

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

**Held on Thursday, 27 July 2017 at 10.00 am in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Mr T. J. Ashby | Mrs S.M. Matthews |
| Mr S. Askew | Mrs K. Millbank (Chairman) |
| Mr S.G. Bambridge | Mrs L.H. Monument |
| Mr W.P. Borrett | Mr T. F. C. Monument |
| Councillor C. Bowes | Mr M. J. Nairn |
| Mr S. H. Chapman-Allen | Mr J.W. Nunn |
| Mr P.D. Claussen | Mr D. R. R. Oliver |
| Mr J.P. Cowen | Mr R. R. Richmond |
| Mr P. R. W. Darby | Mr W. R. J. Richmond |
| Mr P. M. M. Dimoglou | Mr M. S. Robinson |
| Mr R.W. Duffield (Vice-Chairman) | Mr J.D. Rogers |
| Mr P.J. Duigan | Mr F.J. Sharpe |
| Mr K.S. Gilbert | Mr I. Sherwood |
| Councillor E. Gould | Mr W.H.C. Smith |
| Mrs T. Hewett | Mr A.C. Stasiak |
| Mr T. J. Jermy | Mr M. Taylor |
| Mr A.P. Joel | Mrs A. M. Webb |
| Mr R.G. Kybird | Mr N.C. Wilkin |
| Mr K. Martin | Mr P. S. Wilkinson |

In Attendance

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Anna Graves | - Chief Executive |
| Mark Stinson | - Executive Manager Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer) |
| Rob Walker | - Executive Director Place |
| Alex Chrusciak | - Director of Planning and Building Control |
| Phil Mileham | - Strategic Planning Manager |
| Julie Britton | - Democratic Services Officer |

111/17 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brame, Carter, Marion Chapman-Allen, Clarke, Crawford, Paul Hewett, Hollis, Newton and Turner.

112/17 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

113/17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

Councillor Cowen, the Portfolio Holder for Finance declared his existing interest in Agenda item 11 as a Chartered Architect in the Breckland area.

114/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

The Chairman had been very busy since the last Full Council meeting but the main

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highlights had been the Lord Mayor's procession earlier in July and the skydive that she had recently completed in aid of her chosen charity - photographs of the Chairman jumping from the plane were circulated.

The Chairman advised Members that her Reception would be held on Friday, 17 November 2017 at Barnham Broom Golf & Country Club and would include an Auction of Promises of which ideas would be welcomed. It was noted that the invitation was open to both Members and Officers of the Council.

Members were reminded that a presentation by the Director of Place would be held immediately following the Full Council meeting.

The Chairman and Members conveyed their best wishes to Councillor Marion Chapman-Allen and all had been pleased to hear that she was doing well.

115/17 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 5)

The Leader's only announcement for this meeting was in relation to the Local Plan. The Local Plan had involved numerous meetings all around the District. 5,000 comments had been received which had been a huge response and a huge task for the Planning Policy Team. Additionally, 680 sites had been submitted to the Council for consideration and he thanked all involved particularly the three Chairmen of the Local Plan Working Group (past and present).

The next steps, assuming approval, was for the Council to endorse the pre-submission documentation for a six week public consultation period. This would be followed by submission to the Planning Inspectorate in November, the Examination Hearing in January/February 2018, the Planning Inspectorate's report in April 2018 and dependent on all the above, the Local Plan for Breckland should hopefully be adopted by the Full Council in mid-summer 2018.

No questions were asked.

116/17 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 6 (AGENDA ITEM 6)

None.

117/17 QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 7 (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Councillor Gilbert asked the Leader when Members would have sight of the street lighting report. The Leader explained that the report would be ready very soon shortly after the summer recess.

Councillor Jermy directed his question to Councillor Bambridge, the Portfolio Holder for Growth and asked if any effort had been made by Breckland Council to address the void rates of tenants between properties. The Director of Place said that he would speak to Councillor Jermy after the meeting; however, the Leader pointed out that a meeting had been convened with the Chairman of Flagship Housing and there was now a much closer working relationship between Flagship and the Council.

Councillor Jermy also directed a question to Councillor Robinson, the Portfolio Holder for Governance and asked him if it was a requirement of the Constitution that Elected Members had to be a resident of the UK. This question was passed to the Executive Manager for Governance to answer. It was explained that a person had to be a UK

resident and meet one of the necessary district qualification criteria when standing for Election. However, there were Standing Orders within the Constitution about attendance at meetings where Members were absent for a sustained period.

