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**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**CABINET**

**Held on Tuesday, 11 January 2011 at 9.30 am in  
The Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

|                         |                                 |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mr J.W. Nunn (Chairman) | Lady Fisher                     |
| Mr W.H.C. Smith         | Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris           |
| Mr S. Askew             | Mr A.C. Stasiak (Vice-Chairman) |
| Mr P.D. Claussen        |                                 |

**Also Present**

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Mr S.G. Bambridge | Mrs L.H. Monument    |
| Mr J.P. Cowen     | Mrs L.S. Turner      |
| Mr M. Fanthorpe   | Mr R.P. Childerhouse |
| Mr R.F. Goreham   |                      |

**In Attendance**

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Terry Huggins    | - Chief Executive   |
| Mark Stokes      | - Deputy Chief Executive  |
| Maxine O'Mahony  | - Director of Corporate Resources                                       |
| Robert Walker    | - Director - Community Services   |
| Laura Apps-Green | - Community Development Officer   |
| Mandy Ashton     | - Revenue and Projects Accountant                                       |
| Natalie Beal     | - Planning Policy Officer (Growth Point)                                |
| Anita Brennan    | - Assistant Director - Environmental Health & Housing                   |
| Julie Britton    | - Senior Committee Officer  |
| Alison Chubbock  | - Accountancy Manager   |
| Phil Daines      | - Development Services Manager (Capita Symonds for Breckland Council)   |
| Mark Finch       | - Head of Finance   |
| Zoe Footer       | - Land Management Officer   |
| Sharon Jones     | - Strategic Manager (ARP)   |
| Robert Leigh     | - Assistant Director, Communications and Communities                    |
| Stephen McGrath  | - Member Services Manager   |
| Phil Mileham     | - Senior Planning Policy Officer (Capita Symonds for Breckland Council) |
| Jane Osborne     | - Committee Officer   |
| Jamie Smith      | - Environmental Planning Officer (Capita Symonds for Breckland Council) |
| David Spencer    | - Principal Planning Policy Officer (Capita Symonds for Breckland)      |

**Action By**

**1/11 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following typographical error being amended at Minute No. 121/10 (b) to read: £4,925 and not £4,295.

**2/11 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

There were no apologies for absence.

**3/11 DECLARATION OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

Lady K Fisher declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 14 and left the room whilst this item was being discussed.

Mrs L Monument declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 8, the allocation of housing at Greenfields Road, Dereham in relation to the completion of a new through route to the south of the Windmill. Mrs Monument left the room whilst this matter was being discussed.

Mr P Cowen declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 and 14 of the agenda by virtue of his profession as an architect in practice.

**4/11 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Mesdames L Monument and L Turner and Messrs G Bambridge, R Childerhouse, P Cowen, R Goreham and M Fanthorpe.

**5/11 MINUTES OF THE LDF TASK & FINISH GROUP: 15 DECEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Minutes of the LDF Task & Finish Group had been attached to the Cabinet agenda for information.

A Member said that he had been quoted in the Minutes under Minute No. 27/10 (f) as using the term 'large numbers' of the residents. He stated that if he indeed used the word 'large' at this particular point it would have been in error as his intentions would have been to use that term in respect of one of his other villages in his Ward and not Foxley. It had also been pointed out to him that this form of words could be interpreted as him implying that the Parish Council was out of touch with the people of the said village. This had not been his intention.

As far as the settlement boundary was concerned, he had always supported the views of the Parish Council, to retain the boundary but restrict future development.

Members were asked to raise any further comments under agenda item 8.

The Minutes were otherwise noted.

