

# Public Document Pack

---

## BRECKLAND COUNCIL

### At a Meeting of the

### CABINET

Held on Tuesday, 20 November 2012 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 S. Askew	Mr T. J. Jermy
Councillor C Bowes	Mrs E. M. Jolly
Mrs B Canham	Mrs L.H. Monument
Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mr M J Nairn
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mr W. R. J. Richmond

#### In Attendance

Dale Robinson	- Interim Environmental Services Manager
Mark Stanton	- Economic Development Manager
Terry Huggins	- Chief Executive
Vicky Thomson	- Assistant Director - Democratic Services
Mark Stokes	- Deputy Chief Executive
Julie Britton	- Senior Committee Officer
Kevin Ward	- Growth Programme Manager
Sarah Simpson	- Environmental Awareness Co-ordinator

#### Action By

#### **121/12 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **122/12 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

None.

#### **123/12 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

The Chairman announced that a further item had been added since the publication of the main Cabinet agenda. This was not classed as an urgent item as copies of the supplementary agenda had been issued the previous day.

#### **124/12 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

None.

**Action By**

**125/12 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Mesdames M Chapman-Allen, B Canham, L Monument, E Jolly and C Bowes and Messrs W Richmond, T Jermy, M Nairn, P Cowen and S Askew.

**126/12 LAND AT CASTELL ROAD, DEREHAM (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development presented the report which sought Members advice as to whether to formally object to an application made by Dereham Town Council for registration of Breckland Council-owned Slough Plantation and land at Castell Road as a new Town Green.

The land at Castell Road had previously been considered under the Active Land Management Programme where there had been strong opposition to this land being developed; however, the Active Land Management Programme had been put in place to ensure that the Council was gaining best possible use from the public land at its disposal in terms of value and use. This land had development value but would only be realised if planning permission could be gained.

The land known as the Slough Plantation was a large wooded area adjacent to Castell Road which was a facility that was used by the residents as an amenity area.

The Executive Member urged the Cabinet to object to the application for both areas of land on the grounds that Breckland Council owned the land. However, if the objection was unsuccessful, and the land in question qualified for registration as a Town Green, he recommended that Norfolk County Council, as the Commons Registration Authority, be asked to transfer all the land to Dereham Town Council at nil value for Town Green status. Dereham Town Council would then be responsible for maintenance and the upkeep of approximately 3.3 acres of land indefinitely as no alternative use could be obtained.

Mr Abrahams was allowed to speak on behalf of the residents from the area. He read out a number of letters who all used the land for dog walking, playing and school activities. He mentioned that an 85 year old resident had understood that the Slough copse had been left to the residents of Dereham by the developers.

Linda Monument was in attendance as a District Councillor a Town Councillor but mainly as the Ward Representative. She explained that Dereham Town Council had been asked to submit the application for Town Green status by her constituents. She pointed out that there were approximately 600 voters on this particular estate of which 10% of those had lived there for over 25 years. The land, as far as she was aware, had been given to the former Dereham Urban District Council by the developer as open space (the estate had been built a few years before Breckland Council had been formed). The land at Castell Road provided access to the Slough Plantation and would be difficult to manage if the access was lost; therefore to join the two areas would not be practical and

**Action By**

was obviously needed by the residents. There were many single storey dwellings on the estate that were owned by elderly residents and if Town Green status was not allowed Breckland Council would be putting at risk a facility that they had had since the dwellings had been built. On the other hand, if such status was allowed, and Norfolk County Council transferred the said land to Dereham Town Council as recommended, it would be a financial burden but it would be far more acceptable than passing the land over to the adjoining land owner of the swimming pool site.

The Executive Support Member for Planning & Environmental Services stated that the site was thoroughly utilised throughout the year including a cross country running route by the school. He felt that peoples' livelihoods should be considered it should not always be about the money.

The Executive Member for Internal Services thanked the local Members for a very strong and adequate case. He did take the point about it not just being about the money but the land should and must be used strategically to offer homes to those people who needed them.

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development said that he had no objection to the Slough Plantation becoming a Town Green as it was structural to the embankment on the swimming pool side. The Executive Member for Internal Services believed that this was not the first time that Cabinet had been asked to make an exception on a piece of land and therefore acknowledged his support to the Executive Member's proposal.

The Opposition Leader stated that Breckland Council was happy to transfer play areas so this, in his opinion, seemed rather unfair. In response, the Executive Member for Internal Services highlighted the fact that the Cabinet was discussing an area that was already designated as open space and another that had strategic importance. The Chief Executive emphasised the point that Members were not being asked to decide the lands future use they were being asked whether it was appropriate to change the legal status.

