



AGENDA

MEETING VENUE:

**Anglia Room, The
Conference Suite,
Elizabeth House, Dereham**

Our Ref: JB/L.18

Contact: Julie Britton

Direct Dial: 01362 656343

e-mail: julie.britton@breckland.gov.uk

Date: Tuesday, 15 January 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have to inform you that a Meeting of the **District Council** will be held at **10.30 am on Thursday, 24th January, 2013** in **Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

Yours faithfully

Assistant Director – Democratic Services

The Senior Committee Officer to call the roll of Members

Members of the Council requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting. If the information requested is available, this will be provided, and reported to Council.

Note – *The Conservative Group meets in the Anglia Room and the Labour Group meets in Room 2 before Full Council at 9.30am.*

contactus@breckland.gov.uk

Breckland Council Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1EE
Telephone: 01362 656870 www.breckland.gov.uk

1. **MINUTES**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2012.

2. **APOLOGIES**

To receive apologies for absence.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Engagements List – Chairman
6th December, 2012 to 23rd January, 2013

Date	Event	Host
6 th December 2012	Reception	Mayor & Mayoress of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Councillor & Mrs. Geoffrey Wareham
20 th December 2012	Quiz Evening	Swanton Morley Parish Council
16 th January 2013	Opening of renovated youth club	Robertson Barracks Youth Club

Engagements List – Vice-Chairman
6th December, 2012 to 23rd January, 2013

Date	Event	Host
16 th January 2013	Lord-Lieutenant's Youth Fellowship Award 2012	HM Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk Richard Hewson Esq. JP

4. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members are no longer required to declare personal or prejudicial interests but are to declare any new Disclosable Pecuniary Interests that are not currently included in the Register of Interests. Members are reminded that under the Code of Conduct they are not to participate and must leave the room, for the whole of an agenda item to which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

In the interests of transparency, Members may also wish to declare any other interests they have in relation to an agenda item, that support the Nolan principles detailed within the Code of Conduct.

	<u>Page(s)</u> <u>herewith</u>
5. <u>CABINET</u> Unconfirmed minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 8 January 2013.	10 - 18
6. <u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION</u> Confirmed Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 29 November 2012.	19 - 47
7. <u>PLANNING COMMITTEE</u> Confirmed minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 17 December 2012.	48 - 59
8. <u>GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE</u> Unconfirmed minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 9 January 2013.	60 - 63
9. <u>MOVING THETFORD FORWARD BOARD</u> Unconfirmed Minutes of the Moving Thetford Forward Board meeting held on 13 December 2012.	64 - 76
10. <u>APPROVAL OF NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES 1</u> Report of the Assistant Director of Finance.	77 - 80
11. <u>APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE</u> Report of the Assistant Director for Democratic Services.	81 - 83
12. <u>NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS</u> To receive nominations for any changes to Committee and other seats from political groups. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A vacancy exists for a Breckland representative on the Norfolk Records Joint Committee to replace Councillor Phillip Duigan as he has been appointed to that Committee as a Norfolk County Council representative.	

For Information

CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' SURGERY

At the end of the Council meeting, Chairmen of Committees and Executive Members will be available to members who wish to put forward specific questions, for example on ward issues.

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

Held on Thursday, 6 December 2012 at 10.30 am in the Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham

PRESENT

Mrs S Armes	Mr T.J. Lamb
Mr S. Askew	Mr K. Martin
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Mr W.P. Borrett	Mrs K. Millbank
Mr A.J. Byrne	Mrs L.H. Monument
Mrs B Canham	Mr T F C Monument
Mr C G Carter	Mr M J Nairn
Mr T R Carter	Mrs J A North
Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mr J.W. Nunn
Mr R.P. Childerhouse	Mrs K. Pettitt
Mr C. S. Clark	Mr R. R. Richmond
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mr W. R. J. Richmond
Mr P R W Darby	Mr M. S. Robinson
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr J.D. Rogers
Mr K.S. Gilbert	Mr B. Rose
Mr R.F. Goreham (Chairman)	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Councillor E. Gould	Mr I. Sherwood
Mrs D.K.R. Irving	Mrs P.A. Spencer
Mr T. J. Jermy	Mr A.C. Stasiak
Mr A.P. Joel	Mrs A.L. Steward
Mrs E. M. Jolly	Mrs L.S. Turner
Mr C.R. Jordan	Mr M. A. Wassell
Mr R.G. Kybird	Mr N.C. Wilkin

In Attendance

Julie Britton	- Senior Committee Officer
Sharon Jones	- Head of Shared Service (ARP)
Helen McAleer	- Senior Committee Officer
Mark Stokes	- Deputy Chief Executive
Robert Walker	- Assistant Director of Commissioning

111/12 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

112/12 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bowes, Mr Claussen, Mr Duffield, Mr Green, Mr Kiddle-Morris, Mr Skull, Mr Smith and Mr Williams.

Action By

Action By

The Chairman and Members sent their best wishes for a speedy recovery to Mr Kiddle-Morris who was not well.

113/12 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

The Chairman's engagements were noted.

On behalf of the Member Trainer the Chairman publicised a forthcoming course to be held on Monday 10 December for 'Effective Communication'. Members could register their interest with the Member Trainer after the meeting. A small number of Members had not yet signed up for their PDP interviews and were asked to sign up for those at the end of the meeting, or if they did not wish to have an interview, to confirm that fact with the Member Trainer.

In the evening on Thursday 20 December there would be a quiz held at Swanton Morley Village Hall. All proceeds from the event would go to the Chairman's charity, Water Aid. Mrs Turner had already registered one team and there would also be an Officer's team from the Council. If any other Members wished to take part they were asked to contact the Chairman or the Standards Officer after the meeting.

Following the Welcome Home Parade for the Light Dragoons there were some 'Welcome Home' magazines for sale at the back of the room for a suggested donation of £1.50 or above. The Chairman thanked all members of staff who had assisted in making the Welcome Home Parade such a success. He then read out a letter from the Prime Minister, David Cameron, supporting the Welcome Home Parade. (Copy attached)

114/12 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

No declarations were made.

115/12 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME (AGENDA ITEM 5)

The Assistant Director for Commissioning gave Members a presentation (copy attached). He was accompanied by the Head of Shared Service (ARP).

The presentation provided an update on the forthcoming changes and explained the next steps in the process. No formal decision would be needed until the next meeting in January.

Council Tax Benefit would cease with effect from 13 April 2013 and a Local Council Tax Support Scheme would take its place. That change would be accompanied by a 10% reduction in funding, although the final figures of the grant from Government would not be known until 19 December 2012.

Action By

The changes would have to be implemented on 1 April 2013 and the Council was required to have adopted the new scheme by 31 January 2013, hence the tight timescale.

Part of the required process had been to consult with other preceptors and with those directly affected, along with those on benefits that would not be directly affected by the changes and a demographic panel representative of Breckland residents.

The draft scheme maintained the same principles as the current scheme in that it sought to:

- protect pensioners and vulnerable groups;
- protect those in work; and
- be affordable for Breckland.

To meet the 10% funding gap the main change was a proposed cap to the level of funding paid.

There were also some technical changes proposed with regard to second homes and vacant properties. The Council Tax discount on second homes would cease for all except military personnel and the discount on empty properties would remain at 100% for three months (reduced from six months currently) with a further three months with a 50% reduction. After that period full Council Tax would be due.

The consultation results showed strong support for all the proposals. The only discrepancy was between the Panel responses and those from people on benefits regarding the proposed cap. That was not surprising as the cap would directly affect those responding.

A recent announcement from the Government was that there would be a Transitional Grant for 2013/14. £100 million would be available to Authorities that met the required criteria. An application for the grant could only be made once a scheme had been adopted, after 31 January 2013.

The next steps in the process would be to prepare a final report which would go to Cabinet in early January and then to Council in late January.

Mrs Canham thought it was a good report but was very concerned that the people most affected would be those that could least afford a reduction to their payments. She asked what the Council could do to protect them.

The Assistant Director for Commissioning advised that the Council already had a policy to protect the most vulnerable and they would continue to do so under the draft scheme, albeit with a smaller pot of money.

Action By

The Head of Shared Service (ARP) confirmed that they would work with those struggling to pay their Council Tax, etc.

The Leader of the Labour Group had seen the presentation at the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting and had asked a question there about empty properties. He was therefore aware that if an empty property was reoccupied for 42 days and then became vacant it would be eligible again for the two discounted periods. He thought that did not provide sufficient incentive to keep properties occupied.

The Head of Shared Service (ARP) explained that that had always been the case as it was how the legislation had been laid.

The Leader of the Council agreed with the Leader of the Labour Group and said it was something that had been discussed at the Norfolk Leaders Group meetings. There were a huge number of empty houses and there needed to be a change to bring them back into use.

The Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services said that she was very keen to prioritise that issue and would be concentrating on it in the New Year, following the restructure to the Housing Team. It was very frustrating to see empty houses when there were so many people on the waiting list.

The report was noted.

116/12 CABINET MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 6)

(a) Land at Castell Road, Dereham (Minute No 125/12)

The Chairman said that the debate about Council owned land concerned him. Although he sympathised with the need to maximise the Council's assets he thought that sometimes the amenity value of a piece of land outweighed its financial value. He would be concerned if all pieces of land were treated in the same way and hoped that all implications would be taken into consideration when considering other pieces of land.

The Leader of the Council noted his comments.

(b) Corporate Asset Management Strategy (Minute No 129/12)

RESOLVED that the new Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2012-2020 be adopted.

(c) Financial Performance Quarter 2 2012-13 (Minute No 130/12)

RESOLVED that the sum of £22,010 for the District By-Elections be funded from the General Fund in 2012-13.

Action By

(d) Breckland Collective Energy Switching Scheme (Minute No 132/12)

The Leader of the Labour Group was pleased to note that Breckland was embracing the Socialist principle of collective bargaining, but Mr Kybird remarked that market economics and purchasing power were not Socialist.

The Leader of the Council advised that this proposal was being taken forward for the whole of Norfolk.

(e) Review of Policy for Charging for the Provision of Wheeled Bins to New Properties (Minute No 133/12)

Mr Gilbert asked what powers the Council had if people refused to pay for their bins. The Deputy Chief Executive asked the Interim Environmental Services Manager to respond and he advised that if people refused to pay the charge they would have to make their own arrangements for refuse disposal. If those arrangements did not meet the required standards the Council could take action under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act.

(f) Delivery of Affordable Housing on Council Owned Land at Snetterton North End (Minute No 134/12)

Mr Askew thought that the decision was good news for local people. Such schemes would enable people to live locally and would help to retain the vibrancy of parishes.

Mr Kybird noted a grammatical error in the paragraph commencing Wellington Construction. The first full stop should be removed and brackets added to read: "... *sum of £90,000 (the District Valuer had valued the whole of the site for £155,000) which was below...*"

Mr Martin asked Members to bear in mind some pockets of land available for development in Attleborough.

Mr Borrett noted that the Council was able to offer land at below market value to allow development because it was managing its assets so well.

(g) The Anchor Hotel, Thetford (Minute No 135/12)

Mr Lamb said that he had spoken in favour of retaining the Anchor Hotel at every stage. He queried the demolition costs and noted that if that money had been spent years ago to repair and retain the building it might have been a vibrant tourist spot. He thought that the Council's policy with regard to

Action By

old buildings was inconsistent and he quoted various examples. He thought that in the near future the Anchor Site would be an ugly sore in the middle of the town as redevelopment was a long way off.

The Leader of the Council advised that officers had found nothing to merit listing the building and as it was now unsafe the best route was to remove it completely. Anything re-useable would be saved and the site would be landscaped so that it did not look a mess.

The Executive Member for Planning and Environmental Services said that it was not the Council's (or Capita's) Officers that had made the decision about listing. English Heritage were responsible for that. She had tried on various occasions to get other buildings listed without success.

The Leader of the Labour Group said that the matter raised serious questions about the protection of historic buildings. This was a Council owned building which had been allowed to get into a poor state. He warned against losing touch with the community and what they wanted and said that the Council needed to learn from past.

The Executive Member for Performance and Business Development said that they had looked at pictures of the original building in the 1930s and the current building was nothing like it. There had been fire and other damage. The matter needed to be moved on to make it better for the whole community.

Mr Lamb pointed out that the building had once been listed and he and others had appealed against its de-listing. The Council's Historic Buildings Officer had not supported their appeal.

Mr Bambridge noted that he had visited the building at the time that the Council had purchased it. It had been dilapidated then with fire damage and large holes in the roof.

Mrs Chapman-Allen wished that Members would speak more positively about the proposal as the Council was putting an enormous amount of investment into Thetford.

RESOLVED that £110,000 be released to enable the demolition of the existing buildings on the site of the former Anchor Hotel and an interim landscaping scheme be undertaken.

Mr Lamb voted against the proposal.

Action By

- (h) Economic Development Service – New Way of Working (Minute No 138/12)

The Leader of the Labour Group supported the proposal and hoped that the service would be able to provide support for struggling high streets.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission reiterated comments he had made at the Cabinet meeting. The performance of the Economic Development Team provided security to the Council in a time of financial pressures. He urged Members to recognise the Team's contribution.

RESOLVED that the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

- (i) Legal Services Review (Minute No 139/12)

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the proposed structure for Legal Services as detailed in the report be approved; and
- (2) the Assistant Director of Democratic Services proceed with conducting a 30 day staff consultation on the proposed changes detailed within the report.

- (j) Adoption

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20 November 2012 be adopted.

117/12 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION (AGENDA ITEM 7)

- a) Review of the National Planning Policy Framework (Minute No 96/12)

Mr Gilbert reiterated his pleasure that Breckland would be able to produce a more local plan which he hoped would encourage better quality housing.

- b) Adoption

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 18 October 2012 be adopted.

118/12 PLANNING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 8)

- 118 .a Confirmed minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 29 October 2012

Action By

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 29 October 2012 be adopted.

118 .b Unconfirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 26 November 2012

a) Schedule of Planning Applications (Minute No 128/12(f))

Mr Martin hoped that negotiations between the applicant and the Highways Authority would be successful and allow the scheme to come to fruition.

b) Adoption

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 26 November 2012 be adopted.