**Action By**

**6/11 SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES & PROPOSALS DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
DOCUMENT 2001-2026 - PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT  
(AGENDA ITEM 8)**

The report sought Members' approval to publish then submit the Site Specific Polices and Proposals Document including any Cabinet recommendations and those changes required to satisfy Habitats Regulations. Publication and submission represented the last stage of document production and effectively represented the final opportunity for Breckland Council to shape the documents before it was considered at an examination in Public by a Government Inspector. Following consultation earlier in 2010 on a detailed Site Specifics document, the proposed submission version of the document had been further updated for consideration by Cabinet, to reflect those changes which were necessary as a result of previous responses received. During preparation of the document there had been 8 public meetings of the Council's LDF Task & Finish Group (T&F) and 2 meetings of Cabinet. This level of scrutiny, together with the considerable public consultation and evidence base which underpinned the document, meant that the Council could publish and submit a sound document which would help manage development in the market towns and rural parts of Breckland for the next 15-16 years.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer advised that the Minutes of the LDF Task & Finish Group held on 15 December 2010 were pertinent to this debate. He explained that the Site Specifics document had been referred to the Cabinet meeting on 30 November 2010 for discussion where representations had been received from East Tuddenham Parish Council outlining concerns that previously agreed changes to the Settlement Boundary for the village had not been carried forward into the final document. Additional concerns to the same effect had also been raised by non-Executive Members in attendance at Cabinet. In response to these concerns, Cabinet had agreed that the document be deferred for a one-off meeting of the LDF Task & Finish Group to discuss apparent discrepancies within the document. Cabinet had further requested that the document be referred back to a future meeting as expediently as possible in order to minimise delays to the publication of the document. The LDF Task & Finish Group then met on the 15<sup>th</sup> December and the agenda included discussions on the proposed allocations in Dereham, Shipdham and Watton and 14 rural settlement boundaries where further changes were being proposed and new Officer recommendations were being made.

Attached at Appendix A of the report was a table setting out the items reported to the LDF T&F Group and the recommendations to Cabinet. It had been recommended that the proposed allocation for D4 at Dereham (Nurseries, Shipdham Road, Toftwood) be removed and the settlement boundaries for Cockley Cley, Foxley, Guist, Ickburgh, Little Cressingham, Sparham, Stanfield, Stow Bedon and Tittleshall be re-instated. For East Tuddenham, the changes to the settlement boundary had been supported, subject to the inclusion of additional land north of Mattishall Road at the Baynings. In Shipdham, the Thomas Bullock Playing Field site was no longer proposed as a preferred option and there would now be only one allocation site for 85 dwellings on site SH.1 (the Coal Yard);

**Action By**

however, the allocation for Shipdham would now be reduced to 85 houses to take into account the recent planning permission granted in Shipdham at the Development Control Committee held on 5 January 2011.

Members were pleased to note that even with all the aforementioned amendments it still left the Council with a sound document.

The process for publication and submission was explained.

The Opposition Leader, and one of his colleague's who represented Dereham Central, did support the reduction in the allocation on site D2 in Dereham but still had reservations about the concept of joining Greenfields and Wheatcroft Way together by a through road. There had been a lot of public concern from residents that if the estate roads were interconnected it would create a rat-run. Members were informed that significant consultation had been carried out and the Highways Authority had been satisfied and comfortable with the proposal to provide two safe points of access onto Norwich Road. The Opposition Leader asked that it be noted that this concern had been raised.

It was further noted that another access could be achieved on land at the former Maltings on the Norwich Road. The Development Services Manager advised that if the Maltings site did come forward, the Highways Authority would almost insist on another access but the proposal would be tied up with a formal planning application.

The Vice-Chairman stated that he had been asked by the residents of Beeston that the settlement boundary be looked at again as the proposal, as it stood, offered no protection to the local shop. The Chairman felt that the point raised by the Vice-Chairman was not just about Beeston but was about the protection of all rural pubs and shops. He felt that village shops should be safeguarded and asked if there was a policy in place. If there was, it should stipulate that if a shop had to be removed to make way for new development another shop in the village should be provided. The Development Services Manager advised that there were two policies in the Core Strategy namely CP14 and DC18; however, these policies could not prevent shops from closing but would, through this process, be more robust. He reminded Members that all anomalies had been picked up through the LDF T&F Group and Beeston at that time had not been mentioned. The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that Beeston had been looked upon favourably as there would only be a small scale of development to support the industry in the village. This proposal had been supported by the Parish Council and the only option to Cabinet at this stage was for the site to be taken out. The Chairman felt that if the Parish Council had given evidence of their support then the existing decision should remain. In respect of the shop, he hoped that this would be safeguarded through policies as part of any future development going forward. Members were reminded that the policy did require the applicant to go through quite a strenuous marketing exercise to demonstrate and prove that the shop was no longer required, and would then have to go through to the Development Control Committee for a decision.

