

Members were supportive of the approach being taken at the hub and asked officers to report back to the Growth and Localism Committee with progress in due course.

23 COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEMES UPDATE – INCLUDING MEMBERS’ BUDGETS FEEDBACK FROM CHAIRMEN

The Compliance and Risk Manager introduced the item, confirming that due to a recent directorate realignment, this area of work would be overseen by her, under the direction of the Director of Environment and Housing. Members were advised that the report updated members on the overall position with regard to the Council’s funding schemes, and sought a steer from the Committee regarding the way forward.

Each of the Chairmen of the Neighbourhood Areas updated the Committee on the latest position with regard to grants and funding.

Cllr D Bills, Chairman of the Northern River Valleys Area, confirmed that a number of organisations had been helped by Council funding including Hethersett Scouts (acquisition of a new minibus), Mulbarton allotments, Costessey Farmers’ Market and play equipment at Marlingford. He advised members that there were a number of projects/initiatives coming up in the area for which funding applications may be successful including the setting up of a historical apple orchard at Queens Hills in Costessey, Hethersett archives and Ducklings Pre-School Playgroup.

Cllr B Spratt, Chairman of the Tas Valley Neighbourhood Area, advised the Committee that funding had been provided for a number of organisations including Long Stratton Netball Club and Long Stratton Football Club (purchasing of equipment for both), and the Big History Group in Forncett. He confirmed that he was pleased with the level of support his funding had been able to provide to local organisations.

Cllr B Riches, Chairman of the Waveney Valley Neighbourhood Area confirmed that there had been a number of successful applications which included provision of funding for a composting toilet at the local church in Brockdish and a projector in Alburgh as well as other worthwhile causes. He further confirmed that there were other applications being looked at with funding likely to be given in the near future to Pulham Players and Denton Village Hall.

Cllr M Edney, Chairman of the Tiffey Valley Neighbourhood Area advised members that there had been many successes in his area including funding for Appleseed Social Enterprise (funding by the Council secured significant additional funding from other sources). Funding was also provided for Wymondham Allotment Association and being considered for Deopham Sports Hut, Welborne Arts Festival, Barford Village Hall, and play equipment at Morley.
Cllr J Overton, Chairman of Eastern River Valleys Neighbourhood Area sent his apologies to the meeting but confirmed to the Committee in writing that funding had been made available to Shotesham Parish Council (acquisition of a defibrillator), Waveney Valley River Project, Seething Control Tower (for the archiving of local documents relating to World War 2), and Yelverton Football Club. There were a significant number of applications under consideration at the current time.

The Chairman confirmed that she was pleased with the way the Members’ Ward Budget was working, with members able to allocate monies with the minimum of bureaucracy and delay. She suggested that the Neighbourhood Fund, which was proving less successful, should cease to operate with immediate effect and sought the views of the Committee in this regard.

Members of the Committee were generally in agreement with this approach, with the portfolio holder, Cllr M Wilby confirming his approval to the proposals. He concurred with the Chairman with regard to the success of the Ward Budgets.

Members were advised that application forms were available to complete online, and any members that had queries using the forms were encouraged to speak to the communities officers.

Cllr K Weeks confirmed he was happy with the Members’ Ward Budget Scheme but expressed concern that some organisations may be inclined to come straight to their local member for funding rather than seeking other alternative sources of funding which may be available to them. The Chairman reassured the Committee that applicants were being redirected to other charities/organisations where alternative sources of funding were more appropriate.

Members discussed their experiences commenting that it was often the case that a successful application for funding by the Council led to the applicant securing additional, and often significant, funding from other sources.

There was some concern from members that the Council's support, and potential contribution to the funding of events for the forthcoming ‘Silver Sunday’ had not been well publicised to members. It was suggested that details would be included in the next edition of the ‘Members’ Bulletin’

It was RESOLVED:

That officers would draft proposals for future South Norfolk Council funding schemes for the approval of the portfolio holder and thereafter for presentation to the Cabinet

24 MARKET TOWNS INITIATIVE – PHASE 2 UPDATE

The Director of Growth and Localism introduced the report which gave members an update on the Market Towns Initiative as well as proposals for the development of the next stage of the initiative.

Members were advised that there had already been a number of notable successes as detailed in the report. Subsequent detailed assessment of the approach had resulted in a revision of the objectives which broadened the initiative to encompass wider aspects of economic growth for the towns, rather than primarily focusing on retail aspects. Making each market town ‘relevant’ and promoting each with its clear identity and distinctive
functions would also be very important. Cllr M Edney commented on the success of the ‘Retail Academy’ training provided to local retailers.