119/12 GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Chairman of the General Purposes Committee noted that the recommendations in the Minutes were brief because they concerned reports that were Below the Line.

a) Economic Development Service – New Way of Working (Minute No 69/12)

RESOLVED that Option 1 of the report be approved.

b) Community Development Service Review (Minute No 70/12)

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the revised structure at Appendix B be approved; and
- (2) formal consultation with staff should proceed.

c) Legal Services Review (Minute No 71/12)

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the proposed structure for Legal Services as detailed in the report be approved; and
- (2) the Assistant Director of Democratic Services proceed with conducting a 30 day staff consultation on the proposed changes detailed within the report.

d) Adoption

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 22 November 2012 be adopted.

Action By

120/12 APPEALS COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Chairman of the Appeals Committee noted that this appeal had not been Below the Line.

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Appeals Committee meeting held on 28 November 2012 be adopted.

121/12 LICENSING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 11)

- a) Revised Statement of Principles – Gambling Act 2005 (Minute No 19/12)

RESOLVED that in order for Breckland Council to act as the licensing authority to discharge its statutory duties under the Gambling Act 2005 the revised Statement of Principles be approved.

- b) Adoption

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 24 October 2012 be adopted.

122/12 AUDIT COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 12)

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 23 November 2012 be adopted.

123/12 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS (AGENDA ITEM 13)

RESOLVED that Mr M Nairn replace Mr S Green on the Member Development Panel.

The Chairman wished all Members a very Merry Christmas.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am

CHAIRMAN

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

CABINET

**Held on Tuesday, 8 January 2013 at 9.30 am in
Norfolk Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr J.W. Nunn (Chairman)	Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris
Mr M. A. Wassell (Vice-Chairman)	Mr I. Sherwood
Councillor E. Gould	Mr W.H.C. Smith
Mrs L.S. Turner	

Also Present

Mr A.P. Joel	Mr T. J. Jermy
Mr K. Martin	Mrs E. M. Jolly
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mr M J Nairn
Councillor C Bowes	Mrs J A North
Mrs B Canham	Mr W. R. J. Richmond
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr F.J. Sharpe

In Attendance

Dominic Chessum	- Joint Marketing & Communications Team Leader
Robert Walker	- Assistant Director of Commissioning
Terry Huggins	- Chief Executive
Julie Britton	- Senior Committee Officer
Mark Finch	- Assistant Director of Finance
David Spencer	- Joint Deputy Planning Manager
Sharon Jones	- Head of Shared Service (ARP)
Phil Mileham	- Planning Policy Team Leader (Capita Symonds for Breckland Council)

Action By

1/13 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2/13 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

None.

3/13 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

4/13 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None.

Action By

5/13 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)

Mesdames C Bowes, B Canham, E Jolly and J North and Messrs G Bambridge, P Duigan, T Jermy, A Joel, K Martin, M Nairn, W Richmond and F Sharpe.

6/13 ATTLEBOROUGH AND SNETTERTON HEATH AREA ACTION PLAN AND WIDER LOCAL PLAN REVIEW (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Members' views were sought on the implications of a revised timetable for the Attleborough and Snetterton Heath Area Action Plan and consequential effects on the Government's requirements for the transition to a Local Plan.

The Executive Member for Assets and Strategic Development put the report into context. In the light of the demise of the Regional Spatial Strategy, all local authorities would now be able to set their own housing targets through this new single District-wide Local Plan, and whilst this work moved forward, if the preferred recommendation was approved, there would not be a vacuum in the planning process as the development plans in place, within the existing Local Development Framework that determined current planning applications, would still be used and would still hold weight. All the reasons for re-examining the approach and timetable had been set out in the report and had been based on the assumption that necessary evidence was produced/delivered in accordance with the current timetables. Members were made aware that the 3 years that it could take to produce a single Local Plan would signal the end of the Attleborough and Snetterton Heath Area Action Plan as a separate entity. The benefits to the Council for the production of a single District-wide document would also allow for the detailed consideration of overall growth rates for the district and provide an opportunity for further consultation with rural Parishes as to their aspirations for future planning i.e. a refresh of settlement boundaries.

The Executive Member for Assets and Strategic Development was pleased to announce that if the Council did go ahead with a single District-wide Local Plan, Breckland would be one of the first in the country to do so.

Mr Martin had attended a recent Attleborough Town Council meeting where the main concern had been on the procedures/timescales. The current procedure had already taken 4 years. This next procedure was going to take a further 3 years but in the meantime, the Council continued to approve sporadic developments in the town.

The Executive Member for Assets and Strategic Development explained that the Regional Spatial Strategy had been removed and therefore the distribution would not be the same. The number of houses in Attleborough could be decreased or increased taking into account the adhoc developments and depending on the outputs from the forthcoming Transport Evidence Study. The transport evidence is likely to be influential in how the Council determines applications in Attleborough. If infrastructure capacity in Attleborough is fundamentally constrained then

Action By

the Council will have to look at alternative options including allocating some development into the villages as part of the Local Plan process.

The Joint Deputy Planning Manager said that the Attleborough Area Action Plan had been the most complex document within the LDF process and needed robust evidence which had taken time to produce. Further traffic surveys had since been completed and all the work that had gone into Attleborough would be moved across to this new Local Plan. In actual fact, the Plan would contain detailed chapters for each town as well as looking at what role other communities in the district would play.

The Chairman had recently had a meeting with Banham Poultry who had recently submitted a planning application that was very much reliant on the Transport Study and he asked if Officers were sure that the Council was going to be in receipt of such information by the end of March 2013 (as highlighted in the report).

The Joint Deputy Planning Manager said that he was confident of that timeline and was happy to share this transport work study with other interested parties once the Council was satisfied with the quality of the work.

The Executive Member for Internal Services asked how many plans the Council actually had in operation. He further asked when the Council would have something definitive - a question he was often asked by his Parish Councils which he could not answer. The Chairman was unsure of the number of iterations but understood everyone's frustration. He knew that the timing of this review was unfortunate. The Executive Member for Assets and Strategic Development pointed out that Breckland only had the one iteration – the Local Development Framework document that had been adopted by Council in 2009. As far as the latter question was concerned, Members were informed that planning in villages would and should still continue as normal. He reminded Members that with this new Local Plan, the Council would end up with something more *Brecklandised* than what it had before.

The Executive Member for Internal Services also mentioned the proposed link road in Attleborough and asked where it was likely to be situated (as highlighted in paragraph 1.17 of the report). The Joint Deputy Planning Manager advised that the preferred link road option for Attleborough would run from Bunns Bank to somewhere near the Breckland Lodge Hotel.

Mrs North felt that development in villages should be encouraged and asked if some of the settlement boundaries could now be ignored. The Executive Member for Assets and Strategic Development stated that if a village required further development it was quite at liberty to produce a Neighbourhood Plan that allowed development outside the development boundary. He did point out however, that many villages during the production of the Local Development Framework had emphasised that they did not want further housing. He, on the other hand, welcomed further development; villages should not be seen as dormitories and he knew that many people preferred to live in the countryside. His vision was for villages to thrive once more and small businesses and shops to

Action By

be resurrected.

Mr Joel was pleased to hear the route of the new link road and he hoped that the Attleborough Task Force would continue as a Group. Members were informed that positive discussions had stemmed from these Forums and the consultations would carry on as Breckland had a duty to confer with its communities. He pointed out that the Transport Plan would be available to view very soon.

Mr Martin raised concern again about the adhoc developments coming through in Attleborough and mentioned the many planning applications that had recently been submitted and hoped that these would be taken into account during the production of the new Local Plan. The Chairman confirmed that the ability to control this rested with the Transport Plan.

Mr Bambridge very much welcomed the aforementioned statement made by the Executive Member in relation to villages having a greater say in growth and he hoped, through the system, that the Council would have regard to future planning applications in villages that had a good case behind them whilst ensuring that villages grew to a rate suitable to the area. The Chairman totally agreed and was thrilled by the new legislation that gave villages more opportunities to grow.

The Executive Member for Planning and Environmental Services asked if villages could apply for their guidelines to be put back. The Executive Member for Assets and Strategic Development asked whether such boundaries were needed as it stifled development. He could not see anything wrong with building reasonable spaced houses along country roads on the outskirts of a village instead of cramming them in within the guidelines as some had already done. The Executive Member for Planning and Environmental Services knew that the smaller villages would not attempt neighbourhood plans where as settlement boundaries allowed development.

The Chairman felt that the creation of a separate Working Group of Cabinet as suggested at paragraph 2.12 of the report was a good idea as this Group would be able to review villages, policies etc to prevent Breckland ending up with urbanised communities.

Mr Bambridge suggested a document being produced showing areas of non-permitted development instead of permitted development. Members were informed that the National Planning Policy Framework did exactly that.

In response to a question in relation to budget issues, it was noted that the Planning Policy Team was supported by the Capita Symonds contract.

In light of the issues raised in the report, there were a range of potential options available to the Council in taking local planning policy forward for both Attleborough and Snetterton Heath and the wider district. These were as follows:

Option1

Action By

Continue preparing an ASHLP for consultation in Spring 2013, and carry out a separate consultation on 'Issues for a Local Plan review' in late 2013 that contained options on housing growth scenarios, but acknowledging risks in relation to the justification of housing numbers and traveller pitch provision. A key risk to proceeding with a separate ASHLP in advance of undertaking the wider Local Plan review was that sections of the document would become out of date once the revised Local Plan had been prepared and, for example, if new housing figures were identified for the district.

Option 2

Continue the preparation of a further more detailed consultation on growth in Attleborough, but that this be delayed to form part of a more detailed section of a consultation on the preparation of a new District-wide 'Local Plan' in late 2013/ early 2014 (e.g. an 'Issues and Options' paper which could include housing numbers for the rest of the district and more detailed proposals for Attleborough in a separate chapter). A revised Local Development Scheme would be prepared which would set out the remaining timetable for the 'Local Plan' with subsequent milestones to be agreed.

Option 3

Prepare a separate ASHLP consultation to 'Preferred Options' stage, but delay the commencement of work on a Local Plan to 2014 and avoid confusion over revised strategic housing choices and allow further 'objectively assessed' evidence to support future housing growth scenarios in the district to be prepared. Pursuing this option would result in the ASHLP being capable of having some limited weight in decision-taking, but existing LDDs being afforded less weight over time as they became increasingly dated and there was an absence of emerging policy covering the wider district to replace them.

Reasons

It was recommended that the Council endorsed Option 2 of the report. Option 2 was considered to represent the most sound and deliverable approach in moving towards a new strategic planning framework for the district post National Planning Policy Framework, whilst continuing to make progress on providing certainty of the direction of committed growth in Attleborough. Taking such an approach would allow for the remaining evidence base to be fully completed and understood. It would also allow the Council, the public and other professional stakeholders to have a clearer understanding of the options for strategic growth and change across Breckland.

Should Members endorse either option 2 or 3 of the report and commit to either a migration towards a single 'Local Plan', or a further amended timetable for a 'Local Plan', then this should be prepared utilising a new Member decision-making process, such as a Working Group of Cabinet.

RESOLVED that a Working Group be established to scrutinise and review the new 'Local Plan' document going forward.

DS/MKM

Action By

DS

RECOMMEND to Council that Option 2 of the report be endorsed – to continue the preparation of a further more detailed consultation on growth in Attleborough, but that it be delayed to form part of a more detailed section of a consultation on the preparation of a new District-wide 'Local Plan' in late 2013/early 2014 (e.g. an 'Issues and Options' paper that could include housing numbers for the rest of the District and more detailed proposals for Attleborough in a separate chapter). A revised Local Development Scheme would be prepared which would set out the remaining timetable for the 'Local Plan' with subsequent milestones to be agreed.

7/13 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT (AGENDA ITEM 8)

The Executive Member for Internal Services gave a quick introduction to the report that sought agreement to recommend to Council a new Local Council Tax Support Scheme. Breckland, along with all billing authorities had been required to consult on a new scheme; however, the scheme being proposed was slightly different to what had been consulted on. The improvements that had been made were highlighted (see third paragraph of section 5.6 of the report). The Secretary of State had offered a transitional grant, if accepted, it could mean in the region of £17,800 for Breckland Council. This would be a one-off arrangement and no-one knew if this would be offered again the following year. If this was the case and no offer came forward this scheme might have to be revisited.

Members' attention was drawn to the highly detailed document attached to the report at Appendix A.

The Assistant Director of Commissioning highlighted the key elements of the report and emphasised the fact that Breckland Council needed to have a support scheme in place by 31 January 2013; if not, the Government would impose a scheme itself. To have a draft scheme that would pay for itself would have led to a reduced level of support across all working age claims by approximately 25%. It would have been possible for the Council to meet the shortfall in funding from the Council's budget; however, this would have created a pressure on the other major precepting authorities' budgets and would also be inconsistent with the approach agreed across Norfolk.

The Proforma B highlighted the combined cost of the new scheme and technical changes, the Government Grant and the Transitional Grant – the estimated cost to Breckland would be in the region of an additional £42,627. Members were informed; however, that Norfolk County Council had agreed to provide a one off grant for 2013-14 which ultimately meant that there would be no additional cost to this Council for this particular year.

The recommendations were highlighted. The Executive Member for Internal Services stated that the scheme Breckland Council was proposing was broadly as other authorities in Norfolk the only difference being was the Class C properties (100% discount for the first three months then 0% discount for the next three).

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development was pleased to hear that this scheme worked out to be cost neutral in the first year.

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Members were assured that this was subject to the conditional offers based on this report.

Options

Council Tax Support

- 1) Do nothing. If the Council did not adopt a LCTS scheme based on agreed local criteria then the Government's "default scheme" would be implemented.
- 2) To agree and recommend to Council that the draft Local Council Tax Support scheme – which formed the basis of consultation – be finalised and adopted in Breckland.
- 3) To apply for a Transitional Grant and amend the draft Local Council Tax Support scheme to reflect the grant scheme criteria.

Technical Changes

- 1) Do nothing. If the Council did not make technical changes to Council Tax exemptions then the funding shortfall would have to met by the Local Council Tax Support scheme with less support for working age claimants.
- 2) To agree and recommend to Council that technical changes be made to the collection of Council Tax as described above and in line with the other billing authorities in Norfolk and in agreement with Norfolk County Council.