A proposal to move the settlement boundary back was put forward but the proposal was lost and the original decision remained.

**Action By**

**Option A**

Members agree that the Council publishes the Site Specific Policies and Proposals document, including any Cabinet recommendations and any amendments necessary for appropriate assessment for a period of at least 6 weeks. Members further agree to submit the Site Specific Policies and Proposals document to the Secretary of State for an Examination in Public by a Government appointed Inspector whose report will be binding on the authority unless comments received during the 6 weeks of pre-submission publication indicate that the document is unsound and should be withdrawn.

**Option B**

Members do not agree that the Council publishes the Site Specific Policies and Proposals document, including amendments. Members also not agree to submit the Site Specifics Policies and Proposals document to the Secretary of State for an Examination in Public by a Government appointed Inspector.

**Reasons**

Members are asked to approve Option A in order to allow the timely progression of a sound development framework for the market towns, Local Service Centres and villages.

**RESOLVED** that the recommendations made by the LDF Task & Finish Group meeting on 15 December 2010 be noted and agreed.

**RECOMMEND** to Council that the Site Specific Policies and Proposals document be adopted and published for a period of at least six weeks prior to submission to the Secretary of State for an Examination in Public by a Government appointed Inspector whose report will be binding on the authority unless comments received during the 6 week of pre-submission publication indicates that the document is unsound and should be withdrawn.

David  
Spencer

**7/11 BUDGET SETTING REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

The Head of Finance presented the report which outlined the 2011/12 revenue and capital estimates for the General Fund, the proposals for the setting of discretionary fees and charges and the outline financial position through to 2015/16.

The Accountancy Manager and the Revenues and Projects Accountant were in attendance to answer questions.

Members were provided with a presentation which covered all key points and the recommendations within the report. It was noted that under the fees and charges schedule the pest control service would be amended to show that the domestic rats and mice service in 2011/12 would be free of charge.

**Action By**

A question was asked as to how the Homelessness Grant compared to the previous year. Members were informed that this grant had been increased from £60k. A further question on this matter related to what these monies were spent on. The Assistant Director for Housing and Environmental Health explained that the grant funding was used to prevent homelessness by working with those people to find solutions. There were many schemes available which refrained from putting families into bed & breakfast accommodation.

The Executive Member for the Corporate Development & Performance Portfolio thanked the Finance Team for all their hard work throughout the year. The Team had worked methodically with Members and had placed the Council in a much enviable position than many other authorities in the area. A number of years ago he had asked for growth to be looked at and was pleased that even though Council Tax had been frozen for three years prudent and sustainable growth had been maintained. He felt that the Council had responded well to the Value for Money agenda and had over achieved in the efficiency requirement to balance the budget; however, with regard to the funding gap, where it was being asked that this shortfall be met from a one-off contribution from the General Fund, he agreed that this process was necessary to continue with productivity but would not agree to this course of action in future. In concluding his discussion the Executive Member for the Corporate Development & Performance Portfolio wholeheartedly supported the budget.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that this was a draft budget settlement and with this in mind an opportunity had arisen for Breckland Council to make representations to Government. He explained that when the spending review was announced, it had been declared that the headline reduction for local authorities' budgets would be no more than 8.9% which included parish council precepts, this had in fact, brought Breckland's actual reduction to 10.5%. A meeting had been arranged with the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) to highlight this fact.

The Executive Member for Planning, Health & Housing asked where the Homelessness Grant sat within the budget. In response, Members were informed that this grant sat within the General Fund. The Executive Member was not happy with this response as he had concerns as to how the Housing Team was expected to deliver this service when the funding was in this particular pot. He asked what the process was going to be to enable the Housing Team to continue with its preventative work. Members were reminded that there was over £900k in the Strategic Housing and Homelessness budgets for service delivery. The Executive Member for Planning, Health & Housing still had great concerns and felt that this part of the Grant Settlement should be deferred. The Executive Member for the Corporate Development & Performance Portfolio strongly supported the aforementioned points and reminded the Cabinet that the procedure had been changed a number of years ago to allow for a rapid response to certain members of the population (which had actually driven down bed & breakfast costs). He urged Members to leave a certain amount in the pot to be used at the Housing Team's discretion then return the remainder into the General Fund to be used if and when required.