With regard to investment, the Committee was informed that, as detailed in the report, this approach had remained as originally proposed with the Council committed to investing a proportion of its New Homes Bonus monies to the market towns.

The Director of Growth and Localism confirmed that he was currently recruiting to a new post of Market Towns Co-ordinator, which would take the lead on the initiative and drive it forward. Members welcomed this future appointment which would provide members of the public and members of the Council with one primary contact co-ordinating the whole initiative.

Members were generally pleased with the reported position and looked forward to a further update on the matter in due course.

25 A11 GROWTH CORRIDOR PROPOSAL

The Funding Manager delivered a presentation to the Committee giving an oversight of the necessity of the project, the ‘Growth Area’ status of the A11 (Norwich to Newmarket), the way in which the project would work, and the anticipated benefits and risks to SNC. The Funding Manager stated that given the scope of the project SNC would need to work with a range of partners to deliver the project and that given the geographical area of the A11 in question (Thetford to Cringleford) combined with the strong track record in managing EU funding, Breckland Council was the obvious key partner for SNC to work with to deliver the project. She also stated that given the scale of the ambition, it would be necessary to secure external funding from a range of sources, including the New Anglia LEP, EU funding, pooled business rates and SNC, to pump prime the delivery of the new businesses and jobs.

The Funding Manager confirmed that no additional employment land or housing allocations would be needed to deliver the project as it was based on the proposed allocations set out within the SNC’s emerging Local Plan. The Director of Growth and Localism reminded the Committee that funding had already been committed to by SNC and Breckland Council to undertake a feasibility study which would be used to confirm the economic opportunity and to provide delivery options to take the project forward. He also confirmed that the issues of ‘new housing’ and ‘employment land ’ could be looked at jointly as accelerating the uptake of employment land would stimulate greater market demand for delivering SNC’s housing growth.

Cllr Keith Weeks raised a concern regarding the impact of the project on existing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) arrangements which the Council had in place. The Director of Growth and Localism acknowledged that this was an important point to clarify and reassured the Committee that although there would be a cost to the Council to establish and deliver this project, funding secured would be in addition to the CIL arrangements that South Norfolk Council had in place with the Greater Norwich Growth Board for delivery of the Greater Norwich City Deal.

Cllr G Walden raised a concern that there may not be enough housing within South Norfolk to satisfy the need that would be created by this project, and was also concerned that the percentage of people within the District over the age of 60 could be disproportionately high. The Director of Growth and Localism advised members that this was not likely to be a
significant problem within South Norfolk, and the emphasis on increasing employment would help to alleviate these concerns.

Cllr M Wilby thanked officers for the positive message received from this item, and suggested that the Committee support the proposals contained within the presentation.

It was RESOLVED:

To recommend to the Cabinet

1. To support the A11 Growth Corridor project proposal including the delivery approach and timelines

2. To support the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between South Norfolk Council and Breckland Council.

26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee acknowledged the date of the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.38 pm

-----------------------------------------------
Chairman
Community Grant Scheme 2015/16

Compliance and Risk Manager

The purpose of the report is to seek the views of the Growth and Localism Committee on the management of the member-led Community Grant Scheme 2015-16 with a view to recommending a suggested scheme to Cabinet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Ward(s) affected:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Martin Wilby</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Leah Mickleborough 01508 533954 lmickleborough@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. **Background**
   1.1. A new member-led Community Grant Scheme was approved by Cabinet in May 2014 to include:
       1.1.1. Member Ward budget – allowing each member up to £1,000 to spend within their ward
       1.1.2. Community Action Fund – allowing each Neighbourhood Area Chairman up to £25,000 to spend within their Neighbourhood Area
   1.2. The scheme has been administered in line with agreed Ground Rules, with positive feedback received on the ability to quickly deliver much-needed funding to community organisations.
   1.3. Changes were made to the Scheme by Council in December 2014, whereby the Community Grant Funds will be closed during the pre-election period to ensure fairness to newly elected members.

