BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

Held on Thursday, 23 February 2017 at 10.00 am in the Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham

PRESENT

Mr T J Ashby Mrs K. Millbank (Vice-Chairman)

Mr S.G. Bambridge Mrs L.H. Monument Mrs E J Bishop Mr T F C Monument

Mr W.P. Borrett (Chairman) Mr M J Nairn Mr J Newton Councillor C Bowes Mr R. F. W. Brame Mr J.W. Nunn Mr T R Carter Mr D R R Oliver Councillor M. Chapman-Allen Mr R. R. Richmond Mr S H Chapman-Allen Mr W. R. J. Richmond Mr H. E. J. Clarke Mr M. S. Robinson Mr P.D. Claussen Mr J.D. Rogers Mr J.P. Cowen Mr F.J. Sharpe Mr I. Sherwood Mr P. R. W. Darby Mr P. M. M. Dimoglou Mr W.H.C. Smith Mr P.J. Duigan Mr A.C. Stasiak Mr K.S. Gilbert Mr M Taylor Mr M. A. Wassell Councillor E. Gould

In Attendance

Mrs J. Hollis

Mr T. J. Jermy Mrs S.M. Matthews

Anna Graves - Chief Executive

Christine Marshall - Executive Director Commercialisation

(S151 Officer)

Maxine O'Mahony - Executive Director of Strategy &

Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Alison Chubbock - Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151

Officer) (BDC)

Mark Stinson - Executive Manager Governance (Deputy

Monitoring Officer BDC)

Mrs A M Webb Mr N.C. Wilkin

Mr P S Wilkinson

Teresa Smith - Democratic Services Team Leader

25/17 MINUTES

Minute reference 7/17 - Councillor Newton felt that whilst the minutes were not verbatim, his question had not been reflected correctly in the minutes. The Chairman asked what specifically had been omitted from the minutes. Councillor Newton said the question itself had been omitted. No amendment to the minute was requested.

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Action By

26/17APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Askew, Crawford, Duffield, Hewett, Joel, Jolly, Martin and Turner.

27/17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Stasiak declared an interest in Agenda Item 9 (b), the unconfirmed minutes of the Planning Committee, meeting held 6 February 2017, Minute reference 18/17 (h).

28/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman introduced the new Executive Director Commercialisation, Christine Marshall to Members.

Members were informed that the Wayland Show Ball would be taking place on 22 April at Lynford Hall, and the money raised would also be going towards the SSAFA Charity.

The Chairman said that Item 13 – Petition – Cottage Hospital, Thetford, would be heard between items 5 and 6.

29/17LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader informed Members that he would be cycling across the Jordan Dessert at the end of April, and he would do this as a Charity event in aid of the Chairman's charity, SSAFA.

The Leader went on to give an update on the following:

- Unitary Status there was no further update at the moment. He felt that
 there could be more debate in the future around hostile bids but it
 depended on a decision made by the Secretary of State.
- Local Plan was currently being finalised with Local Plan Working Group meetings scheduled for the 15 and 17 March. This would be considered by Overview & Scrutiny Commission on 6 April and going onto Cabinet then Council in May.
- LGA Peer Review a presentation would be given to Members in due course
- Unsightly Sites a report from Overview and Scrutiny would be presented
 to the Cabinet in support of the concept of creating a list of priorities and
 actions in respect of unsightly sites across the District. The Leader had
 responded to the challenge by Councillor Jermy to write to the owners of
 the Cottage Hospital, Thetford who have said they would be coming forward
 with proposals to seek planning permission to progress the site.

30/17 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 6

The following question was received under Standing Order No. 6 from Councillor Gilbert, addressed to the Chief Executive.

- 1) What was the total amount collected from the residents of Watton under the special expense for street lighting in the financial year 2016 to 2017?
- 2) How much of this was spent on "A" Power, "B" maintenance, "C" replacements?

- 3) What is the total proposed amount to be charged to the residents of Watton under the special expense for street lighting in the financial year 2017 to 2018?
- 4) How much of this is being budgeted for "A" power, "B" maintenance, "C" replacements?

RESPONSE:

- 1) £18,914.90 (equivalent to £7.97 per year for a Band D property)
- 2) £14,186.43 (equivalent to £5.77 per year for a Band D property) at a £4.95 council tax rise option
- 3) See over page for the breakdown of the budget for each year & where it is forecast to be spent.
- 4) The special expenses shown are based on estimated amounts, as, due to timing of setting budgets, we set the budget for 17-18 before the 16-17 year has finished. You will therefore see in each year an adjustment for 2 years previous where there is either a credit (if the town has been overcharged) or a cost (if the town has been under charged).