**Action By**

The Chairman was surprised by the amount in the Strategic Housing budget and asked for a paper to be brought to Cabinet to gain a better understanding how this £900k was spent rather than taking a certain amount out. He felt every service should be reviewed annually; therefore, justifying what this authority needed to put in the budget.

The Opposition Leader supported the aforementioned suggestion. He felt that the Government settlement, in his opinion, had not been a clever was grateful for Reserves but felt sorry for the many authorities that did not have such monies to fall back on. He knew that a decrease to the budget had been expected but felt that Breckland Council should not have been penalised as much as it had, as it had clearly demonstrated efficiencies.

The Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman echoed all the above sentiments. He asked about key risks and was keen to know more about the New Homes Bonus as he was not able to understand how this would deliver funding to authorities. The Chief Executive advised that this was a risk but a positive one, and although further details were awaited, the Government had indicated that the funding should be received in 2011/12 which should be equivalent to the Council Tax grant. It was anticipated that District Councils would retain 80% of the funding whereas County Councils would retain 20%. A greater understanding of how this new bonus would work was required to be able to maximise finances. The Executive Member for the Planning, Health & Housing Portfolio did not understand the element of the housing delivery and expressed his concerns. The Chairman assumed that the Housing Minister would be able to clarify a number of these concerns.

The Vice-Chairman conveyed his thanks to the Finance Team for doing such a grand job in such difficult circumstances.

**Options**

There were no alternative budget options presented; however, the Cabinet was able to make amendments before recommendation to Full Council.

**Reasons**

To comply with the budgetary and policy framework.

**RESOLVED** that a report be prepared for the next Cabinet meeting on 22 February 2011 so that Members have a greater understanding of what and how the Homelessness Grant monies are spent.

**Anita  
Brennan**

Subject to the charges for domestic rats and mice being continued as a free of charge service; it was **RECOMMENDED** to Council that:

**Mark  
Finch**

- 1) the Breckland revenue estimates and parish council special expenses for 2011/12 and outline position through to 2015/16 be approved;
- 2) the capital estimates and associated funding for 2011/12 and outline position through to 2015/16 be approved;
- 3) the revised capital estimates and associated funding for 2010/11 be

**Action By**

- approved;
- 4) the fees and charges shown at appendix 2/2B of the report, for adoption 1 April 2011, be approved;
  - 5) the Council Tax for a Band D property in 2011.12 be set at £64.05
  - 6) the changes to the Constitution for Reserves and Grants (detailed in appendix 6 of the report) be approved;
  - 7) up to £754,675 of the pre-incurred costs (detailed in section 3 of the report) relating to Thetford Enterprise Park (TEP) be written off to the General Fund; and
  - 8) the budget virements set out in appendix 8 of the report be approved.

**8/11 PROPOSAL TO EXPAND ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP**  
**(AGENDA ITEM 10)**

The Head of Finance presented the report which concerned the expansion of the Anglia Revenues & Partnership (ARP) and the development of the telephony system at Breckland House. He explained that a report had been raised to clarify the expenditure required and efficiencies to be made, rather than expecting Members to refer back to Joint Committee reports.

The Strategic Director for ARP was in attendance to answer any detailed questions.

At the ARP Joint Committee meeting on 16 December 2010 it was agreed to expand the Partnership to include St Edmundsbury District Council. At the same meeting, the Committee also received a request for funding to replace and develop the partnership's telephony system.

The admission of a new partner offered the opportunity to grow the service and provide greater resilience as well as delivering significant savings for the new and existing partners. To achieve this level of savings, investment was required to the ICT systems to migrate the new partner onto the same platforms. There would also be a one-off cost for furniture as staff from Bury would be relocated to Thetford.

The costs had been set out in Appendix A of the report and included both capital and revenue costs.

