

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 16 November 2022 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 6.00 pm

Members Present:	Mr T Adams	Ms P Bevan Jones
	Mr D Birch	Mr H Blathwayt
	Mr A Brown	Dr P Bütikofer
	Mrs S Bütikofer	Mr C Cushing
	Mr N Dixon	Mr P Fisher
	Mrs A Fitch-Tillett	Mr T FitzPatrick
	Mr V FitzPatrick	Mrs W Fredericks
	Ms V Gay	Mrs P Grove-Jones
	Mr C Heinink	Mr P Heinrich
	Dr V Holliday	Mr N Housden
	Mr R Kershaw	Mr N Lloyd
	Mr G Mancini-Boyle	Mr N Pearce
	Mr S Penfold	Mrs G Perry-Warnes
	Mr J Punchard	Mr J Rest
	Mr E Seward	Miss L Shires
	Mrs E Spagnola	Mrs J Stenton
	Mr M Taylor	Mr J Toye
	Mr A Varley	Ms L Withington

Also in attendance:

73 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr G Hayman, Cllr E Vardy and Cllr A Yiasimi.

74 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th October were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

75 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

76 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Dr V Holliday declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9: Council Tax Discount Determination 2023/2024. She informed members that she had received a dispensation from the Standards Committee to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

77 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman spoke about civic vents that she had attended since the last meeting of Full Council:

6th October – Royal British Legion President's Reception, Birbeck Hall, Norwich

9th October – High Sheriff of Norfolk’s Justice Service, Norwich Cathedral
16th October – Chairman of Broadland DC’s Civic Service, Thorpe St Andrew Parish Church
30th October – Mayor of Dereham’s Civic Service, St Nicholas Parish Church, Dereham
11th November – NNDC Armistice Day, laying of wreaths
13th November – Remembrance Service, St Mary’s Parish Church, Stalham

The Chairman finished by reminding members that she was holding a quiz night to raise funds for her charities on 26th November at the Poppy Centre, Stalham.

78 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader, Cllr T Adams, began by speaking of his sadness to learn of the death of Peter Farley, founder of the drug and alcohol abuse charity, The Matthew Project, in 1984. The project originally went out to secondary schools in the county and had an in-person counselling service in Central Norwich. Cllr Adams said that his legacy would have a lasting impact and he would be sorely missed.

The Leader then outlined spoke about the imminent launch of the Council’s precept consultation. Adding that the Local Government sector cautiously awaited the outcome of the Government’s autumn budget statement, which was due on 17th November. He said that the national financial situation was very fluid currently and it was hard to anticipate the effect of inflationary increases on the Council’s finances.

He then spoke about the Council’s recent Cost of Living Summit which had been well attended. Speakers included representatives from the Council’s statutory services and voluntary organisations, and they spoke about the challenges facing residents across the District. He informed members that there was a recording of the session available. He added that there would be some additional pressure on the Council’s Benefits team who were assisting with the rollout of support under the Household Energy Support scheme.

Regarding the Levelling up Bids, the Leader said that an announcement was now expected at some point over the winter. The position on County Deals was currently very uncertain and he was not able to provide an update at this time.

He then spoke about the impact of Avian Flu and an increase in the removal of wild bird carcasses across the District.

The Leader concluded by saying that the Council had been successful at appeal against a fine given to a landlord for the very poor condition in a rental property. He thanked officers for their work and said it was really important, in the light of recent news, that the Council continued to tackle such issues.

79 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

80 PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Cllr G Perry-Warnes raised the matter of prayers at Full Council meetings. She

wondered whether these could recommence now that the pandemic was over. The Chairman asked members to indicate whether they supported this and several raised their hands. The Democratic Services Manager agreed to look into reinstating prayers in the future.

The Chairman then asked Cabinet members if they wished to provide an oral update to their written reports.

Cllr W Fredericks advised Members that the Poverty Dashboard was now up and running. She explained that this facilitated the collation of information for people receiving benefits and identify areas where they may be able to receive more support, such as free school dinners, energy support, or access to foodbanks. Currently there were 1300 children in the District who were currently not receiving free school meals but were eligible for them. She highlighted a website called 'Entitled to' which had a useful calculator for anyone wanting to access additional support or resources.