Watton Special Expenses Charge

		2016-17	2017-18
Energy Costs		9,584.03	9,493.27
Amey Works		1,853.29	1,850.00
NCC Management & Admin			
Costs		1,755.54	1,756.06
Sub Total - NCC Charges		13,192.86	13,099.33
Repairs Allowance		1,222.12	1,628.24
Breckland Recharge		2,774.91	2,868.90
Breckland Funding		(2,746.63)	(1,950.40)
Total Budget		14,443.26	15,646.07
Adjustment for 14-15 Actuals		4,471.63	0.00
Adjustment for 15-16 Actuals		0.00	(1,459.63)
Actual Charge to Watton			
Residents		18,914.89	14,186.44
Band D Equivalent Change			
Per Year	£	7.97	£ 5.77

31/17 QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 7

Councillor Gilbert thanked the Executive Member for Finance for his answer on the street lighting, but said the response did not show the split between maintenance or replacement of lights. The Executive Member Finance explained that the spreadsheet showed £1850 for both years which was an estimate, which could not be divided in to further detail. However money could be saved if the Town were to take control of their own street lighting.

Councillor Jermy asked the Executive Member for Growth for an update on the take-up of the units at Thetford Riverside. The Executive Member Growth confirmed that TLC Inns had confirmed their tenancy on two units adjacent to the cinema. There were conversations with a third operator for one unit, and

discussions were being held nationally with regard to the remaining two units.

Councillor Clarke asked the Executive Member for Finance if council tax support scheme had been reduced for the 17/18 budget, and why £720k would be going into the growth fund when perhaps this should be within the area where the development had taken place. The Executive Member for Finance confirmed the council tax support scheme would be reduced over the coming 4 years as it was being phased out. With regard to the growth fund there would be a significant amount being invested into this which would be to the benefit of all residents.

Councillor Gilbert referred back to his street lighting query and said that six street lights had been removed from Lovell Gardens and he had received conflicting responses as to whether they would be replaced within budget. The Leader of the Council responded that if a street light had deemed to be unsafe then it would be removed. A report would be presented at a future Cabinet meeting which would outline all columns assessed and consider what options would be available for the Council going forward.

32/17 CABINET

RESOLVED that:

- a) Breckland Bridge Ltd Business Plan
- 1. To approve the updated Breckland Bridge Ltd Business Plan for 2017-2022 as set out in appendices A to D of the Cabinet report.
- 2. To agree the Bridge recommendation to initiate a project to create a Thetford Town Asset Plan and in doing so:
 - a) Provide up to £130,000 (spread over three years).
 - b) Delegate the release of the funds to the S.151 Officer subject to receiving satisfactory information on the project plan, delivery plan and expected outputs.
- 3. To defer the Bridge recommendation to deliver a programme of minor development schemes in a 50/50 arrangement by:
 - a) Providing £82,500 as an initial equity share in the required subsidiary for the first three sites and £10,000 for legal and tax advice.
 - b) Agreeing the first three sites as Rougholme Close (Gressenhall), Glebe Road (Thetford) and Tottington Road (Thompson).
 - c) Subject to Legal advice confirming such an arrangement can be undertaken and if so delegate the release of the funds to the S.151 Officer subject to satisfactory receipt of the necessary tax advice and satisfactory returns from the first three sites.
- b) Arts council Funding The Silver Social Project
 That agreement is given to receive and spend grant funding of £185,773
 from Arts Council England for delivery of the Silver Social project in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the funder.
- c) <u>Budget Setting, Medium Term Plan & Capital Strategy</u> This item was discussed under Agenda Item 14.
- d) Quarter 3 Financial Performance Report
 That the full year end underspend is contributed to the Organisational
 Development Reserve to fund timing delays in the Moving Forward
 Programme 2017-18.

<u>ADOPTION</u> the unconfirmed minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 February 2017 be adopted.

33/17PLANNING COMMITTEE

33 .a 9 January 2017

It was highlighted that the minutes referred to the challenge made by Parsons and Whittley and the response made was emailed to Members for information. This had not yet been actioned.