Reasons

It was recommended that Cabinet agreed the new Local Council Tax Support Scheme and recommended it to Council for adoption.

It was further recommended that Breckland Council applied for a Transitional Grant and amended the draft Local Council Tax Support scheme to reflect the grant scheme criteria.

The new criteria were largely consistent with those consulted upon; the only difference being 8.5% limit on increased council tax liability. In applying for the grant, Breckland Council would minimise the impact on benefit recipients, for at least one year, of reductions in council tax support.

There were a number of different criteria which could be used to deliver a local scheme. Other billing authorities were expected to agree some different arrangements reflecting their own local circumstances. The proposals put forward here largely reflected the current policies for the award of council tax benefit but reflected the reduced level of funding available by capping the maximum award [in line with the Transitional Grant Criteria].

To deliver the required saving from changes to the Council Tax scheme alone, without the Transitional Grant and with no income from technical

	<u>Action By</u>
<p>changes to Council Tax exemptions, would lead to a reduced level of support across all working age claims by approximately 25%.</p> <p>It would be possible for the Council to meet the shortfall in funding from the Council's budget. However, this would also create a pressure on the other major precepting authorities' budgets and was inconsistent with the approach agreed across Norfolk.</p> <p><u>RECOMMEND</u> to Council that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) the new Council Tax Support Scheme be approved;2) an application be made for the Transitional Grant and the draft Local Council Tax Support scheme be amended to reflect the grant scheme criteria; and3) technical changes be made in regard to the collection of Council Tax.	<p>RW/SJ</p>
<p>8/13 <u>ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP (AGENDA ITEM 9)</u></p> <p>Subject to the following recommendations the Minutes of the Anglia Revenues & Benefits Partnership meeting held on 13 December 2012 were adopted.</p> <p>(a) <u>Partnership Budget 2013-14 (Minute No. 65/12)</u></p> <p>The Executive Member for Internal Services stated that the Partnership budget figures had been approved by the Council's S151 Officer. The Chairman said that the figures did not mean a great deal to him, all he wanted to know was whether they had gone up or down. The Assistant Director of Finance (also the S151 Officer) advised that the budget was broadly in line with last years figures taking into account the changes to transition processes and expansion of the computer systems. All the Finance Directors had worked very closely on this budget. The Assistant Director of Commissioning reminded Members of the saving that had been made with the joining of another authority.</p> <p><u>RECOMMEND</u> to Council that the amount of £1,912,716 from the Anglia Revenues Partnership budget be included in Breckland Council's budget for 2013-14.</p>	<p>RU/MF</p>
<p>(b) <u>Microsoft Licensing (Minute No. 66/12)</u></p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) a new methodology for future licensing refreshes be approved;2) the amounts needed for the licence to refresh be funded via contributions from the Partner Authorities; and3) the option to purchase by annual subscription over three years be approved.	<p>RU</p>

	<u>Action By</u>
<p>(c) <u>Business Rates Resourcing (Minute No. 67/12)</u></p> <p>The Executive Member for Internal Services said that this new scheme should enable the Partnership to bring in more revenue.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) the changes to the current legislation be noted; and2) the proposed changes to the Business Rates Service be approved.	RU
<p>(d) <u>Home Working/Home Enabled Report (Minute No. 68/12)</u></p> <p>The Executive Member for Internal Services said that he had been happy with the progress of the Home Working Scheme.</p> <p>Subject to approval by the General Purposes Committee, it was <u>RESOLVED</u> that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) changes to the Home Working Scheme be approved; and2) the new Homeworking Policy be approved. <p>At the end of the Minutes, at Appendix D, Members' attention was drawn to the number of successes that had been made by the Benefit Fraud Service.</p>	RW
<p>9/13 <u>MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL (FOR INFORMATION) (AGENDA ITEM 10)</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Member Development Panel meeting held on 22 November 2012 were noted.</p>	
<p>10/13 <u>NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 11)</u></p> <p>The arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 12 February 2013 at 9.30am were noted.</p>	

The meeting closed at 10.15 am

CHAIRMAN

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held on Thursday, 29 November 2012 at 2.00 pm in the Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham

PRESENT

Mr J.P. Cowen (Chairman)	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Mr T. J. Jermy (Vice-Chairman)	Mr R. R. Richmond
Mr A.J. Byrne	Mr J.D. Rogers
Mr C G Carter	Councillor C Bowes (Substitute Member)
Mr A.P. Joel	Mr S.G. Bambridge (Substitute Member)
Mr R.G. Kybird	

Also Present

Mrs S Armes	Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris
Mrs E. M. Jolly	Mr M. A. Wassell

In Attendance

Mark Finch	- Assistant Director of Finance
Zoe Footer	- Land Management Officer
Helen McAleer	- Senior Committee Officer
Kim Parks	- Senior Performance Analyst
Rory Ringer	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Teresa Smith	- Committee Officer (Scrutiny & Projects)
Mark Stokes	- Deputy Chief Executive
Steve Udberg	- Asset & Property Manager
Rod Urquhart	- Operations Manager (Support and Fraud)
Robert Walker	- Assistant Director of Commissioning

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106/12 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

107/12 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs D Irving, Mr K Gilbert and Mr B Rose. Councillor C Bowes and Mr G Bambridge were present as substitutes.

108/12 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

109/12 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

No declarations were made.

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**110/12 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING
(AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Mrs Armes, Mr Kiddle-Morris, Mrs Jolly and Mr Wassell were in attendance.

111/12 EXECUTIVE MEMBER PORTFOLIO UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Mr M Wassell, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Governance gave Members a presentation on his Portfolio which gave details of the three main areas within the Portfolio: Democratic Services, Legal Services and Finance (copy attached). The key areas of responsibility were noted and an explanation of the 'day job' of each service was given.

Democratic Services had the key responsibility of promoting local democracy. That included maintaining the register of electors, dealing with standards of ethical practice of both District and Parish Councillors; maintaining the register of interests of District and Parish Councillors; dealing with complaints and Freedom of Information requests and supporting the Scrutiny Commission and other Committees.

Current projects included the Local Government Boundary Review and preparing for the Norfolk County Council elections to be held in May 2013.

Legal Services was a small team that provided legal advice on a wide range of issues across the Council, in both a re-active and pro-active way. Where specialist advice was required, external solicitors were used.

The Finance Team provided a wide range of services including Accountancy, Treasury Management and Purchase Ledgers. The team managed and safeguarded the Council's resources and supported Committee reports through the provision of Proforma Bs. Their responsibilities also covered Central Administration, Post Opening, Cashiers Office and stationery procurement, along with preparing the Council's accounts by 31 December each year.

The Executive Member concluded his presentation by saying that combined with his responsibilities as Deputy Leader he found that his Council duties were a full time role. He relied on his officers and trusted them to assist him in decision making. He was also grateful to his Executive Support Member, Ellen Jolly, for her support.

Members then asked questions about the details provided in the presentation.

Action By

With regard to individual registration (which would replace household registration in 2014/15) Mr Bambridge asked how people would be affected.

The Democratic Services Team Leader advised that the initial process would be to match the Electoral Register to DWP records. Anyone on the Register in 2014 would stay on it until after the 2015 elections. After that everyone would have to register individually and provide details of date of birth and National Insurance Number. There was a fear that the change might reduce the number of people on the Register, but to counter that, new ways of registering would be introduced, including on-line and possibly registering by text.

The Vice-Chairman wondered if a separate Finance Portfolio should be created to reduce the workload, but the Executive Member thought that having responsibility for Finance gave him a good insight into all areas of the Council. He pointed out the additional costs of having an extra Portfolio.

The Chairman asked about Freedom of Information requests which had risen exponentially. He wondered what percentage were valid, and how many were spurious requests? The figures were not available but would be provided.

Rory
Ringer

With regard to the recent PCC Elections at which there had been a very low turn-out, the Chairman asked if the complexity of the voting system had affected analysis.

The Democratic Services Team Leader thought that the problem stemmed from the lack of information from the Government and the Electoral Commission. Although a booklet should have been delivered to every household, that had not happened and anyway the booklet had not explained the Supplemental Vote system. The majority of calls from the public had been because they didn't understand the role of the PCC or the Supplemental Vote.

The Council had not been allowed to publicise the candidates. That and the fact that the election had been held in November had added to the general apathy and the low turnout. The Council's hands had been tied, they had been told how to organise the election but had not been allowed to issue any press releases or other information.

The Executive Member noted that he had attended the count as an Agent and he considered that the large number of spoilt votes had been due to people not understanding the system.

Moving on to the subject of Councillor's Register of Interests, Mr Joel asked what would happen to those Councillors that did not return their forms. The Executive Member advised that the Council's role was only to administer the forms and publish them

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on the website. It was up to individuals to raise complaints about non-compliance.

Mr Bambridge asked about the Parish Precept. He had heard that Parishes were not required to submit their precept until March, was that correct? The Assistant Director of Finance confirmed that legally the Parishes were not required to submit their precept request until March but a letter had been sent out encouraging early submission by the end of January, to enable the setting of Council Tax.

Mr Joel asked about the need for Councillors to get a dispensation to allow them to vote on budget setting matters and the Executive Member advised that the Parish Clerk was the proper officer for dealing with those matters. He agreed that under the new Standards regime, Councillors should not discuss such matters without a dispensation.

The Chairman was concerned that some Parishes might have set their precepts without having granted dispensations to their Councillors. He suggested that Members should engage with their Parishes to encourage compliance with the new regulations.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Member and his Lead Officers for their time.

**112/12 QUARTERLY GOVERNANCE AND PERFORMANCE
MONITORING REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Senior Performance Analyst presented the report on behalf of the Joint Performance Team Leader who was unable to attend.

The report was for information only. In future it would be reported to the Commission quarterly, before being presented to Council.

Mr Kybird was concerned that the summary report on Audit was the worst he had ever seen and that performance against Audit measures was 100% red or purple. It was pointed out that there had been some IT issues during the transition period which had caused problems with getting the data onto the system. They had been sorted out and the system was now more up to date.

The Chairman asked when the Commission would receive the report in future and the Deputy Chief Executive advised that the new system places accountability with the Portfolio Holders and their Managers. A Performance Board, consisting of the Executive Member for Performance with the Deputy Chief Executive and others, would look at under-performance, risk and failure to achieve key milestones on a quarterly basis.

The system was interactive and could be updated daily. It would be presented to the Commission quarterly for their advice on

Action By

where the Performance Board should focus their activities.

The Chairman suggested that the report should be a Standing Item on the Commission's agenda four times a year and that the report should be presented to Scrutiny before going to the Performance Board.

Mr Kybird asked for the report to include a summary of items that had been red for two quarters.

The Chairman said that he was more interested in trends, if they could be seen then it might be possible to influence them. The Deputy Chief Executive pointed out that on page 56 it showed the position in the current and previous quarter and the direction of travel.

Mrs Jolly asked how the level of risk could be shown and also asked if the system tracked the performance of contracts. The Senior Performance Analyst advised that they were currently looking at adding contracts to the Performance system and once that was done they would be able to produce reports.

The Deputy Chief Executive thought that the Executive Support Member was more concerned about contract expiry and renegotiation. He explained that each contract had key indicators. The Performance Board would look at the 'reds' in each quarter and identify risks.

The Chairman noted that high risk items needed to be addressed very quickly.

He thanked the officers for the report.

113/12 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME (AGENDA ITEM 8)

The Assistant Director of Commissioning gave Members a presentation on the changes to Council Tax Benefit which would take place from 1 April 2013.

Council Tax Benefits would be abolished and replaced by a Local Council Tax Support scheme. The Council was required to have adopted a scheme by 31 January 2013 to implement on 1 April 2013. That scheme would operate on 10% less funding than was currently received. The exact grant settlement was not yet known and the new scheme was being developed using models based on estimated figures.

The key elements of the new scheme would be:

- that the benefits of Pensioners and vulnerable groups would be protected;

Action By

- that it would continue to support and give incentives to those in work; and
- that it would be affordable for the people of Breckland.

A key issue was that currently CT Benefit matched the maximum Council Tax charge. One way to address the 10% funding gap would be to cap Council Tax allowance. That would affect all the current CT Benefit claimants.

Other, technical changes had also been consulted on. They included questions about Council Tax on second and empty homes. The proposal was to charge 100% Council Tax on second homes (currently it was 90%) except for military personnel. The exemption period on empty properties would be reduced to three months, followed by a 60% allowance for a further three months, then charging full Council Tax after that time. It was hoped that that would also encourage empty properties to be brought back into use.

Members were shown the questions in a survey carried out with two groups of people: those on benefits who would not be affected and those on benefits that would be directly affected by the changes.

Of 770 people surveyed 48% had responded. 258 of those responses were from people directly affected by the changes. Members were shown a table of findings comparing the responses from the two groups. It showed broad support for the majority of the proposals. The only exception was the proposal to cap the level of support which only 53% of those directly affected supported as opposed to 80% of those not directly affected.

Other preceptors had also supported the scheme as it was cost neutral.

The scheme was being developed in an atmosphere of constant change with new announcements regularly being made by Government. There would be a £100 million grant for the transition to specific scheme requirements, but it could only be applied for once the scheme was adopted and it was not guaranteed.

The Operations Manager (ARP) was in attendance to answer any technical questions.

Mr Bambridge noted that it was a big difference of opinion regarding the cap. The Assistant Director for Commissioning agreed and said they were not underestimating the impact of the changes. There were difficult decisions to be made but the 10% gap had to be made up somewhere.

Mr Joel asked how 'vulnerable groups' were defined and was

Action By

advised that the same rationale would be used as with the current system. The people in those groups were those with dependent children, carers and those in receipt of disability living allowance.

With regard to empty properties, the Vice-Chairman asked what would happen if a property was empty for three months (receiving the full Council Tax exemption) then occupied for a short time and then empty again. Would it qualify for the full exemption again?

The Operations Manager (ARP) advised that under current arrangements there was a minimum period of 42 days of re-occupation before the exemption would be re-applied.

Mr Bambridge requested that a copy of the slides from the presentation be circulated to Members. The Chairman agreed that the slides from the Executive Member's presentation should be circulated, but he suggested that the Council Tax slides should not be sent out until the presentation to Council on 6 December – as there might be some changes in the meantime.