Clarification of what was being recommended was provided to the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission.

The Ward Representative felt that registering the land as a Town Green seemed appropriate but using part of it strategically to get the swimming pool site moving was not a good idea. Trying to interfere with it was unfair and trying to provide for every resident was what the Council was supposed to do. In response to a question, she explained that the reason the land had never been registered as a Town Green before was due to the fact that the land had been entrusted to the Council as open space 40 years ago.

The Executive Member for Performance & Business Development thought that this was a conundrum but very fair. He knew that this land was valued and used by the community but Breckland Councillors had a broader responsibility and reminded Members of what the Chief Executive had said – this was not a decision as to whether this land should be built

**Action By**

on it was about whether the land should become a Town Green.

The Chairman clarified that this was not a decision about whether the land should be sold or whether it should be built on – this was about protecting this asset as a Council. There would be further discussion on this matter in the future, whatever the outcome.

Option 1

To object to the application (see report).

Option 2

Not to object to the application (see report).

Reasons

As a landowner, it was imperative that Breckland Council protected the potential value of this asset although it was aware of the wider community issues.

Following a majority vote, it was

**RESOLVED** that an objection to an application made by Dereham Town Council to register Breckland Council owned land at the Slough Plantation and at Castell Road, Dereham as a Town Green be submitted to Norfolk County Council, as the Commons Registration Authority, on the basis that such designation would impede the future potential value of the site.

**127/12 SALE OF BRECKLAND COUNCIL-OWNED LAND AT ST GILES  
LANE CAR PARK, THETFORD (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development presented the report which sought approval for the transfer of Council-owned land at St Giles Lane Car Park in Thetford to Thetford Town Council.

The land in question consisted of one car parking space which would be removed and replaced with one tree. The tree would be a backdrop to the new bell tower which was being created and built in place of the existing brick archway between Kings Street and St Giles Street.

Option1

To dispose of the identified land by transfer to Thetford Town Council for nil consideration in furtherance of the Kings Street Enhancement Scheme, provided Breckland Council's legal transaction fees were paid for by Thetford Town Council and also the value of the Council's contribution of £1500.00 was attributed to the project but not received as consideration from the Project Manager/Project.

Option 2

Do not dispose of the land and retain the land and the ownership and maintenance liabilities which would be incurred in managing the tree in the future.

**Action By**

**Reasons**

- The land where the tree was being planted would then be owned by Thetford Town Council so it would therefore be responsible for future maintenance of the tree and its liabilities and associated costs.
- There would only be one car parking space lost.
- This would support the wider Moving Thetford Forward Programme and specifically the King Street Enhancement project.
- The difference in value from the market value of £1500.00 was minimal.
- It demonstrated further partnership working.

**RESOLVED** that the Council-owned land at St Giles Car Park in Thetford be transferred to Thetford Town Council at nil consideration in furtherance of the Kings Street Enhancement Scheme; subject to:

- 1) Thetford Town Council paying for Breckland Council's legal transaction fees; and
- 2) the value of the Council's contribution of £1500.00 be attributed to the project but not received as consideration from the Project Manager/Project.

**128/12 Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

The Executive Member for Performance & Business Development presented the Performance Report for Quarter 2 for Members to note.

The new style Quarterly Performance Report had been generated by the new Performance Management System 'Performance Plus'.

Performance Plus was web based which allowed greater access for all users including Portfolio Holders who were now able to receive and view a tailored overview of their services in a simple and easy to understand format.

The Executive Member for Localism, Community & Environmental Services had found the in-depth training she received on the performance Plus system extremely useful.

**Option**

That the Performance Team continued to report at the level at Appendix A of the report.

**Reason**

In future Overview & Scrutiny Commission would receive the report prior to Cabinet so that it can make appropriate recommendations.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

Action By

**129/12 CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2012-2020  
(AGENDA ITEM 10)**

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development presented the report which sought Members approval to recommend to Council the adoption of the new Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2012-2020.

This Strategy would be the document by which the Council's assets would be managed.

In response to a question as to how the document would be kept up to date, Members were informed that there was already a timetable in place which would be managed by the Corporate Asset Management Manager. Performance Indicators and Action Plans accompanied the document which would be overseen by the Portfolio Holder.

In response to a further question in relation to growth, the Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development advised that there would be two Asset Plans that sat below this Strategy and the Strategy itself formed part of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Options

To adopt or not to adopt the Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2012-2020.

