

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 28 March 2022 at the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 10.00 am

Committee

Members Present:

W Fredericks
V Gay
N Lloyd
L Shires

A Fitch-Tillett
R Kershaw
E Seward (Chairman)

Members also attending:

C Cushing
A Brown

Officers in Attendance:

Chief Executive, Assistant Director for Resources, Democratic Services Manager, Director for Resources/Section 151 Officer and Democratic Services and Governance Officer - Scrutiny

Apologies for Absence:

Mr J Toye
Mr T Adams

223 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Seward, Deputy Leader, informed members that he would be chairing the meeting in the absence of the Leader, Cllr T Adams.

He said that as Cllr L Shires needed to leave the meeting early, he would take Agenda Item 9: NNDC Youth Council first.

224 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

225 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

226 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

227 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

228 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

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

229 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

In the absence of the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, The Scrutiny Officer advised members that there were no recommendations to report from the 9th March meeting.

230 NNDC YOUTH COUNCIL

Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Organisational Resources, introduced this item. She explained that improving youth engagement across the District was a key element of the Corporate Plan and she thanked the Democratic Services Manager for bringing the report to Cabinet. Cllr Shires said it was a very positive step in moving forwards and creating a North Norfolk for future generations by involving them in the North Norfolk of today.

It was proposed by Cllr L Shires, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

RESOLVED

1. That the British Youth Council provides support to assist in the establishment of a Youth Council
2. That £10,000 is allocated from the Delivery Plan Reserve to cover the cost of this service together with the provision of training members of the youth council, officers and elected members.

Reasons for recommendations:

To deliver the Corporate Plan objective of improving engagement with young people across the District.

231 PROPOSED RECRUITMENT OF UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER POSITION

The Chairman invited the Director for Communities to introduce this item. He explained that following the Government's announcement of two schemes to facilitate access to the UK for Ukrainian refugees, it was believed that large numbers of women, children and elderly people could come to North Norfolk in the coming weeks. Therefore, in order to provide a warm welcome to refugee families and to support local people who had offered to provide accommodation through the Homes for Ukraine scheme via assisting them in accessing health, education, language support and employment locally, the Council proposed creating a Ukrainian Support Officer post. This would be within the People Services area and it was intended that they would speak Ukrainian/Russian and provide a cultural link and support for the new community in North Norfolk. He added that there would be a 'welcome hub' at the Council Offices to provide immediate support.

Cllr V Gay asked if there would be arrangements in place to test the language skills of applicants for the post. The Director for Communities replied that there would be access to translation services and to language line to assess that applicants had sufficient skills. He acknowledged that there were many dialects across Ukraine and in response to a further question regarding Russian speaking applicants, he confirmed that this would be preferable, if possible as many Ukrainians spoke

Russian as a second language.

Cllr R Kershaw asked if the Director for Communities was aware of any Russian refugees seeking to settle in North Norfolk. The Director for Communities replied that he was not aware of any in North Norfolk and they would not be on the same scale as Ukrainian refugees. He added that there were two schemes in place for Ukrainian refugees – the UK Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine programme.

Cllr C Cushing said that it was suggested that Norfolk Council was anticipating approximately 300 refugees and he wondered how many would come to North Norfolk. He also asked about the provision of language support in schools as it was likely that the children of refugee families would not speak English and may need additional support. The Director for Communities replied that the Council had not been advised about the number of families that might come to North Norfolk. One of the reasons for this was that the UK Families Scheme was operating on the basis that support would be provided by the families concerned and no wrap around support would be provided by the Government. Regarding the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, it was not yet known how many residents of North Norfolk had registered for this. He said that the Home Office was matching individuals and that this information was passed onto the County Council who would then process properties in North Norfolk and ask the Council to go out and inspect their suitability. He said that there had been a request to inspect some properties but the overall figure was not yet known. Regarding school provision and support, he said that this was a responsibility of the County Council and there was a team in place to ensure that there was sufficient, suitable school provision. He added that this scheme was different to other refugee support schemes as the accommodation of refugees was spread more widely and not focussed on urban areas and North Norfolk was well set up to educate refugee children as some schools had capacity. He said that there were some teachers coming from Ukraine who may be able to provide support in local schools.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr N Lloyd and

RESOLVED

To agree to the Council recruiting a Ukrainian Community Support Officer post on the Council's establishment, initially for a period of twelve months, with the costs being met through the Council's Delivery Plan Reserve in the immediate term, and with officers asked to establish if such costs can be claimed back from Government funding to local authorities supporting the national refugee programme in the coming months.