He thanked the officers for their presentation.

114/12 TASK AND FINISH GROUPS (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Chairman noted that a new Task & Finish Group would be needed to consider the Local Development Plan. The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development advised that there would be a report coming shortly to Cabinet with a recommendation to set up a Cabinet sub-Committee to hold open meetings on the subject, which would feed into Scrutiny.

Mr Kybird noted that he was awaiting a response from the Emergency Planning Officer and the Deputy Chief Executive with regard to the Business Continuity Task & Finish Group.

115/12 HEALTH & SCRUTINY (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 10)

Mr Kybird reported that at the meeting held the previous week there had been discussion about the radical redesign of Mental Health Services. He had requested to be on the joint committee that was to be set up.

116/12 SCRUTINY CALL-INS (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 11)

(a) **Sale of Council Owned Land at Mackenzie Road, Thetford**

The Chairman asked the Vice-Chairman to introduce this matter as he had 'called in' the decision. A note outlining the reasons for the call-in had been tabled. The Vice-Chairman advised that Councillor Armes had been dealing with the issue as Ward Member and he asked her to speak on behalf of residents.

Action By

Mrs Armes explained that the problem had commenced in 2010 and she had become involved following her election as one of the Ward Members for Saxon Ward in 2011.

As no Commission Members had visited the site she passed round photographs to give a sense of the area of dispute. This formed part of a piece of wooded land belonging to Breckland Council on which 'Mr R' had been parking his cars. At times access to two footpaths had been blocked.

Mrs Armes asked why enforcement action had not been taken at an early stage. She considered that the Authority had not been sufficiently strong in preventing misuse of its land. If that land was now sold at auction she believed it would set a dangerous precedent. There was little amenity space in the area and the woodland was much used by residents. If the land was sold she thought other residents might apply to purchase parts of the land to extend their gardens.

She reiterated that it would be wrong to auction the land and to continue to allow its use for parking. She suggested a site visit.

The Vice-Chairman said that it was clear that there were a number of issues in the area which were complicated by neighbour disputes. There were two principle issues:

1. had the misuse of the land been addressed robustly enough; and
2. was an auction the fair way to deal with disputed land?

He had called the matter in because he thought it would set a precedent and because he knew that residents did not feel that it had been enforced properly and that the sale was just to resolve the dispute. On the contrary, he thought that the sale would escalate the problem and be a tacit endorsement of the misuse if sold to the person flouting the law. It was also unfair as there was no regard to the ability to pay.

If it was the Council's approach to dealing with members of the public who abused Council land not to protect that land, what was to stop abuse of further areas of land? Would future enforcement action be compromised? He thought it was important to debate the Council's responsibility for protecting public land.

The Chairman noted that the Council did not get involved in neighbour disputes and that it was the issue of selling the land that was to be debated.

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development sought to put the matter into context. He said that the Council

Action By

owned over 5000 pieces of land in Breckland. The unfortunate Land Management Officer had the onerous job of controlling those 5000 pieces of land.

The Active Land Management exercise had identified a lot of encroachment which had not always been known about before. The piece of land under discussion was designated open space. It could not be sold for any other purpose, so any applications for extensions to gardens would not receive planning permission for change of use.

The Land Management Officer gave some background information. The encroachment was on a small part of a relatively large area of land. When a complaint had been received the internal encroachment procedure had been initiated and external legal advice had been sought.

The recommendation by officers to Members had been to dispose of the small piece of encroached land as it had no strategic importance to the Council and was protected as open space. It had minimal value and its sale would relieve the Council of management and maintenance responsibilities. Under the Active Land Management scheme the Council was seeking to dispose of land identified as having no strategic value.

The Asset & Property Manager confirmed that the enforcement option had been considered but would have been a very costly route both in management time and cost resources. It was a small piece of land with nominal market value, designated as open space and with no strategic value but high management cost. He urged the Commission to consider carefully that if it was retained and enforcement action taken that would come at a price. The pragmatic and business like solution was to dispose of the liability giving equal opportunities to bidders to purchase it.

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development noted that in paragraph 1.3 of the report it referred to an easement by prescription which meant that even if enforcement action was taken Mr R might retain the right to park on the land.

Mr Bambridge sought confirmation that if the land was sold public access to footpaths could not be blocked and the land could not be fenced. It was confirmed that without planning permission for change of use fencing could not be erected.

Mr Carter thought that the land did have a value and that selling it would just shift the responsibility and cost.

Councillor Bowes asked if it would set a precedent if the land was sold and asked if other pieces of land had been sold by

Action By

auction. The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development said that some land was being sold as people made applications. Other land had been transferred to Parish Councils at nil consideration. Some people had attempted to register land with the Land Registry because they had fenced it. It was a very difficult job for the Land Management Officer.

The Chairman was concerned that even if the land was sold, the Council might be required to take enforcement action if Mr R continued to park on it as it would be a breach of planning law. The Executive Member disagreed, saying Mr R would not require planning permission to park his cars if he had a prescriptive right. He went on to say that he made a lot of delegated decisions and he considered each one carefully. He had thought that selling the land was the best option in this case.

The Vice-Chairman sympathised about the number of pieces of land and the problems associated with them. However, in this case the residents had approached the Council for support in protecting the land and had not received it. The lack of action had increased the cost.

He was saddened by the language used; saying the land had no strategic value when it was obviously valuable to the residents. The Council had a duty to protect Public Open Space. The prescriptive right had not been determined. The real issue was that there had been encroachment onto Council land and nothing had been done about it.

Mr Bambridge was concerned that the purchaser of the land could apply to move the Rights of Way but it was confirmed that the footpaths did not actually cross the land.

Mrs Jolly noted that although the land to be sold was very small it formed part of a much larger area which might have future strategic value as a ransom strip.

Mrs Matthews wondered why the problem had only come to light now if the parking had been taking place for 20 years.

The Chairman thought that the nub of the issue was that the recommendation was based on there being a 'likely' prescriptive easement. He did not think a decision should be taken without unequivocal evidence. It was clear that the land did have importance to the people in that part of Thetford. If there was no prescriptive right and the land was sold and the owner stopped public use it would be a problem for the Council.

Mr Kybird agreed and said that the factory site to the rear had potential as a redevelopment site which enhanced the land's strategic value in terms of providing additional access to that

Action By

site possibly by a cycle way in future.

Mr R Richmond completely agreed. Mr Joel asked what alternatives were available.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the Commission could recommend that the decision maker reconsidered their decision or refer the matter to Council.

The Land Management Officer advised that the correct process had been followed regarding enforcement and legal advice had been sought. She could only give advice on the information she had been sent. That information was limited and had been supplied by the complainant. The amount of years that the land had been used as a car park was not known. The Solicitors acting for Mr R said that they believed he had a prescribed right. They had not provided any evidence.

The Chairman asked the two Ward Members what evidence they had and Mrs Armes advised that Mr R had lived in the house for 13 years but she could not say how long he had used the land.

Mr Rogers proposed that the matter be deferred and Mr R asked to produce evidence. Mr Kybird said that Mr R would have to prove that he had encroached on every piece of the land.

The Executive Member explained that the Council had no legal right to ask Mr R to prove his prescriptive right.

Members debated the possibility of taking enforcement action or of putting in posts to restrict access to the land. It was pointed out that they were likely to lead to costs for the Council. Another suggestion was to offer the land to the Town Council, but the Land Management Officer advised that the Town Council were unwilling to assume responsibility for land with any encumbrances.

The Vice-Chairman seconded Mr Roger's proposal to defer the application and the Executive Member was happy with that and hoped that the necessary information would be forthcoming.

RESOLVED to defer the decision and delay the sale until the matter could be reconsidered with more evidence on the period of time that the land had been used by Mr R at the next meeting of the Commission.

117/12 COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION (STANDING ITEM)
(AGENDA ITEM 12)

None.

Action By

118/12 WORK PROGRAMME (AGENDA ITEM 13)

The work programme was noted.

119/12 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 14)

The arrangements for the next meeting on 10 January 2013 at 2pm in the Anglia Room were noted.

The meeting closed at 4.07 pm

CHAIRMAN

**Democratic Services
Legal Services
Finance Services**

**Overview & Scrutiny
29th November 2012**

Presentation

By

Cllr Michael Wassell

Democratic Services

Service in a nutshell

Democratic Services provides a range of services for elected members, public and officers to promote local democracy.

These include:

- committee administration
- effective overview and scrutiny
- standards
- member support
- electoral registration
- election services



Responsibilities

- Key areas of responsibilities
 - Committee Administration
 - Standards
 - Freedom of Information
 - Scrutiny
 - Democratic Engagement
 - Electoral Registration
 - Election Management
 - Community Governance Reviews & Boundary Arrangements
- Supports democracy and is governed by legislation

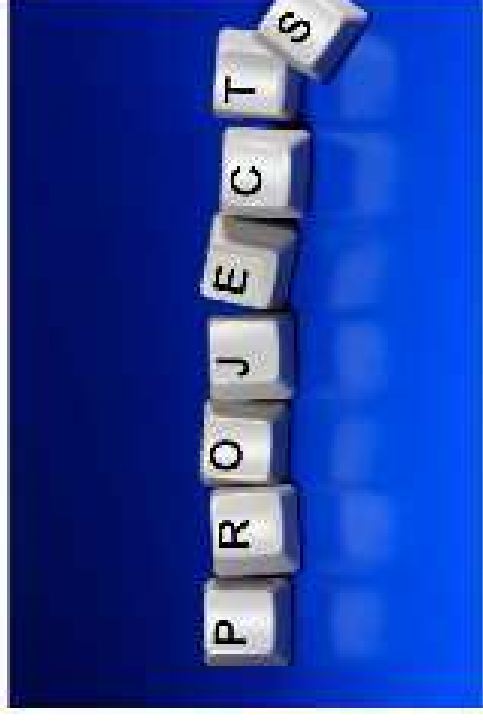
The day job

- Committee Administration
- Standards
- Electoral Services -
 - Parish elections
 - District elections
 - County elections
 - Parliamentary & European Parliamentary elections
 - Referendums & Parish Polls
 - Maintenance of the Register of Electors
 - Boundary Reviews
 - Electoral advice to Town & Parish Councils
- Freedom of Information
- Scrutiny
- Democratic Engagement



Key projects

- Police & Crime Commissioner Elections
- Norfolk County Council Elections
- Local Govt Boundary Commission Electoral Review of Breckland
- Individual registration
- Localism Act – Review of Standards Arrangements
- Further development of Modern.Gov



Legal Services

Service in a nutshell

Legal advice to services across the council

- Proactive
- Reactive



The day job

Examples

- Advising on a wide range of issues
- Drafting contracts and agreements
- Defending legal challenges on decisions
- Providing legal advice on policy decisions
- External specialist advice



Finance Services

Service in a nutshell

- Accountancy Services
- Treasury & Capital Management
- Purchasing & Sales Ledgers
- Central Admin
- Financial Control Environment (incl Internal Audit)



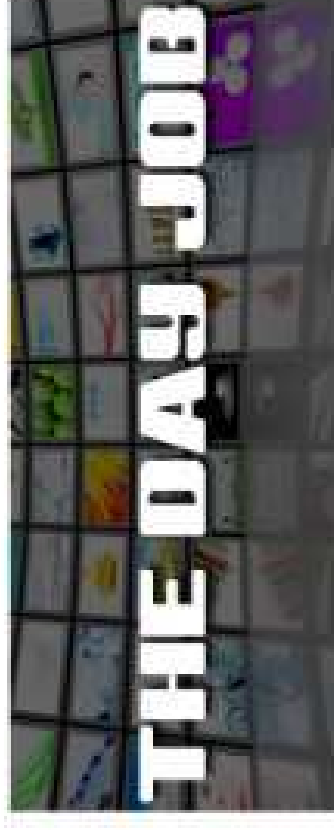
Responsibilities

- Managing the council's finances
- Statutory Reporting



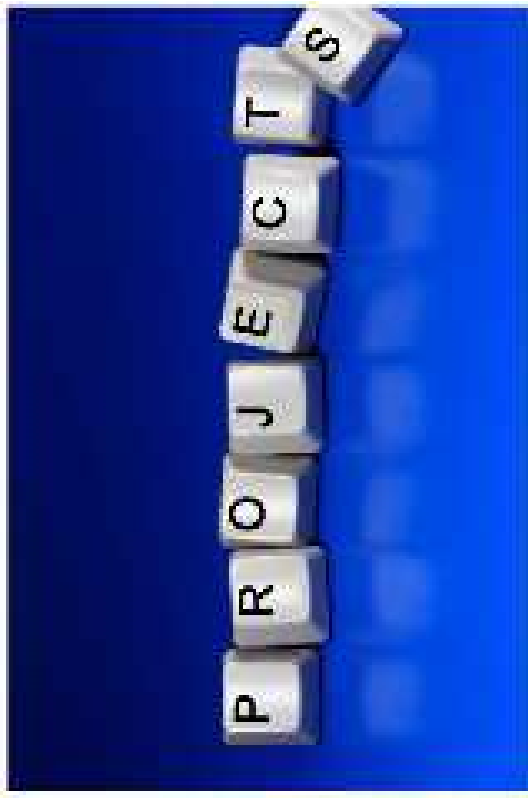
The day job

- Budgetary control
 - Monitoring income & expenditure
- Decision support
 - Project appraisal & Proforma B
- Treasury management
 - Cashflow & ‘investment’
- Paying suppliers & collecting sundry debts
- Statutory returns
 - VAT & Gov’t stats
- Maintaining systems of internal control
 - Incl. Internal Audit
- Central Admin



Key projects

- Budget & Council Tax
- Statements of Accounts
- Corporate Financial Strategies & Policies
 - Medium Term Financial Plan
 - Capital Strategy
 - Treasury Management Policies & Strategy
 - Annual Internal Audit Plan



In Summary - A Team Effort

- Portfolio encompasses whole council
- Held portfolio for 6 months
- Been an interesting challenge
- Sometime feels quite relentless
- But Never Boring
- Very Time Consuming
- Far more than I expected



And Finally.....