Reasons

The Strategy was required to ensure the Council had clear strategic governance regarding its decisions specifically in terms of acquisitions and disposals of property assets.

The Strategy would provide a policy for the Council to manage its property assets over the life cycle of the asset in a consistent and cost effective manner.

Adopting the Strategy would ensure the property assets were managed to meet the corporate priorities.

**RECOMMEND** to Council that the new Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2012-2020 be adopted.

**130/12 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE QUARTER 2 2012-13 (AGENDA ITEM  
11)**

The Executive Member for Finance & Democratic Services presented the report which provided information on the forecast full year financial position of the Council as at 30 September 2012.

It was noted that the virement requested from the General Fund was to take account of the cost of the By-Elections in 2012; other than that, this forecast just showed the prudent way the Council dealt with its finances.

Option 1

**Action By**

To note the report and approve the virements detailed within table 3 of Section 1 of the appendix.

Option 2

To note the report and not approve the virements detailed within table 3 of Section 1 of the appendix and not recommend to Full Council the funding of the By-Elections from the General Fund.

Reasons

To provide timely information to Members of the overall finances of the Council and to make the best use of resources available.

**RESOLVED** that the virements as detailed in Table 3 of Section 1 of the appendix be approved.

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

**131/12 GRANT PANEL REPORT ROUND 3, 12TH SEPTEMBER 2012**  
**(AGENDA ITEM 12)**

The Executive Member for Localism, Community & Environmental Services presented the report which highlighted the funding recommendations that had been made by the Grant Panel at its meeting on 12 September 2012 and made recommendations to Cabinet on the allocation of Match Funding.

The Grant Panel had taken a great deal of time and trouble over the Brisley application and had been satisfied with the answers received.

The Executive Member for Internal Services strongly supported the application as it fitted very well with the Council's manifesto commitment of supporting wildlife. He said that he would prefer to see more applications such as this as they protected the value of Breckland's wildlife.

It was noted that the three remaining applications were for information only as these had already been awarded under delegated powers.

Referring to the Icen Partnership decision, the Executive Member for Internal Services did not consider the over 60s to be vulnerable groups to warrant such a service as many people of that age group were still working or had to work due to the increase in retirement age. He asked if this 'Handyman Service' was a way of subsidising a direct labour organisation that would impact on existing small tradesman. The Executive Member for Localism, Community & Environmental Services stated that there was already a 'Handyman Service' operating in Norfolk but Swaffham wanted someone local. This funding was provided to assist with set up costs and was discussed as part of the Older People's Forum. The Grant Panel had already asked for a follow up report to come back to a future Forum.

The Executive Support Member for Planning & Environmental Services

**Action By**

thanked the Grant Panel for the funding for the Etling Green Mission Station.

Option 1

To approve the Match Funding for Brisley Woodland & Amenity Project up to the value of £12564.00.

Option 2

To approve a lesser amount of Match Funding towards Brisley Woodland & Amenity Project.

Option 3

To decline the Match Funding application.

Reasons

The Grant Panel had recommended approval for the Brisley Woodland & Amenity Project based on the following reasons:

- The project had been supported well locally during the consultation survey conducted on June 2011.
- Significant external funding was in place therefore representing good value for the Match Funding Reserve.
- A range of purposes and access opportunities would be available to the local community including the school, children, walkers, wildlife enthusiasts etc.
- The applicants provided further detailed information regarding the project when requested to do so by the Grant Panel, which then passed further Panel scrutiny.

**RESOLVED** that the Match Funding sum of up to £12,564.00 for Brisley Woodland & Amenity Project be approved; subject to:

- a) a maximum of £12,564.00 or 29% of the total project costs (excluding 15 year maintenance costs) whichever was the lower; and
- b) the balance of all other funding being confirmed.

**132/12 BRECKLAND COLLECTIVE ENERGY SWITCHING SCHEME  
(AGENDA ITEM 13)**

The Executive Member for Localism, Community & Environmental Services presented the report which asked Members to consider the establishment of a collective energy scheme for Breckland for gas and electricity.

The soaring price of all fuels was causing anxiety to many residents in the area. Breckland Council was already in negotiations with an oil supplier which had stemmed from the Older People's Forum.

The Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services pointed



**Action By**

out that the Government was already looking at tariffs and asked whether this would aid such a scheme. Members were informed that it would as the Council would have an opportunity to tender at auction twice a year.

The Chairman felt that enough volume would force the prices down.

