

Cabinet



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Friday, 20 March 2020

A meeting of the **Cabinet** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN on **Monday, 30 March 2020 at 10.00 am.**

At the discretion of the Chairman, a short break will be taken after the meeting has been running for approximately one and a half hours

COVID_19 - please note in light of Government guidance, the Council has restricted public access to the Council Offices. If you wish to submit a statement or question for consideration at the Cabinet meeting please email it to democraticservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk 24 hours in advance of the meeting and the Chairman will read it out at the meeting.

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: Mr A Brown, Mrs S Bütikofer, Mr C Cushing, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Ms V Gay, Mr G Hayman, Mr R Kershaw, Mr N Lloyd, Mr J Rest and Mr E Seward

All other Members of the Council for information.

Members of the Management Team, appropriate Officers, Press and Public



If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance
If you would like any document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us

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A G E N D A

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

1 - 6

To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 02 March 2020.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

To receive questions and statements from the public, if any.

4. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To determine any other items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Code of Conduct for Members requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

To receive oral questions from Members, if any

7. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MATTERS

To consider any matters referred to the Cabinet by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for reconsideration by the Cabinet in accordance within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules

8. BIG SOCIETY FUND - REVIEW AND REFOCUS

7 - 22

Summary:

The Big Society Fund was established in 2012. The purpose of the fund is to help build strong and vibrant communities in North Norfolk through the delivery of projects that improve social and economic wellbeing.

The annual funding for the Big Society Fund is currently £225,000, with the maximum grant award being £15,000. Decisions on grant applications are made by a politically balanced Panel who meet four times a year.

The fund has now been in operation for eight years. During that time it has awarded over 260 grants totalling

approximately £1,960,000 to 211 organisations in 94 parishes across North Norfolk. End of Grant reports from successful grant applicants plus feedback from communities, Members and individuals demonstrates the importance and value of the fund and the significant difference it has made to communities across North Norfolk.

A review of the Big Society Fund in conjunction with the funds Chair and Vice Chair identified a number of areas for improvement and refocus. The aim of the fund and the purpose for which a grant can be awarded has also been reviewed to ensure it meets both Council's priorities and community need in North Norfolk.

As a result, it is proposed that a number of changes are made to the fund. This will enable a wider range of organisations to apply to the fund for projects that will benefit their communities.

It is proposed that name of the fund will change from the Big Society Fund to the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund. Sustainable Communities are places in which people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life.

The fund will be more closely aligned to the key priorities identified in the Councils Corporate Plan specifically Climate, Coast and Environment and Quality of Life.

This report seeks approval from 1st June 2020 to:

- Change the name of the fund to The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund
- Refocus the fund and give additional weighting to projects with positive environmental outcomes and those which promote the physical and mental

health and wellbeing of communities.

- Require applicants to demonstrate how their project is accessible and inclusive
- Give applications for revenue and capital funding equal priority. Revenue costs could include staff or volunteer training.
- No longer fund 100% of a project. All applications will be expected to identify a level of match funding
- Establish a simplified application process for projects requesting a grant of up to £1,000. Decisions will on these application will be made each month by the Chair and Vice Chair of the fund and reported to the next Panel. Currently all eligible applications are presented to the Panel which has authority to make grant awards up to a maximum limit of £15,000.

Options considered:

Option 1 – Not to make any changes to the Big Society Fund process or criteria. The review has identified areas where the criteria of the fund needs to change to ensure it reflect key Council priorities, is more equitable, encourages accessibility and utilises the budget more effectively. This option is not recommended

Option 2 – To accept the recommendations in the report to change the name and refocus the fund. This will encourage a wider and more diverse range of projects from communities across North Norfolk. It will align with and support the delivery of identified Council priorities in respect of Quality of Life and Climate, Coast and Environment. This option is recommended

Conclusions:

Since it was established in 2012, grants awarded by the Big Society Fund have contributed to the delivery of 260 projects that have helped improve social and economic

wellbeing and build strong and vibrant communities in North Norfolk. The renaming and refocussing of the fund will build upon this legacy and ensure that The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund supports projects that meet key Council priorities, widens the criteria to fund a wider range of organisations and communities, and promote accessibility and the effective use of the budget.