2. **Current Position and Issues**

   **Member Grant Budgets**

   2.1. At the time of preparing this report, 72% of the local member ward budget is spent or committed. Officers are working with those members who are yet to fully commit their budget to support them in identifying potential community activities. The Community Action Fund is now 95% spent or committed and in two Neighbourhood Areas – Northern River Valleys and Tas Valley, 100% of the money has now been spent or committed to programmes. Monthly updates on community grant spend are available on the Council’s website.
2.2. The Council’s budget for 2015/16 will be agreed by Council in February 2015 and thus there is the opportunity at present to review the amounts allocated under the scheme.

2.3. Following the closure of the Neighbourhood Fund in 2014, consideration needs to be given to how the Neighbourhood Fund Reserve of £97,000, compiled from historic underspends on the Fund, may usefully be employed to deliver benefits for communities. It is suggested by officers that rather than utilise the reserve as a one-off boost, this is reduced over a 4 year period in that approximately £25,000 is allocated in each of the next 3 years, and £22,000 allocated in year 4 to supplement the community grant scheme.

2.4. There are various potential ways in which this funding can be distributed between the member ward budget and community action fund. Officers have considered various options, as set out below, which members are encouraged to consider and determine which should be recommended to Cabinet:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Total for Budget</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universal increase member ward budget</td>
<td>Member Ward Budget</td>
<td>£1,500 per member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Action Fund</td>
<td>£25,000 per area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal increase to Community Action Fund</td>
<td>Member Ward Budget</td>
<td>£1,000 per member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Action Fund</td>
<td>£30,000 per area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed increase between Member Ward and Community Action Fund</td>
<td>Member Ward Budget</td>
<td>£1,250 per member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Action Fund</td>
<td>£27,500 per area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5. There are clearly benefits to each option. There are inevitably cases where year-on-year variances will occur in the demand on funds across wards and neighbourhood areas. This may create an argument for increasing the community action fund, which can be used to smooth out local variances, however careful allocation needs to be made to ensure that there is an equitable distribution across wards. A mixed increase may therefore be perceived as a fair way forward.

2.6. Members who wish to put forward alternative proposals are encouraged to contact officers in advance of the meeting in order that they can calculate the impact on budgets.

**Ground Rules**

2.7. The ground rules for the scheme have generally worked well, allowing a flexible approach to funding. However, officers and members have noted cases where it would be helpful to provide further clarity regarding the scheme and its operation. The following amendments are suggested:

2.7.1. At present, all grants must be signed off by the relevant Director. This can be problematic when the Director is on leave, and it is therefore suggested that grants may also be authorised by the
Compliance and Risk Manager or any other officer that the Director may authorise

2.7.2. The member ward scheme currently has a requirement that all grants must be at least £100. This has proved problematic where members have small amounts left within their budget which cannot be spent, however it should be recognised that whilst the new scheme has reduced the administrative requirement, processing very small grants can be inefficient for the Council and Councillors. It is therefore suggested that any amounts remaining in the budget of both the member ward budgets and community action fund less than £100 are rolled forward to the next financial year.

2.7.3. Should any individual ward or neighbourhood area have over £100 remaining within its budget, the member should notify the grants administrator of any commitments to which the funding should be allocated for spending within the next financial year for consideration as part of the revenue slippage requests process.

2.7.4. It is proposed that following a grant being awarded, the grant recipient is provided with a simple monitoring form which enables the Council and members to obtain greater feedback on the benefits secured from the funding provided. It is also suggested that those recipients of funding towards a physical asset are encouraged to place a Council plaque or sticker on the asset to recognise the funding contribution.

2.7.5. The current wording on the ground rules for those instances where a member has an interest are inconsistent and confusing. The following changes are proposed:

2.7.5.1. At present, a grant cannot be considered if a member has a pecuniary interest in the organisation. This is unfair on worthwhile organisations who are denied access to South Norfolk Council funding streams simply because of the member involvement. It is proposed that this is amended so that if the local member or Neighbourhood Chairman has a pecuniary interest in an organisation who may seek funding, they should immediately notify the Monitoring Officer. The application should be referred to the Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holder, who will act as honorary local members or Neighbourhood Chairmen, jointly determining whether the application should be supported or not. The member with the pecuniary interest shall have no involvement in the decision making process.

2.7.5.2. Should a member have an “other” interest in a potential grant applicant, they shall inform the Monitoring Officer. The member may continue to act in processing the application, however should they believe the nature of their interest means that they cannot consider the application with an open mind, then they may refer the matter to the Portfolio Holder
and Shadow Portfolio Holder to act as honorary local members or honorary Neighbourhood Chairmen.

