

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

**Held on Thursday, 8 December 2016 at 10.00 am in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr T J Ashby	Mr K. Martin
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Mrs E J Bishop	Mrs K. Millbank (Vice-Chairman)
Mr W.P. Borrett (Chairman)	Mrs L.H. Monument
Mr R. F. W. Brame	Mr T F C Monument
Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mr M J Nairn
Mr S H Chapman-Allen	Mr J.W. Nunn
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mr D R R Oliver
Mr D M Crawford	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	Mr J.D. Rogers
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mr K.S. Gilbert	Mr W.H.C. Smith
Councillor E. Gould	Mr A.C. Stasiak
Mr P.J. Hewett	Mr M. A. Wassell
Mrs J. Hollis	Mrs A M Webb
Mr T. J. Jermy	Mr N.C. Wilkin
Mr A.P. Joel	Mr P S Wilkinson

In Attendance

Anna Graves	- Chief Executive
Maxine O'Mahony	- Executive Director of Strategy & Governance
Robert Leigh	- Executive Manager People & Information
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

140/16 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

141/16 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Askew, Bowes, C Carter, T Carter, Clarke, Claussen, Jolly, Newton, Sherwood, Taylor and Turner.

142/16 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

143/16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

The Chairman's engagement list had been attached to the agenda but he had also been busy at the Dereham Sorting Office looking at the work being carried out by Royal Mail at their busiest time of the year. He had been very impressed and

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conveyed his best wishes for a very Merry Christmas. He also reminded Members of his Civic Service on 12 January 2017 which was being held at St Nicholas Church in Dereham at 6pm and asked Members to respond if they had not already done so. Invitations for his Reception on 16 March 2017 would be sent out in due course.

It was noted that the Safeguarding presentation which followed the Council meeting had been cancelled.

144/16 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 5)

The Leader of the Council gave a brief update on the following subjects:

A short film was shown from the start of the Riverside development in Thetford to completion. The Leader was confident that this development would bring regeneration to the town as it had been well received and had gone from strength to strength; it had also been endorsed by colleagues who had been against it at the beginning. He was pleased to announce that the Grand Central Restaurant would be open for business in the New Year and felt it to be appropriate to have a café culture alongside the river.

A petition was coming forward from Thetford Town Council; the subject matter being the former Cottage Hospital site at Earl Street in Thetford. The Thetford Labour Party had asked for it to be debated at the next Full Council meeting in January 2017. The Leader was aware of this site but was also aware that this authority could not do everything for every town and village in Breckland; however, he mentioned a piece of work that South Holland District Council was undertaking called unsightly sites and felt that this authority should do everything it could through the Town and Parish Councils to bring forward this type of work. He pointed out the many difficulties that the Council faced when it came to privately owned buildings including the legal ramifications but the Council had a duty of care to its constituents and therefore he had tasked the Overview & Scrutiny Commission (O&SC) to take these matters forward for debate.

Devolution had disappeared for now but there was still a potential piece of work going on and it was agreed that the Chief Executive and the Leader would engage in this conversation and work with the coalition to discuss Norfolk's future moving forward. Members would be notified if any funding was required by way of a report to Full Council.

Funding had been secured from Norfolk County Council for the duelling of the A11 corridor.

A full Corporate Peer Review would be taking place from Monday, 12 December 2016; some Members had already been invited to meet the Peer Team at 6pm on Wednesday, 14 December. The Leader felt that Peer Reviews only worked if Members engage.

Councillor Brame queried the submission of the petition as he believed that it had not come from Thetford Town Council and felt that this matter should have been debated at a Full Council meeting and asked that the public be informed that Breckland Council would do its best for any site in Thetford. The Leader agreed and had been dismayed that a petition had been submitted instead of having a discussion. He pointed out that any Member should be able to approach him and have a debate and as the Leader he

would do everything he could as the Council had a duty of care. He reminded Members of the graffiti issues that had been resolved; this would have been a great opportunity to work collaboratively for the community and felt upset that some Members had played politics with a matter such as this.

On the subject of Riverside, Councillor Jermy praised the Council for the successful opening event and felt that the key test would be the extent of regeneration to support the wider town centre. The Leader advised that there was a Market Town Initiative going on at the moment. Regeneration had to be about sustainable projects going forward and not about funding projects in the short term. Councillor Joel asked that the subject of unsightly sites be brought to the O&SC sooner rather than later. Councillor Gould, the Chairman of O&SC thought this would be an interesting topic but was cross with Councillor Jermy as Breckland Council had invested a great deal of money in the town and was at a loss as to what the Town Council actually did. The Leader said that he would be happy for him and the Chief Executive to attend a Town Council meeting if invited to have an unpolitical dialogue of what the Council could assist with but it was up to the Town Councils to come forward with ideas. Councillor Jermy clarified that the aim of the petition was to get the best outcome for the building.

Councillor Dimoglou reminded Members that the Riverside development had been delivered on time and within budget and asked if it would be appropriate to send a letter of thanks to Breckland Bridge and The Land Group. The Leader agreed and also conveyed his thanks to the Breckland Team, everyone had done an excellent job and all should be congratulated.

145/16 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 6 (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Councillor Jermy had been given the response to his question which had been in relation to the petition, the Cottage Hospital site.

146/16 QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 7 (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The Chairman reminded Members that questions without notice on any matter can be asked but must be specific to the Leader's or Portfolio Holder's area of responsibility.