Breckland Council's contribution would be £120,480 capital and £1,000 revenue for the expansion. The revenue contribution would be covered by savings elsewhere within the current year's budget and would not require a supplementary budget approval. The costs for the upgrade to the telephony system had been set out in Appendix B of the report. Breckland's contribution had been identified as £24,833 for basic upgrade and £45,507 as its share of the partnership costs which brought the authority's total contribution to £70,340. Members were informed that a paper had recently been received following the procurement exercise indicating likely cost reductions in delivering the project, which meant that the authority's contribution to the project could be reduced.



**Action By**

The Vice-Chairman said that the Partnership had served Breckland well over the years which could only benefit the residents.

The Executive Member for the Corporate Development & Performance Portfolio highlighted the savings that would be made and was quite pleased that St Edmundsbury Council was coming on board and hoped that this would encourage other authorities to follow suit.

**Options**

To recommend or not to recommend the expansion of the Partnership and the set up costs and telephony to Council for approval.

**Reasons**

To provide ongoing revenue savings through further shared working arrangements and economies of scale.

**RECOMMEND** to Council that:

- 1) the expansion of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership to include St Edmundsbury Council from 1 April 2011 be approved;
- 2) the supplementary budget for set up costs be approved which consists of £335,780 capital and £102,800 revenue, with grant funding and contributions from other partners reducing this amount for Breckland Council's contribution to £120,480 and £1,000 respectively; and
- 3) the supplementary budget for telephony costs be approved which consists of £140,640 capital, with contributions from other partners reducing this amount for Breckland Council's contribution to £70,340.

**Mark  
Finch/  
Sharon  
Jones**

**9/11 OLDER PEOPLE'S CHAMPION (AGENDA ITEM 11)**

The Community Development Officer presented the report which recommended to Members the appointment of an Older People's Champion and the formation of an Older People's Forum.

She said that in this period of austerity a need had arisen to give a voice, represent and indeed champion the needs of the senior members of Breckland's community. This need had been evidenced following the success of the Golden Age Fair held at East Harling in November 2010.

The Council's youth engagement programme had captured the imaginations of young people in Breckland and had provided, not just a voice, but a valuable opportunity to make a difference. A Breckland Older Peoples forum and champion would offer those same opportunities and help balance and compliment the provision for young people

This report recommended the formation of a Breckland Older People's Forum and to appoint a Member champion in order to give those people concerned a voice and support whilst recognising the value that they added to our communities.

This was of particular importance given the already high proportion of

**Action By**

older people in Norfolk which was expected to grow in the future.

The appointment of an Older People's champion and formation of an Older Peoples Forum would ensure that Breckland Council's services continued to reflect the needs and views of older people.

The Executive Support Member for Communities and Benefits felt that older people should be appreciated and valued as they made a huge contribution to society. These people were the ones with the energy to support Breckland's communities and had to face the same challenges as the young. She urged Members to support this request so that our older residents had a voice.

The Vice-Chairman reminded Members that over 25% of Breckland's population were over 60 and he commended the report for approval.

The Executive Member for the Corporate Development & Performance Portfolio agreed with the creation of a champion but asked that it worked in tandem with the Youth Council.

**Options**

- 1) To appoint an Older People's Champion for Breckland and support the formation of an Older People's Forum.
- 2) Not to appoint an Older People's Champion and not support the formation of an Older People's Forum.

**Reasons**

Breckland was the only District in Norfolk without an Older People's Champion or forum/partnership to ensure that the service development and provision takes into account of the views and needs of older people.

25% of the population in Breckland was aged over 60 or over and there was a proven need to give targeted support and assistance to help those people lead more fulfilling and independent lives.

**RECOMMEND** to Council that an Older People's Champion be appointed and the formation of an Older People's Forum be supported.

Laura  
Apps-  
Green

**10/11 PROPOSED TRANSFER OF LAND ADJACENT TO 'THE BRAMBLES', STEGGS LANE, WESTFIELD, DEREHAM (AGENDA ITEM 12)**

The Executive Member for the Economic & Commercial Portfolio introduced the report which requested approval to transfer all rights and interest in the land adjacent to "The Brambles", Steggs Lane, Westfield, Dereham to the Parish Council. He explained that he had tried to convince the Parish Council that Breckland Council did not own the title to this land.