- Team work is vital
- I am very lucky to have the team that I do
- On both sides of the portfolio – best officers in the council – my “unbiased” opinion of course
- Also thanks to my ESM – Ellen Jolly - for all of her support and advice



And Really Finally.....

- Thank you for your time and attention
- I will happily take questions



BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Held on Monday, 17 December 2012 at 9.30 am in
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mrs S Armes	Mr T.J. Lamb
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mrs J A North (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor C Bowes	Mr W. R. J. Richmond
Mr T R Carter	Mr M. S. Robinson
Mr P.D. Claussen	Mrs P.A. Spencer
Mr P.J. Duigan (Substitute Member)	Mr N.C. Wilkin (Chairman)

Also Present

Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris	Mr W.H.C. Smith
Mr K. Martin	

In Attendance

Mike Brennan	Principal Planning Officer*
Heather Burlingham	Assistant Development Control Officer*
John Chinnery	Solicitor & Standards Consultant
Paul Jackson	Planning Manager
Helen McAleer	Senior Committee Officer
Nick Moys	Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects)*
Martin Pendlebury	Director of Planning & Business Manager*

* Capita Symonds for Breckland Council

133/12 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

134/12 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies were received from Mr F Sharpe. Mr P Duigan was in attendance as his substitute.

**135/12 DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND OF REPRESENTATIONS
RECEIVED (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

Agenda Item 9 (Schedule Item 3 – Attleborough) Members noted that they had received direct communication by letter and telephone from the Applicant.

Action By

136/12 REQUESTS TO DEFER APPLICATIONS INCLUDED IN THIS AGENDA (AGENDA ITEM 5)

Agenda Item 9, Schedule Item 1 – Kenninghall, had been deferred for further information from the Applicant.

137/12 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (STANDING ITEM)(AGENDA ITEM 7)

The Planning Manager informed Members that a report would be presented to Cabinet on 8 January 2013 to consider a range of options for the new Local Plan. A range of strategic issues would be considered including housing numbers and land supply.

The decision on the legal challenge to the TAAP was still awaited.

138/12 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 9)

RESOLVED that the applications be determined as follows:

- (a) Item 1: KENNINGHALL: Ash Tree Farm: Demolish 9 poultry sheds, erect 8 broiler houses for the rearing of poultry, feed bins and 4 service buildings: Applicant: Mr Bob Gooderham: Reference: 3PL/2012/0876/F

This item had been deferred for further information from the applicant.

- (b) Item 2: SWAFFHAM: Stanfield House, Lynn Road: Retirement Village comprising of care home and 13 assisted living cottages: Applicant: Mr J Ball and Mrs M Ball: Reference: 3PL/2012/0909/O

This Outline proposal was identical to a full application previously approved. The details were indicative only. The access had been moved to improve visibility and avoid a pipeline that crossed the site. The site was outside the Settlement Boundary and restrictive policies applied generally. Care Homes were allowed outside Settlement Boundaries, but assisted living accommodation was not technically permitted. If approved a legal agreement would be required to tie the units to people needing care.

Mr Bull (Objector) owned the caravan site next door. He had no objection to the proposal but requested screening if approved. He was also concerned about potential noise during the construction period.

The Chairman confirmed that screening could be conditioned and the Director of Planning & Business Manager advised that construction could be restricted to weekdays and not to commence before 7am.

Action By

Members asked the following questions:

- What would be above the pipeline? *The layout (which was indicative only) showed an access road linking the car parking areas and landscaping. Details could be conditioned.*
- Would there be an age restriction? *An age restriction and certification of the need of care would be required.*

Deferred, and the officers be authorised to grant approval, subject to conditions, on completion of the section 106 agreement.

- (c) Item 3: ATTLEBOROUGH: Land at London Road: Erection of 375 dwellings with associated parking, garages and landscaping (FULL) and Employment Development (OUTLINE): Applicant: Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd: Reference: 3PL/2012/0958/H

This Hybrid application sought full permission for 375 dwellings and outline permission for employment land and was a follow up to similar proposals refused in July 2012 on Policy and Highway grounds. An appeal had been lodged and would be heard at a public inquiry in January.

A number of revisions had been made to the new application to address Members' concerns. The two and a half storey dwellings originally sited along London Road had been moved. Open Space had been sited alongside the Listed Building and more trees were proposed to the boundary.

Members were shown street-scene views of the layout and appearance of the proposed housing. At the back of the site an area of Open Space would provide a buffer between housing and the A11. Another large area of Open Space would include play areas and allotments. A number of traffic improvements were proposed including the extension of the 30mph zone on London Road and improvements to the junction of Exchange Street and Connaught Road.

The issues of the previous refusal were considered. In policy terms the site was outside the Settlement Boundary. However, as the Council did not have the necessary Housing Land Supply, it was required to consider the proposal in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which had a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The proposal would provide economic benefits by the introduction of employment land and also by the construction work itself. It would provide Open Space and allotments to meet an identified need. 25% affordable housing was proposed (less than the required 40% due to verified

Action By

viability issues).

With regard to prematurity (development in advance of the ASHAAP), it was generally accepted that unless a plan was well developed refusal could not be sustained on those grounds.

With regard to disturbance to existing residents on London Road the housing had been set further back and additional screening was proposed. An acoustic fence would be provided as a goodwill gesture to local residents.

Transport and traffic issues had been the subject of discussions with the Highways Authority. Mitigation proposals included putting traffic lights at the junction of Exchange Street and Connaught Road. There were still concerns about the impact of additional traffic on the gyratory system; however, the Highways Authority were satisfied with the Transport Assessment.

Mr Hall (Objector) represented the Attleborough Community Team. They had petitioned the Council against further development without parking provisions etc. He asked what had happened to the ASHAAP. He was concerned about the shortage of infrastructure and the effects on the Town Centre. The mitigation measures would not address the problems. Other developers were waiting for the decision and would come forward with proposals if it was approved. He urged refusal.

Mrs Taylor and Mr Middleton (Town Council) said that traffic was their main concern as it had not been properly assessed. A Traffic Survey for the ASHAAP was underway and its results should be awaited. Planned sustainable growth would be best. Refusal would protect the interests of the town.

Mr Maidman (on behalf of the Applicant) said they had worked hard to amend the scheme. A cash payment could be offered in lieu of the junction works if the ASHAAP identified other needs. There were also large contributions to the schools, library etc.

Mr Edmunds (on behalf of the Applicant) referred to previous developments at Carbrooke and Dereham and said that they continued to support those residents. The site would supply 200 jobs. 30 to 40 people could be employed on site within 12 months and the development would attract a large New Homes Bonus. They were ready to sign the legal agreement and get on with providing homes and jobs that were needed now.

Mr Martin (Ward Representative) said that the applicants and

Action By

agents had attended meetings and answered questions. They had responded to concerns by amending the house types on London Road and offering to provide acoustic fencing. They were prepared to commence construction in the spring of 2013 that would continue for five to six years. He acknowledged there were infrastructure problems but said the lights at Queens Road worked well.

Members asked the following questions:

- Why was only the first junction in the gyratory system to be improved? *At each junction traffic diverted and the effect was diminished.*
- What would stop the courtyard parking areas being used improperly? *A number of different features including overlooking windows and fencing to rear gardens which allowed views into the parking areas should deter improper use.*
- What did the acoustic fencing look like? *The fencing was being proposed under a separate application. It would be 2.4m high and look like close-boarded fencing but be made of more substantial materials to block noise. The fencing would become the property of residents.*
- What safeguards were in place to retain the allotments? *It was proposed to transfer them to the Town Council. If not a Management Company would take control of them.*
- How had the employment figures been arrived at? *They were based on a study by the University of Reading. The number of jobs from the employment land would depend on the usage.*

After further discussions regarding the infrastructure problems and the benefits or otherwise of waiting for the ASHAAP the Planning Manager advised Members that the previous scheme had been refused on two issues and they should not introduce different reasons for refusing this application. The evidence was clear. The Highways issues had been addressed and infrastructure requirements would be dealt with by legal agreement. There was no clear planning reason to refuse the application.

Deferred, and the officers be authorised to grant approval, subject to conditions, on completion of the section 106 agreement.

- (f) Item 4: LITCHAM: Land West of Tittleshall: Solar photovoltaic panels and associated works including inverter housings, access tracks and security fencing: Applicant: Claypit Moor Solar Park Limited: Reference: 3PL/2012/1020/F

Action By

This application for a solar panel farm was on undulating agricultural land. The permission would be temporary, for 25 years. Members were shown maps and photographs of the site and its surroundings. Officers considered that with additional planting and the timber cladding of the sub-station building there would be no significant impact on the area and renewable energy proposals were generally supported by planning policies.

Mr Smith (Tittleshall Parish Council) raised concerns which included: the lack of a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or Bird Survey; setting a precedent; inappropriate urbanisation of a rural landscape; and additional landscaping being ineffective as screening for ten years.

Mr Birkbeck (Objector) said the scheme would be acceptable on a redundant airfield or other brownfield site but not on unspoilt countryside which was close to charity land open to public use. He asked Members to visit the site.

Mr Garner (Objector) a local landowner and farmer objected strongly to the removal of good arable land from food production. With regard to being able to graze sheep on the site he said it would be very difficult to get a sheepdog to work among the panels.

Mr Hodgson (Agent) said that the applicant had been delivering solar farms for five to six years. The critical factor was connection to the grid system. Then each site was assessed for suitability including consideration of the impact on residential properties. The panels were only 2.2m high, much less visually intrusive than wind farms. Renewable energy was a key Government policy. They had provided a Bio Management plan for the site and there were no statutory objections to the scheme.

Mr Kiddle-Morris (Ward Representative) representing Litcham Parish Council and a local resident who was manager of the Rural Nature Reserve (RNR) adjacent to the site, said their concerns were the same as the previous objectors. Part of the site was in a Minerals & Waste Safeguarding site. If the application had not been temporary Norfolk County Council would have objected on those grounds. There were two core policies CP11 and CP12. One sought to protect the countryside and the other was pro renewable energy. It was up to Members to make their decision but if minded to approve the application he asked that the conditions proposed by the Chairman of Tittleshall Parish Council should be included.

Members asked the following questions:

- What Charity owned the land and how was it

Action By

controlled? *The land belonged to Cole Charity from Wellingham and was administered by Tittleshall Common Committee on behalf of Wellingham and Tittleshall residents.*

- *What species occupied the RNR? Wild cowslips and early purple orchids.*
- *Why had no EIA been carried out? A Screening Opinion had been requested which had considered all the issues and concluded that the proposal would have no significant impact therefore no EIA was required.*
- *Could a condition be applied which confirmed that no precedent had been set? That was unnecessary. Any new application would be assessed on its merits.*
- *How would the panels be secured? The panels would be secured by piles, 1-2metres deep.*
- *Were the panels only effective when the sun was shining? The panels were up to 35% effective and worked on UV light so the sun did not have to be shining.*

It was clarified that construction would be commenced outside the bird nesting season.

Approved, as recommended, with conditions requiring wood cladding to the substation, colour of inverter cabins to be agreed and the panels to be piled.

- (e) Item 5: HARDINGHAM: Land to the East of Hardingham: Proposed development of solar photovoltaic panels (60,480 panels) and associated works including inverter housing, tracks, etc: Applicant: Hardingham 2 Solar Park Limited: Reference: 3PL/2012/1021/F

This application was similar to the previous one although a slightly larger site. Members were shown photographs of the site and its surrounds. A permissive footpath on the border would be retained. The Health & Safety Executive and the Fire Service had no concerns regarding fire risk. With regard to concerns raised by the Mid Norfolk Railway Trust about the use of heavy machinery near the railway line it was proposed to condition an exclusion zone.

A letter from Mr Jordan (Ward Representative) was read out as he could not attend. He said that a lot of residents had attended the Parish Council meeting and raised concerns about: visual impact; additional screening without trees being out of keeping; and the loss of agricultural land for growing food. There had also been a lot of supporters of alternative energy.

Mr Gibb (Objector) spoke on behalf of 43 residents and raised concerns including: the loss of food producing land; physical

Action By

and visual impacts industrialising the landscape; planting not screening the site for ten years; increased vehicle movements during construction causing damage to verges and danger at the junction near the railway bridge; and the panels were only 12-20% effective.

Mr Hodgson (Agent) said that the applicant would be responsible for repairing any road damage caused by construction lorries. The scheme had the least visual impact of the three applications.

Members asked the following questions:

- Would noise be an issue? *The panels made no noise at all but there was a low hum from the inverter buildings which could only be heard close by.*
- Could the sub-station be wood clad and the inverter buildings be coloured green? *The Agent agreed the brick sub-station could be wood clad. The colour of the inverter buildings could be conditioned.*
- How long would construction take? *It was estimated that it would take 16 weeks to get the panels on site. Commencement would depend on any pre-conditions.*
- Did the panels feed straight into the grid or was it possible to store energy? *The panels produced electricity whenever there was UV light. Some energy could be stored and fed into the grid as required.*

The efficiency of the panels was confirmed by the Agent as between 35 and 40%.

A Member reiterated concerns about the loss of land for growing food. He also noted that the land would never return to agriculture because of the quantity of piles and concrete left in the ground.

Approved, as recommended, with conditions requiring wood cladding to the substation, colour of inverter cabins to be agreed and the panels to be piled.

- (f) Item 6: NARFORD: Land off Low Road: Solar photovoltaic panels and associated works including inverter housings, access tracks and security fencing and cameras: Applicant: Burntstalks Plantation Solar Park Limited: Reference: 3PL/2012/1036/F

This was the least contentious of the three solar farm applications and no objections had been raised. Members were shown a map and photographs. A small part of the site was within the Stone Curlew buffer zone. The site was well screened except from an existing footpath. The Ramblers Association had raised concerns about fencing and the

Action By

applicants had agreed to move the fence further back and screen it with planting.

A Member requested that the same requirement to wood-clad the sub-station should be attached.

Approved, as recommended, with conditions requiring wood cladding to the substation, colour of inverter cabins to be agreed and the panels to be piled.

