

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION**

**Held on Thursday, 30 May 2019 at 10.00 am in the  
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

Mr D. R. R. Oliver (Chairman)	Mr M. Kiddle-Morris
Mrs L.S. Turner (Vice-Chairman)	Mr R.G. Kybird
Mr T. Birt	Mr I. Martin
Miss H. Bushell	Mr M. J. Nairn
Mr E. Colman	Mr H. E. J. Clarke (Substitute Member)
Mr F. Eagle	

**In Attendance**

Rob Walker	- Executive Director Place
Phil Adams	- Executive Manager People & Public Protection
Ross Bangs	- Corporate Innovation, Change & Performance Manager (shared)
Stephen James	- Communities & Environmental Services Manager
Ruth Tudge	- Democratic Services Officer

**28/19 MINUTES**

The Minutes of a meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019 were proposed by Councillor Kybird as a true record and agreed by Councillor Lynda Turner and were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**29/19 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Wickerson and Jermy. Councillor Clarke was present as Councillor Jermy's substitute.

**30/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)**

None.

**31/19 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**32/19 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None.

**33/19 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING**

None.

**Action By**

**Action By**

**34/19 COMMUNITY ASSET VALUE POLICY**

A presentation was given by the Communities and Environmental Services Manager, Steve James. He explained the purpose of the policy which was to give communities the right to identify buildings or other land that they believe to be of importance to a community's social well-being. If an asset was identified and came up for sale the community would be given a fair chance to make a bid to buy it on the open market.

A copy of the presentation would be shared with Members for information.

Ruth  
Tudge

**35/19 Q4 2018-19 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORT**

The Corporate Innovation, Change & Performance Manager, Ross Bangs had given an explanation and overview on the Quarterly Performance Report and how to interpret results. The Chairman opened this to the Committee for questions.

Councillor Clarke asked about flytipping and noticed the tonnage had increased from 60.00 tonnes to 90.69. The number of incidents of fly tipping had also increased from 212 to 362. He questioned if Breckland had carried out any 'interviews under caution' or prosecutions.

The Executive Director of Place, Rob Walker confirmed there had been an increase in flytipping. A Fly Tip Enforcement Officer had been recently appointed and already had a first case, the details of which would be publicised shortly. It was hoped this would lead to more future convictions and deterrents. He confirmed Breckland only collect fly tips from public land within the district. Flytipping on private land was the responsibility of the land owner.

Councillor Clarke went on to ask how long the Jaeger building at Kings Lynn had been empty. The Corporate Innovation, Change & Performance Manager confirmed that following lengthy negotiations, the property had been re-let. This had been reported to the Risk and Audit Committee. The property had been vacant for a period of 23 months and Members were informed the previous tenant went into administration. The Chairman asked if Breckland took appropriate steps to recover funds where possible. The Corporate Innovation, Change & Performance Manager will find out further details and report back.

Ross  
Bangs

Councillor Birt queried that under the Freedom of information the target was 100%, however the actual was 73% yet we have a green indicator and was there a reason for that. The Chairman stated the Commission had previously said that this was a statutory duty and if it was less than 100% members should be concerned. The Corporate Innovation, Change & Performance

Manager explained the reasons why it displayed a green and the Chairman asked that in future the detail was included in the report.

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Ross  
Bangs

Councillor Turner suggested if we knew who the Freedom of Information requests were coming from we could see if there was a trend. Members were informed the information was available and showed a significant reduction in the number of requests received due to publicising information on the website. Officers continue to review the requests.

Councillor Birt sought clarification on how the abandoned calls and new website visitors was measured. The Corporate Innovation, Change & Performance Manager agreed to meet with Councillor Birt to discuss the item in detail.

Councillor Birt went on to question why the household waste, recycled or composted, showed as green despite the trend being low for the previous four quarter reporting. The Executive Director of Place explained it showed a recurring theme and suggested the team consider the tolerances and explain in detail any deviation that could be permitted.

Ross  
Bangs

Missed Waste Collections – Councillor Birt asked if this could be set as percentage. It was agreed that the missed waste collections would be reported as a percentage in future reports.