Councillor Taylor directed his question to the Leader as he was concerned about the major parking and speeding traffic problems in the town centre in Thetford and wanted to know if there was anything that Breckland Council could do. Members were informed that both issues would have to be dealt with by the Police; however, contacting the Norfolk County Councillors for the Thetford area could also help as it would put pressure on those responsible.

Councillors Martin, Sherwood, Nairn and Joel provided Councillor Taylor with a number of ideas and information that were relevant to the matters concerned.

118/17 CABINET MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 8)

- a) Breckland Local Plan and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Document (Minute No. 75/17)

See Minute No 121/17 below.

- b) Grant Funding (Minute No. 76/17)

Councillor Jermy was supportive of the recommendation; however, he felt that gambling was a real problem in the District and 'loan sharks' were, in his opinion, a serious concern due to the fact that there was a lack of Credit Unions in the area.

RESOLVED that a match funding reserve of £300,000 be maintained for grant giving in 2017/18 and 2018/19 (£150,000 per annum) and that the remaining balance from this Reserve be de-allocated and made available for investment, linked to the Council's developing Investment Strategy.

- c) Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) – Thetford (Minute No. 77/17)

Councillor Stasiak felt that the Minutes were incomplete and did not reflect the discussion that took place. Councillor Cowen agreed and pointed out that there had been a significant discussion on this item. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Nunn asked for clarification on this matter. The Executive Director of Place advised that the Council was able to apply to make a PSPO on any public space within the district but before doing so it had to consult with the local police. How enforcement of the PSPO was resourced was a matter for a number of local bodies, e.g. Council, Police and Town Council to determine.

- d) Locally Administered Business Rates Relief Scheme (Minute No. 79/17)

RESOLVED that:

- i. the guidelines to award relief to local businesses with a rateable value under £200,000 and an increase resulting from the 2017 revaluation above 11% be approved; and
- ii. the S151 Officer in conjunction with the Leader be given delegated power to finalise the scheme and to determine the Rateable value cap

and percentage each year.

- e) Market Town Initiative – Grant Re-Allocation (Minute No. 80/17)

RESOLVED that the Pride in Breckland programme be concluded and that the residual funding held in reserve for this programme be reallocated to the Market Town Initiative.

- f) Breckland Training Services – Next Steps and Options (Minute No. 82/17(a))

See Minute No 128/17 below.

- g) Adoption

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 10 July 2017 be adopted.

119/17 PLANNING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 9)

- (a) 12 June 2017

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 12 June 2017 be adopted.

- (b) 3 July 2017

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 3 July 2017 be adopted.

120/17 GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 10)

- (a) Minutes

- a. Treasury Management Out-turn Report (Minute No. 30/17)

RESOLVED that:

- i. the actual 2016-17 prudential indicators be approved; and
- ii. the Treasury Management stewardship report (presented to the Committee at its meeting on 13 June 2017) for 2016-17 at Appendix B and C of the report be noted.

- b. Annual Report of the Governance and Audit Committee (Minute No. 34/17)

See Minute No 120/17(b) below.

- c. Adoption

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee meeting held on 13 June 2017 be adopted.

- (b) Annual Report of the Governance and Audit Committee

RESOLVED that the contents of the Annual Report be approved.

**121/17 BRECKLAND LOCAL PLAN PRE-SUBMISSION PUBLICATION DOCUMENT
(AGENDA ITEM 11)**

Councillor Bambridge, the Executive Member for Growth presented the report and echoed the comments made by the Leader under agenda item 5. A great deal of work had been carried out by the Planning Policy Team over the last 8 years which had intensified during the past 18 months.

The Director of Planning & Building Control and the Strategic Planning Manager were in attendance. The report highlighted a number of changes since the last 'Regulation 18' consultation.

Alex Chrusciak, the Director of Planning & Building Control explained that the Local Plan presented within the report had been subject to significant consultation during its preparation and had been shaped by 29 meetings of the Local Plan Working Group which included meetings held at venues across the District.

Members were taken through the key points of the report (see sections 1.5 to 1.32 of the report). A particular point that Members were asked to note was the increase in housing need equating to 14,900 to 15,300 new homes over the Plan period. The Director of Planning & Building Control was confident that the Council could meet this requirement and explained the housing trajectory stepped approach methodology that was considered to be appropriate for Breckland having regard to the urban extensions being planned.

The emerging Local Plan, if approved, would be published for a period of 6 weeks not as wide-ranging consultation document but as a pre-submission publication; in other words, a final check to establish whether the Plan was sound. Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out the tests of soundness and these were read aloud by the Director of Planning & Building Control (see paragraph 1.27 of the report).