(g) Item 7: ROCKLANDS: Holly Cottage, Chapel Street: Single detached dwelling and garage: Applicant: D Batch: Reference: 3PL/2012/1057/F

This was a finely balanced application for a detached dwelling and garage off a private close. The history of the site was explained to Members. The issue to be considered was whether the impact on the character of the area and the harm to amenity would be sufficient to justify refusal. After careful consideration, officers were recommending approval.

Mr Smith (Parish Council) objected on two grounds. The proposal was backland development and would set a dangerous precedent which could change the character of the village and if approved, would lead to parking on the road or verges which would alter the nature and character of the area.

Mrs Thomas (Objector) reiterated those points. She lived opposite No 4 which was owned by relatives of the applicant. Approval could lead to emergency access points being blocked. Overspill from the new development would cause problems on the narrow, private road.

Mr Took (Agent) stressed that this was a significantly different proposal to the previous. Highway issues had been considered at appeal and the revised proposal addressed those. There would be no material harm to privacy. The Appeal Inspector's findings were relevant.

Mr Smith (Ward Representative) thought that the decision should err in favour of existing residents. Planning should consider all the facts and future consequences. Approval would lead to overcrowding and overdevelopment to the detriment of residents. There would be increased noise and disturbance.

The Chairman questioned the arrangement of the garages, with the proposed new dwelling having the garage for the existing conversion beside it and its own garage further away. The Agent advised that there might be scope to re-look at the arrangements.

Action By

Members were concerned about the reduction in parking provision but were advised that the Highway Authority had accepted two parking spaces per dwelling.

It was noted that the application referred to mains sewers but there were none in the area. A private treatment plant could be conditioned and the details would be a Building Control matter.

The recommendation for approval was not supported.

The Planning Manager noted that Members were not happy with the proposed access and parking arrangements but that technically they met requirements. However, Members had clearly expressed their view that the layout and form of development was inconsistent with the prevailing character of the area and was contrived and fairly cramped and that concerns remained regarding amenity implications.

A new proposal was moved and seconded.

Refused, contrary to recommendation, on grounds of inappropriate backland development, and concerns about the effects on amenity and on the form and character of the area.

- (h) Item 8: SHIPDHAM: Lomond House, Mill Road: Erection of 2 storey dwelling and attached garage with new vehicular access: Applicant: Mrs G M Hewson: Reference: 3PL/2012/1069/O

This outline application was for one dwelling in part of the garden of an existing house. All matters were reserved except access. The Highways Authority had raised objections to the site access and the junction of Mill Road and the A1075 on grounds of poor visibility. Due to that objection the application was recommended for refusal.

Mr Hewson, speaking on behalf of the applicant (his mother) said that she had owned the property from 1954 and now lived in a care home. A business had operated from the site from 1954 to 1998. Mobile cranes, drilling rigs and lorries had regularly accessed the site and he pointed out that it was possible to turn right out of the property, avoiding the restricted junction with the A1075. However he had no knowledge of any incidents at that junction.

Members felt that the access would be adequate once the hedge was cut back. The lack of the required visibility splay was mitigated by the fact that traffic would not be moving fast at that point and the additional traffic from a single dwelling was not likely to have a big impact on the junction.

Action By

The recommendation for refusal was not supported.

Approved, subject to conditions requiring the best visibility splay that could be achieved, contrary to the recommendation, on the grounds that the Highways objection did not provide sufficient grounds for refusal.

Notes to the Schedule

Item No	Speaker
2	Mr Bull - Objector
3	Mr Hall – Objector Mrs Taylor – Town Council Mr Middleton – Town Council Mr Edmonds – Agent Mr Maidman – Agent Mr Martin – Ward Representative
4	Mr Smith – Tittleshall Parish Council Mr Birkbeck – Objector Mr Garner – Objector Mr Hodgson – Agent Mr Kiddle-Morris – Ward Representative
5	Mr Gibb – Objector Mr Hodgson - Agent
6	Mr Hodgson - Agent
7	Mr Smith – Parish Council Mrs Thomas – Objector Mr Took – Agent Mr Smith – Ward Representative
8	Mr Hewson – for Applicant

Written Representations Taken into Account

Reference No	No of Representations
3PL/2012/0876/F	3
3PL/2012/0909/F	1
3PL/2012/0958/H	13
3PL/2012/1020/F	8
3PL/2012/1021/F	37
3PL/2012/1057/F	6

**139/12 BRECKLAND COUNCIL PLANNING PROTOCOL : UPDATED
VERSION (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

The Solicitor presented amendments to the Planning Protocol.

The original protocol had been introduced in 2009 following a long discussion and scrutiny process. It had only been amended to address the recent changes to the Standards Regime particularly concerning Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and pre-determination.

A Member thought that there should not be any restriction on conversations with constituents. He accepted that if a Member was

Action By

pre-determined that was a separate issue but said that he should have freedom to speak to any applicant or objector in his Ward.

The Solicitor confirmed that it was perfectly acceptable for a Member to talk about an application as long as they did not commit themselves in any way.

Another Member who had fallen foul of the process previously accepted that a Member should not vote if pre-determined but asked if they could still take part in the discussions. The Solicitor advised that they could address the Committee as a Ward Representative having declared their pre-determination, but then they should take no further part.

Concern was raised about Site Visits and whether Members that attended had additional information to those that did not. It was noted that some authorities debarred Members from consideration of applications if they had not attended an arranged site visit. The Solicitor did not think that was necessary but said that Members that had not attended the site visit should decide if they had enough information to vote.

At a recent site visit a Member had felt pressured by the Ward Representatives. The Solicitor suggested that any invitation to non-Committee Members should make it clear that they were only invited to point out relevant viewpoints to Committee Members, not to enter into discussions with them.

**Helen
McAleer**

140/12 APPLICATIONS DETERMINED BY THE DIRECTOR OF COMMISSIONING (AGENDA ITEM 11)

Noted.

141/12 APPEAL DECISIONS (FOR INFORMATION) (AGENDA ITEM 12)

Noted.

The meeting closed at 1.50 pm

CHAIRMAN

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**Held on Wednesday, 9 January 2013 at 10.00 am in
Norfolk Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr P.J. Duigan (Chairman)	Councillor M. Chapman-Allen
Mr T R Carter (Vice-Chairman)	Mr C. S. Clark
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mrs A.L. Steward
Mrs B Canham	Mrs E. M. Jolly (Substitute Member)

Also Present

Councillor C Bowes	Mr T. J. Jermy
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In Attendance

Dominic Chessum	- Joint Marketing & Communications Team Leader
Mark Stokes	- Deputy Chief Executive
Helen McAleer	- Senior Committee Officer

Action By

1/13 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2/13 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Borrett, Mrs Matthews, Mr Skull and Mr Williams.

Mrs Jolly was present as substitute for Mrs Matthews.

Councillor Bowes and Mr Jermy were in attendance.

3/13 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

No declarations were made.

4/13 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None.

5/13 LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 5)

The Chairman noted that the General Purposes Committee on 22 November 2012 had received verbal updates from the Chairman of the Local Joint Consultative Committee from their meeting which had been held earlier on the same day.

The Chairman asked how the Performance Related Pay item was progressing and the Deputy Chief Executive advised that the matter was being researched and developed.

With regard to Minute No 64/11, Mrs Steward asked about the timeline for funding and was informed that an application for funding had been made to the EDRF and confirmation of the outcome of that bid was expected by the end of the month.

Mr Bambridge noted that the posts had already been advertised. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that was the case so that everything would be in place to commence as soon as the project funding was confirmed.

In response to a question from Mrs Chapman-Allen regarding Minute No 66/12, it was confirmed that the counselling would be provided externally.

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Local Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 22 November 2012 be adopted.

6/13 HOMEWORKING / HOME ENABLED SCHEME FOR ARP STAFF (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Members had previously been informed that this item had been withdrawn from the Agenda. It would be presented to the Local Joint Consultative Committee on 14 February 2013 and then to the next General Purposes Committee on 27 February 2013.

7/13 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The arrangements for the next meeting on Wednesday 27 February 2013 at 10.00am in the Norfolk Room, Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, were noted.

8/13 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 8)

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

9/13 CHANGES TO THE PROVISION OF GRAPHIC DESIGN (AGENDA ITEM 9)

Members were given time to read comments from Unison which had been tabled.

The Deputy Chief Executive advised Members that the comments from Unison would be 'taken on board' and used as part of the consultation.

The Joint Marketing & Communications Team Leader then presented the report which provided Members with three options. The need and demand for graphic design was changing and he believed that savings could be made by outsourcing the service.

Mr Bambridge asked how much work was already outsourced. He wondered if it would be practical to bring that work back in-house to keep the post.

It was explained that graphics were changing and there was likely to be demand for digitization and digital animation in future. It was acknowledged that there were risks with outsourcing the service but it was felt that the risks of keeping it in-house were greater and that the cost of training staff to meet the new requirements would out-weigh potential savings.

It was clarified that more than one supplier would be used to ensure prices were kept low.

Mrs Jolly raised several concerns about the figures quoted in the Proforma B. The discrepancies were explained.

Mrs Chapman-Allen was concerned about the knock-on effects to the print room of losing the post and the potential risks of untrained staff using the print room equipment.

Mrs Steward however, felt that as an entrepreneurial Council it was right to look for new ways of working. She was glad that the Unison comments would be taken into consideration but supported the recommendation.

The Chairman pointed out that the risks of changing were clearly documented, but it was not made clear what the risks of maintaining the status-quo would be.

The Joint Marketing & Communications Team Leader advised that those risks were not having the necessary skill-set to provide the required service and also the possibility of sickness absence affecting the service.

Action By

RESOLVED that

- (a) consultation with affected staff on the changes to graphic design provision should begin; and
- (b) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to make final arrangements for the provision of a graphic design service in line with Option 1.1 of the report.

The meeting closed at 10.30 am

CHAIRMAN



Moving Thetford Forward
The Local Delivery Vehicle for Thetford
Growth Point

MEETING NOTES OF THE MOVING THETFORD BOARD

Held on Thursday 13th December 2012 at 10.00 a.m. at Keystone Innovation Centre, Thetford

Present (Voting Members)

Cllr William Nunn (JWN) (Chairman)
Cllr Robert Kybird (RGK)
Cllr Marion Chapman-Allen (MCA)
Cllr Graham Plant (GP)
Cllr Tony Poulter (TP)
Mr Alan Flack (AF)
Jo Pearson (JP)
Cllr Ivor Andrew (IA)
Cllr Terry Jermy (TJ)
Andrea Smith (AS)
Alec Witton (AW)
Carol Doherty

Representing

Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Norfolk County Council
Norfolk County Council
Brettenham & Kilverstone Parish Council
Keystone Development Trust
Local Business Representative
Croxtton Parish Council
Thetford Town Council
Flagship Housing Association
Land Representative
NHS Norfolk

Present (Non-Voting Members)

Mark Stokes (MS)
Kevin Ward (KW)
Susan Glossop (SG)
Nick Clarke (NC)
Ian Parkes

Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Thetford Town Council
Thetford Healthy Town
Norfolk County Council

In attendance

Carol Butters (CB)
Julian Bamford
Cllr Carl Clark (CC)
Cllr Corinne Fulford (CF)

Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Thetford Town Council
Thetford Town Council

Apologies for Absence Received

Cllr Mark Robinson (MRob)
Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris (MKM)
Cllr Jennifer Chamberlin (JC)
Cllr Derrick Murphy (DM)
Cllr Ann Steward (AS)
Neil Stott (NS)
Cllr Bob King (BK)
John Connolly (JCo)
Emma King
Tony Trotman (TT)
Margaret Bailey (MB)
Natalie Beal (NB)
David Spencer (DS)
Mark Stanton (MSta)
Steve Udberg (SU)
Tim Edmunds (TE)
Chris Hey (CH)
Ralph Burton (RB)
Darryl Smith

Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Norfolk County Council
Norfolk County Council
Norfolk County Council
Keystone Development Trust
Croxtton Parish Council
Thetford Business Forum
Flagship Housing Association
NHS Norfolk
Breckland Council
Capita Symonds for Breckland Council
Capita Symonds for Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Breckland Council
Norfolk County Council
Norfolk County Council
Breckland Council
Breckland Council

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies have been received for Cllr Jennifer Chamberlin, Cllr Derrick Murphy, Cllr Ann Steward, Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris, Mr Neil Stott, Mr John Connolly, Cllr Bob King, Emma King, and Mr Tony Trotman.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 3)

The Keystone Trust declared an interest on the Expression for Supporting Thetford's Civil Society in the Era of Austerity.

Brettenham and Kilverstone Parish Council declared an interest in the Expression for the Riverside path.

Terry Jermy declared an interest in the Expression for Sort It Business Support Package.

Jo Pearson declared an interest in the Expression for Jones' Van and Charles Burrell Museum.

Nick Clark declared an interest in the Park Run.

**MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING OF
24th FEBRUARY 2012 (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

Actions from previous meeting.

SJ advised that there is not a prescribed size for the skate park.

KW advised that the funding for the estates would be taken forward to the New Year.

There were no amendments to the minutes.

The minutes were agreed as being a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS PANEL MEETING OF
October 2012 (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

These were for information.

EXPRESSSION OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Kevin Ward advised that Invites for Expressions of interest sent out 11th October 2012 to Board Members, PDP Members, Theme leads and via the MTF web site. The deadline for submission was 9th November 2012.

**Action
by**

There is £57,000 for capital funding available and £10,000 for revenue funding available.

The Scoring Criteria based on CLG funding requirements

Building stronger communities 4 points

Protect and improve the local environment 3 points

Develop prosperous and sustainable communities 4 points

Finance – match funding 4 points

Risk analysis 2 points

Sustainability 2 points

Moving Thetford Forward received four expressions of interest for capital funding and eight expressions for Revenue.

Of the Living History and Sort It Business Support Package were re-classified to revenue due to the CLG requirements.

Three schemes for future consideration lodged without formal application were Ramsey Close Play Area, Footpath from Joe Blunts Lane to the BP Station on the B1175 and Nunn's Bridge revetments.

The following projects were unable to be considered for assessment by Programme Delivery Officers.

Riverside Path as submitted at an early stage for future investigation of funding opportunities. The planners support this, as it would link into the TAAP.

Muslim Welfare there was insufficient information and no defined outcomes even after further requests.

Tree Tops this application did not meet with CLG requirements.

