

# COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual General meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 21 May 2025 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 6.00 pm

<b>Members Present:</b>	Cllr T Adams	Cllr P Bailey
	Cllr M Batey	Cllr K Bayes
	Cllr D Birch	Cllr H Blathwayt
	Cllr J Boyle	Cllr C Cushing
	Cllr P Fisher (Chairman)	Cllr A Fitch-Tillett
	Cllr T FitzPatrick	Cllr A Fletcher
	Cllr W Fredericks	Cllr M Gray
	Cllr M Hankins	Cllr C Heinink
	Cllr P Heinrich	Cllr V Holliday
	Cllr N Housden	Cllr R Macdonald
	Cllr G Mancini-Boyle	Cllr P Neatherway
	Cllr L Paterson	Cllr S Penfold
	Cllr P Porter	Cllr J Punchard
	Cllr C Ringer	Cllr C Rouse
	Cllr L Shires	Cllr E Spagnola
	Cllr M Taylor (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr J Toye
	Cllr K Toye	Cllr A Varley
	Cllr L Vickers	

**Officers in attendance:** The Chief Executive, The Monitoring Officer, the Democratic Services & Governance Officer (EH)

### 1 OUTGOING CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual meeting of Council. She began by talking about recent events that she attended:

25 March – Opening of Cromer Pier Pavilion backstage refurbishment

30 March – Kings Lynn Minster, High Sheriff of Norfolk's service for justice & youth

11 April – Chairman of Breckland District Council's civic reception

24 April 2025 – Chairman's Civic Reception – Norfolk Wildlife Trust Cley Visitor Centre

28 April 2025 – Chairman's dementia networking event

03 May 2025 – Making Connections, Hoveton & Wroxham VE 80 celebrations

07 May 2025 – Buckingham Palace Royal Garden Party

08 May 2025 – VE 80 celebrations at Blakeney Harbour Rooms

08 May 2025 – NNDC Offices, VE 80 commemoration

11 May 2025 – Blakeney Royal British Legion VE 80 Service

11 May 2025 – Norwich Cathedral, service of thanksgiving and remembrance

The Chairman said it had been a huge honour to be a Chairman of North Norfolk District Council and thanked members for the opportunity. When she started her year in the role, she wanted to shine a spotlight on all the organisations who worked so tirelessly to support those suffering with dementia. She had visited a lot of community groups and had been so impressed by the dedication of everyone involved. The high point of the year had been the dementia networking event which had brought everyone together to share experiences and knowledge.

The Chairman said everyone had been incredibly generous in supporting her

nominated charities: 'Making Connections' in Hoveton, the 'Wensum Dementia Café' in Fakenham, 'Memory Lane café' in Mundesley and 'So...' in Southrepps. £5000 had been raised during the year and she thanked the Community Connectors for all their help and support as well as the Corporate PA team.

The Chairman then invited representatives from her four nominated charities to come forward and presented them with their cheques.

## **2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman invited nomination for the Chairman of the Council, for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

Cllr T Adams nominated Cllr P Fisher. This was seconded by Cllr L Shires.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to elect Cllr P Fisher as Chairman of the Council for 2025 – 2026.

The Outgoing Chairman presented the chain of office to Cllr Fisher.

## **3 INCOMING CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

Cllr Fisher thanked members for electing him as Chairman of the Council. He then presented the outgoing Chair with her medal and a gift.

The Chairman elect then signed the declaration of office. He thanked members again for electing him and said that his nominated charity for the year would be the Norfolk Charitable Trust. It worked with the public, private and voluntary sectors and individuals with programmes to stimulate opportunities for the disabled, young people and others in need, helping individuals to reach their full potential and maximise physical and mental wellbeing.

## **4 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

The Chairman invited nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Council 2025-2026.

Cllr P Neatherway nominated Cllr M Taylor. Cllr L Vickers seconded the proposal.

Cllr R Macdonald nominated Cllr L Paterson. This was seconded by Cllr J Punchard.

Both nominations were put to the vote and Cllr M Taylor was duly elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council.

The Chairman invited Cllr Taylor to accept the chain of office and sign the declaration of office.

## **5 VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr T Adams, then thanked the outgoing Chairman, Cllr Holliday for being an exceptional ambassador for the Council during her year in office. Everyone appreciated and valued her hard work and commitment and he proposed a vote of thanks.

## **6 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Brown, Butikofer, Dixon, Leith, Spagnola and Withington.

## **7 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **8 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS**

None.

## **9 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

## **10 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman invited the Leader to speak. Cllr Adams began by congratulating the Chairman and Vice-Chairman on their election. He also congratulated Cllr T FitzPatrick on his recent election as Chairman of Norfolk County Council.

Cllr Adams then congratulated newly elected member, Cllr C Rouse and welcomed him to the Council. He thanked members and officers for their continued commitment and hard work over the last year, particularly during such a period of change. Several council teams had been recognised for their achievements and this was well deserved. Many other services continued to perform highly, including the Climate Change team, Economic Growth, Housing & Peoples Services and the Coastal team. In addition to these high profile teams, support services continued to work tirelessly behind the scenes.