The Chairman invited members to ask questions:

Cllr M Taylor asked the Leader about the recent Cost of Living Summit and the decision to donate £10,000 to Cromer foodbank. He commended the generosity behind this but asked whether there was further scope to roll out support across the District. The Leader replied that the donation was to the North Norfolk food bank which covered the District, including Stalham. The donation was towards the energy bank too, as this was something which residents were increasingly seeking support for. In terms of planning for the cost of living crisis over the next few months, he said that there was still a lot of learning to do and information to take on board and he hoped that the Council could engage with other organisations to provide consistent and strong support across the District.

Cllr J Rest referred to page 24 of the agenda and asked the Leader if he could clarify the financial increase to the Council in percentage terms of the staff pay award. He also sought reassurance that this was the only pay award that would be offered to staff. The Leader said that as far as he was aware this was the only pay award. The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Cllr E Seward, said that he understood the award to equate to 5.9% in percentage terms. The Chief Executive said that he believed it was closer to 5.3%.

Cllr N Housden asked why some Portfolio Holders had not included a list of meetings attended in their reports. Cllr Fredericks said that this was an oversight and agreed to circulate a written update.

Cllr P Heinrich asked Cllr R Kershaw, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth if he could confirm that monitoring in North Walsham Market Place had found no reduction in footfall and that it was likely therefore that any reduction in trade was due to inflationary pressures and not the work being undertaken for the Heritage Action Zone project. Cllr Kershaw replied that the market place had been monitored for the past 8 weeks and footfall had remained buoyant. He added that trade in the town was suffering more generally from the impact of rising fuel costs and fewer people eating out. Footfall had increased during September, so the number of people visiting the town was not a factor. He concluded by saying that the work on the east of the Market Place had now finished, on schedule.

Cllr N Dixon asked Cllr N Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change, about the Corporate Plan objective to plant 110k trees. He wondered how

many of the trees that had been planted to date had survived the dry summer. He asked if information on this was collected and if so, when that would be reported to Full Council. Cllr Lloyd replied that all applicants who requested and received a tree, signed a pledge agreeing to care for and look after the tree. He said that there was 5 – 8 % re-planting rate. He concluded by saying that over 70k trees had been planted to date and the Council was on track to reach its target of 110k.

Cllr Dr V Holliday asked Cllr E Seward, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets, if the Council would be providing free car parking in the market towns in the run up to Christmas. Cllr Seward replied that there would be free parking for Christmas shoppers on 5th and 6th December. He said that he would ask the Communications Team to publicise this.

Cllr J Toye asked Cllr N Lloyd about Avian Flu and sought reassurance about continuing to resolve communication issues between the responsible authorities. Cllr Lloyd replied that Civil Contingencies Manager at NNDC was leading on this for all Norfolk Authorities and she was sending a letter to DEFRA asking for clearer guidance on dealing with wild birds. He added that the Council would continue to work with partners on addressing the significant problem of Avian Flu.

Cllr E Spagnola thanked all of the officers who had supported the Cost of Living Summit. She asked the Leader whether the Council intended to monitor the situation and issue follow-up surveys so that there could be an understanding of whether services were reaching the right recipients. The Leader confirmed that this was the intention, adding that it was important that the Council remained flexible in its ability to respond to arising issues. He said that the Community Connectors continued to work hard and were working with local organisations on supporting warm hubs. Cllr E Withington referred to the forecast deficit in the Council's finances and asked Cllr Seward whether there were any cuts to services planned. Cllr Seward replied that as it currently stood, the Council could maintain services and its capital programme. It was the future that was looking less certain.

Cllr A Varley sought assurance from Cllr W Fredericks, Portfolio Holder for Housing, that, as the winter months approached, support would be provided for rough sleepers. Cllr Fredericks replied that there were not many rough sleepers in the District. However, if the temperature was due to drop below zero for three consecutive nights, then the Housing team would go out and offer support and a warm place to sleep.