Jones' Van The Programme Delivery Group felt that that this application was ineligible, as it constitutes retrospective funding and therefore not scored.

Norfolk Switched On The Programme Delivery Group felt that there was a lack of local focus and with no explanation of how it works with existing initiatives.

Theftfest The Programme Delivery Group felt that a more direct mechanism for funding the Tourist Information Centre with less reliance on a successful Theftfest should be sought. Officers to invite a direct funding application from TIC.

CAPITAL FUNDING PROJECTS**Charles Burrell Museum**

The Programme Delivery Group felt that this was an important building in Thetford and their expression was for

- a) External works and repairs
- b) Equipment to enable the museum to grow e.g. by purchasing audio equipment, information screens etc

The PDG felt that it could not fund the equipment element but would be able to consider the external works and repairs and scored this project on that basis. The total amount of funding for the works and repairs is £19,250. This Project scored a total of seven points. However, there are potential risks to the project which are;

Quotation for works not to an appropriate standard and therefore inaccurate

Works insufficient to secure the fabric of the building

Approval required by the historic buildings officer

United Reformed Church

The Programme Delivery Group felt that this was also an important building in Thetford and their expression was for improvements and repairs. The total amount of funding requested from MTF is £37,500. This project scored seven points. The potential risks to the project are;

The precise scope of work yet is to be determined or cost estimated

Security of other funding unknown

REVENUE FUNDING PROJECTS**Supporting Thetford's Civil Society in the Era of Austerity**

The PDG felt this a worthy project as it supports and increases the effectiveness of the voluntary sector by supporting community organisations and projects. The project has a reasonable understanding of the risks going forward and there are no future revenue impacts for MTF. The project scored six points. The amount of funding is £4,916 and is considered a low risk project.

Park Run

This is a well developed model (based on the Norwich run) and contributes to the health and wellbeing of residents. This is an ideal legacy project for Thetford Healthy Town. The project provides over

Action
by

50% match funding and is part of a successful national organisation. The project scored nine. The amount of funding requested is £3,000 and considered a low risk project.

Living History

This project is to purchase costumes for the Walks around Thetford after a successful walk where the actors borrowed costumes and acted the parts during the walks. The project had two submissions one for £10,000 and another for £3,500.

Based on the funding available the project was scored on the £3,500 application and scored a total of seven. This is considered a low risk project.

Sort It Business Support Package

This project is to purchase equipment for new businesses to use however, CLG rules put this into the revenue funding. This project scored four and maintenance/sustainability issues were not identified in risks.

Further liaison with the Breckland Council ED team is worthwhile to see if other grants are available or how best to work with Sort-it to deliver business support.

Recommendation that MTF Fund

Capital Project

Charles Burrell Museum	£19,250
United Reformed Church	£37,500

Questions

Cllr Kybird asked where the match funding was coming from for the Charles Burrell Museum and he was advised by Mr Pat Pearson that the trustees have £15,000 and there is £5,000 from elsewhere. The latest quote received is for £14,000.

Cllr Chapman-Allen was concerned on the funding that was being matched on the Charles Burrell Museum. What had happened to the European funding and had there been any funding applications since then. Mr Pat Pearson replied that the money had been spent over the 3 years and that there had not been any applications since. He felt that if this application was successful that the newly appointed trustees have a new feel with the museum and with the new addition of the Jones' Van that there will be potentially an increased income for the museum. The involvement with Dads Army and Cllr Corinne Fulfords joint volunteer scheme the museum would grow next year. It was confirmed that Refurbishment and repair was capital funding.

Cllr T Jermy was concerned that the United Reformed Church

Action
by

application was for a significant amount of money. KW advised that we could look at reducing this amount say to £25,000.

RJK wondered whether there were possibilities in other applications pooling their equipment requests e.g. Sort It and Charles Burrell. Kevin Ward advised this would depend on scale of equipment although Charles Burrell is capital funding and Sort It due to type of equipment is revenue (lots of small items).

JP concurred with the issue of the large amount of funding required for United Reformed Church.

WN agreed that 75% of this fund for United Reformed Church is rather large and felt that the Riverside Path is also a worthy project.

Mr Ian Parkes felt that upon looking on the United Reformed Church felt that there were regular inspections and were looking mid to long term. The Church would probably find funding elsewhere and sustain itself.

Cllr M Chapman-Allen felt that the United Reformed Church is one of the best kept churches in Thetford and is well used.

Susan Glossop felt that there are many other churches in Thetford that were also worthy of funding.

A conversation took place regarding Jones's Van and it was felt that it was not retrospective funding as the funding still need to be raised to repay those that stepped in to purchase the van at auction. Cllr Fulford felt that this project is worthy as from publicity done in the EDP and Radio 2 recently that the pre-booked tour figures are at 55. The museum has struggled with the building upkeep

A discussion took place regarding the Riverside Path and that both parts of the path would need to be constructed. It was felt that this project needed working up properly and for MTF to undertake the project. The Chair advised that he would be happier if this project would be under the area of the Town Council and suggested that MTF Fund the Charles Burrell, United Reformed Church on a reduced amount, Jones Van and fund some exploratory work for the Riverside Path.

There was a suggestion of £7,500 for the United Reformed Church.

RESOLUTION

The Board resolved to approve the Capital Funding as follows;

Charles Burrell Museum	£19,250
United Reformed Church	£ 7,500
Jones Van	£10,000

**Action
by**

Riverside Path Exploratory work	£ 2,000
---------------------------------	---------

Total	£38,750
-------	---------

(£18,250 remaining in reserve for the residual Riverside Path)

Revenue**Park Run**

Nick Clark explained how the Park Run would be set up. The model in Norwich was used as an example. There is a 5k run in Norwich every Saturday at 9am at the launch there were 75 people who ran now approximately 375 people run each Saturday. There are approximately 100 people that participate in the King's Lynn Run and 85 people in the Sheringham Run. The runs are wheelchair and pushchair friendly and there are family groups and children participating in the runs. Nick Clark explained where the Thetford route would start and finish and advised that there would be two laps. Run routes are not on the highway due to the risk to runners and the start/finish are normally with areas of coffee shops to benefit the local economy. Cllr Jermy enquired about the funding and whether it was sustainable and any ongoing costs. Nick Clark advised that it is £6,000 start up costs £2,000 from park run HQ, £1,000 from Active Norfolk therefore they are seeking £3,000 from MTF. The funds are used to train the volunteers and the run is sustainable and there are no foreseeable ongoing costs.

Civil Society

Alan advised that this group has been going since 2005 and this funding would enable them to continue after next year. The voluntary groups will be invited to forums and workshops. Cllr Jermy felt that having five forums and five workshops to have a meeting and chat isn't value for money. Other attendees felt that the largest problem for charity organisations is where assistance in completing the funding applications. If there could be some expertise and manpower to assist in this included in this scheme it would be beneficial. This scheme is an extension to the KAVO project. Alan Flack advised that they have a similar scheme in Brandon have secured £25,000 of funding. RK suggested that a target outcome could be the approved number of written bids for voluntary organisations. The Chair advised that he felt that MTF could fund this and have restrictions on the outputs.

Sort It

Cllr Jermy felt disappointed that the Sort It Project did not score well as they are inundated with requests for help. People want to set up businesses and support is needed as the Business Link has now gone.

The Chair advised that there is a substantial amount of risk money set aside for the Bus Station so there could well be £1.2 million returning to MTF and the projects who have not been approved could well get

funding then..

Kevin Ward advised that he is sure that Economic Development could work with Sort It through Enterprise Norfolk with regards to workshops and grants. To enable Sort It to achieve their outputs via another route.

RESOLUTION

The Board resolved to approve the Revenue Funding as follows;

Supporting Thetfords Civil Society	£ 4,916
Park Run Thetford	£ 2,000
Living History	£ 3,500
Total	£10,416

Overspend of £416 funded by interest received.

HEALTHY TOWN (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Carol Doherty went through the key results of Thetford Healthy Town since funding was secured from NHS Norfolk, Breckland Council and Moving Thetford Forward. Healthy town.

- a) Thetford Food Festival 2011
- b) 0-19's project (Healthy start, HENRY, Mend + workshop)
- c) Oral Health Workshop
- d) Smoking awareness month (over 25 people signed up to services)

Nick Clark introduced himself as replacing Tony Trotman and displayed a slide of the new Healthy Town website.

Carol Doherty explained that they have had successful marketing with twitter averaging 50+ tweets per month. They have a facebook page and have been in Thetford Magazine, Thetford & Brandon Times, EDP, Radio Norfolk and local THT branding/gazebo.

Londis in Thetford have a change4life fridge at the front of the shop. Where they sell fruit and vegetables. This has been effective with people/children seeing this and purchasing items.

Change4Life scheme was in Thetford and they gave out fresh fruit and vegetables together with recipes. They have involved the local community and CD dressed as a strawberry.

Action
by

Case Study One

The Oral Health Workshop was in October 2011. This was to enable the community to raise awareness of the dental availability in Thetford. The community including the migrant communities didn't know where to go for oral health. There were 23 attendees from dentists, care workers for people with learning difficulties and the elderly.

There were challenges to work on were to go for information and 78% of those that attended said they would use the learning from the workshop in their role.

It was felt that follow up drop in sessions would be beneficial together with additional information sessions for the Matthew project and Breathe easy Group.

Case Study Two

Community Events 2011

In November there were three hour Health Hub and during this time the event promoted Health Trainers, NORCAS, Smokefree and Change4Life. Some were signposted to other services two breathe easy, three to healthy lunchbox resources and four for walking for health.

Case Study Three

Lets get moving in Thetford

This was based on motivational interviewing and they worked in partnership with the Health Trainers. Two community groups were set up (Aqua aerobics' and Zumba) these are now sustainable and are able to cover their costs.

There has been 103 sessions with 477 attendees.

Thetford Healthy Town is a beacon in Norfolk and it is now a sustained group. This will be rolled out to other towns in Norfolk. Next year the Norfolk Healthy County will be set up.

CD would like to say thank you to Moving Thetford Forward for supporting this project as they would not have achieved everything they have done with out this support. Thetford Healthy Town has made a difference and they hope to continue in towns like Dereham and Attleborough.

**Action
by**

At the moment they are working closely with Keystone. They will be empowering people by guiding and helping. They will be concentrating on Mental Health issues and if they can get one person to leave their property and do something using small steps this project is worthwhile. It improves the quality of Thetford residents in their own lives, the communities in which they live and societies of which they are part.

A final decision on lottery bid for Norwich Living well is expected December 2012 this is based on THT.

Norfolk's Community Health and Sport bid accepted and due to start April 2013 which will include projects in Thetford.

BUS STATION (AGENDA ITEM 8)

Ian Parkes advised that the planning permission was received at the NCC Planning Regulatory Committee on 27th July 2012. Purchase of No. 4 Minstergate under discretionary powers has been completed. It should be noted that the property may no longer be suitable for residential use once the bus interchange is operational.

The Compulsory Purchase order for the remainder of the site was published on 3rd October 2012. Two objects have been received one statutory and one non-statutory.

Guidance is now awaited from the Government office on the Public Inquiry procedures,

Assuming that there is a public enquiry the timeline is

Let construction contract March 2014

Start of construction April 2014

Alterations to Highway July 2014

Completion of bus station construction January 2015

Risks are that there are possible additional construction costs. Norfolk County Council will try to keep costs on budget if they materialise.

The timeframe for the decision on the public enquiry should be imminent but it is not known when the decision would be made.

NCC had always envisaged that there would be a public enquiry. A Member felt appalled that it was one landowner holding this up. It was also mentioned that the said landowner has split his asset into three and sold off the land to other parties. It was felt that this should not affect the CPO process as the CPO was about the land. Not who owned it.

It is believed the Bus Station would go out to tender however IP will confirm this and advise. It is believed that Mott McDonald or May

**Action
by**

Gurney would tender for this.

It was felt that a meeting was needed with Norfolk County Council with Higher level managers to confirm the risks going forward and who would meet any additional costs involved for the Bus Station. KW to arrange this.

The landowner wants more than the market value of the land. However a public enquiry would set the market value plus uplift. The value of the land can be measured by three values and taking the average. NCC must be seen to act accordingly as this is public money.

The time for objections to be submitted has passed.

FINANCE SUMMARY (AGENDA ITEM 9)

	MTF Budget	Expenditure at 30 November 2012	Budget Remaining
Capital	£6,326,837	£1,752,170	£4,574,667
Revenue	£847,214	£781,218	£65,996
Total	£7,174,051	£2,533,388	£4,640,663

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 10)

Cllr Jermy would like an update on the Skate Park.

KW advised that there was a comment in the minutes that the project be moved to Thetford Town Council and some other sites were to be considered as there were issues with the site that was planned. One of the sites was at land behind the Mudder.

The chair advised that Thetford Town Council would find a site and he was frustrated that everything was in place and then it was decided that there were issues with the site. He understands that Cllr Fulford has been working on the new proposed sites for the skate park.

Cllr Fulford advised that discussions had taken place to move the skate park back and that she has been looking at other sites.

One site is awaiting a site assessment from Breckland Asset team. There are less issues as near Drake's School and has an existing play area. There are other sites she is looking at. Once a site is agreed and assessment done then it is only the Planning Application that would need to be completed.

**Action
by**

It was felt that the site needs to be right and all need to be involved in the consultation process.

The issues are anti social behaviour, noise levels and location needs to be right.

There was a feeling that pressure should be placed on the Asset officers to complete the assessment for this site near Drake School.

GP advised that from his experience in Great Yarmouth residents did not want them close but not to far away due to their children having access to them. He also felt that they should not be schools. Normally they are situated in existing play parks.

Various locations were suggested including Castle Park, land near Drake School and land near Bishops School as locations and SG felt that due to the heritage of the Castle park site planning permission would not be granted. JP advised that heritage sites should not be a problem if you look at Abbey gardens in Bury.

Cllr Carl Clark asked whether anyone wanted him to approach Bishops school regarding the land behind.

TJ also advised that he could arrange volunteers to door knock regarding the consultation on the skate park.

MS said that he could write to whoever was needed the Secretary of State or English Heritage for the permission on the Castle park. The Chair advised that as this project is being lead by TTC then he would prefer Thetford Town Council to write.