2.7.5.3. If the Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holder also has a pecuniary or other interest that they believe would prevent them acting openly in the matter, they may refer the matter to the Leader of the Council and Leader of the main opposition group to act.

3. Relevant Corporate Priorities
3.1. Supporting communities to realise their potential.

4. Implications and Risks
4.1. Financial – it should be noted that the community grant programme is re-assessed on annual basis and any decisions regarding the 2015/16 should not be seen as a long-term commitment.

5. Action Required
5.1. The Growth and Localism Committee is requested to:
   5.1.1. Consider the proposed options highlighted in paragraph 2.2 regarding the community grant funding for 2015/16 and determine a preferred option to recommend to Cabinet;
   5.1.2. Consider the proposed amendments to the Ground Rules for community funding outlined in paragraph 2.5 above and determine whether these should be recommended to Cabinet, alongside any further amendments the Committee may seek to recommend.
Update on the Market Towns Initiative (MTI)

This report updates members on the progress of phase two of the MTI

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Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: D. Disney 01508 533745 ddisney@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. **Background**
   1.1. This report gives an update on the Market Towns Initiative following on from a cabinet report of 8th December 2014

2. **Current Position and Issues**
   2.1. Works is progressing on the Terms of Reference for each town team by the MTI Coordinator who has met with the relevant contacts for each town.
   2.2. Diss.
       We have facilitated the organisation of, and the MTI Coordinator is a committee member of the newly reformed Diss Town Team. This new group has representation from the Heritage Triangle Project, Diss business Forum, Triangle Traders association and Diss Town Council. We have agreed to regular meetings and will together populate a calendar to monitor all the current planned events and devise others to spread the coverage. We have also agreed to work on formulating plans for both the £20k top slice and further longer term projects that meet with the council’s objectives.
   2.3. Loddon
       The MTI Coordinator has met with the Loddon and District Business Association and the above mentioned calendar has been sent in advance to both the Secretary and the Parish Council Clerk. The first physical meeting was in January because of commitments over the holidays. This is in addition to the workshops detailed below.
   2.4. Harleston
The MTI Coordinator has attended a meeting with the representatives of Harleston Town Council, Harleston’s Future and the Harleston Town Team and the role of SNC and the MTI Coordinator within the team has been explained and terms of reference are being developed in accordance with the plan.

2.5. Wymondham

The MTI Coordinator has met with the committee of the Wymondham Business Group and the Mayor and deputy Mayor of WTC and terms of reference are now developed. Further action plans are in pipeline and the events calendar is being populated.

3. **Future Work programme.**

3.1. A series of walkabouts with the MTI Coordinator and the team representatives is planned for January/February to try to put fresh eyes on any shortcomings in the physical appearance of the towns.

3.2. In addition to the work directly with the teams, we have arranged workshops in Wymondham, Loddon and Diss during January to which current team members and all independent retailers from each town have been personally invited.

3.3. The extension of the invitation beyond the current membership is to try and encourage other skillsets into the teams and widen the potential audience.

3.4. These workshops will give SNC the opportunity to outline the second phase of the MTI and give retailers and teams some guidance on the new town logos and general marketing guidance.

3.5. We will also offer delegates more local training on issues to be identified from feedback at these workshops.

3.6. We will at these venues launch our Retailer award Scheme, which will give residents the chance to vote for their favourite local business via SMS and the SNC website in three categories. This will engage the retailers and residents and the winners will be announced at the forthcoming MTI Conference planned for February 26th at Swan House.

3.7. The MTI Conference will give teams the chance to network and exchange best practice informally and also celebrate the success of the MTI so far and see the retailer awards presented to the category winners.

3.8. The MTI Coordinator will analyse the events calendar and work with the team to increase the scope and involvement of the local community in town events.

3.9. We will during the summer period undertake more “health checks” to build on the baseline survey carried out last year and the possibility of data capture from the CCTV systems in Diss and Wymondham are being explored.

4. **Conclusion**

4.1. Phase two of the Council’s Market Towns Initiative is building on the successful positive outcomes of phase one.
4.2. The expanded scope is now developing better communication with the town teams and a better platform to support future plans and coordinated events.

4.3. The ambition to develop strong and self-sustaining town teams is ongoing and a wider membership is being encouraged.

4.4. This coordinated approach to action plans both for infrastructure and events is being welcomed by the teams and will ultimately improve delivery of the initiative.