RESOLVED that the confirmed minutes of the Planning Committee held on 9 January 2017 be adopted.

33 .b 6 February 2017

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2017 be adopted.

34/17 COMMITTEE OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed minutes of the Committee of the Licensing Authority meeting held on 11 January 2017 be adopted.

35/17 LICENSING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 11 January 2017 be adopted.

36/17 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PANEL

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed minutes of the Member Development Panel meeting held on 12 January be noted.

37/17 PETITION - COTTAGE HOSPITAL, THETFORD

Mr Brindle presented to Members a petition that asked the Council to consider the Cottage Hospital Thetford, and bring back to life a building that had been empty for the past 10 years. He said there had been great support within Thetford for the iconic site and asked the Council to break the deadlock.

Councillor Jermy said he had walked the pavements to collect signatures for the petition and it had been lovely to hear the stories that people told of their memories of the old hospital. He felt that 1800 signatures was an achievement, and also thanked the Leader of Breckland Council for the work that had been done. He added that there were aspirations for the use of the building but felt the main point would be positive whatever the outcome of the planning process. He thanked the Council's approach for the district wide consideration of derelict sites and hoped the exercise would bring positive usage for disused buildings across the district.

Councillor Bishop fully endorsed what the Leader had said, but felt Mr Brindle should have contacted the Council in the first instance before the petition was raised.

Councillor Brame congratulated the Leader on the proactive response. He felt this

issue had moved really quickly and that Members were looking at a strategic approach into what the council could legally do with disused buildings.

Councillor Hollis fully agreed with the renovations of the hospital and endorsed the swift action of the Council. She was concerned with the accuracy of the petition in that there was no way of clarifying how the signatures had been acquired.

Councillor Robinson also thanked the Leader for his consistency and for listening to the issues of Thetford.

The Leader said he had fond memories of the Cottage Hospital in Thetford. He thanked Mr Brindle for the petition and said if nothing else it showed the strength of feeling on the topic, and that it can bring communities together.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Leader would continue to be in dialogue with the owners of the building to ensure the site was put into productive use.

38/17BUDGET SETTING, MEDIUM TERM PLAN & CAPITAL STRATEGY

The Executive Member Finance presented the report outlining that the Council was in a strong financial position thanks to the historical foresight of Members. The entrepreneurial approach had enabled the Council to protect services to residents, as well as achieve projects. The report included a recommendation to allocate £100,000 for specialist advice to move projects forward. A consultation had been carried out, and there had not been any response with regards to a proposed council tax increase.

The Executive Member for Finance proposed that recommendations referred to at paragraph 2.2 of the report be approved.

Councillor Jermy understood the need to increase council tax but was concerned that any increase did not take into account means. Vulnerable residents received a 91.5% discount and therefore any increase would be disproportionate. He had calculated that providing 100% discount would cost the council an extra £15,000 per annum and if such protection was introduced he would support the budget. However, he could not do this if vulnerable residents were not supported by in this way.

Councillor Jermy asked the Council for an amendment to the recommendations and consider undertaking a 12-week consultation with a view to implementing a 100% increase. Councillor Clarke seconded this proposal.

The Leader of the Council had raised the issue in the past, however consultation with colleagues, Police and Norfolk County Council would need to take place to seek full support of the 100% discount. He was in support to undertake the consultation, but would not agree on spending the money now.

Councillor Dimoglou added that if Breckland Council allowed the 100% council tax relief people would be less inclined to move forward and felt the £7.00 per month was achievable for most.

Councillor Jermy said however that even the small amount was an incredible amount when you had nothing. The 100% discount could make all the difference to those people.

The amendment to the proposed recommendations was not agreed.

Councillor Clarke proposed an amendment by asking the Council to create a fixed term position for a Market Town Co-ordinator. He felt the market towns were struggling and this role would help the towns to generate income.

The Chairman asked Councillor Clark to provide a specific and clear amendment that provided sufficient detail. Councillor Wassell added that it would have been helpful if this had been suggested at an earlier stage so that it could be considered thoroughly.

Councillor Jermy added that the proposal was crucial for the market towns, and suggested that the additional finance could be drawn from the New Homes Bonus, as this was how it worked at South Norfolk council.

Councillor Monument agreed with the suggestion but would like to have seen a detailed report and to hear from South Norfolk about the role.

Councillor Chapman-Allen said it was a corporate priority to support the market towns and it would be a cabinet item in the future to discuss how to work with the towns to support them moving forward.

