

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

**Held on Thursday, 3 September 2015 at 10.15 am in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr T J Ashby	Mrs E. M. Jolly
Mr S.G. Bambridge (Chairman)	Mr K. Martin
Mrs E J Bishop	Mrs K. Millbank
Mr W.P. Borrett	Mr M J Nairn
Councillor C Bowes	Mr J Newton
Mr T R Carter	Mr J.W. Nunn
Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mr D R R Oliver
Mr S H Chapman-Allen	Mrs K. Pettitt
Mr H E J Clarke	Mr R. R. Richmond
Mr P.D. Claussen	Mr W. R. J. Richmond
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mr J.D. Rogers
Mr D M Crawford	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mr P R W Darby	Mr W.H.C. Smith
Mr P M M Dimoglou	Mr M Taylor
Mr R.W. Duffield	Mrs L.S. Turner
Mr K.S. Gilbert	Mrs A M Webb
Mrs J Hollis	Mr N.C. Wilkin
Mr T. J. Jermy	Mr P S Wilkinson
Mr A.P. Joel	

In Attendance

Anna Graves	- Chief Executive
Maxine O'Mahony	- Executive Director Strategy & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Helen McAleer	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Teresa Smith	- Democratic Services Officer
Alison Chubbock	- Chief Accountant (Deputy Sec 151 Officer)

69/15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

70/15 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brame, C Carter, Duigan, Gould, Hewett, Matthews, L Monument, T Monument, Robinson, Sherwood, Stasiak and Wassell.

71/15 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman was pleased to see that the Leader of South Holland District Council had been made a Lord in the recent Honours appointments.

The Chairman had had a busy but enjoyable month but the highlight had his day visit to Thetford.

Action By

72/15 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Deputy Leader thanked Members for their support whilst the Leader had been away.

The Better Broadband for Norfolk project had received a further £5.3m which had been allocated to Norfolk. Full analysis was still required, and the information would be available from Norfolk County Council (NCC) in September. The £950k that Breckland had set aside for this project had been ring-fenced for the Breckland area and as yet had not been released.

Devolution and what this meant going forward was being discussed at Leaders meetings across Norfolk. Agreement had been reached to send initial expressions of interest to the Government.

Breckland had also supported Norfolk County Council for the Northern Distributor Road.

Councillor Turner said it would be useful if the Housing Team presented at Full Council the changes to the new Choice Based Letting arrangements.

Work continued on Place Based Governance and the first Greater Thetford board meeting had taken place.

Breckland had also been invited to speak at Whitehall regarding the income generation project which specifically linked to the work of the Local Asset Backed Vehicle project.

The Deputy Leader was pleased a number of villages had taken advantage of the match funding available for the Tour of Britain which was coming through the District. Two years ago this had brought over £2m into the local economy.

Councillor Taylor asked if the Council had any contingency plans with regards to the recent immigration issues, and if so what they were.

The Chief Executive responded that it was an important issue. A letter from the Government had been received at South Holland on that topic. Breckland might receive a letter in due course. Members were reminded about the Emergency Planning function which covered Norfolk which the issue was being reviewed.

Councillor Cowen welcomed the announcement that further funding had become available for Broadband across Norfolk. He raised concerns that in the Ward he represented a number of villages were remote and unlikely to receive superfast Broadband.

The Deputy Leader reassured Members that the detailed modelling had not been finalised and also mentioned that the Wayland Partnership had called a meeting with Karen O'Kane from NCC to discuss the village issues.

Councillor Joel thanked the Council for the £500 grant towards the Tour of Britain event. The Village Green at Old Buckenham would be closed for the day for the first time ever, allowing residents to cycle around the green, and also enjoy a fun-fair, bands and refreshments.

Councillor Wilkinson said concerns had been raised within his Parish regarding Beachamwell and Shingham. The Parish had met with Karen O'Kane and had

**Teresa
Smith**

Action By

been advised that there was no guarantee that the village would receive Broadband. He was concerned as businesses in the villages should have access to Broadband.

Councillor Chapman-Allen said she was also told that villages within her Ward would not be upgraded and felt this was unsatisfactory. A resident had asked Karen O’Kane that if some properties were too remote to receive broadband would the satellite vouchers be financially viable.

The Deputy Leader suggested that Karen O’Kane should be invited back to Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

Councillor Sharpe asked who was collating information regarding Broadband.

The Chief Executive said Broadband was a sensitive issue for the rural areas. Whilst Breckland had set aside £950k for the Broadband project this would only be released once information had been seen regarding the coverage. This model had not yet been completed and only BT was able to carry out that technical piece of work.

Councillor W Richmond added that in the North of the District, Broadband was woefully inadequate and reiterated that the Broadband team should be invited to Overview and Scrutiny.

Councillor Gilbert asked who was monitoring the money that the Council had provided and wanted assurance that it was being spent only in the Breckland District.

