

## **CABINET**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 3 May 2022 at the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 10.00 am**

### **Committee**

#### **Members Present:**

W Fredericks	A Fitch-Tillett
E Seward	R Kershaw
J Toye	L Shires
	T Adams (Chair)

#### **Members also attending:**

N Dixon  
J Rest

#### **Officers in Attendance:**

Chief Executive, Democratic Services Manager, Director for Resources/Section 151 Officer, Director for Communities, Assistant Director for People Services and Assistant Director for Finance, Assets, Legal & Monitoring Officer

#### **Apologies for Absence:**

V Gay, N Lloyd

### **238 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> March were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr J Rest said that a question had been asked on his behalf at the previous meeting (Minute 235 Property Transaction: Lease Proposals at the Blue Sky Café and Art Deco Building) and he had not yet received a response. The Democratic Services Manager agreed to follow this up.

### **239 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS**

None received.

### **240 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None received.

### **241 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Leader, Cllr T Adams, declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 10: Property Transaction – North Lodge Park, as it was in his ward.

## **242 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

The Chairman advised Members that they could ask questions during the meeting as matters arose.

## **243 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Cllr N Dixon, said that although there were no recommendations from the main committee, there was a recommendation from the Environment and Quality of Life Scrutiny Panel, regarding Agenda Item 9 – Quality of Life Strategy. He explained that they supported approval of the strategy subject to consideration of the inclusion of demonstrable and measurable outcomes. He went on to say that there had been further correspondence between Cllr Dr V Holliday and the Director of Communities suggesting examples of how such indicators could be included. The Director of Communities confirmed that those possible areas had been identified where there were opportunities for existing data could be used. He said that the action plan was a working document that was still being developed and the monitoring element of this would be worked on in the coming months.

Cllr L Shires asked whether the outcomes for monitoring would be in addition to the final column of Appendix 7 – as this was already entitled outcomes and measures. The Director for Communities replied that it was felt that some elements of the action plan would be delivered over a longer period of time and there was an opportunity to have more measurable outcomes than currently specified. The Assistant Director for People Services added that the intention was to look at the Thriving Places index and see which areas were applicable to North Norfolk and reflect them within the Action Plan. She said that specific measures would be assessed as the Strategy was developed to ensure that they were robust enough to measure that a difference was being made.

## **244 OFFICER DELEGATED DECISIONS - FEBRUARY TO APRIL 2022**

The Leader explained that this was a report to inform Cabinet of recent decisions taken under delegation.

Cllr N Dixon referred to the decision to apply a temporary increase to staff mileage rates and asked whether it was in line with national rates and whether other Norfolk authorities had introduced the same increase. The Director for Resources replied that it was a temporary increase for 3 months and would be reviewed at the end of that period. He said the decision had been taken following discussions with Unison who had raised concerns about the impact of high fuel prices and the general rise in the cost of living. Cllr Dixon sought clarification as to whether the decision had been taken by the District Council alone or in consultation with neighbouring authorities. The Director for Resources confirmed that it was not a national position and the Council had taken the decision on its own without wider, regional consultation.

### **AGREED**

To note the report.

## **245 QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGY 2022 - 2024**

The Leader began by thanking the Assistant Director for People Services for her hard work in preparing the Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

Cllr W Fredericks then read out the following statement from the Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing, Cllr V Gay, as she was unable to attend the meeting in person:

'The Quality of Life strategy is the result of a good deal of work and thought and I recommend it to you. The strategy seeks to define quality of life. It analyses the research which underpins quality of life, it examines the various tables of comparison which measure accomplishment in this area. Perhaps most important of all, it suggests a profile for North Norfolk so that we may have an understanding of where our weaknesses may lie. A good District Council, such as ours is, does not simply work to pick up the rubbish, collect taxes or deliberate planning decisions. It has the competence to make life better for its residents. It can choose to provide safe and stimulating play areas for children, public conveniences, places to walk in the out of doors freely and easily, it can help people in getting to medical appointments, make it more likely that one may find a decent job, make it less likely that people are homeless. I might add many more things, but if you read the action plan you will see the picture. The strategy has now been studied within and without the District Council. It has received support from Councillor Blathwayt's Scrutiny Panel, from the members of the new Health and Well Being Partnership, Public Health and Norfolk Police. The action plan is a live document; it will alter as the situation changes and as we make further accomplishments. It is a foundation for future work rather than a blueprint. Finally, there's the matter of objective measurement. There are many measurements which we might apply - how many people went swimming last week? How many children under three were taken to one of our play areas? Is this number declining? How many hectares of woodland do we have? Do we have plans to increase this? What about allotments? But to do a good job in the future we must dig deeper? How would these measurements demonstrate that our residents had better lives? That is what we need to work on. Which things which lie within our power would be most helpful. That's the next step for us. In closing I would like to thank Karen, Sonia, Steve, for their work towards the strategy. I'd also like to thank Cllr. Dr. Holliday who has already made a very insightful contribution to the thinking about measurement. I hope that you can all support this.'

The Leader referred to the Engagement Strategy which was also being developed and asked how that was progressing. The Director for Communities replied that it was going to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> May and would then come through to Cabinet for approval.

Cllr J Toye said that a huge amount of work had gone into preparing the Quality of Life Strategy and a lot of interesting information was coming out of it. He referred to page 42 and asked about monitoring reports and the annual review and which committee would consider these. The Assistant Director for People Services replied that the quarterly monitoring reports would be provided via the Portfolio Holder's report to Full Council. The route for the Annual report had not been agreed yet but it was likely to go to Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee. She added that community engagement was key to the success of the strategy and that was why the Engagement Strategy was being developed in tandem with it. She said it was likely that the QoL Strategy would be reviewed in full after 4-5 years.