Reason for the recommendation:

To provide a timely response and support to the arrival of Ukrainian refugees into North Norfolk as part of the UK's Homes for Ukraine programme.

232 PROPOSED 2022/23 PROGRAMME OF SECTION106 COMMUTED SUMS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOMES IN NORTH NORFOLK

The Portfolio Holder for Housing, Cllr W Fredericks, introduced this item. She explained that in February 2021 Cabinet had agreed to the establishment of an annual budget in the Capital Programme to provide grants, using section 106 capital receipts held by the Council to support registered providers to deliver new affordable

homes. The report set out details of the programme of grants for 2022/23 and sought support to provide a grant to four affordable housing schemes totalling £700k.

The Housing Strategy & Delivery Manager explained that the Council had received £2.3m of section 106 receipts in lieu of on-site affordable housing delivery and they could only be used for the delivery of affordable housing. There were now a number of schemes which required 'top up' grant funding to deliver homes. It was anticipated that around 130 homes would be delivered.

It was proposed by Cllr W Fredericks, seconded by Cllr L Shires and

RESOLVED

That Cabinet supports the granting of £700k of existing s106 monies in 2022/23 to support Registered Providers deliver four new affordable housing schemes as detailed in the report.

Reason for the recommendation:

To provide support to £700k grant funding to help deliver affordable homes

233 HORNBEAM ROAD CAR PARK, NORTH WALSHAM

Cllr R Kershaw, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth, introduced this item. He explained that the provision of a new car park at Hornbeam Road, North Walsham had been secured as part of the wider mixed use development of the former HL Foods factory site by Hopkins Homes. Following its completion on 2018/19 responsibility passed to the District Council and it was agreed that a different charging regime would be needed to be agreed beyond the usual classifications used for other council-owned car parks.

With the place-making works taking place in North Walsham town centre during the summer, causing possible disruption to existing parking provision and with the car park order not due to be agreed until July 2022, it was felt that the Hornbeam Road car park could be used to provide free long-stay parking in the town. This would also give the Council an opportunity to assess demand for the car park ahead of introducing a charging structure.

It was proposed by Cllr R Kershaw, seconded by Cllr N Lloyd and

RESOLVED

That the Hornbeam Road Car Park, North Walsham is operated on a without charge basis for a period of 9 months from 1st April 2022, during which time a longer term charging and management strategy will be developed for this car park asset

Reason for the decision:

To provide alternative, free parking to minimise the impact of the place-making works on parking provision in North Walsham, during which time a longer term charging and management strategy will be developed for this car park asset.

234 STAIRCASING OF SHARED EQUITY PROPERTY - ASHBURTON CLOSE, WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA

Cllr Seward, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets, invited the Estates and Asset Strategy Manager to introduce this item. She explained that the Council was the freeholder of a number of shared equity properties which it had acquired through provisions of S106 agreements. The leaseholder of such a property could, after 5 years, serve notice on the Council to staircase the lease. She said that the Council had received notice in relation to a property at Ashburton Close, Wells-next-the-sea and approval was now sought to complete the transaction which would result in the Council receiving a capital receipt of £102,300.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr Kershaw and

RESOLVED

To complete the transaction as outlined in section 2 of the report.

Reason for the decision:

The Council is bound by the terms within the lease that allows the leaseholder to staircase the lease

235 PROPERTY TRANSACTION : LEASE PROPOSALS AT THE BLUE SKY CAFÉ AND ART DECO BUILDING

Cllr E Seward, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets introduced this item. He explained that the report set out lease proposals for two council-owned sites in Cromer.

Cllr A Brown commented that if the terms of the lease were re-negotiated, then as a precaution it might be best to authorise delegation to include the Chief Legal Officer. Cabinet supported this approach.

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett said that she wished to raise a matter within the exempt appendix. The Chairman proposed that the meeting should go into private session to discuss this.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

RESOLVED 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.

Once Cllr Fitch-Tillett's query had been raised and it was agreed that a written response would be provided, Members agreed to come out of private session.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

RESOLVED

- A. To approve the lease terms as described in Appendix A and C
- B. Should there be any further negotiations to the offer made, to delegate to the s151 officer and the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder, the ability to vary the terms of the lease and a rental value not exceeding a 10% variation the original lease proposal.

Reason for the decision:

Principally to support the financial sustainability and growth of the Council by leasing the premises and generating rental income that is used to support Council services.

The meeting ended at 10.28 am.

Chairman