Cllr J Punchard asked Cllr L Shire, Portfolio Holder for Customer Services, if more work would be undertaken to link the Council's website to the waste contractor's, (Serco), website – as it was currently a very difficult and clunky process to report a missed bin collection. Cllr Shires confirmed that work was underway to improve the connection between the two systems.

Cllr C Cushing asked Cllr V Gay, Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, for more information about the Community Connectors, saying that it would be useful to know which areas they covered. Cllr Gay said that she would circulate information to all members and suggested that a briefing could also be held so that members could learn more about the work that the team did.

Cllr S Penfold asked Cllr R Kershaw about the Rural Prosperity Fund. He said that 40% of the District's population lived in rural areas and he wondered whether there was a good mix of representation in place to form the bid that was being submitted. Cllr Kershaw replied that he had met with the local partnership group and it

comprised the two MPs for the District, the Federation of Small Businesses, the National Farmers Union, the Country Landowners Association, Community Action Norfolk and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). He said that the Fund did not start until next April, with just 20% being made available during the first year. It was a capital fund, with no percentage allowed for administration costs. So there would be additional work for officers to undertake.

Cllr D Birch asked Cllr N Lloyd whether the 'Environmental Tip of the Week' which was currently circulated to staff, could be expanded to share with the public. Cllr Lloyd replied that he was happy to look into this suggestion and would discuss it with the Communications Team.

Cllr J Stenton asked Cllr L Shires about Customer Services' call response times. She said that the times provided in Cllr Shires report indicated that the service was good, yet she was aware of one of her constituents who had waited 24 minutes for a response. Cllr Shires replied that specific cases could be investigated. She asked Cllr Stenton to provide her with the details outlining the date, time and phone number for the call. She would look into what had happened and then come back with a response.

81 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 03 OCTOBER AND 07 NOVEMBER 2022

Cabinet 3rd October 2022

1. Council Tax Discounts Determination 2023 / 2024

Cllr E Seward, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets, introduced this item. He drew members' attention to two of the recommendations.

Firstly, that any properties that could not be lived in but were undergoing repair, would receive a 50% council tax discount, as long as the repairs were completed within 9 months.

Secondly, that a second homes premium of 100% is applied from April 2024. Cllr Seward explained that the legislation allowing this was currently going through Parliament and it was anticipated that Royal Assent would be granted in 2023. Local Authorities were required to give 12 months' notice ahead of introducing the premium, so it was coming to Full Council now for approval. He added that it was not certain that 100% could be applied until the legislation was passed, or whether there would be any flexibility around how it was managed. Cllr Seward reminded members that the District Council only received 9 pence in every pound raised in Council Tax. He said that if the premium was introduced as planned, the additional income would be ring-fenced for affordable housing, however, the Council would need to negotiate with Norfolk County Council and the Police for agreement on this.

Cllr E Withington reiterated the impact of second homes on local communities. She said that the Council needed additional income to address the housing crisis in the District, reminding members that there were currently 2,700 households on the housing waiting list. Funding to purchase land for the building of homes was crucial. It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

RESOLVED that

Under Section 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and in accordance

with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and other enabling powers that:

- 1) The discounts for the year 2023-24 and beyond are set at the levels indicated in the table at paragraph 2.1
- 2) The existing 100% council tax hardship discount and associated policy (see Appendix B) remains in place for 2023-24
- 3) That an exception to the levy charges may be made by the Revenues Manager in the circumstances laid out in section 2.2 of this report
- 4) The premiums for the year 2023-24 and beyond are set at the levels indicated in the table at paragraph 2.3
- 5) A new second homes premium of 100% as detailed in paragraph 2.4 is applied from April 2024, subject to the necessary legislation.
- 6) To continue to award a local discount of 100% for eligible cases of care leavers under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)
- 7) Those dwellings that are specifically identified under regulation 6 of the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 will retain the 50% discount.
- 8) Those dwellings described or geographically defined at Appendix A which in the reasonable opinion of the Head of Finance and Asset Management are judged not to be structurally capable of occupation all year round and were built before the restrictions of seasonal usage were introduced by the Town and Country Planning Act 1947, will be entitled to a 35% discount

To set appropriate council tax discounts and premiums which will apply in 2023-24 and to raise council tax revenue.