The Executive Member for Performance & Business Development commended the Portfolio Holder for such an excellent idea and was pleased that oil was being looked at as well. Everyone knew how much the price of power had eaten into the public's personal income and wholeheartedly supported the scheme.

The Opposition Leader also felt it to be a good idea but asked to what extent Town and Parish Councils would be able to buy into the scheme. In response the Executive Member stated that talks with parishes were already being had with regard to the oil buying groups as there tended to be more consumers for oil in villages rather than gas.

The Executive Member for Internal Services asked about the management of the scheme particularly in relation to liabilities. The Chief Executive advised that any liability would remain with the power companies, Breckland Council would only be responsible for the auction therefore making the scheme cost neutral. He strongly supported this initiative.

The Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services was aware that there were a number of energy buying groups already out there but hoped that this would make a big impact on energy prices. She was pleased to hear that parishes would be brought into the oil buying groups.

Referring to businesses, the Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman pointed out that business use fell into two categories and many small businesses, SMEs, fell into domestic tariffs. This scheme could score points for everyone. He stated that most of his constituents were reliant on oil but was very keen to understand how the Council was going to co-ordinate this scheme.

The Executive Member for Localism, Community & Environmental Services explained that the scheme would be advertised and the Team was already in negotiations.

The Chairman concluded by saying that this type of scheme already had the support from Norfolk Leaders who were in negotiations for acquiring a buyer's consortium for Norfolk.

Option 1 - Do nothing

Households in Breckland would not have the opportunity to participate in a collective energy switching scheme. They would continue to purchase energy on an individual basis, potentially at a higher price, increasing the chance of the household falling into fuel poverty. If other local authorities offer the scheme and we do not, residents may deem us to not be supporting our local communities.

Option 2 - To commission our own collective energy switching scheme

**Action By**

The Council would engage the services of a private sector switching specialist to manage a collective switching scheme for the Council.

Option 3 - To commence a collective switching process by joining the Peterborough led consortium.

The Council would engage with the consortium that would operate and manage the scheme on the Council's behalf.

**Reasons**

The recommendation was to commission Breckland's own collective energy switching scheme. Having direct management over the scheme would enable the Council to shape and develop the scheme and provide a positive message that the Council was helping and supporting its residents on a local level. Once established, the scheme would be relatively low cost to run, as it could be predominately web based, and the bulk of marketing material would be covered within the set up costs.

**RESOLVED** that a Breckland Council collective energy switching scheme be commissioned, and subject to successful discussions, authority be delegated to the Chief Executive or the Deputy Chief Executive to enter into a contract and deliver a collective switching energy scheme on behalf of Breckland residents.

**133/12 REVIEW OF POLICY FOR CHARGING FOR THE PROVISION OF WHEELED BINS TO NEW PROPERTIES (AGENDA ITEM 14)**

The Executive Member for Localism, Community & Environmental Services presented the report that advised Members of the result of the review of the Council's Wheeled Bin Provision Charging Policy and sought Members' approval for a revised Policy.

Members were informed that Full Council had previously approved a Policy for wheeled bins at new properties but it had been suspended as it was not robust. She emphasised that this revised Policy was for new properties only.

The Opposition Leader felt it had been a great shame that Scrutiny had not been able to scrutinise the Policy more thoroughly instead of rushing it through. The Executive Member apologised but assured the Opposition Leader that it had been re-written accordingly.

The Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman asked how this Policy sat with other local authorities and was Breckland Council on par with other schemes out there that were not able to be challenged. Members were informed that most had similar policies in place. The Interim Environmental Services Manager explained that most authorities had the same legal agreement; therefore, Breckland's was now on a much firmer legal footing.

The Executive Member for Internal Services had noticed that Section 46(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 had been mentioned within the report several times. Members' attention was drawn to section

**Action By**

2.3 of the report under the heading 'General Powers' which highlighted that Section 46 had not been designed for discretionary services but Council's had the power to support such a Policy under certain sections within the Localism Act.

**Option 1**

To continue with the existing suspended Policy.

**Option 2**

To vary the proposed revised Policy

**Option 3**

To agree with the Policy as set out in the report.

**Reasons**

The revised Policy would enable cost recovery and therefore budgetary savings. In addition, the Policy was designed to ensure the numbers of collections were controlled; bins presented matched the Council's collection infrastructure; and it provided a fiscal driver to encourage reductions in residual waste presentation and increased recycling.