Cllr Toye said that transport ran as a thread through a lot of the services provided by the Council. He added that he had noticed that 'transport and connectivity' was listed in the Action Plan in a couple of places and he queried whether it would be better to see it strengthened and listed in one place. The Assistant Director for People Services replied that it was recognised that transport and connectivity cut across

several areas, including sustainability as well as impacting on mental health. She said that it had been listed in the areas where it was felt that the Council could make a difference.

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett referred to additional stress levels in coastal erosion and flood risk zones. She asked whether this should be highlighted more in the strategy and action plan. The Assistant Director for People Services replied that the Thriving Places index was a national index so it didn't recognise whether an area was a coastal area but focussed on rurality. It was for this reason that the strategy referenced the Health in Coastal Communities report, although it was acknowledged that this was more focussed on health and wellbeing rather than quality of life. She added that quality of life in coastal communities would be looked at in more detail as the action plan developed and her team would work with the Coastal team to explore these areas. It was felt that the action plan needed a robust evidence base, hence the initial focus on the Thriving Places index.

The Director for Communities said that the recently formed Shadow Health & Being Partnership provided an opportunity to work with partners on matters that affected the whole District but also on specific local issues.

Cllr L Shires said that quality of life underpinned her reasons for standing for election. She felt that it was a really exciting document and would help improve people's lives. She referenced the mental health situation and said it was extremely disappointing to learn of the recent inspection of the region's mental health trust. However, the work of primary care network were working very hard to bridge the mental health gap and this work should be applauded. She gave the example of Birchwood Medical Practice which showed how a local group could work closely with the community to achieve real change and benefits through the Healthier North Walsham programme. She concluded by saying that the District Council could provide support and guidance and this was where its strength lay.

Cllr Dixon sought clarification on whether the recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel had been accepted. The Director for Communities replied that he was happy to work with Cllr Dr Holliday to develop the outcomes further. He added that one of the complexities of quality of life and the accompanying indicators, was that so many things could influence the outcomes so it was important to be able to demonstrate NNDC's contribution. He queried the use of the term 'subject to' and asked whether agreement to the Scrutiny Panel recommendation could potentially hold up the approval of the strategy if the measures were not developed. He wanted to be sure that it did not put a caveat on adoption of the Strategy. The Assistant Director for People Services suggested that an additional paragraph was inserted to state that work would be undertaken to develop the measures further.

Cllr J Toye commented that it was a living document and he supported the recommendation but it could not be agreed at the current time which measures and outcomes would be included. Cllr Dixon replied that there was no expectation that such detail would be agreed now.

Cllr W Fredericks said she welcomed the offer of help from Cllr Dr Holliday.

Cllr J Rest referred to page 60 and 'Housing' and the recent announcement from the Government regarding 'right to buy'. He said that the Council should be mindful of this and the possible impact that it could have. The Chief Executive agreed and said this was a good example of an issue that was not within the gift of the District Council to being about change. The issues regarding mental health and the

downgrading of the trust also fell into this category. The Council could work with partners to address such issues but it must be recognised that there were some outcomes that could not be influenced.

It was proposed by Cllr W Fredericks, seconded by Cllr T Adams and

## **RESOLVED**

**To approve the Quality of Life Strategy 2022 – 2024 and Action Plan and the development of demonstrable outcomes to be included in Appendix 7 of the Strategy.**

Reason for the decision:

The development and implementation of a Quality of Life Strategy is a key objective in the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan. The Strategy has been developed and is presented for approval by Cabinet and adoption by Full Council.

## **246 PROPERTY TRANSACTION - NORTH LODGE PARK**

Cllr E Seward, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets, introduced this item. He said that the proposals reflected the Council's continued commitment to developing North Lodge Park in Cromer. He said the proposals to develop the former tennis courts on the site for a mixed use, combining both community and income producing operations, enhancing the use of the park and providing training and support for the wider community.

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett, seconded the proposal and congratulated the Friends of North Lodge Park who had undertaken a lot of work over a period of several years to improve the park and make it attractive to visitors.

The Leader concurred and said that he had been involved from a Town Council perspective previously. He clarified that the café was a separate entity and was not related to the proposals before Cabinet today.

Cllr N Dixon asked for clarification on how the base rent was determined. The Strategic Surveyor replied that it had been quite difficult but they had based it on comparable ground rent levels for similar sites and properties across the District.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr A Fitch-Tillett and

## **RESOLVED**

**To proceed with The Friends of the Park in partnership with Cromer Town Council to complete a new lease over the former tennis court site and as provided in the agreed heads of terms.**

Reason for the decision:

The Friends of the North Lodge Park are a known operator to NNDC and are an existing partner in managing the Park.

The proposal made is a joint venture with the Cromer Town Council and provides for a new changing places toilet facility to be fully funded by the Town Council.

The proposal combines both community and income producing operations.

The proposals are unlikely to be of concern to local residents and offers the least contentious use from a planning perspective.

The proposal will further enhance the use of the Park whilst providing training and support for the wider community.

The proposal for a new toilet block within the tennis court site will free up the existing toilets in the Park which, when combined with the vacant adjacent unit (formerly the children's nursery) and the existing café, will provide the opportunity to create a newly refurbished income producing property.

**247 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**248 PRIVATE BUSINESS**

The meeting ended at 10.46am.

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Chairman