In accordance with the relevant legislation these determinations shall be published in at least one newspaper circulating in North Norfolk before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of the determinations.

Three members abstained.

Cabinet 07 November 2022

1. Budget Monitoring Report 2022-2023 – Period 6

Cllr E Seward introduced this item. He said that he welcomed the proposal by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the year end forecast overspend was logged in the Corporate Risk register and that the RAG status was reviewed by the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee (GRAC) at their next meeting in December and that regular updates were provided to Members on the mitigation measures being taken to address the forecast deficit. Cllr Seward added that the Council was now entering unprecedented times in terms of trying to deal with inflationary cost pressures. No-one anticipated this when the Budget was set in February 2022. He reminded members that this was a forecast and that the outturn figures often varied. However, the situation would be monitored closely.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr P Heinrich and

RESOLVED

That any outturn deficit is funded from a contribution from the use of the General

Reserve

2. Prudential Indicators 2021 – 2022

Cllr E Seward, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets, explained to Members that this was a statutory report that was presented to Full Council annually.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr L Shires and

RESOLVED

To approve the outturn position in respect of the 2021 -2022 prudential indicators

82 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 9TH NOVEMBER 2022

Cllr N Dixon, Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee said that the two recommendations by the Committee had already been covered by in the previous item.

83 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE GOVERNANCE, RISK & AUDIT COMMITTEE 27 SEPTEMBER 2022

Cllr J Rest, Chairman of the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee, introduced this item. He drew members' attention to page 126 of the agenda and said that he wished to make Members aware of a substantial increase of 150% in the fee paid by the Council for services provided by External Audit.

The Chief Executive said that the contract had been procured through the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) process via a consortium and PSAA had advised that there was an average increase of 150% across the tender prices for the current 5 year contract. There was concern across the sector at the rise in costs but it did reflect the tightness of the labour market in the audit sector.

Cllr V Gay sought clarification as to whether this was the same External Audit provider that had caused considerable delays in recent years. Cllr Rest confirmed that it was.

Cllr S Penfold asked whether the costs were for the whole of the 5 year contract or whether the increase would be applied annually. The Chief Executive confirmed it was for the full 5 year contract.

It was proposed by Cllr J Rest, seconded by Cllr J Punchard and

RESOLVED

To receive the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee Annual Report for 2021/2022

84 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY 25TH OCTOBER 2022

Cllr A Varley, Chairman of the Constitution Working Party, introduced this item. He referred Members to the draft minutes of the meeting, which were included to provide context to the recommendations. He said that recommendations 1,2,3 and 5 were intended to strengthen and clarify the Constitution, whilst the fourth

recommendation proposed that a full review of was undertaken. The current constitution had been in place for 12 years now and had never undergone a full review. The preferred provider for this work was the Local Government Association, in conjunction with the Centre for Public Governance. It was anticipated that the review would be completed by May 2023.

It was proposed by Cllr A Varley, seconded by Cllr V Gay and

RESOLVED

1. Review of Working Parties & Groups

- a) That the Protocol for Working Parties is approved, subject to the inclusion of the following:
- The different roles of a working party and a working group will be set out
 - The nomenclature of the body will reflect this, depending on its role.
 - The names of existing working parties or groups will be changed in accordance with the above
- b) That the Constitution is updated to reflect any consequential changes.

2. Review of Public Speaking Arrangements

RESOLVED

That public questions and statements are submitted two days in advance of a meeting, with the deadlines for each committee to be clearly set out on the Council's website and that the Constitution and accompanying guidance is amended to reflect this.

3. Contract Procedure Rules

RESOLVED

To update the Contract Procedure Rules to reflect UK legislation, removing reference to EU law and increase expenditure thresholds to include VAT and an additional amount which takes into account inflation (as set out in Appendix 1)

That for contracts under £5k, a single quotation will be required and that three written quotations will be requested for contracts between £5k and £10k.