The Chief Executive explained that this would form part of the Cabinet report and would be a decision that Council would take once the details were available.

**Teresa
Smith**

73/15 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

74/15 CABINET MINUTES

- a) Supporting successful growth in Thetford and surrounding villages (Minute ref: 68/15)

Councillor Jermy asked for the final sentence of the 4th paragraph on page 13 be amended to read ‘Less than 1% of MTF funding had been put towards regeneration **of existing residential areas** and he hoped that with the new framework this would be addressed’.

- b) Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) (Minute Ref: 69/15)

Councillor Claussen said he was involved in the setting up of the Trading Company (ARPT) and asked why a loan of £10,000 was required, as when he left the board there was over £60,000 balance.

The Executive Member for Income and Prosperity said the decision had been taken based on a new shareholding of the Trading Company so that it could be in a position to trade with other Council’s in the future. Monies that had been left in the company had been shared out between the original companies (Breckland and Forest Heath District Council’s). Each new

shareholder had submitted the same monies so that they had an equal share in the ARPT Company.

Councillor Claussen said the Trading Company was a risk when it was set up and that Breckland owned 60% of the value; however it had now been decided that it was worth nothing.

Councillor Smith added that he was involved in establishing the Trading Company with Forest Heath and a number of other authorities expressed interest in the company due to the brand value ARP had. He felt the company had greater value than what it was sold for.

The Executive Member for Income and Prosperity explained that when ARPT started there was a 60-40 split between Breckland and Forest Heath District Councils. However, the Trading Company had not been used and there were now seven authorities involved in the partnership.

Councillor Turner suggested that the Executive Member reported back to full Council in response to the questions.

Councillor Duffield asked what was the value the shares had been sold for.

The Chairman reminded Members that specific questions should be asked prior to Full Council to ensure that full answers could be provided.

The Executive Member for Income and Prosperity assured Members that no money had been lost, and that as the company had not been making profit, it had been proposed that it should be owned by the six partner Council's. A detailed response would be available for Members at the next Full Council.

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14 July 2015 be adopted.

75/15 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

The Chairman advised Members that the Special Meeting scheduled for the 24 September would not be taking place, however a Special Meeting on the 17 September had been scheduled to discuss the Transformation Programme.

Transformation Programme (Minute ref 49/15)

Councillor Jermy mentioned that he was a member of the County's Environment Development and Transport Committee (EDT) and not 'Economic' as stated in the minutes.

RESOLVED that subject to the above amendment the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2015 be adopted.

76/15 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20 July 2015 be adopted.

77/15 AUDIT COMMITTEE

a) Breckland Bridge Ltd – Loans (Minute Ref: 41/15)

Councillor M Chapman-Allen sought clarification on the wording of Recommendation three, and asked if loans for a period of less than two years would still require approval.

There was a discussion between Members as to whether it would be a Full Council decision or a decision made by Audit.

The Chief Accountant clarified that it was a Full Council decision as it was a change to the Treasury Management Policy with regards to Investment. It was asking to extend the loan policy to third parties and not just to banks / building societies that it currently mentioned.

A slight amendment to Recommendation three was proposed as follows: The total value of loans not to exceed £5m at any one time and no loans to be made for periods in excess of 2 years without prior approval of the Audit Committee **and** Full Council.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Treasury Management Policy be amended to enable loans to be made to Breckland Bridge Ltd to enable the Council to exercise its option to finance agreed projects (in addition to Riverside funding approved at Full Council on 26 March 2015);
2. Any loans be approved by the S151 Officer on a project by project basis; subject to the project being part of a Business Plan approved by Full Council and the necessary due diligence being undertaken and update the capital budgets accordingly to reflect the investment and repayment of the loan; and
3. The total value of loans not to exceed £5m at any one time and no loans to be made for periods in excess of 2 years without prior approval of the Audit Committee and Full Council.

b) Adoption

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 31 July 2015 be adopted.

78/15 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Councillor John Newton be appointed as the UKIP Substitute Member on the Appeals Committee.
- 2) Councillor Jennifer Hollis be appointed as the UKIP Substitute Member on the Audit Committee.
- 3) Councillor Mark Taylor be appointed as the UKIP Substitute Member on the General Purposes Committee.

Action By

- 4) Councillor Denis Crawford be appointed as the UKIP Substitute Member on the Licensing Committee.
- 5) Councillor John Newton be appointed as the UKIP Substitute Member on the Overview & Scrutiny Commission.
- 6) Councillor Jennifer Hollis be appointed as the UKIP Substitute Member on the Planning Committee.
- 7) Councillor Ellen Jolly be appointed as the Council's representative on the Greater Thetford Development Partnership.
- 8) Councillor Lynda Turner be appointed as the Council's representative on the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel.
- 9) Councillor Peter Wilkinson replaces Councillor Mark Robinson as the Council's Representative on the Youth Advisory Board.

The meeting closed at 11.15 am

CHAIRMAN