The Land Management Officer said that this was just one of many pieces of land, known as former highway sites, that there was not any legal paperwork for that proved that the land had been transferred to Breckland Council as it had all been handled through an Act.

**Action By**

For this piece of land to be transferred to the Parish Council would be subject to a covenant restricting the use of the land to amenity purposes only. The land had been valued at £5,200 and Members were being asked to transfer the rights at nil consideration.

**Options**

- 1) To transfer all rights and interest (if any) in the land adjacent to "The Brambles", Steggs Lane, Westfield, Dereham (as shown edged red in the plan attached to the report) to Whinburgh and Westfield Parish Council at nil consideration subject to the imposition of a restrictive covenant "not to use this land for any other purpose other than amenity purposes only".
- 2) To refuse to transfer all rights and interest (if any) in the land adjacent to "The Brambles", Steggs Lane, Westfield, Dereham.

**Reasons**

To conclude this long standing matter.

**RESOLVED** to transfer all rights and interest (if any) in the land adjacent to "The Brambles", Steggs Lane, Westfield, Dereham (shown edged in red on the plan attached to the report) to Whinburgh and Westfield Parish Council at nil consideration subject to the imposition of a restrictive covenant "not to use the land for any other purpose other than amenity purposes only".

Zoe Footer

**11/11 1FUTURE 'PROPOSAL' - FLAGSHIP HOUSING GROUP (AGENDA ITEM 13)**

The Assistant Director for Housing & Environmental Health introduced Mr David McWade, the Chief Executive of Flagship Housing Group, who was in attendance to put his case forward and answer questions.

Members were being asked to consider a proposal by parent company Flagship Housing Group to amalgamate its three component housing associations to form a single new entity 'Flagship'. This proposal would be called 1Future.

Many of Flagship's tenants were Breckland residents and customer feedback from a recent survey that had been undertaken had been positive on the whole and in support of the proposal.

1Future would be based on five specific aims: To position and strengthen the Group in times of economic uncertainty, to organise the Group more efficiently, to improve the way the organisation was run and how they consult with its customers, to be more accessible at the local level to customers and to invest more in front line staff and services from savings achieved.

In response to a question in relation to Flagship being able to offer a commitment to Breckland Council going forward, Mr McWade reassured

**Action By**

Members that this was a positive proposal that would be good for Flagship and Breckland Council.

The Executive Member for the Planning, Health & Housing Portfolio asked what difference this would make to tenants. Members were informed that Flagship had a fairly large governance structure that would be reduced if this proposal went forward, it would also make on-going substantive savings that would be put back into front line services. Tenants would definitely see the benefits over time.

The 1Future proposal was forecast to achieve an initial cost saving of £800,000, increasing to over £1m per annum in future years which would be re-invested into front line services. These new services would include: a 24 hour, 7 day a week free phone number, 15 new community rangers, new customer service stations/hubs and a new community improvement fund.

Mr McWade stated that the real common agenda between both Breckland and Flagship was around the provision of affordable housing. If Members were mindful to approve the recommendation, Flagship would be in a position to make substantial changes. He felt it fair to say that he had a flavour of direction but as there would be many challenges ahead and until further details, guidance and procedures were in place, he was unsure how the new model would work for both Flagship and the people it served.

A Member said that he would like to hear of more local people getting housing priority. The Assistant Director for Housing and Environmental Health assured Members that the allocations policy had been changed to reflect this; all housing allocations came under a Breckland Council policy and not Peddars Way.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission was interested in the word 'challenges' that Mr McWade had used and asked him what he meant by this. Members were informed that the challenges facing Housing Associations across the country were around the level of grant funding available in future, and the housing market in terms of developers' appetites. He was unsure how Housing Associations would dovetail into all of the above. He explained that there had also been a change of attitude in financial institutions lending money to housing providers. Housing providers were now being squeezed in a number of directions against a number of component parts, for example: planning, planning policy and changes to welfare and benefits payments. In response to the former question relating to housing allocations, Mr McWade stated that Flagship's priority had always been to deliver homes to local people.