4. Review of the Constitution

RESOLVED

That a review of the Constitution is undertaken and that the preferred provider for undertaking this work is the Local Government Association in partnership with the Centre for Governance & Scrutiny

5. Updates to the Constitution

RESOLVED

That Chapter 5, section 13.1 of the constitution is amended to state:

'A Member who is not a Member of the particular Committee or Sub-Committee may attend all meetings of any Committee or Sub-Committee, save for where the Chairman of the Committee considers an item to be particularly sensitive, including, but not limited to where such item involves the personal information of a specific employee. Where the Chairman considers the item to be particularly sensitive, he/she shall require Members who are not Members of that Committee to withdraw from any part of a meeting from which the Committee or Sub-Committee excludes press and public, unless specifically invited to remain by the Chairman because of the special contribution which that Member can bring to the issue under consideration.'

85 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE EMPLOYMENT & APPEALS COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES (S151 OFFICER)

The Chief Executive introduced this item. He explained that the Employment & Appeals Committee met on 20th October 2022 and resolved to recommend to Full Council that Tina Stankley be appointed as Director of Resources and the Council's designated Section 151 Officer.

The Chairman invited members to speak:

Cllr J Rest asked how many people had applied for the role and how many were interviewed.

The Chief Executive replied that 4 applications had been received. The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) had been engaged to provide support through the recruitment process and they had advised that two of the applications had not met the required threshold. Two candidates were invited for interview, with one withdrawing. This left one candidate who was invited and then attended an interview.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr P Heinrich and

RESOLVED

To confirm the appointment of Tina Stankley as the Director of Resources and designated Section 151 Officer.

86 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - TRUNCH PARISH COUNCIL - REDUCTION IN SEATS

The Chief Executive introduced this item. He explained that at the last meeting of Full Council on 5th October, Members had agreed to commence consultation on a community governance review proposing a reduction in the number of councillors serving on Trunch Parish Council, from 11 to 9. There had been a strong level of local support for the change, including from both the County and District members for the Parish.

It was proposed by Cllr P Grove-Jones, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

RESOLVED

That from 1st December 2022, Trunch Parish Council be made up of nine councillors.

87 QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS

None received.

88 OPPOSITION BUSINESS

The Chairman invited Cllr C Cushing to introduce the motion. He began by saying that the Council's waste contractor, Serco, had introduced a new collection timetable at the start of September 2022, which affected 90% of households in the District. Given the scale of the changes, it was to be expected that there would be some issues for a couple of weeks. However, the disruption was much worse than expected, with 2000 missed bin collections. This compared to an average of 250 prior to the timetable changes. Cllr Cushing said that the local MP had been inundated with complaints from residents and he was aware of one resident in his own ward who had not had a bin collection for 4 weeks. They had spoken to the Council and contacted Serco but had not seen any results. He went on to say that all residents knew that NNDC was the authority responsible for bin collections, and although Serco's management team must accept the blame for what had happened, the Council must also accept that it was responsible for working with them to minimise the disruption. Cllr Cushing said that there was no blame on Serco operatives at all but he wondered what oversight the Portfolio Holder for Environment had of the situation. He concluded by saying that the Council must apologise to residents and redouble efforts to work with Serco to resolve the problems.

Cllr N Dixon seconded the motion. He reserved his right to speak.

The Chairman invited Cllr N Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Environment, to respond. He began by saying that if residents ever received less than good service then it was of great concern. The Leader, Cllr Adams, had apologised in the latest edition of the Council's magazine, Outlook. Cllr Lloyd added that he had also apologised when he had attended the Overview & Scrutiny Committee recently. He said that he would like to apologise once again and reassure residents that the number of missed collections was now back to pre-timetable change levels. Cllr Lloyd explained that the collection rounds needed to be reorganised because housing stock across the District had increased in recent years and there had also been a significant rise in the amount of trade waste that needed to be collected. He added that the contract also included two Conservative controlled councils and changes to collection rounds had been implemented in Breckland and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk before being introduced in North Norfolk. Six additional vehicles had been hired to support the changes and practice runs had been carried out in advance. In addition, leaflets advising residents of the changes had been distributed. He said that he resented the suggestion that officers did not work with Serco to address any problems.