Councillor Clarke had heard the comments, and asked the amendment still be considered. The amendment to the proposed recommendation was not agreed.

The Executive Director Commercialisation (S151 Officer) reminded members for the purpose of clarity, that they would be voting as outlined in paragraph 2.2 of the report. Councillor Wassell proposed and Councillor Dimoglou seconded the recommendation.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations below. The vote was as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Apologies / Not Present
			Notification
Councillors:	Councillor:	Councillors:	Councillors:
Ashby	Clarke	Hollis	Askew
Bambridge	Jermy		Crawford
Bishop	Newton		Duffield
Brame			Hewett
Borrett			Joel
Bowes			Jolly
Carter			Martin
M Chapman-Allen			Sherwood
S Chapman-Allen			Smith
Claussen			Taylor
Cowen			Turner
Darby			
Dimoglou			
Duigan			
Gilbert			
Gould			
Matthews			
Millbank			

L Monument		
T Monument		
Nairn		
Nunn		
Oliver		
R Richmond		
W Richmond		
Robinson		
Rogers		
Sharpe		
Stasiak		
Wassell		
Webb		
Wilkin		
Wilkinson		

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The Breckland revenue estimates and parish special expenses for 2017-18 and outline position through to 2020-21, as set out in Appendix B2 and E2 are approved;
- 2) The capital estimates and associated funding for 2017-18 and outline position through to 2020-21 (as set out in Appendix H) are approved;
- 3) The discretionary business rates relief for local newspapers for up to 2 years as detailed in Appendix I is approved;
- 4) The fees and charges shown at Appendix D and D2, for adoption on 1 April 2017, are approved;
- 5) The Council Tax in the medium term plan be set at £4.95 increase per year (£78.93 for a Band D property in 2017-18);
- 6) The financial Medium term plan at Appendix A 2 is approved;
- 7) The capital strategy at Appendix G is approved;
- 8) That £100,000 is allocated in the Organisational Development Reserve to fund feasibility studies for growth and investment projects which will generate a return to the Council. That release of funding for individual feasibility studies be delegated to the S151 Officer in conjunction with the Strategic Growth Group and Finance Board in consultation with the Leader or Deputy Leader.

39/17 COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2017-18

The Executive Member Finance asked Members to approve recommendations two and four of the report.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations below. The vote was as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Apologies / Not Present
Councillors:	Councillor:	Councillors:	Councillors:
Ashby	Clarke	Hollis	Askew
Bambridge	Jermy		Crawford
Bishop	Newton		Duffield
Brame			Hewett
Borrett			Joel

Bowes	Jolly
Carter	Martin
M Chapman-Allen	Sherwood
S Chapman-Allen	Smith
Claussen	Taylor
Cowen	Turner
Darby	
Dimoglou	
Duigan	
Gilbert	
Gould	
Matthews	
Millbank	
Mrs Monument	
Mr Monument	
Nairn	
Nunn	
Oliver	
R Richmond	
W Richmond	
Robinson	
Rogers	
Sharpe	
Stasiak	
Wassell	
Webb	
Wilkin	
Wilkinson	

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1. Full Council approves the special expenses for 2017-18 (at paragraph 1.3.2) based on a £4.95 council tax rise.
- 2. Full Council approves the formal council tax resolutions for 2017-18 (at paragraph 1.4.6 to 1.4.10) based on a £4.95 council tax rise.

40/17 CORPORATE PLAN REFRESH 2017-18

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Strategy, Governance & Transformation presented the report but suggested that an amendment to the wording of the recommendation such that the contents of the report were agreed and the Annual Corporate Plan Refresh 2017-18 be adopted.

Councillor Jermy said the achievement of the Council was making a difference to the residents lives.

The Chairman added that delivering the Early Help Hub and the Riverside Project had been an excellent achievement.

Councillor Cowen concurred with the comments and added that the document underscored the commitment to see growth and significant changes in all market towns.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report are agreed and the Annual Corporate Plan Refresh 2017-18 is adopted.

41/17 NORWICH CITY COUNCIL SECTION 113 AGREEMENT

The Executive Member Finance introduced the report and Paul Corney, Head of the Anglia Revenues Partnership to Members.

Paul Corney informed Members that it was proposed the Strategic Management team would manage the Norwich City Council Team, acting as their Head of Service. Some costs would be shared between the partners of the Anglia Revenues Partnership and there would be future potential partner for the Enforcement Agency leading to additional efficiencies.