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves to accept the recommendations in the report to rename and refocus the Big Society Fund and to delegate the consequential changes to the Fund's prospectus to the Head of Economic & Community Development, in consultation with the portfolio Holder for Culture & wellbeing.

Reasons for Recommendations: To ensure the fund reflects Council priorities, enables more organisations and communities to apply for funding to make their communities sustainable.

To utilise the fund to build sustainable communities and demonstrate the Council's commitment to respond to the Climate Emergency it declared in 2019.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Virginia Gay	Ward(s) affected – all across North Norfolk
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Sonia Shuter, 01263 516173 email sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk

9. ADVICE AND INFORMATION CONTRACT

23 - 32

Summary: The Council has for many years provided funding to support the provision of advice and information via the Citizens Advice Bureaux. The funding arrangement that we have in place is due to terminate and consideration needs to be given as to the best way to provide such support to residents of North Norfolk in the future. The position is summarised as follows.

- The advice and Information contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice and joint funding agreement with Norfolk County Council is due to end on 31st March 2020 and we have been asked to consider an extension to it for a further 12 months in order to bring it into line with NCC's arrangements.

- The total annual grant for the service amounts to £109,000, of which North Norfolk District Council provides £66,323 and Norfolk County Council provides £42,677 per annum.
- Any decision to provide continued grant funding (for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021) for the Advice and Information service provided by Norfolk Citizens Advice needs to be informed by an evaluation of the effectiveness of the service and in particular the way it is provided and the locations that are used in North Norfolk. Such a decision will need also to consider potential alternative means of provision both in the immediate term and in the future.

Options considered:

Option 1: To extend the current funding agreement with Norfolk County Council and to contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice for another year until 31 March 2021. The original contract which ended on 31st December 2018 was already extended by fifteen months, until 31st March 2020, at the request of Norfolk County Council. A further extension of the contract would require suspension of the Council's Standing Orders in accordance with exemption Rule 9 (f). There are elements of the existing contract that, for a variety of reasons, are not being delivered. The actual cost of delivering the service has also not been reviewed. Therefore, it is not appropriate to merely extend the contract and this option is not recommended.

Option 2: Not to award any funding towards the provision of Information and Advice services in North Norfolk. Statistical data submitted by Norfolk Citizens Advice as part of the existing contract as well as data from services such as Social Prescribing, demonstrates a need, particularly for elderly and vulnerable residents, to provide access to a range of support services, including advice and information. Whilst Norfolk County council will continue to fund

Advice and Information services, ceasing any funding by the Council for Advice and Information services would have a negative and detrimental impact on residents. This option is not recommended.

Option 3: Not to award a grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice when the current arrangements end on 31 March 2020. Whilst there is a compelling case to review and revise the grant award from the Council, the total withdrawal of funding support from the Council to Norfolk Citizens Advice would have an impact on their ability to provide appropriate Advice and Information services across North Norfolk. This option is not recommended.

Option 4: Not to extend the current contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice and joint funding agreement with Norfolk County Council until 31st March 2021 but instead to award a *conditional* grant, not exceeding the current level (£66,323), to Norfolk Citizens Advice towards the provision of Advice and Information services in North Norfolk, which would include variations of the service provision arrangements. This option is recommended as:

- it will provide the opportunity to review/tailor the service, taking into account the reasons why elements of the existing contract are not being delivered and their appropriateness/ efficacy;
- the combined funding from Norfolk County Council and this Council for the existing Advice and Information service in North Norfolk does not accurately reflect the cost of the service that is currently being delivered;
- Since the original contract was agreed, other services such as Social Prescribing have been established in North Norfolk, which offer advice and information as part of a wider support service.

The amount and conditions of the grant awarded to Norfolk Citizens Advice should reflect other advice and information services being delivered.

Conclusions:

In 2016, the agreement with Norfolk County Council to jointly fund and procure a three-year Advice and Information service resulted in the provision of an enhanced advice and information service across the district.

Norfolk County Council has decided to extend their contract for advice and information services for a further year until 31st March 2021. This will include funding towards services being delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice across Norfolk.

There is a need to review the funding as there are services within the existing contract that are not being delivered in North Norfolk; but also others that we see as being essential to maintain. The actual cost of services being delivered compared to the allocated funding also needs to be reviewed.

