
BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

CABINET

Held on Monday, 30 November 2020 at 9.30 am

**THIS MEETING IS IN LINE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME
PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND
CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020**

PRESENT

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mr S. H. Chapman-Allen (Chairman) | Mr M. S. Robinson |
| Mr P.D. Claussen (Vice- Chairman) | Mr I. Sherwood |
| Mr S.G. Bambridge | Mrs S. E. Suggitt |
| Mr J.P. Cowen | Mrs A. M. Webb |
| Mr P.J. Hewett | |

Also Present

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Mr R. Atterwill | Mr F. Eagle |
| Mr W.P. Borrett | Mrs J. James |
| Councillor C. Bowes | Mr T. J. Jermy |
| Councillor M. Chapman-Allen | Mr I. Martin |
| Mrs H Crane | Mr P. Morton |
| Mrs S. Dowling | Mr J.W. Nunn |
| Mr P.J. Duigan | Mr D. Wickerson |

In Attendance

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alison Chubbock | - Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151 Officer) (BDC) |
| Stephen James | - Communities & Environmental Services Manager |
| Maxine O'Mahony | - Executive Director of Strategy & Governance (Monitoring Officer) |
| Mark Stinson | - Executive Manager Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer) |
| Julie Britton | - Democratic Services Officer |
| Teresa Smith | - Democratic Services Team Leader |

Action By

71/20 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

72/20 APOLOGIES

None.

Action By

73/20 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

74/20 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

75/20 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING

Councillors Atterwill, Borrett, Bowes, M Chapman-Allen, Crane, Dowling, Duigan, Eagle, James, Jermy, Martin, Morton, Nunn, and Wickerson.

76/20 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

The Chairman mentioned that as businesses looked to open again in the coming days following Lockdown 2.0, the second Confidence Campaign: 'Enjoy, Discover and Explore' had been launched across the five market towns which raised awareness and provided support and advice to small businesses.

He went onto explain that the 1 December would be 'World Aids Day', a campaign that supported everyone living with HIV. He described how far the world had advanced since 1988 and how care and treatment for people with the disease had been transformed. The campaign looked to end the stigma of HIV that blighted the lives of those who were affected.

77/20 BRECKLAND COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS (STANDING ITEM)

The Executive Member for Community, Leisure & Culture explained that two applications for match funding had been approved under delegated powers. The first was for Athena Educational Trust for the 'Penny Earnt, Penny Saved' project where £3,000 would help towards providing family workshops addressing needs for vulnerable children providing confidence and resilience on financial matters.

The second application was for £5,000 for Access Support for Migrants in East Anglia that complimented the work already provided by the Icen Partnership and Watton Library to provide support to migrants across the District.

78/20 QUARTER 2 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21

The Executive Member for Finance and Growth was pleased to present the report that provided information on the forecast of the full year financial position of the Council as of 30 September 2020.

He explained that there would be a balanced budget at the end of the financial year with a contingency of £139k. The forecast out-turn showed a spend of £14,4942k (99%) against the budget at this stage of the year, with the larger projects continuing well at this stage, despite the pandemic pressures. It was requested that £90k be carried forward as projects would run into future years.

Action By

He went onto explain that as there was reduced income through low interest rates and timing delays to loans provided to third party organisations.

The Executive Member for Contracts and Assets praised the financial performance of the Council and thanked the Finance Team for delivering the Q2 performance report.

Councillor Jermy said that the Government had provided financial support for the housing and homelessness and asked if the Council continued to receive this funding. The Executive Member for Health and Housing said that the Housing Team continued to work with those requiring temporary accommodation and thanked the Housing Team for their hard work through challenging times. The Chief Accountant confirmed that the Council continued to receive funding and that following the recent spending review announcement further funding would be provided for Rough Sleeping.

Councillor Morton was impressed to hear that the Council was in a good financial position and asked once the grants had been issued would a balanced budget still remain. The Executive Member for Finance and Growth was confident the Council would be in a strong financial position. The Chief Accountant added that any grants from the Government were received before they were issued, however the Council was expected to return £1.5m back to the Government for grants where the businesses did not claim (often because they were national companies unable to claim due to State Aid rules).

Councillor Atterwill asked if he could be informed as to who the third-party organisations were that short term loans had been provided to. In addition, he asked if the Night Shelter in Thetford would be receiving additional funding and how it was dealing with the COVID pandemic and social distancing rules. The Chief Accountant informed that the third-party information would be shared with Councillor Atterwill.

The Executive Member for Health and Housing said she would ask for a full report and respond with how the Council was supporting the Night Shelter.

Councillor Eagle asked why the Council was expected to return £1.5m back to the Government. The Chief Accountant informed Members that Councils were provided with funding based on estimates, and for that particular scheme there had not been the full take up and some businesses did not claim (often because they were national companies unable to claim due to State Aid rules).

Councillor Martin added his thanks to the Council and Finance Team for the support provided to the community facilities, such as village halls, and appreciated their assistance on the matter.

Options

- 1) That the report and appendix be noted.
- 2) Do nothing.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

To provide timely information to Members on the overall financial position of the Council, enabling resource re-allocation to priorities where necessary.

RESOLVED that:

Action By

- 1) The report and appendix be noted; and
- 2) £90,000 from the Inclusive Growth reserve be released to fund the 2-year fixed term climate role as detailed in paragraph 1.6 of the report.

79/20 PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS

The Executive Member for Environmental and Public Protection introduced the Communities and Environmental Services Manager and asked him to provide the detail on the two Public Space Protection Orders for Thetford and Watton.