Town Centre Scheme

SG advised due to the weather the clock foundations have been delayed. It is hoped that the clock foundations would be completed this weekend (15th & 16th December) however if the weather is not appropriate then the foundations will be delayed until January.

Cllr Fulford expressed concerns about problems with the contractors not working and felt that they should be scrutinised. She has taken photographs of their working methods.

It was questioned why NCC were undertaking the works. KW as the works were in the Highway only NCC are able to undertake the works.

This is a partnership project with TTC who did the bidding and NCC delivering the project. Felt that KW organise the questioning of delivery.

Alex Witton suggested that the minutes be distributed after the meeting not ten months after. KW to arrange.

Action
by

SG advised that Thetford have successfully had Night Markets with the newly purchased marquees (with MTF Logo) They were used on the Thetford Lights switch on and they are now getting a lot of enquiries for market traders to use. These marquees completely cover the market place.

Breckland Press release for MS to arrange with Dominic Chessum for MTF Grants approved and Thetford Healthy Town.

Meeting Finished at 11.55am

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of Mark Stokes, Deputy Chief Executive

To: Full Council, 24 January 2013

(Author: Mark Finch, Assistant Director Finance)

Subject: Approval of the NNDR 1 Form

Purpose: To seek approval for the NNDR 1 Form and request delegated authority for future years' approvals

Recommendation(s):

1. Approve the NNDR 1
2. Delegate authority (and update the Constitution accordingly) for the approval of the NNDR 1 in future years to the S151 Officer, with a subsequent report detailing what has been approved to Full Council as part of the annual budget setting report.

1. BACKGROUND

The new Business Rates retention scheme takes effect from 1 April 2013. This new scheme has altered the information and approvals required in relation to the NNDR 1 form, which estimates the amount of non-domestic rates income the authority is expecting to receive in the new financial year.

Under the current Business Rates scheme an NNDR 1 form is completed giving the business rates base as at 30 September each year and this is submitted to CLG by 31 January each year. Under the new business rates retention scheme a revised NNDR 1 form is required to be completed based on rateable values at 30 September, adjusted for a forecast figure based on the Council's local intelligence of changes to rateable values for the following year. The importance of the NNDR 1 form is significantly increased, as this form will inform the CLG when setting the Council's business rates base for the following year.

Because of these changes the NNDR 1 is now required to be formally approved by 31 January each year in the same way the Council Tax Base is approved. Approval of the Council Tax Base has been delegated to the S151 Officer and is reported as part of the annual budget setting report and it is recommended that the same approach is adopted for the NNDR 1 approval for future years.

The NNDR 1 form is attached at Appendix 1. This shows that the amount of business rates income estimated to be collected by Breckland Council is £28.0m (row 36) of which £11.2m is this Council's Baseline (40% of £28.0m). This compares with the figure used by central government in the draft local government settlement, which calculated a Business Rates Baseline figure of £11.1m. After payment of central government calculated tariffs, Breckland will be allowed to retain £3.4m of this. This sum will be included in the budget presented to Cabinet and Council for approval in February.

2. OPTIONS

Approve the NNDR 1 form and delegate authority to the S151 Officer for future years;

Do not approve the NNDR 1 form or delegate authority for future years;
Approve the NNDR 1 form, but do not delegate authority for future years

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

To meet regulatory requirements for the approval of the NNDR 1 form and to simplify the process in future years

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS

To meet regulatory requirements for the approval of the NNDR 1 form to ensure our Business Rates base is estimated as accurately as possible and to simplify the process in future years and bring in line with the Council Tax Base approval process.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 **Legal** - None

5.2 **Risks** - None

5.3 **Financial** – To ensure the most up to date estimate of the business rates base for next year is submitted to CLG

5.4 **Timescales** – N/A

5.5 **Equality and Diversity** - None

5.6 **Stakeholders / Consultation** - None

5.7 **Contracts** - None

5.8 **Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998** - None

6. WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED - All

Background papers:- *none*

Lead Contact Officer

Name/Post: Alison Chubbock/Accountancy Manager

Telephone Number: 01362 656865

Email: Alison.chubbock@breckland.gov.uk

Director/Officer who will be attending the Meeting

Name/Post: Mark Finch/Assistant Director Finance

Key Decision – Yes

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix 1 – NNDR 1 Form

NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN 1 NNDR1 2013-14

Please e-mail to : nndr.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct authority name.

Please check the figures shown in the cells with a blue border and enter your own figures if you disagree with those suggested.

A provisional version of the form should be returned to the Department for Communities and Local Government by

The final version of this form, including a signed copy, must also be sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government by
Thursday 31 January 2013

Select your local authority's name from this list:

Check that this is your authority :	Breckland
Check that this is your E Code :	E2631
Local authority contact name :	Brian Cunningham
Telephone number of local authority contact :	01842 756465
Fax number for local authority contact :	01842 756513
E-mail address of local authority contact :	ian.cunningham@angliarevenues.gov.uk

Ver 1.3

1. Number of hereditaments on the rating list on 30 September 2012	4,130	
	£	
2. Aggregate rateable value on the rating list on 30 September 2012	73,673,212	
GROSS CALCULATED RATE YIELD		£
3. Enter line 2 x small business non-domestic rating multiplier (0.462)		34,037,023.94
MANDATORY RELIEFS		
Small business rate relief		
	£	
4. Additional yield generated to finance the small business rate relief scheme	531,043.83	
5. Cost of small business rate relief for properties within billing authority area	2,530,573.85	
6. Net cost of the small business rate relief (Line 5 minus Line 4)		1,999,530.02
7. Cost of relief to charities	1,345,071.51	
8. Cost of relief to Community Amateur Sports Clubs	28,312.94	
9. Cost of relief for rural general stores, post offices, public houses, petrol filling stations and food shops	80,222.71	
10. Cost of relief for partly occupied premises	95,558.98	
11. Cost of relief for empty premises	432,967.47	
12. Total mandatory reliefs (Sum of lines 6 to 11)		3,981,663.63
DISCRETIONARY RELIEFS		
13. Cost of relief to charities	64,048.99	
14. Cost of relief to non-profit making bodies	6,240.75	
15. Cost of relief to Community Amateur Sports Clubs	231.98	
16. Cost of relief for rural general stores, post offices, public houses, petrol filling stations and food shops	10,596.35	
17. Cost of relief to other rural businesses	0.00	
18. Other Section 47 reliefs (Localism Act discounts)	0.00	
19. Total discretionary reliefs (Sum of lines 13 to 18)		81,118.07
20. Gross Rate Yield after reliefs (Line 3 minus lines 12 & 19)		29,974,242.24
21. Estimate of 'losses in collection'		299,250.00
22. Allowance for Cost of Collection		167,037.58
23. Special Authority Deductions - City of London Offset		0.00

Section 2		£
Enterprise Zones		
24. Estimated level of discount to be awarded in 2013-14		0.00
25. Estimated value of non-domestic rates in the Enterprise Zone area in 2013-14	0.00	
26. Enterprise Zone baseline	0.00	
27. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14 (Line 25 minus line 26)		0.00
New Development Deals		
28. Estimated value of non-domestic rates in the New Development Deals area in 2013-14	0.00	
29. New Development Deals baseline	0.00	
30. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14 (Line 28 minus line 29)		0.00
Renewable Energy Schemes		
31. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14		0.00
32. Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements and rate retention (Line 20 minus the sum of lines 21 to 23, 27, 30 & 31)		29,507,954.66
Rate retention adjustments		
33. Estimate of the change in rateable value between 1 October 2012 and 30 September 2013		0.00
34. Estimate of the change in receipts as a result in the change in rateable value (line 33 times the multiplier)		0.00
This equates to a percentage change of	0.00	%
35. Local authority's estimate of adjustment due to appeals		1,498,712.11
36. Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements but after rate retention adjustments (Line 32 plus lines 34 and minus line 35)		28,009,243.00
Section 3		
Transitional arrangements		
37. Addition revenue received because reduction in rates have been deferred	61,152.49	
38. Revenue foregone because increase in rates have been deferred	190,692.70	
39. Net cost of transitional arrangements (Line 38 minus line 37)		129,540.21
40. Net Rate Yield after transitional arrangements and rate retention (Line 36 minus line 39)		27,879,703.00

NNDR Summary for : Breckland		£
<small>These figures show the percentage shares of the NNDR you estimate your authority will collect in 2013-14. They are based on line 36. See the Tier Split tab for full information</small>		
Amount of NNDR to be paid to central government		14,004,622.00
Amount to be retained by Breckland under the rates retention scheme		11,203,697.00
Amount to be passed to Norfolk		2,800,924.00

Certificate of Chief Financial Officer

I certify that the entries in lines 3, 12, 19, 20, 36, 39 and 40 of this form are the best I can make on the information available to me and that the figures given in lines 1 and 2 used in the calculating the amount shown in lines 36 and 40 are, to the best of my knowledge and belief those shown in the rating list for my authority as at 30 September 2012, subject to any order made before 15 January 2013 under the Local Government Act 1972 implementing boundary changes. I also certify that the authority has made proper arrangements for securing efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the collection of non-domestic rates. I also certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that any amount included as legal costs in line 22 and discretionary relief in line 24 meet the conditions set out in the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013.

Chief Financial Officer :

Date :

Ver 1.3

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of the Assistant Director of Democratic Services

To: Full Council: 24 January 2013

(Author: Vicky Thomson, Assistant Director of Democratic Services)

Subject: Appointment of Interim Shared Chief Executive

Purpose: To approve the appointment of Trevor Holden as Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

Recommendation(s):

To approve the appointment of Trevor Holden as Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service in a joint arrangement between South Holland District Council, Breckland Council and Luton Borough Council, for an estimated period of 3 months, or until such time as an alternative is agreed.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 31 January 2013, Mr Terry Huggins will be leaving his post as shared Chief Executive of Breckland Council and South Holland District Council. He holds the statutory appointment of "Head of Paid Service" at both Councils.
- 1.2 A number of options are available to the Councils. These include recruiting a replacement for Mr Huggins on a like for like basis, seeking a third partner to enter into the shared management arrangement and agreeing a Chief Executive for the new 3 way share, an internal senior management staff restructure.
- 1.3 Since Mr Huggins announced his departure the Leaders of the two authorities have been in discussion. Both authorities had agreed in principle the sharing of the managers group across three authorities last year with Great Yarmouth. The Leaders believe that the absence of an "in post" Chief Executive may make sharing with a neighbouring or other nearby authority more attractive and they have had informal discussions with other Leaders. It has become clear that whilst there is interest in a three way share no other authority is going to be ready to commit to this before Mr Huggins leaves. It is therefore proposed that a person be appointed as interim Chief Executive to allow for this opportunity to be fully explored and only if no other partner comes forward to give time for the recruitment of a replacement Chief Executive.
- 1.4 There are a number of organisations who specialise in identifying and placing interim managers but before approaching these, the Leaders considered if there was a better and perhaps more innovative way of appointing a joint interim Chief Executive. Mr Trevor Holden is the Chief Executive of Luton Borough Council. Formerly he was Chief Executive at Breckland Council and he has followed the development of the shared arrangement with interest. The Leaders believed that if both he and Luton Borough were willing he would be able to carry out an interim shared appointment. He would require less induction into the shared arrangement than others and would trial on an

interim basis what would be a innovative way of working. This would also enable Luton Borough to make a saving on the cost of his salary. Discussions were held with the Leader of Luton Borough and Mr Holden and subject to formal agreement from their Council Meeting on 15 January 2013 they are agreeable to an interim arrangement, initially for three months.

1.5 Mr Trevor Holden will remain as an employee of Luton Borough Council and will be seconded to work for Breckland and South Holland District Councils. At no point will he become an employee of either South Holland District Council or Breckland Council. Breckland and South Holland will jointly pay Luton Borough the equivalent of two days per week salary with on costs. They will also share expenses associated with the arrangement. Breckland Council and South Holland District Council will be invoiced for the monthly fixed costs of the arrangement by Luton Borough Council.

1.6 The proposed arrangement relates solely to the post of Chief Executive and not to the sharing of other senior management posts.

2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 To approve the appointment of Mr Trevor Holden as Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

2.2 To recruit an interim Chief Executive through a suitable agency.

2.3 To continue with existing senior managers whilst a permanent replacement is recruited.

3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 The recommendation to appoint Mr Trevor Holden as Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service is to allow the authority to continue to be provided with the leadership required and whilst retaining the opportunity to explore all options for a permanent appointment.

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS AND TIMELINES**

4.1 The interim arrangement will lead to some modest savings on the Chief Executive salary whereas more traditional interim arrangements are often more expensive. The real benefit will be the opportunity to thoroughly explore the options for a three way shared management arrangement with another local authority. If achieved, this will produce sustainable savings in senior management costs.

4.2 Within the initial three months term of appointment it is anticipated that:

1. Councillors will be consulted upon a three way joint shared management arrangement with another as yet unidentified local authority
2. In the event of (1) not being possible arrangements will be in hand for the recruitment of a replacement joint Chief Executive
3. The effectiveness of the interim arrangement will be assessed and its suitability to continue whilst either 1 or 2 are completed.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Constitution & Legal

5.1.1 The appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service is one made by the full Council. The Chief Executive services will be provided under the terms of a contract between South Holland, Breckland and Luton Borough Council. This contract provides for termination by either party with due notice.

5.2 Financial

5.2.1 Breckland Council and South Holland District Council will pay a monthly fixed contribution to Luton Borough Council for Mr Trevor Holden's services under the terms of contract between the three authorities. This equates to the employment costs of Mr Holden. Additionally expenses for his activities which are of shared benefit to both authorities will also be shared and invoiced on a monthly basis.

5.3 Risk Management

5.3.1 The main risk associated with this arrangement is that the arrangement does not meet the requirements of Breckland Council and South Holland District Council. This will be mitigated by close working between the Breckland and South Holland Corporate Management Team, Executive Committees and Full Councils.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 All wards are potentially affected by this decision.

Lead Contact Officer

Name/Post: Vicky Thomson, Assistant Director - Democratic Services
Telephone Number: 0782 784 3173
Email: vicky.thomson@breckland-sholland.gov.uk

Key Decision: No