**RESOLVED** that the review of the Policy for charging for the provision of wheeled bins to new properties be approved as follows:

- 1) A delivery and administration charge per property be levied in accordance with Table 1 paragraph 2.2.1 (excluding VAT) of the report. The charge being irrespective of the number or size of bins delivered at any one time.
- 2) This charge covered the costs for the administration, procurement, storage, cleaning (if necessary) and delivery of the bins. The bins themselves would be provided free of charge to the occupier of the property for their use but remain in the ownership of the Authority and as such must remain at the property when occupiers move house.
- 3) Collections would only be made from Breckland District Council issued and/or approved wheeled bins.
- 4) To qualify for a free delivery, occupiers reporting a missing bin and requesting a replacement were required to make a written application together with signed declaration, prior to the bins being delivered, that they had undertaken all reasonable enquiries to locate their bin (s) and the bin was in fact missing/lost or stolen. Alternatively they could report the bin as stolen to the Police and obtain a crime number.
- 5) Residents who refuse to pay the delivery and administration charge do not receive the Council's bin provision service and in such cases the Council would invoke the powers under Section 46 (3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 by

**Dale  
Robinson**

**Action By**

service of notice on the occupier.

- 6) For housing developments of five or more dwellings the Council, where the developer agrees, enters into a section 106 agreement for the payment and provision of bins to the development in line with the general charging policy.
- 7) Where a developer refuses to enter into a section 106 agreement for the payment and provision of bins then the charge be levied on the new occupiers of the development in question.

**134/12 DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON COUNCIL OWNED  
LAND AT SNETTERTON NORTH END (AGENDA ITEM 15)**

The Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services presented the report. The report asked Members to consider a proposal to dispose of land at Snetterton North End for the provision of 10 units of affordable housing to meet housing needs.

The Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services considered this to be a great step forward being able to provide further affordable housing in the district.

The site itself was outside the Settlement Boundary but was adjacent to a number of former council owned units that had been transferred to Flagship Housing Group some time ago. The 10 affordable units would be allocated for local need. An open space would also be provided for community use.

The new Planning Policy Framework did allow market housing to be considered on this site but the risk would be too great for the developer.

The viability study was explained.

Wellington Construction Ltd would be purchasing part of the land for the sum of £90,000. The District Valuer had valued the whole of the site for £155,000 which was below the District Valuer's valuation. Once built, the affordable housing would be sold to a Housing Association.

Mr Askew, the Ward Member for Snetterton, whole heartedly supported the recommendation but had concerns about the land that the children currently played on being lost and he hoped that there would be proper provision made for a play area elsewhere. The Chairman stated that it was the hope of the Council that the area of allocated open space would be gifted across to the community.

The Ward Member stated that Snetterton Parish Council would struggle to pay for the maintenance of such a play area. The Principal Housing Officer (Strategy & Enabling) advised that even if the developer installed the play equipment the maintenance responsibilities would still be the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The Executive Member for Internal Services mentioned risk and asked

**Action By**

what would happen if the developer did not transfer the housing to a Housing Association. Members were informed that there was already a Housing Association in place.

**Option 1** - Dispose of the whole site at the District Valuers assessment of £155,000.

**Option 2** - Offer the site for tender to try and obtain maximum value for the site.

**Option 3** - Retain ownership of the site and until such time the land was either included within the development boundary or land values improved.

**Option 4** - Approve the disposal of the whole site at a value less than the District Valuers assessment to bring forward the units of affordable housing and open space as per the proposal.

**Option 5** - Approve the disposal of the area of land, Wellington Construction Ltd to require the units of housing at a sum of £90,000 and Breckland Council retain the area of land not required for open space.

**Reasons**

- Approving the disposal of the site at a value less than the District Valuers report would in effect be equivalent to the Council providing a subsidy to the delivery of affordable housing. It would be usual for the Council or the Homes and Communities agency to subsidise a development outside the development boundary through the capital programme or other grant funding.
- Further exploration with Wellington Construction Ltd has led to agreement from them to share any costs not used which can be accounted back to the land value. They would test the market again to see if any Housing Association would pay more for the units of housing but highlighted the risk that Saffron Housing Association may decide to fill their programme with other schemes if there are further delays to commitment to the project.
- The land which was not sold if retained by the Council could be developed at a later date which in turn could realise a further capital receipt.
- 10 units of housing would be delivered to meet local housing need.

**RESOLVED** that the disposal of land at a cost of £90,000.00 to Wellington Construction Ltd for the delivery of 10 units of affordable housing be approved.

