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CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 7 June 2021 at the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 10.00 am

Committee

Members Present:

Mrs A Fitch-Tillett
Mr R Kershaw
Mr E Seward
Mr J Toye

Ms V Gay
Mr N Lloyd
Miss L Shires
Mrs W Fredericks

Members also attending:

Cllr C Cushing
Cllr N Dixon
Cllr V Holliday
Cllr J Rest

Officers in Attendance:

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

Also in attendance:

Press and Public

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr S Butikofer

85 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th May 2021 were approved as a correct record.

86 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

87 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

88 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

89 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

None received.

90 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee informed Cabinet that there were no recommendations.

91 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PLANNING POLICY & BUILT HERITAGE WORKING PARTY

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Cllr J Toye, introduced this item.

It was proposed by Cllr J Toye, seconded by Cllr A Fitch-Tillett and

THE GLAVEN VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS & MANAGEMENT PLANS 2021

Decision
RESOLVED:

1. To adopt the five Glaven Valley Appraisals for statutory planning purposes and for the Appraisal documents to become material considerations in the planning process.
2. To agree the proposed boundary changes as recommended in the draft Appraisal documents and that they be published in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
3. **To agree the proposed Local Listings as identified within the draft Appraisal documents.**

92 ADOPTION OF THE RYBURGH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (RNP)

Cllr J Toye, Portfolio Holder for Planning, introduced this item. He explained that there was a requirement to formally 'make' the Ryburgh Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory Development Plan for North Norfolk.

It was proposed by Cllr J Toye, seconded by Cllr V Gay and

RESOLVED:

1. To adopt the Ryburgh Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory Development Plan for North Norfolk;
2. To approve the attached Decision Statement under Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended and authorised for publication and release in order to bring to the attention of the qualifying body, the people who live, work and or carry out business in the Neighbourhood Plan Area;
3. To authorise the required consequential changes to the adopted policies map and the required consequential changes to the referendum version of the neighbourhood plan through delegated powers to the Planning Policy Team Leader.

93 NORTH NORFOLK SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FUND - ANNUAL REVIEW

The Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Culture, Cllr V Gay, introduced this item. She said that the annual review of the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund demonstrated continued support to communities across the District. She

thanked the Health & Communities Manager for her support and the Panel for their commitment. She said that it was a cross-party panel which worked together with no interference. She concluded by saying that applications for more environmental projects would be welcomed.

Cllr J Toye said that he was pleased to see an equal distribution of funding across the District.

Cllr J Rest said that it was good to see more match funding coming forwards from applicants as this made the process fairer.

The Chairman sought clarification on whether the report would go to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration. The Democratic Services Manager replied that it had previously been scrutinised but that the decision lay with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr V Gay, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

RESOLVED

To note the contribution that the NNSCF makes on Council priorities as well as the impact that Covid 19 has had on applications to the NNSCF and the provision and delivery of community projects.

Reason for the recommendation:

To ensure the NNSCF continues to reflect Council priorities to build sustainable communities and respond to the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in 2019.

94 MANAGING PERFORMANCE Q4 2020/21

The Chairman, Cllr Seward, introduced this item. He explained that it provided an overview of quarter 4 (January to March 2021) and enabled the Council to assess delivery against objectives detailed in the Delivery Plan 2019 – 2023 as well as operational service performance.

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett, Portfolio Holder for Coast, referred to page 31 and the summary section for corporate plan delivery. She said that she was extremely disappointed to see that the coast was not referenced at all. She said that later on in the report all of the targets relating to coast were green and this should be recognised and reflected in the covering section.

Cllr J Rest referred to pages 52, 77 and 78 of the report and the indicators marked with a red triangle. He said that he understood why objectives such as the establishment of a Youth Council were currently on hold but he sought assurance that they would be progressed as soon as possible. Cllr L Shires confirmed that she was committed to getting the Youth Council up and running as soon as it was practical to do so.

Cllr C Cushing referred to the February Budget meeting of Full Council when he had raised the Administration's lack of preparation for a future deficit. He drew members' attention to page 68 of the report and section 6.2.1 which related to the objective of developing a financial sustainability strategy. He said that preparations should be starting now to prepare for future years and asked for an update. The Chairman

replied that he had requested a briefing meeting with the Finance Team to discuss preparations for next year's budget. He referred to the new approach of zero based budgeting which was being introduced soon and said that preparations were underway for achieving a balanced budget next year. Cllr Cushing asked why the anticipated deficit was not listed as a key priority within the delivery plan (page 34 of the report). The Chairman replied that it was his understanding that the Government's Fairer Funding review was likely to be further delayed and this could impact on the Council's priorities. He added that he wanted to approach the financial sustainability of the Council in a planned way.

Cllr Cushing requested an update on the situation at the next Cabinet meeting. The Chairman replied that the Outturn report would be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee soon and members would have the opportunity to question the Section 151 officer on these issues. He agreed that an update would be provided at the next meeting of Cabinet.

The Director of Communities said that financial sustainability and growth was key. Some objectives had been delayed by Covid but the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) was very aware of the financial position and was looking at areas for improvement.