Ending the joint contract with Norfolk County Council will enable the Council to award a conditional and appropriate grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice for the delivery of advice and information service in dedicated offices and agreed outreach locations for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

The amount of the grant should not exceed the current allocated annual funding of £66,323.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet resolves:

- To review the advice and information service being delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice.
- Having regard to the review, to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the

Portfolio Holder for Culture & Wellbeing, to award a conditional grant (of no more than the current sum of £66,323) to Norfolk Citizens Advice towards the continuation of advice and information services in North Norfolk at dedicated offices and agreed outreach locations for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

- Over the coming year, to review the various operational options for meeting the advice and information needs of the District in future years (after the proposed new contract period).

Reasons for Recommendations:

To enable the continuation of established advice and information services by Norfolk Citizens Advice in North Norfolk for the period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

To ensure the funding awarded by the Council to Norfolk Citizens Advice enables residents across North Norfolk to benefit from the provision of advice and information services in North Norfolk including at designated and outreach locations as appropriate.

To ensure that sufficient preparations are made to secure appropriate provision to meet the needs of users of the service in the future.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Virginia Gay	Ward(s) affected All wards in North Norfolk
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Sonia Shuter, 01263 516173 email sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk

10. SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING POLICY

33 - 44

Summary:

This report presents the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy for consideration by Cabinet and links directly with objective 2.3 of the Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan timescales scheduled the approval of the policy for the end of April 2020. The policy will provide a framework within which officers to try and drive additional income

for the Council from sponsorship and advertising to support service delivery.

Options considered: The policy itself will provide a framework within which officers will be able to operate. The options for consideration will then be developed before being shared and discussed in more detail with Members.

Conclusions: The majority of Councils have a Sponsorship and Advertising Policy. Having an approved policy in place will provide officers a framework within which these opportunities can be explored with a view to generating additional income to support services provision and the Council's financial sustainability.

Recommendations: That Cabinet approve the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy and that a further report is produced covering the potential opportunities.

Reasons for Recommendations: To enable officers to try and drive additional income for the Council from sponsorship and advertising opportunities and to agree the policy in line with objective 2.3 of the Delivery Plan.

Cabinet Member(s) Greg Hayman	Cllr	Ward(s) affected All
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Duncan Ellis (Head of Finance & Assets), ext 6330, Duncan.ellis@north-norfolk.gov.uk

11. REVENUES AND BENEFITS IT SYSTEM PROCUREMENT

45 - 52

Summary: The existing supplier contract for the Revenues and Benefits IT system ends in October 2020. A number of options around re-procurement of the system have been explored, with a direct award under a framework being the preferred option. This balances value for money and risk. The value of the contract over 5 years exceeds delegated decision making levels.

Options considered: The following options have been considered and are dealt with in more detail in the body of the report.

1. Extending the contract with the existing supplier.
2. A full procurement for a new system.

3. Using a framework agreement to procure a new system.

Conclusions: The direct award of the contract through a framework provides the most cost effective and lowest risk option for the authority.

Recommendations: That Cabinet;

- 1) agree the procurement of the Revenues & Benefits IT system through a Direct Award via the Crown Commercial Framework (RM3871) to Civica (Open Revenues) for a contract period of 5 years from October 2020 at a total cost of £301,000 and;
- 2) makes a capital provision of £101,000 for the software licences to be financed from capital resources.

Reasons for Recommendations: A direct award balances the need to achieve value for money for the Council, with a system that is suitable for the needs of both services, with minimal risk of disruption and additional cost in implementation.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Revenues and Benefits System Specification
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Cabinet Member(s) Cllrs Sarah Butikofer/ Eric Seward	Ward(s) affected All
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: emma.duncan@north-norfolk.gov.uk 01263 516045

12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution:

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

13. PRIVATE BUSINESS

14. PURCHASE AND OPERATION OF CAR PARK AT NORTH WALSHAM RAILWAY STATION 53 - 64

Summary: This report is an update to the previous 2018 Cabinet report which outlined an opportunity for the District Council to acquire a brand new car park within North Walsham as part of the Mulberry Grove development, off Norwich Road, adjacent to the train station and railway line.

Options considered: An alternative option would be for the authority not to proceed with an acquisition. However, if this option was taken, it would not give the Council the opportunity of managing an important piece of community / local transport infrastructure associated with a growing town which, at the same time, would have the potential to generate future income for the authority.

