

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 6 October 2025 at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN at 10.00 am

Committee

Members Present:

Cllr W Fredericks (Deputy Chair)	Cllr L Shires
Cllr T Adams (Chair)	Cllr C Ringer
Cllr J Toye	Cllr L Withington

Members also attending:

Cllr C Cushing
Cllr A Fitch-Tillett
Cllr V Holliday

Officers in Attendance:

The Chief Executive, Director for Resources (S151 Officer), Director for Service Delivery, Assistant Director for Resources, Assistant Director for Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer), Estates & Asset Strategy Manager, Democratic Services & Governance Manager, the Communications Manager

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr A Brown
Cllr H Blathwayt
Cllr A Varley

50 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th September were agreed as a correct record.

51 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

53 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Benefits, Cllr W Fredericks to speak. Cllr Fredericks said that she was delighted to announce that the Council's Benefits Team had been awarded the 'Benefits & Welfare Reform Team of the Year' award 2025 by the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation. She congratulated the staff and thanked them for their tireless work in supporting residents.

54 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The Chair advised Members that they could ask questions as matters arose on the agenda.

55 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no recommendations to Cabinet from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

56 FLASH - PUBLIC SECTOR DECARBONISATION GRANT

Cllr L Withington, Portfolio Holder for Leisure, introduced this item in the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Net Zero. She explained briefly that the Council had accepted a £150,000 grant towards works to decarbonise the existing Fakenham Fitness Centre from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) administered by Salix. The report set out the additional costs and impacts to the LUF funded project and sought to add the scope of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme works to the main Fakenham Leisure and Sports Hub project via a variation to the contract.

- 1.1. The Chair agreed that it was an important element of the overall work. The Director for Service Delivery added that it had been anticipated that there would be further information available from the contractors but their focus had been on preparing for the start of the construction phase of the project. Further detail would be available shortly. He went onto explain that the Council aimed to decarbonise the existing centre at the same time as the major 'Levelling Up' funded project to add a swimming pool to the site, taking advantage of savings from already having the contractor and design team on site. If the PSDS project was agreed and progressed, the site would have no reliance on fossil fuels and would be Net Zero ready in line with the Council's Net Zero Strategy and Climate emergency declaration.

Cllr V Holliday asked how the cost of each tonne of carbon dioxide saved on this project compared to other similar projects. The DSD referred to s8.2 of the report which provided some figures for the projected reduction in the carbon footprint – approximately 26.7 tonnes reduced. He said he would provide a more detailed response in writing. Cllr J Toye said that it cost more per tonne to reduce the carbon than a newer building, so it may be difficult to produce a clear comparison.

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

RESOLVED

To delegate to the s151 officer in consultation with the portfolio holders for Community, Leisure & Outreach (Including Health & Wellbeing), Climate Change & Net Zero, Finance, Estates & Assets and the Director of Service Delivery, the decision whether to include the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme works into the main Fakenham Leisure and Sports Hub project via variation to the contract, once the full capital and revenue implications are understood.

Reason for the decision:

To ensure the Council meets its objectives in the Corporate Plan relating to "our

journey to Net Zero”

57 FIVE-YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY POSITION (2025-2030)

In the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Cllr J Toye introduced this item.

He read out a short statement on Cllr Brown's behalf which thanked officers for their hard work. He then explained that last year the Council had less than a 4 year supply which exposed the current plan to pressure from the Government requiring the Council's planner to apply the presumption of sustainable development which made it harder to resist applications from developers. Thanks to the Planning Policy Team, the Council now had a 7.3 year supply. This safeguarded against future under-delivery of homes and ensured that housing numbers would be provided in desirable locations.

It was proposed by Cllr J Toye, seconded by Cllr T Adams and

RESOLVED

That the position statement be published and used in decision-making

Reason for the decision:

- To comply with the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to identify and update annually a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- To provide clarity and certainty for planning decision-making.
- To confirm that the Council is not subject to the NPPF's “presumption in favour of sustainable development” which applies where a five-year supply cannot be demonstrated.

58 LEASE RENEWAL - RNLI SHERINGHAM

Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, introduced this item. She explained that the RNLI currently had a 99-year ground lease at Sheringham Promenade, established in 1935 and set to expire in 2034. This lease enabled the construction of the lifeboat station and slipway, which had supported the RNLI's critical lifesaving operations in North Norfolk. Following a recent structural survey, safety concerns were raised regarding the condition of the lifeboat station, prompting a temporary closure earlier this year. In response, the RNLI had been exploring repair options and had formally requested an early renewal of the lease.

The RNLI planned to invest in substantial building repairs and improvements, ensuring the long-term viability of their operations at Sheringham. To support this, it was proposed that the Council granted the RNLI a new 25-year lease under terms broadly consistent with the existing agreement.