**Darryl  
Smith**

**135/12 THE ANCHOR HOTEL, THETFORD (AGENDA ITEM 15A) -  
ADDITIONAL ITEM**

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development presented the report which updated Members on the current position with the existing

**Action By**

buildings on the site of the former Anchor Hotel.

The majority of the hotel had been deemed as unsafe and therefore the demolition of all the buildings was the preferred option; this would align the Council for the reasons set out in section 4 of the report. If approved, temporary landscaping would be put in place.

The Executive Member for Internal Services agreed with the aforementioned option as demolishing part of the building would still leave the Council with a 100% of the liability. The agreement for temporary landscaping also needed to be emphasised.

Marion Chapman-Allen a Ward Member for the area stated that it would be a great relief for the Thetford Fire Service if all the building was pulled down.

The Opposition Leader, also a Ward Member for Thetford, stated that a great many people would be sad to see the hotel disappear and he was disappointed that it had been left in such disrepair. Thetford had not embraced its history enough and therefore any build should be sympathetic to what had been there before.

The Executive Member for Performance & Business Development agreed with the Opposition Leader's aforementioned views but it had been a long time since this building had been young and beautiful and looking at the pictures provided in the report the heritage had already gone and it was time for the building to be demolished.

The Opposition Leader said that one of the special features within the hotel was the oak beams and he urged the Cabinet that if the building was to be demolished that these be kept and re-used in the new build. The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development agreed with this request and said that he would mention this to the contractor.

Option 1

To release £32,000.00 to remove part of the Anchor Hotel, in accordance with the structural survey recommendations.

Option 2

To release £110,000.00 to enable the demolition of the existing buildings on the site of the former Anchor Hotel and undertake an interim landscaping scheme.

Option 3

Do nothing.

Reasons

Whilst the structural survey recommended part removal of the buildings, the Council had an opportunity to demolish the structure as a whole, to satisfy not only the requirements of the structural survey, but provide the opportunity to improve the area and provide the catalyst for the

**Action By**

regeneration of the Riverside area.

**RECOMMEND** to Council that £110,000.00 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.

**136/12 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 16)**

The arrangements for the next meeting on 8 January 2013 were noted.

**137/12 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 17)**

**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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

**138/12 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICE - NEW WAY OF WORKING (AGENDA ITEM 18)**

The Executive Member for Assets & Strategic Development presented the report which set out a proposal for a new way of working for the Council's Economic Development Service.

This proposal was completely new but had been based on a model that the Council had already undertaken in the past. The Executive Member admitted that this was a complicated document to read but drew attention to the charts highlighted on pages 174 and 190 of the report that explained the new structure. He also highlighted the savings that could be made if Members were mindful to approve the recommendation.

The Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman, as a non-Cabinet Member, thought that this new way of working could do so much for the Council and its ratepayers and congratulated everyone involved. He did ask however, how long this funding would be in place. Members were informed of the process and how the Eastern Region Development Fund programme worked.

**Options**

See report.

**Reasons**

See report.

**RECOMMEND** to Council that the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

**139/12 LEGAL SERVICES REVIEW (AGENDA ITEM 19)**

The Executive Member for Finance & Democratic Services presented the report that asked the Cabinet to approve the next stages of the Legal Services Review.

**Action By**

The report recommended fundamental changes to the Council's legal service, it moved away from in-house to a more out-source approach.

Marion Chapman-Allen completely understood the reasoning for such a change but was not so sure, given that over the years, there had been some dissatisfaction from Members about the outsourcing arrangements. She also had concerns about cost and was not convinced that savings would be made. South Holland District Council's decision not to join its legal services with Breckland Council was also mentioned.

The set up of the new proposed structure was explained.

A number of Members needed assurance that all legal work, if outsourced, would be carried out in a timely manner particularly in relation to leases etc. The Chairman explained that the new co-ordinators role would be to push work in the right direction to the right company. Members were reminded of the new Performance Plus system of which the Portfolio Holder would be able to monitor the said role's performance.

Marion Chapman-Allen agreed that the success of this new service would be in the hands of the co-ordinator performing well.

The Executive Support Member for Finance & Democratic Services asked what level of authority this person would have. In response, the Executive Member for Finance & Democratic Services stated that the new co-ordinator would report to the Assistant Director of Democratic Services and would be subject to the same performance standards as all officers of the Council.

Linda Monument felt that the Council had an enormous and very important task of identifying the right person for the job and suggested a meeting with another Council who had already employed such a person.

**Options**

See report.

**Reasons**

See report.

**RECOMMEND** to Council 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.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am

CHAIRMAN