Cllr V Holliday referred to the 'reasons for the recommendations' at the start of the report. She said that it stated that it was to ensure that the objectives of the Council were achieved, however, the objectives were not likely to be achieved if the Council was not prepared to be critical about what it was trying to achieve. The Director of Communities replied that when performance was viewed in the fullness of the previous year, the Council continued to achieve against a number of targets. He added that it had been looked at hard and some judgements had been made. It should be acknowledged that it was a journey and that performance was lagging in some areas but further ahead in others. He used the example of the homeless list, saying that the Council could not control how many people presented as homeless but it could manage the list and the provision of available properties. He concluded by saying that when performance was considered against the background of a pandemic a lot had been achieved. Cllr Holliday asked when the pandemic would no longer be used as a reason to justify slippage. The Director for Communities replied that this report covered the period from January to March 2021 which was when the impact of the pandemic was at its height in North Norfolk. He said that it was likely to have an impact for some time as support grants were still being paid out to businesses and a large number of visitors were expected during the summer season.

Cllr N Dixon said that he wanted to make an observation. He said that it was not the easiest or clearest document to read. He referenced page 34 which was entitled 'key priorities', he said that there was just a pie-chart and that it would be more helpful to have a list of the Council's top 10 priorities here. He then said that some of the indicators listed were about how well processes were working rather than outcomes. He added that as a ward member and a County councillor, he was aware of one or two portfolios where problems occurred regularly. He said that when the Council received feedback from a business or an individual who hadn't had a good experience of the Council, this should be reflected in the performance report. Customer experiences and the resulting challenges that arose from these should be acknowledged, accepted and reflected in the performance report. As it currently stood, the report was not consistent with his own experience as a ward member and a county councillor.

The Chairman said that it was hard to reflect the issues that Cllr Dixon was referring to in the report, however, consideration would be given as to how this could be addressed. He said that outcomes were more important than processes and he was supportive of adapting the indicators to reflect this.

Cllr L Shire, Portfolio Holder for Customer Services, said that she would be happy to work with Cllr Dixon to improve the service.

Cllr N Lloyd said that he had asked similar questions of the Administration when he was in Opposition. He believed that the current Administration had taken a lot of the previous criticisms on board and more detail was now included in the performance report. He thanked officers for the progress that was being made in achieving the ambitions set out in the Corporate Plan.

The Director of Communities said that the style and content of the report was a work in progress. He asked members to make senior officers aware of any improvements.

It was proposed by Cllr J Toye, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

RESOLVED to

Note the report and endorse the actions being taken by Corporate Leadership Team detailed in Appendix A – Managing Performance.

95 NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY 2021

The Chairman, Cllr E Seward, introduced this item. He explained that Norfolk County Council had been approached for support in preparing the document as they had a policy team with experience and expertise in equality, diversity and inclusion. He said that there were four Equality Objectives which would be published alongside the Equality Policy and that these objectives would become actions to be delivered as part of an annual action plan (AAP). He proposed the following additional recommendations,

The first one would strengthen section 13 of the report:

‘That an annual report to be produced and reported to the relevant committees’.

The second, would be included in the ‘Further Information’ section:

‘This Policy should be read in conjunction with the action plan and other relevant documents’

Cllr V Gay said that she was supportive of the amendments. It should be recognised that it was a ‘live’ document and keeping it under review would keep it in people’s minds.

Cllr N Dixon said that the document had been a long time coming. He acknowledged recent conversations with the Director of Communities and said that this version was more in keeping with a policy statement, which reflected the key messages from Overview & Scrutiny Committee. He made reference to pages 99 – 101 and asked whether they were part of the policy or in addition to it. He highlighted the definition of anti-semitism on page 100 and asked whether it was enshrined in the policy or attached as an appendix. He concluded by acknowledging the contribution of Norfolk County Council and asked why they were not approached for support earlier.

The Director for Communities replied that pages 99 to 100 were footnotes to the

main policy document and included explanation of the definitions referred to in the policy. They formed part of the overall document but the view had been taken that the main policy document should be kept as tight as possible. Cllr Dixon requested that the linkage between the policy document and the footnotes should be clear. Cllr Gay suggested that if they were called notes rather than footnotes and set out clearly that they included definitions of the protected characteristics, then this should make it clearer.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr V Gay and

RESOLVED

1. To recommend to Full Council the formal adoption of its Equality Objectives and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021, including the amendments agreed by Cabinet.
2. That an annual report to be produced and reported to the relevant committees

Reason for the recommendation:

The Council is legally required to publish Equality Objectives. It is doing this alongside the publication of its refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021. The Equality Objectives and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will need to be formally adopted by Full Council

96 DISPOSAL OF A PROPERTY

The Chairman introduced this item. He explained that this item had come before Cabinet on 12 April 2021. Since then the previous offer to acquire the property had fallen through and a number of further offers had been received. It was suggested that these options were explored.

Cllr V Holliday asked whether the receipt from the sale would be ring-fenced for housing. The Chairman replied that, as it was a capital asset, it would go into a central fund which was allocated into appropriate priorities. This was in line with the Council's Disposal Policy. He said that there was a balance to be drawn but that flexibility was needed.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr J Toye and

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet approves the disposal of the property as outlined in the exempt appendix.
2. That should there be any further changes to the offer made or the potential purchaser, to delegate to the s151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to dispose of the property for any value exceeding the original purchase price (plus any additional costs incurred).

Reason for the recommendation:

The disposal is in accordance with the Council's Disposal policy and the offer is deemed to be the best financial consideration reasonably obtainable at the current time.

97 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

98 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 10.53am

Chairman

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