Councillor Cowen thanked Mr Corney and his team for the outstanding work carried out.

Councillor Brame also added that it would continue to provide additional job security for those within Thetford.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The report be noted;
- 2) That Breckland Council instruct the ARP Operational Improvement Board to negotiate and enter into a Section 113 agreement with Norwich City Council so that Officers services can be placed at all authorities disposal (shared);
- 3) That approval is given for the ARP management team to start working with Norwich City Council immediately to carry out any necessary work prior to the 1 April 2017 that will assist with the commencement of the agreement.

42/17 HR POLICY HANDBOOK

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Strategy, Governance & Transformation presented the report informing Members that following their request Overview and Scrutiny Commission had reviewed the HR Policy handbook.

This would be a key publication for staff to use which derived from 11 key policies and would be a user friendly document for staff. A key amendment was with regard to the maternity support of up to 5-days which would be on a discretionary basis.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) the HR Policy Handbook be approved to implement across Breckland District Council with the following delegations and consideration:
 - a) That should any amendment to policy be required as a result of legislative or constitutional change, of which we as an organisation have no jurisdiction, that this be delegated to the Head of Paid Service in order to ensure a prompt response to such changes and mitigate risk of application of said policy in line with employment law.
 - An information paper will be submitted to Full Council where legislative changes have occurred.
 - b) That permission is granted to implement Maternity Support Leave at Breckland District Council, again to provide additional support to new fathers/partners at the time of birth or adoption of their child. This is not a statutory/constitutional obligation but, if approved, will form part of the Councils' procedure.
 - Maternity support leave of up to 5 days with pay shall be granted, at or around the time of birth, to employees who are the child's father or partner

of an expectant mother, or to any employee nominated as carer to assist in the care of the child and to provide support to the mother.

43/17 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18

It was **RESOLVED** that the Pay Policy Statement be approved.

44/17 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS

None.

45/17 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

None.

46/17 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT -

None.

47/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1, 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

48/17 LEGAL SERVICES REVIEW

The Executive Manager Governance introduced the report which related to the staffing structure of the Legal Services Team which had been reviewed as part of the organisational design strand of the Transformation Programme.

The report sought approval to proceed with the implementation of the proposal to restructure the service.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The Head of Paid Service and/or the Executive Director for Strategy and Governance, in consultation with the Executive Member for Governance, be authorised to implement the proposals subject to no major change.
- 2) The Head of Paid Service and/or the Executive Director for Strategy and Governance, in consultation with the Executive Member for Governance, be authorised to make minor amendments and to undertake any incidental and consequential actions necessary to implement the proposals.

49/17 PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE REVIEW

The Executive Member for People and Information presented the report.

Councillor Jermy asked if formal consultation had taken place and the Executive Manager for Public Protection confirmed this had been dealt with.

Councillor Bambridge said it was an excellent report and was pleased to see how the department had been very innovative.

It was **RESOLVED** that recommendation 1 be approved as follows:

That the Head of Paid Service and/or the Executive Director for Strategy and Governance, in consultation with the Executive Member for People and Information be authorised to implement the proposals subject to no major change.

50/17 NEW BRECKLAND PAY SCHEME: PERFORMANCE RELATED INCREMENTS (PRI) SCHEME

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Strategy, Governance & Transformation presented the report to Members, informing that it had already been to Overview and Scrutiny who had recommended that a review was carried out after the first year of implementation (May 2018).

It was asked if the Unions had been consulted and it was confirmed that they had and were content with the report.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) That Council adopts the Performance Related Increments Scheme and associated Policy (Appendix A) to take effect from 01 April 2017 (to be phased in as per proposal at Appendix B)
- 2) That Council agrees to the minimum 'Assimilation Benefit' as per proposal at Appendix B
- 3) That the Performance Related Increments scheme covers all staff (including Chief Officers), excluding staff currently covered by the ARP Pay Scheme
- 4) That delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive to agree the annual 'Basic Performance Increase' in-line with agreed budgets
- 5) That delegated authority is given to EMT to introduce additional staff benefit schemes, to include a Holiday Purchase scheme and appropriate salary sacrifice schemes

51/17 CAPITA BRIEFING

Members were provided with an update by the Director of Capita Planning & Building Control.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm

CHAIRMAN