Cllr Lloyd said that Serco had fallen below expected standards. It should be remembered, however, that since Brexit there had been a shortage of HGV drivers and it had taken some time to recruit drivers for waste vehicles. They had then had to work a 7 day week to catch up, with the situation being made worse by the additional Bank Holiday for Her Majesty the Queen's funeral. He reminded Members that there had been a seamless transfer of the service from Kier to Serco in 2020 and the waste collection service had been maintained throughout the pandemic. He

welcomed the feedback but felt that some members would be fully apprised of the situation if they had attended the recent member briefings. Cllr Lloyd concluded by saying that he apologised once again to any residents who had been affected. He would not, however, accept any criticism of NNDC staff.

Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Organisational Resources, thanked the Customer Services Team for stepping up to field a large volume of calls. She said that she wanted to remind everyone that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee could call in items and she was not aware of the changes to bin collection rounds being called in before they were implemented. She added that residents phoned the Council initially to raise concerns because the Customer Services team had such an excellent reputation.

Cllr A Brown referred members to page 3 of the Outlook magazine which included an apology from the Leader to all affected residents. He reiterated that Cllr Lloyd had also apologised at the November meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. He said that 70k bins a week were collected and the number of missed collections amounted to 0.65% if this. It was still too many but all things considered, was not high. He went on to say that any trial period would present challenges, particularly as it had been many years since the rounds had been reviewed. In addition, allowances needed to be made for crew sickness. He concluded by saying that there were issues at management level at Serco.

Cllr S Penfold commented that Cllr Cushing was clear that the operatives were not being blamed but it appeared that this did not extend to NNDC staff. He said he was not supportive of any implied attacks against officers. He always received an excellent response whenever he contacted NNDC officers for assistance.

Cllr E Withington said that there had been a lot of issues with waste collection in her ward, Sheringham, however most of them were in the lokes. She said that any missed Friday collections were done on a Sunday to catch up. She too was disappointed to hear the comments regarding NNDC staff as she also found them to be extremely helpful.

Cllr N Housden commented that when Serco had attended Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 2021, he had asked if there was a strategic crisis management plan in place and they had confirmed that there was not. He had asked them again in October 2022 and they admitted that there was still no plan in place, and again at the November meeting. Cllr Housden said that a contract of this size should have strategic crisis planning in place.

The Leader, Cllr T Adams, said that in the district of Breckland, waste collection was now at 100% and North Norfolk aimed to be at that level in December. He reminded members that it was always anticipated that it would take 12 weeks to implement the changes. He said that he received daily updates from officers on the situation and he was confident that the situation was almost back to normal.

Cllr J Toye praised officers for their hard work. He said waste collection was a high profile topic and members must engage fully to ensure that they were kept informed, so that they could reassure residents who had concerns.

Cllr G Perry-Warnes commented that residents phoned the Council because the bin collection vehicles had the NNDC logo on them, not because the customer service experience was excellent, as suggested by Cllr Shires.

The Chairman invited the seconder of the motion, Cllr N Dixon, to speak. He began by saying that it was unfortunate and disappointing that some members had chosen to focus on what they perceived to be implied criticism of officers. He said that the motion was about ensuring that the Council took responsibility for delivery of this service and that rested with the Chamber – as elected representatives. He went onto say it was about accountability not blame. The Council needed to be bold enough to say that things had not gone well and it needed to do better. Referring to Cllr Shires comments about Overview & Scrutiny Committee's role, he said that it had not been a key decision taken by Cabinet and therefore there had not been any opportunity for call-in or challenge. There had been no foresight to see what was coming. The Chairman then invited the proposer, Cllr Cushing to close the debate. He said that the response from the Administration was very disappointing. Residents were at the heart of the motion. He went onto say that meetings of Full Council were reported in the local press and it was a good opportunity for members to publicly apologise for the mistakes that had been made.

Cllr Cushing requested a recorded vote.

When put to the vote, 13 members voted in favour, 19 against and 4 abstained. The motion was therefore not supported.

89 NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

None received.

90 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

None.

91 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 7.37 pm.

Chairman