

## **CABINET**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 13 May 2024 at the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 10.00 am**

### **Committee**

#### **Members Present:**

Cllr W Fredericks (Deputy Chair)	Cllr L Shires
Cllr T Adams (Chair)	Cllr A Brown
Cllr H Blathwayt	Cllr J Toye
Cllr A Varley	

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

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

Chief Executive, Director for Resources / S151 Officer, Assistant Director for Finance, Assets, Legal & Monitoring Officer and Estates and Asset Strategy Manager

#### **Also in attendance:**

Press and Public

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

Cllr C Ringer  
Cllr L Withington

#### **56 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 15<sup>th</sup> April were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **57 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS**

None received.

#### **58 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None received.

#### **59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **60 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

The Chairman advised members that they could ask questions as matters arose.

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

The Scrutiny Officer read out the following statement on behalf of Cllr N Dixon, Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

'In respect of the first recommendation it's self-explanatory and for the second - the

Rocket House Call In, I would have confirmed the split decision of OSC was to accept recommendation (c) on page 15 of the papers'

The Chairman invited Cllr A Varley, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Net Zero to speak regarding the East of England Water Summit. Cllr Varley said that the discussion undertaken at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting was constructive and there had been some recommendations regarding further engagement with the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance, Water Resources East, Internal Drainage Board, and other external agencies, and invite these agencies to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as necessary.

The Chairman said that he agreed that initial engagement with the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance was important and that the Council should continue to monitor Anglian Water's strategic plan and the significant investment that was planned locally was achieved. He highlighted key areas such as adequate water supply for hydrogen production at Bacton and abstraction licences for agriculture.

Cllr H Blathwayt said that the Internal Drainage Boards should be invited to attend Overview & Scrutiny Committee so that their views could be represented.

Cllr A Varley said that Water Resources East should also be included in any discussions as they could provide an over-arching strategic input into the discussions.

The Chief Executive acknowledged that there were acute pressures regarding water availability in North Norfolk. Anglian Water had a statutory responsibility to meet future housing growth needs but there was no such requirement to meet future business needs and some agricultural and food processing firms were already experiencing pressure regarding Environment Agency review of abstraction licences. He agreed with the Chairman's comments regarding water provision to support the proposed hydrogen production at Bacton.

Regarding the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA), he said that there was a further summit event on 31<sup>st</sup> May. The NSFA was developed around rainfall intensity and surface water flooding and damaged properties and flooded highways and how that water was managed. This introduced a series of issues and considerations in the way in which rainwater was captured and retained. The event on 31<sup>st</sup> May was billed as a Flood Water Management and Drought Summit and the Council would be represented by the Assistant Director for Environment & Leisure. He added that it was big issue for the Council in terms of planning policy and the Council's Planning Policy Team was already engaging with Water Resources East and he was not sure that Cabinet could add any additional advice or input on the matter. If there was a need to disseminate information or further members' understanding of the issues, then consideration could be given to that.

Cllr W Fredericks said that her recollection of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's discussion on this matter was that they were going to request that representatives of the NSFA and Water Resources East attend a meeting of the committee to respond to questions.

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that this was a resolution of the committee but that it was **not** a recommendation to Cabinet. The only recommendation made to Cabinet was 'That Cabinet provide advice in what it would like the Council to take forward on water issues following the East of England Water Summit'

Cllr Fredericks requested further clarity.

Cllr L Shires said that she was concerned that it could just turn into a general fact finding mission with no clear direction or purpose. She said that it would be beneficial to understand the Council's role particularly regarding flood management. If the Council had a good understanding of the water impacts as a local authority and what partners were doing to address this.

Cllr J Toye said that the key word was strategy. There were officers with extensive knowledge of the main issues and it was important to know which partners would be

delivering on these matters and how they would be monitored to ensure that they were on track.

Cllr H Blathwayt said that the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) which had appointed Jacobs as consultants regarding a lot of the issues being discussed. They were controlling the overall strategy in the region and it was an important part of this.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments. He said that it was not Cabinet's place to set the direction for Overview & Scrutiny Committee but that lots of pointers had been raised regarding the key players that should be involved.

The Chairman said that comments from the Chairman regarding the call-in of the Rocket House, Cromer were noted.

## **62 SHORT TERM LEASE - ROCKET HOUSE, CROMER**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets, Cllr L Shires, introduced this item. She said that it was a brief paper and she asked the Estates & Asset Strategy Manager to outline the background. She explained that the existing tenant (RNLI) had served notice to vacate the property this summer and a short term lease was proposed to enable them to stay until 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024.

It was proposed by Cllr L Shires, seconded by Cllr T Adams and

RESOLVED

RESOLVED

That Cabinet agree to the short-term lease as outlined in the exempt appendix.

Reason for decision:

To have a lease in place for a short period to enable the existing tenant to be in operation.

## **63 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

## **64 PRIVATE BUSINESS**

The meeting ended at 10.20 am.

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Chairman