The Leader then updated members on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and said that the feedback from Government so far had been quite limited and lacked clarity. The Council and its neighbouring district authorities, continued to work towards a three unitary model, as it was felt that this was the best opportunity to keep service provision and support local.

He then spoke about the very welcome re-awarding of blue flag status on the beaches at Sea Palling and Mundesley. This was in addition to the retention of the blue flags at the other sites, resulting in 6 overall. He thanked officers and the local communities for their continued commitment. He went onto say that car park transactions were currently up on last year which boded well for the forthcoming summer season.

The Leader informed members that feedback had now been received from the Planning Inspectorate following the Local Plan hearings. It was accepted that more land needed to be allocated to accommodate housing growth but he acknowledged that some of the proposed sites were hard to accept. That said, having an agreed Local Plan in place would be a huge achievement for the district. Regarding ongoing homelessness pressure, he said that he was pleased to announce that by the end of the year, it was hoped that there would be 31 temporary accommodation units. These properties would help support families whilst a permanent home was found but also helped the Council save money on the cost of renting expensive holiday accommodation.

Last week the Coastal Practitioner conference had been hosted by the Coastal Team on Cromer Pier and it was good to see so many young people in attendance.

In conclusion, the Leader spoke about ongoing commitments for the Property Services team, including work on the Leas playground in Sheringham and the opening of the new toilet facilities in Albert Street, Holt.

## **11 APPOINTMENT OF S151 OFFICER**

The Leader, Cllr Adams explained that the Section 151 Officer was a statutory role and the proposal recommended a temporary solution whilst recruitment was undertaken for a permanent appointment.

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

### **RESOLVED to**

Agree the appointment of Karen Sly (Executive Director Resources & S151 Officer at Great Yarmouth Borough Council, under and subject to a s113 agreement, as S151 Officer for an initial period of 6 months, pending recruitment of a new Director of Resources.

## **12 MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE AND ARRANGEMENTS TO RECRUIT A DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

The Chairman invited the Leader to introduce this item. He explained that due to recent changes in personnel and the demands placed on the Council due to the need to focus on devolution and LGR, it was necessary to undertake a restructure of senior management, resulting in one less director, whilst adding in additional capacity elsewhere. He said that the Employment & Appeals Committee would need to be convened for the appointment of a new Director of Resources (s151 Officer).

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

### **RESOLVED to**

- 1) Note the revised senior management structure detailed in the report so as to meet the needs of the organisation moving forward in creating additional capacity to respond to the programme of Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk – particularly the deletion of the post of Director of Place and Climate Change and creation of an additional Assistant Director post (AD – Corporate Services and Transformation);
- 2) To convene a politically balanced Employment and Appeals Committee to support the recruitment of a Director of Resources

## **13 REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES & PANELS**

The Leader, Cllr T Adams, introduced this item. He explained that whenever there was a change to the membership of the political groups at North Norfolk District Council, the Council was required to review the allocation of seats on committees, sub committees and working parties to reflect the political balance of the Council, in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made thereunder.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr M Batey and

**RESOLVED to**

1. Approve the revised political balance calculation as per sections 2.3 and 3.5 of this report
2. To approve the allocation of seats to political groups as shown at Appendix A, taking into consideration any arrangements agreed by the Group Leaders
3. Delegation is given to the Group Leaders to make any appointments to committees, sub-committees, working parties & panels.

**14 REPORT ON APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO CABINET**

The Leader, Cllr Adams, informed members that there were no changes to the membership of Cabinet.

**15 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS AND SUBSTITUTES TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND PANELS**

The Chairman advised members that changes to the committee appointments had been submitted after the agenda was published. The final version was shared on the screen and Group Leaders confirmed their appointments to each committee in turn.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams and seconded by Cllr M Batey and

**RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the appointment of members to committees, sub-committees, working parties and panels as set out in Minutes Appendix A.

**16 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN TO COMMITTEES**

The Chairman invited the Group Leaders to nominate members to the positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of Committees.

Cllr C Cushing nominated Cllr Dr V Holliday as Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. This was seconded by Cllr T Adams.

Cllr T Adams nominated Cllr D Birch as Chairman of the Licensing Committee. This was seconded by Cllr P Fisher.

Cllr Adams nominated Cllr E Spagnola as Vice-Chairman of the Licensing Committee. This was seconded by Cllr P Fisher.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairman (as amended), as set out at Minutes Appendix B.

**17 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Chairman referred members to the appendices setting out the appointments to outside bodies. Cllr A Fitch-Tillett referred to the inclusion of Coastal Partnership East in the list (appendix c) and said this body had been dissolved. It was agreed to remove it from the list of appointments.

Cllr C Cushing proposed that Cllr P Neatherway be appointed to the Bacton Gas Terminal Liaison Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr J Punchard, seconded by Cllr M Batey and

RESOLVED to approve

1. To **approve** Council appointments to Outside Bodies and Joint Committees as amended (Minutes Appendix C)
2. To **approve** the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's appointment to the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Minutes Appendix D)
3. To note Executive appointments to Outside Bodies and Joint Committees (Minutes Appendix E)

**18 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**19 PRIVATE BUSINESS**

The meeting ended at 6.58 pm.

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Chairman