Cllr L Withington, Local Member for Sheringham North, said that she welcomed the proposals and the whole community was supportive. The RNLI was an integral part of the town. The Chair agreed, adding that the Council had a long-standing operational relationship with the RNLI as an organisation.

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett said that at the moment, the Sheringham lifeboat was being housed in Cromer and the Cromer boat was away being serviced. She said that it

was vital that there was a boat sited at Sheringham as there was a large gap to the West and it was a long way from Cromer to Wells.

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

RESOLVED to

- A Lease renewal of a 25-year lease to the RNLI
- Delegate approval to the Asset Strategy Manager to finalise and agree the exact terms of the above legal agreement

Reason for the decision:

To enable the RNLI to repair the building and recommence lifesaving services from the lifeboat station

59 HENRY BLOGG MUSEUM, ROCKET HOUSE CROMER

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, Cllr Shires, introduced this item. She reminded Members that there was an exempt appendix and that the meeting would need to go into closed session if they wanted to discuss anything within the appendix. She said that this matter had been going on for a long time but she was hopeful it was reaching a conclusion.

Cllr Shires explained that investigations in 2023 & 2024 had identified defective subfloor drainage beneath the public conveniences as a major cause of damp and refurbishment works in early 2025 addressed these isolated issues, but monitoring showed damp persisted where the rear wall met the cliff, requiring further action.

Consultants had been engaged and had provided a cost plan for the tanking works and repairs and reinstatement of the internal fabric of the building. Heads of Terms for a new lease with the RNLI were under discussion to support the return of the Henry Blogg Museum and secure the building's long-term use.

The Chair thanked Cllr Shires and said that damp monitoring had been ongoing for some time but had been delayed due to heavy rainfall. The next phase would be limited tanking together with various electrical and mechanical works, internal and external fittings and decoration. It was anticipated that these further works would be within the approved capital budget. The Chair went onto say that under the proposed lease terms, the RNLI would pay a commercial rent (independently valued), replacing the previous peppercorn arrangement. The lease also required the RNLI to cover a proportionate share of the property's running costs through a service charge. He said that the reopening of the museum was welcomed. It was a key part of the maritime heritage of the town and wider district.

The Chair invited members to speak:

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett said that it was no surprise that damp was an ongoing problem in a building built against the cliff wall. She said that a previous Liberal Democrat administration had persisted in approving the construction of this unfortunate building and taxpayers would be lumbered with this for the foreseeable future. The Chair interjected and said that Cllr Fitch-Tillett had voted in support of the project at the time. She refuted this. He countered that it was recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The Chair went onto say that the report before Members was not focussing

on matters that happened years ago. The Henry Blogg museum celebrated the achievements of fishermen and lifeboat crew over generations, and they had worked together to restore the HF Bailey, which would be on display in the museum. He added that the building was not just about the museum but also about providing accessibility from the top of the cliffs to the promenade, as well as a café and public conveniences. The Chair said that Cabinet's position on this had been set out clearly and careful financial planning had ensured that the budget envelope covered the anticipated costs.

Cllr J Toye reiterated the Chair's comments and said that it was important to remember the project was still in budget. He added that if the building had not been built, it was likely that there would still be issues to deal with regarding erosion of the cliff face and the impact buildings nearby. The building fulfilled a lot of roles and added to the vibrancy at that end of the town.

Cllr Shires said that she would welcome a discussion of Cromer's assets that didn't propose removing them, adding that it was a lack of investment by previous administrations that had led to this point. She reminded Members that the taxpayer owned these assets and the Council needed to maintain them and look after them. Cllr Shires thanked the Estates & Assets Strategy Manager for all her hard work and the Assets & Property Programme Manager for his support and for providing detailed information when requested. She concluded by saying that this project met the two aims that she had set out to achieve when she took over her portfolio – to ensure that the leases on Council-owned buildings became more commercial and that the buildings were well maintained.

Cllr C Cushing said that he wanted to refute Cllr Shires' comments regarding previous administration's lack of investment. Under the last Conservative-led administration, £5m had been invested in Cromer Pier. The Chair replied that it was easy to argue about the handling of historic issues regarding individual structures but the Council had inherited several assets in Cromer but they did also generate some income too. He said that other towns had assets too.

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

RESOLVED to

- Delegate to the Asset & Property Programme Manager in consultation with the s151 Officer to utilise any remaining capital budget to undertake all works set out in the detailed cost plan dated 11 September 2025 as shown in Appendix A.
- Delegate to the Estates and Asset Strategy Manager in consultation with the s151 Officer to enter into a lease based on terms listed in Appendix B.

Reason for the decision:

Address the ongoing damp issues within the Rocket House building and implement measures to improve its energy performance to support future letting and sustainability.

Support the reinstatement of the RNLI Museum in Cromer by ensuring suitable accommodation within the building.

To facilitate the Reoccupation of the building and to ensure its use as a key community heritage and visitor asset.

60 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

61 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 10.35.

Chairman