Councillor Gilbert congratulated the Planning Policy Team for the immense amount of hard work and fully endorsed the stepped approach but asked how confident Officers were that this approach was deliverable. Members were informed that sufficient allocations had been set as part of the Council's trajectory but did not prevent earlier delivery. Councillor Bambridge pointed out that the Council should be providing housing for people who lived in the District.

Councillor Jermy echoed the comments made by all concerned and thanked the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission and the Strategic Planning Manager for responding to the questions that he had previously sent; however, he wanted to know if the affordable housing data was up to date and whether it reflected the need. He also wanted it confirmed that the numbers of affordable housing were being delivered and was reaching the target set. The Director of Planning & Building Control highlighted the fact that this had been one of the key changes in the Local Plan due to the fact that in the current Core Strategy the 40% affordable housing figure had been unobtainable. A viability test had been carried out and it had been found that a level of 20% was viable but the Plan had been set at 25%; more could be secured but a balance had to be reached as the Council did not want to stifle development. Councillor Bambridge concurred with the above comments.

Councillor Webb, as a Member of the Local Plan Working Group, re-iterated all that had been said and congratulated Councillor Bambridge for his chairmanship of those

meetings as he had listened and, where justified changes had been made. She conveyed her thanks to the Officers too.

Councillor Borrett challenged Councillor Jermy's aforementioned point in relation to affordable housing. He explained that Breckland had lower unemployment and a growing economy and he did not deny that there was a demand but the Council had to have a deliverable percentage otherwise the five year housing land supply would not be met and the Local Plan would mean nothing and Breckland would up with less affordable homes.

Councillor Robert Richmond also thanked the Planning Policy Team - their hard work had been recognised; however, he had been asked to raise a question on the quality of design. Councillor Bambridge advised that a supplementary planning document would be prepared to support the Design Policy that was already included in the Local Plan. Such supplementary documents would be brought through the committee process and all would have an opportunity to input into it. The Director of Planning & Building Control advised that these documents added meat to the bones to policies GEN02 and COMM01 of the Local Plan.

Councillor Wilkinson felt that a 25% affordable housing target was reasonable but asked about housing for the elderly of which there was a great shortage. Such housing was being promoted by the Local Government Association and therefore should be incorporated. Councillor Bambridge explained that as a Council improvements to those areas were already being looked at but were not included in the Local Plan.

Councillor Jermy responded to the comments made by Councillor Borrett and pointed out people on low wages could not afford rent, a mortgage or a deposit.

RESOLVED that:

1. the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment be endorsed for a six week publication period;
2. following statutory public consultation, delegated powers be given to the Strategic Planning Manager in consultation with the Leader and Executive Member for Growth to submit the Local Plan, subject to any minor modifications, for examination provided that no substantive objections have been submitted;
3. delegated authority be given to the Strategic Planning Manager in consultation with the Leader and Executive Member for Growth to make minor modifications and amendments to the draft Local Plan prior to commencement of the Statutory Public Consultation; and
4. delegated authority be given to the Strategic Planning Manager in consultation with the Leader and Executive Member for Growth to agree amendments to the Local Plan arising during the Examination in Public.

122/17 MODERN SLAVERY (AGENDA ITEM 12)

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Strategy, Governance and Transformation, Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen presented the report.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 placed an obligation upon businesses with a total turnover in excess of £36 million. Once a business reached this threshold, the obligation was to prepare a "Slavery and Human Trafficking" statement.

RESOLVED that the Modern Slavery Statement be approved and published on the Council's website.

123/17 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS (AGENDA ITEM 13)

RESOLVED that Councillor Bambridge be appointed as a Member of the Area Museums Committee.

124/17 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION (AGENDA ITEM 14)

None.

125/17 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (AGENDA ITEM 15)

None.

126/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 16)

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

127/17 SERVICE REVIEW: EXECUTIVE SUPPORT FUNCTION (AGENDA ITEM 17)

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Strategy, Governance and Transformation, Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen presented the report and updated Members on the service review of the Executive Support Team.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Head of Paid Services and/or the Executive Director for Strategy & Governance, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Strategy, Governance & Transformation be authorised to implement the proposals subject to no major change.
- 2) The Head of Paid Services and/or the Executive Director for Strategy & Governance, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Strategy, Governance & Transformation be authorised to make minor amendments and redundancies as necessary.

128/17 BRECKLAND TRAINING SERVICES - NEXT STEPS (AGENDA ITEM 18)

The Executive Member for Finance, Councillor Cowen, presented the report asking Members to consider next steps and options in relation to the future of Breckland Training Services (BTS).

Detailed background information was provided.

Councillor Jermy felt that the report underplayed the benefits that BTS brought to the

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RESOLVED that the recommendations as listed in the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 11.05 am

CHAIRMAN