
BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**Held on Wednesday, 12 December 2007 at 10.00 am in
Norfolk Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr R.W. Duffield (Chairman)	Mrs K. Millbank
Mr P.J. Duigan (Vice-Chairman)	Mr D.S. Myers
Mr G.P. Balaam	Mr I. Sherwood
Mr R.P. Childerhouse	Mr D.R. Williams JP

Also Present

Mrs D.K.R. Irving

In Attendance

Andrea Long	- Environmental Planning Manager
Keith Stevens	- Acting Business Transformation Director
Ian Vargeson	- Democratic Services Manager

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71/07 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

72/07 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr S Chapman-Allen, Mrs L Turner and Mr W Smith and Mr T Leader, Deputy Chief Executive, both of whom had been required to attend the concurrent Star Chamber meeting.

**73/07 FUNDING FOR THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND
GROWTH POINT (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

The Environmental Planning Manager explained the programme for the Local Development Framework (LDF), which involved the development of three plans at the same time. The extra resource sought was necessary to progress the submission of the Council's LDF core strategy; greater consultation with Town & Parish Councils on the site-specific elements of the LDF; and to staff the Thetford New Growth Point Status initiative and Thetford Area Action Plan.

It was noted that funding for the posts requested had been authorised by Cabinet, the additional costs to be covered from the remaining Planning Delivery Grant and unallocated LABGI grant.

In reply to a question, the Environmental Planning Manager stated that the need for these posts was even more pressing following the recent news on the size of the grant for Thetford.

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Some members recalled work which had already taken place with Town and Parish Councils and wondered why the information gathered from that consultation had not been used. It was pointed out that government requirements had changed, resulting in more background work being necessary. Accepting this, the Chairman mentioned that Parish Councils had not been informed of changes, how the LDF process had stopped, or when it would be likely to begin again, and generally felt that the impetus had been lost. The Environmental Planning Manager said that this frustration was shared by staff, who understood that towns and parishes were waiting for site-specifics and wanted to get on with agreeing the details. As far as communication of the situation to Town and Parish Councils was concerned, she pointed out that quarterly newsletters had been issued, but a comprehensive strategy needed to be established so that local Councils could be given specific dates and timetabling.

RESOLVED that an increase to the establishment for additional temporary staff resource for the LDF site-specifics at Thetford New Growth Point Status be approved as follows:

- Senior Planning Policy Officer (Grade 8/7 for three years).
- Planning Graduate (Grade 10 for three years).
- Principal Planning Policy Officer (Growth Points): extension to existing contract by 23 months, or up to March 2011.

74/07 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 6)

RESOLVED that, under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and 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 paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

75/07 REQUEST TO INCREASE ESTABLISHMENT (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The Acting Business Transformation Director gave the background to this matter, which had been reported to the last Cabinet meeting and, subsequently, been acted upon under delegated powers, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Committee, to enable an appointment of an additional Senior Development Control Officer to be made quickly in order to create capacity for income generation from opportunities that had arisen. The delegated powers had been used in the interests of moving forward with the Strategic Alliance in the planning and building control area, to enable advantage to be taken of the opportunities that had presented themselves for trading with Waveney District Council and Norwich City Council.

Members supported the action that had been taken, in the circumstances that had arisen, and the report was noted.

76/07 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 8)

In pointing out that the next meeting would be held on 30th January 2008 at 10.00 a.m., the Chairman conveyed his best wishes to Members and staff for the Festive Season.

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The meeting closed at 10.20 am

CHAIRMAN