(a) Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) Renewal - Thetford

Steve James, the Communities and Environmental Services Manager explained that the current Public Spaces Protection Order No.1 of 2017 for Thetford would expire early December 2020. The report provided the background to the PSPO and an evaluation of the effectiveness from key stakeholders since its inception three years ago. It was recommended that the PSPO continue for a further three years without variation.

Councillor James spoke in favour of extending the PSPO across the town and explained how it was an important toolkit for enforcement for the Police.

Councillor Dowling also supported the recommendation within the report t as it was important for the Town and felt that the measures should be continued.

Options

- 1) Do nothing, not renew the Order. This option is not preferred for two reasons. Firstly, the consultation on the potential renewal of the Order shows public support for it continuing and the perception that street drinking continues to be a problem in Thetford Town Centre. Secondly the evaluation of the Order shows that the enforcement options provided by the Order are still being utilised to address anti-social behaviour in the town centre. As such, allowing the Order to cease would be going against public opinion and is likely to result in increased problems of anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre.
- 2) Approve the renewal of the Public Spaces Protection Order in Thetford Town Centre without variation (preferred option).
- 3) Extend the Order geographically to include new issues or behaviours. This option is not legally possible currently. The Council would be required to consult on any increase in the scope of the Order. We have not carried out this consultation as part of the renewal process.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council is recommended to extend the PSPO. The recent Poll shows that the public perception of these behaviours being present in Thetford is decreasing.

Street drinking

Action By

In 2017 95% of respondents had seen people persistently consuming alcohol in a public space compared to 87% of respondents in the 2020 poll. 18% of respondents in the 2020 poll say that that they believe the problem has improved, while 37% say that the problem has gotten worse.

Public urination and defecation

67% of the 2017 respondents said they had seen people persistently urinating or defecating in a public place. This has reduced to 49% of the 2020 respondents. 6% of the 2020 respondents believed that this problem has improved, and 25% believe the problem has gotten worse

Anti-social use of Scooters, skateboards, bikes and other wheeled vehicles

Respondents saying that they have witnessed people persistently using wheeled vehicles in a pedestrianised area has increased by 5% since 2017, 84% in 2017 and 89% in 2020. Only 1% of the 2020 respondents believe that this issue has improved since 2017 and 51% believe the issue has got worse.

There is also overwhelming support from stakeholders for continuing with the protection against anti-social behaviour provided by the Order. However, the data also shows a continuing need for enforcement actions both formal and informal under the PSPO and continuing reports of alcohol related anti-social behaviour. Based on the evaluation from stakeholders there is a risk that these behaviours escalate should the PSPO cease.

In reaching a decision on whether to renew the Order it will be important to consider the necessity of continuing with the Order and the proportionality of the restrictions it contains. Some of the responses from stakeholders have requested that the scope of the Order is widened to include spitting in the Town Centre. This cannot happen as part of the current renewal process since we are required to formally consult on any proposal to change the Order. We can later collate the evidence relating to possible inclusion of spitting in the street and can decide on review of that evidence whether a public consultation should be commenced on extending the Order.

RESOLVED that the renewal of the Public Spaces Protection Order in Thetford Town Centre without variation (Option 2) be approved.

(b) Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) - Watton

The Communities and Environmental Services Manager explained that following a consultation exercise with the Norfolk Constabulary, Town Council and local stakeholders, it was seen as a priority to add in a new prohibition and therefore create a new PSPO for Watton for a three-year period.

Councillor Bowes was disappointed to see that despite issues raised with the Police, the new PSPO would not cover the Brandon Road area where there had been repeated complaints from residents regarding anti-social behaviour issues.

The Communities and Environmental Services Manager recognised that

Action By

there were issues raised by residents from that area and it was a priority to get the PSPO in place which was sought to be on the existing footprint.

He gave reassurance that through new legislation the PSPO could be amended. He would continue to work with the Police and the Order would be reviewed immediately should an extension be required to cover the Brandon Road area.

Options

- 1) Do nothing.
- 2) Proceed with the implementation of the new PSPO for the restricted area (Appendix A) prohibiting the following activities:
 - a) Consumption of alcohol in a public place
 - b) Urination and defecation in a public place

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council had a statutory duty to work in partnership with other agencies to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduced new powers to tackle anti-social behaviour, one of which being the power to implement Public Spaces Protection Orders.

The consultation exercise had evidenced significant support from all stakeholders for the proposed PSPO to be implemented.

RESOLVED to proceed with the implementation of a new PSPO for the restricted area (outlined in Appendix A of the report) prohibiting the following activities:

- a) Consumption of alcohol in a public place
- b) Urination and defecation in a public place

80/20 BRECKLAND SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY (STANDING ITEM)

The Executive Member for Customer Engagement and Climate Change Champion explained that the draft sustainability policy statement would be discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting of the 3 December.

He highlighted that a positive Member Forum had been held earlier in the month, and as a result key issues had been raised that would be included within the Strategy. The key points covered the level of urgency on the timescale of delivery and recognised the role of the Town and Parish Councils in supporting the sustainability agenda. It would include a focus on water management as well as ensuring the right trees were planted in the right places. Funding for the Climate Change Officer had been approved of which 64 applications had been received. It was hoped the position would be filled as soon as possible. The results of the Carbon Audit had been delayed by a week due to the in-depth information required on the Council's asset portfolio.

Councillor Morton asked when the Carbon Audit would be shared with all

Action By

Members. The Executive Member assured Members that as soon as he received the information and it had been put into a suitable format, he would share it with Members.

81/20 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting on Monday 4 January 2021 at 9.30am were noted.

The meeting closed at 10.18 am

CHAIRMAN