Conclusions: The Council is an experienced and successful operator of public car parks across North Norfolk, currently managing more than 25 coastal, resort and standard car parks across the district.

There continues to be very few opportunities that arise for the acquisition of brand new car parks within the district. The Council has the potential to expand its car parking offer within North Walsham and specifically for the increasing number of rail passengers travelling from the town through the acquisition of this car park. This investment of modest capital finances in the purchase of the facility would generate future revenue income to the authority through car parking charges that would be used to support Council services.

The remaining query should be resolved with further investigations undertaken prior to exchange and completion, which will be subject to satisfactory findings.

The Council's purchase of the car park should also be seen as an investment for the future as the town accommodates further growth and train travel increases.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet agrees:

- A. To the District Council purchasing the car park at the cost plus legal fees and associated capital costs and revenue budgets. To be funded from the Local Property Investment Fund as identified within exempt Appendix C;
- B. To purchase the car park subject to satisfactory site investigations.
- C. To review the viability of charging against our commercial and environmental objectives.
- D. Allocate funding of approximately £5,000 for a Traffic Regulation Order to protect Hornbeam Road and the adjacent strategic network from displaced parking

Reasons for Recommendations:

The potential purchase of this new car park by the Council provides the opportunity for the authority to expand its car park portfolio, provide car parking to meet the anticipated demand for increased train travel locally with the forthcoming improvements to the rail service from North Walsham and generate a future source of income for the authority.

To meet the Council's new Corporate Plan objective of Financial Sustainability and Growth, as a means by which the Council will improve income streams while providing enhanced car parking facilities for those travelling by train.

Cabinet Member(s) Councillor Greg Hayman	Ward(s) affected North Walsham
Renata Garfoot, Asset Strategy Manager Tel: 01263 516086 Email:renata.garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

15. PROPERTY TRANSACTION

65 - 114

Summary:

Property Transaction: Disposal of Property, North Walsham

Options considered:

A range of options have been considered and can be found in exempt Appendix A.

Conclusions:

Taking into account the options included in the options appraisal a disposal of the property represents best value and

supports the objectives of the Corporate Plan, Asset Management Plan and meets the criteria as stated in the Councils Disposal Policy.

Recommendations: It is recommended to Cabinet to agree:

- A. To dispose of the property subject to Officer advice, as provided in the exempt appendix.
- B. A budget is provided for the removal of the portakabins and associated works.
- C. An independent valuation of the site for disposal is obtained by a specialist surveyor

Reasons for Recommendations: The disposal would bring the property back into use.
 The disposal supports key corporate priorities;
 Boosting Business Sustainability and Growth within North Walsham and surrounding areas.
 Financial Sustainability and Growth by providing a capital receipt that could be used for other projects the Council wishes to deliver and reduces revenue costs of holding the property.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Richard Kershaw Cllr Greg Hayman	Ward(s) affected North Walsham
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Renata Garfoot. Asset Strategy Manager
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16. PROPERTY TRANSACTION

115 - 128

Summary: The paper considers the disposal of an asset that no longer supports the objectives of the Councils Corporate Plan or core service.

Options considered: Retain the site. This option would require the capital investment and ongoing revenue budgets.

Sell a long lease of the site.

Joint Venture.

Redevelop the site for housing. Previous planning advice, would not support proposals for a separate residential development for new dwellings.

Conclusions:

Following an unsolicited offer to acquire the site, officers obtained independent advice and considered the proposed offer alongside a range of options. Valuation advice obtained indicates that a higher capital receipt may be generated through marketing the site and in addition to this, there may be opportunities to enhance the sites value further.

It would not be recommended to accept the offer received, without having undertaken an open market disposal strategy as it does not currently represent best value for the site.

Recommendations:

It is recommended to Cabinet to make a resolution:

1. To seek pre application advice on the planning acceptability of additional plots on the site in order to maximise the value of the asset prior to disposal.
2. Disposal of the freehold of the site on the open market through the appointment of a specialist Estate Agent.
3. To dispose of the site subject to overage clauses.
4. To recommend reinvestment of the receipt in a suitable income generating asset in line with the Council's adopted Commercial Property Strategy.

Reasons for Recommendations:

The current use of the site does not currently directly support any of the key themes contained with the Corporate Plan.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Greg Hayman	
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