A Member had concerns with regard to the membership of the Flagship Housing Group's Board and felt that there should be someone on it who would represent and support local people. Mr McWade assured Members that he would commit to this suggestion.

In response to a question, Mr McWade confirmed that none of the conditions listed at 3.2.3 of the report would cause Flagship any difficulties.

**Action By**

There was some debate about variances in the rental markets between privately rented and social rented properties, and how increased income should provide enough capacity to build new homes to cover the loss of some grants.

The Executive Member for the Planning, Health & Housing Portfolio was encouraged by the way this proposal was going forward and felt that 1Future could only be good thing for Breckland and wholeheartedly supported the recommendation.

**Options**

- 1) To consent to Flagship Housing Group's request to amalgamate the existing group structure and in doing so deregulate Flagship Peddars Way.
- 2) Not to consent to Flagship Housing Group's request.

**Reasons**

The formation of the new organisation post Election and post Comprehensive Spending Review presented new opportunities for the partnership. In developing the localism and shared service agenda, the Council is considering new ways of delivering services and there were some potential future opportunities inherent in the Flagship proposal.

**RECOMMEND** to Council that consent be given to Flagship Housing Group's request to amalgamate its group structure and concomitant deregulation of Flagship Peddars Way subject to the following requirements:

- 1) Officers request that any consent forthcoming reflect:
  - The need to ensure that the obligations/rights contained with the stock transfer agreement remain and are transferred to the newly created single entity.
  - The need for the new organisation to demonstrate its ongoing strategic commitment to the growth and rural housing agendas and the local offer to tenants/leaseholders in the Breckland District
  - The need to agree an asset disposal strategy with the Council
  - The need for Flagship to actively demonstrate how the positive strategic and operational relationships that now exist can be maintained at non executive director/member level and how we ensure that a 'one size fits all' approach will not emanate from the new organisation. A suggestion in this regard was that rather than securing a place on the new board, Breckland be engaged on a 'scrutiny' level.
- 2) Breckland Council Legal Services request that any consent

**Anita  
Brennan**

**Action By**

forthcoming should be subject to the proviso that the successor body to Peddars Way Housing Association enters into a formal Deed of Novation to Breckland Council. Thereby ensuring that all Peddars Way Housing Associations contractual obligations arising from the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer are preserved.

**12/11 DRAFT FINAL THETFORD AREA ACTION PLAN/HOUSING TOPIC PAPER & CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS/COMMITMENTS PAPER(AGENDA ITEM 14)**

Approval was sought to consult on the draft final Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP) consultation document. The draft final TAAP would contain land allocations and policies to guide the growth and regeneration of Thetford over the next 15-20 years. The results from the final draft consultation would influence the content of the Submission Version of the TAAP.

The views and recommendations of both the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (6 December 2010) and the Moving Thetford Forward Board (15 December 2010) had been considered and had been taken into account as part of the overall consultation process. It was intended to undertake an extensive programme of public engagement including a summary leaflet and comments form sent to every home, with all feedback fully documented, assessed and presented as part of the final document.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer and the Planning Policy Officer (Growth Point) presented the report which at this stage was a consultation document.

Further evidence had come forward with regard to energy and transport issues since the Preferred Options consultation in early 2009; therefore, further consultation was required.

Many useful comments from both the Overview & Scrutiny Commission and Moving Thetford Forward Board (MTF) had been taken on board.

Construction of the dwellings and infrastructure would be phased and each phase would be self supportive i.e. each stage would provide homes, employment land, education and other supporting infrastructure, including allotments.

To support the consultation and help the Council to understand the consequences of the TAAP, a draft Housing Topic Paper and draft Commitments Paper had been produced which provided further technical details to accompany the approach taken in the draft final TAAP. It was recommended that the Cabinet considered the papers and that these be published for consultation alongside the draft final document.

The draft Housing Topic Paper analyses the results of the constraints to development analysis (attached at appendix B of the report) and the draft Commitments Paper highlighted the consequences of the TAAP and talked of further work required to aid the delivery (attached at appendix C of the report). Comments would be sought on both.