Councillor Jermy thanked the Leader and the Chairman for the opportunity of tabling his question at the meeting. The reason he had taken this approach was due to it being nearly 10 years since the NHS had moved out of the Cottage Hospital and in 2012 Breckland Council had enforced a clean-up of the site and had written to the owners accordingly; what he wanted to know was whether an Enforcement Officer had visited the site or not. In response, the Leader advised that he had been made aware that Environmental Health had contacted the owners to tidy the site on three occasions. Councillor Jermy knew that the Council had substantial powers to bring empty/derelict buildings back into use and asked the Leader if Breckland could do something else before going down the litigation route. The Leader explained that Breckland could do something with the private individual about this site but all were hugely expensive and suggested working together with the community to have that conversation to address that site going forward.

On another subject, Councillor Joel conveyed his thanks to Better Broadband for installing six new green fibre-optic boxes in his Ward and asked if this could be extended to the villages surrounding Attleborough. The Leader reminded Members

that this would be rolled out to all communities in Breckland. In response to a further question about when the £950k that the Council committed to the Better Broadband project would be released, the Leader explained that this money was not actually needed at the moment as the more people signing up to Broadband the more money BT could recycle back into the project but when it was needed it would be released. Councillor Sharpe was pleased that the money had not been drawn down as yet but asked about the £950k match-funding pot and whether it had been used in Breckland for Breckland projects. Members were assured that it would be used in the correct areas. Councillor Darby asked if broadband installation should be included in Breckland's Planning Policies and gave an example of a developer that had approached BT to install a fibre-optic cabinet in a recently built housing site in Swaffham. Councillor Wassell confirmed that this had and could be done and had tried to have the conversation with Capita to ensure that these matters could be dealt with as part of every application on new development as broadband should be included as a major utility. He asked if Members could get some assurance that further conversation be had with Capita as a matter of course as this was affectively, in his opinion, a major utility. In response, the Deputy Leader explained that no condition could be placed on a planning application but all developers were encouraged to do this on new developments of over 30 dwellings.

147/16 CABINET MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 8)

1. Breckland Bridge Strategic Site Review – Planning Activity (Minute No. 120/16)

Councillor Cowen, the Executive Member for Growth & Commercialisation had recently been informed that Breckland Council now had a five year land supply and therefore felt it to be inappropriate to approve this recommendation at this stage but to take the report back to Cabinet for further review.

Members were asked if they were content with this proposal, and it was

RESOLVED that:

- the Breckland Bridge Strategic Site Review recommendation to initiate submission of planning applications at two sites as described not be approved;
- the £120,000 of funding which was subject to Breckland Bridge undertaking pre-planning community consultation resulting in a positive outcome not be released; and
- the delegation to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the relevant Ward Councillor to release the funding on satisfaction of the positive outcome of the community consultation not be provided.

RECOMMEND that the report be returned to a future Cabinet meeting for further review.<1>

2. ICT Strategy (Minute No. 123/16)

It was noted that this matter would be discussed under Agenda item 18 at the exclusion of the press and the public.

<1>
**Ralph
Burton,
Rebecca
Duncan,
Teresa
Smith**

3. Adoption

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22 November 2016 be adopted.

148/16 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION (AGENDA ITEM 9)

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 13 October 2016 be adopted; subject to a correction under Minute No. 80/16 to read 'YAB' not 'YAP'.

149/16 PLANNING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 10)

149 .a Confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 17 October 2016

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 17 October 2016 be adopted.

149 .b Unconfirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 14 November 2016

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 14 November 2016 be adopted.

150/16 COMMITTEE OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY (AGENDA ITEM 11)

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Committee of the Licensing Authority meeting held on 12 October 2016 be adopted.

151/16 LICENSING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 12)

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 12 October 2016 be adopted.

152/16 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL (AGENDA ITEM 13)

1. Councillor Development Financial Plan 2017/18 – 2021/22 (Minute No. 50/16)

The Leader had been surprised to note the paragraph where it mentioned the large cost of the Leadership training in Warwick as it was actually free and for a 5 day course was excellent value.

2. Adoption

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Member Development Panel meeting held on 10 November 2016 be adopted.

Councillor Bishop commended the Officers for being awarded Charter Plus and felt that all had worked very hard to achieve such status.

153/16 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS (AGENDA ITEM 14)

RESOLVED that:

1. Councillor Nairn be appointed as a Member of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission.
2. Councillor Bishop be appointed as a substitute Member of the Governance & Audit Committee.

154/16 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION (AGENDA ITEM 15)

None.

155/16 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (AGENDA ITEM 16)

The Chief Executive encouraged Members to wear Christmas jumpers/earrings on 19 December 2016 a £1 donation would be collected towards the Chairman's charity SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families).

156/16 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 17)

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A) 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 paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

157/16 ICT STRATEGY (AGENDA ITEM 18)

Councillor Webb, the Executive Member for People & Information presented the report and provided Members with a detailed overview of the proposal.

A question was asked about staffing issues, the Executive Manager, Information advised that new posts would be created but not over and above existing staff.

Councillor Cowen and Councillor Bambridge wholeheartedly supported the recommendation.

The Officers involved were thanked for all their hard work.

RESOLVED that the recommendations (3) and (4) as listed in the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 11.05 am

CHAIRMAN