Ross  
Bangs

It was suggested the final report from the recent Flytipping Task and Finish Group be shared with new members.

Ruth  
Tudge

Councillor Turner asked for the benefit of new members if it could be explained when a new refuse vehicle would be requisitioned. The Executive Director of Place explained that the current contract allowed for a new refuse vehicle per 5,000 new households which would remain so until the current contract expired in the next 2 years. However a more gradual approach was being explored.

Councillor Birt suggested that the performance indicator for staff turnover be a sliding average which was agreed.

Ross  
Bangs

A discussion was had on whether it would be appropriate for the Commission to see if there was a significant difference between full and part time staff sickness. It was decided that the Commission would leave it at this time.

The report stated we had a negative value of empty properties back in use however it was displayed as a zero. It was asked if there was a negative value it could be shown in order for Members to keep track. The Corporate Innovation, Change & Performance Manager explained that historically reports showed

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<p>the number of properties available as per council tax receipts. It was agreed that the measure actually determined the number of properties brought back into use as a result of direct officer intervention, whereby the housing service had worked with owners of long term empty properties either through engagement or enforcement to bring them back into use, so with the data in terms of negative figure the measure would be re-written and shown in Q1 report as properties brought back into use as a result of direct officer intervention. Councillor Kybird asked how ARP assess whether a property is a second home.</p>	<p>Ross Bangs</p>
<p>Councillor Birt asked if there could be a better way to measure unemployment. It was explained that unemployment levels were pulled from Government Return Data however the Corporate Innovation, Change &amp; Performance Manager would look to understand if there was a better way to measure this and bring findings back to the Commission.</p>	<p>Ross Bangs</p>
<p>Councillor Birt queried why the target of Major Applications determined within 13 weeks or agreed extension was showing green and felt it should be Amber. Members were informed that the Corporate Improvement Team was working with Capita on targets and figures to ensure they were reported accurately.</p>	
<p>Councillor Ian Martin asked for an explanation on how we were achieving the commercial property average yield. The Corporate Innovation, Change &amp; Performance Manager would seek further clarification on the way this was calculated.</p>	<p>Ross Bangs</p>
<p><b>36/19 <u>OUTSIDE BODY FEEDBACK (STANDING ITEM)</u></b></p>	
<p>Councillor Kybird raised whether the Breckland Area Museum Committee should be an outside body or a committee following an issue Councillor Duigan had raised. It was agreed that Councillor Kybird would discuss the matter with the Democratic Services Manager and report back to the commission.</p>	
<p><b>37/19 <u>SCRUTINY CALL-INS (STANDING ITEM)</u></b></p>	
<p>None.</p>	
<p><b>38/19 <u>COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION (STANDING ITEM)</u></b></p>	
<p>The Chairman encouraged members of the Commission to make use of Councillor Call for Action if a matter was pertinent to a local ward that had wider ramifications or involved other Local Authorities that should be held to account.</p>	
<p><b>39/19 <u>WORK PROGRAMME</u></b></p>	
<p>The Chairman asked Members for items they would like included in the Work Programme. The following suggestions were made:</p>	

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- The calculation of how the Council has arrived at the 5 year land supply as it would be useful and affected all our rural communities.
- Validation of planning applications, what was the process for revising or reviewing local list.
- Neighbourhood planning. How does Breckland support local groups in developing plans?
- To review Capita contract and to understand the process of how planning applications are validated.
- Local Plan and the National Policy Framework.
- To seek an update from the Flagship Task and finish Group.
- To consider holding a Task and finish Group to look into the Housing Strategy.
- Market Town Initiative and how it has impacted opportunities and how it is measured.
- Community Grant Funding Scheme.
- How Section 106 money is used.
- Governance and Policy around surplus land disposal.
- Green Issues.

The Chairman will work up a draft programme and distribute for comment.

Chairman

**40/19 NEXT MEETING**

The arrangements for the next scheduled for Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 10am in the Anglia Room were noted.

The meeting closed at 12.12 pm

CHAIRMAN