**Action By**

Members were also being asked what form this consultation should take i.e. leaflet, on-line, open days etc. The Planning Policy Team would be liaising with secondary schools in regard to how to engage their pupils and letters would be sent to statutory consultees. The draft consultation process would now be for five weeks instead of four to take account of the school half term in February. It would commence at the end of January and finish at 4pm on 4 March 2011. It was emphasised that any responses received would be considered, comments would be logged with the Officers responses, and recommendations to MTF and the Council would eventually be placed on the Council's website.

The Chairman felt that the key point to note was to listen to what local people had to say.

A Member asked the type of leaflet that would be sent round. In response the Planning Policy Officer (Growth Point) said that it was proposed to send a summary leaflet, similar to the one sent round in the Preferred Options consultation stage with a detachable comments form which included a freepost address. There were no specific questions to be asked other than 'what do you think of the plans?' - 'do you have any comments?' Residents would also be able to email their comments to the Council. The Member felt that that there should be just ten major questions formatted in certain a way so that responses were limited to 'yes' and 'no' answers.

The TAAP was a significant document not just for Thetford but for the whole of the district and the Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman felt that the people who should have the most interest in this consultation was the school children as they would be the ones who would have to live with the decisions that would be made. Their views would be fundamentally important, and with something of this scale, it was very important that the Council engaged with children of school age. The Development Services Manager was happy with the aforementioned comments.

It was proposed and agreed that the Planning Policy Team should arrange for an open event to be held in Croxton.

Referring to land disposal on page 277 of the document, the Chairman asked if the allocation of allotment land could be added. The Executive Member for Planning, Health & Housing pointed out that he had seen evidence that this had already been included in Pigeon's proposals, farm land had already been allocated for allotments.

**Option A**

To consider the contents of the report and agree the document, draft Housing Topic Paper and draft Commitments paper, subject to any changes, for a consultation period of five weeks starting at the end of January 2011.

**Option B**

**Action By**

Not to agree the document for consultation. This option represents a considerable risk to the Council as failure to make good progress with the Area Action Plan could result in the location of housing being determined through early applications for development without the appropriate contributions to the required strategic infrastructure for the town.

**Reasons**

The recommendation to endorse Option A of the report was to ensure that the Thetford Area Action Plan document was presented for public consultation in accordance with the Council's adopted Local Development Scheme timetable.

**RESOLVED** that the content of the final draft Thetford Area Action Plan, draft Housing Topic Paper and draft Commitments Paper be approved for public consultation for a period of 5 weeks commencing 28 January until 4<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

**Natalie  
Beal**

**13/11 REFERENCE FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION - LAND AT SWANTON MORLEY, TRANCHE 2 OF THE ACTIVE LAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (AGENDA ITEM 15)**

This call-in was in relation to land management activities at Swanton Morley and after a very healthy and vigorous debate the Overview & Scrutiny Commission determined that the Cabinet's former decision should be continued, to offer the land for affordable housing. However, taking into consideration the strength of local opposition to the proposal, the Commission had requested that once the value of the land had been established, the final decision on its sale should be brought back to Cabinet for further discussion to explore best value and best return for the residents of Swanton Morley.

The Opposition Leader stated that a good debate had been had which centred round the whys and wherefores of Active Land Management. He said it was quite rare for a decision to be called-in but the residents had felt it warranted further debate.

Looking at the recommendation, the Chairman felt that both sides should be satisfied with the outcome. He asked Officers to ensure that all the relevant information was available before it came back to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED** that the previous decision that was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 30 November 2010, to offer the land for sale for affordable housing be re-approved, subject to a final decision on its sale being discussed at a future Cabinet meeting once the value of the land had been determined to take account of local opposition to the proposal.

**Zoe Footer**

**14/11 ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP (AGENDA ITEM 16)**

a) St Edmundsbury Financial Case (Minute No. 29/10)

See Cabinet Minute No: 8/11 above.



**Action By**

- b) Partnership Telephony Report (Minute No. 30/10)

See Cabinet Minute No: 8/11 above.

- c) Adoption

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership held on 16 December 2010 be adopted.

**15/11 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 17)**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Cabinet would be held on Tuesday, 22 February 2011 at 9.30am in the Norfolk Room.

The meeting closed at 11.35 am

CHAIRMAN