

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

**Held on Thursday, 24 November 2016 at 2.00 pm in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham**

PRESENT

Councillor E. Gould (Chairman)	Mr T F C Monument
Mrs E J Bishop	Mr R. R. Richmond
Mr R. F. W. Brame	Mr A.C. Stasiak (Vice-Chairman)
Mr D M Crawford	Councillor C Bowes (Substitute Member)
Mr A.P. Joel	Mr P S Wilkinson (Substitute Member)
Mrs S.M. Matthews	

Also Present

Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mr K. Martin
Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mr J Newton
Mr P. R. W. Darby	Mrs L.S. Turner
Mr P. M. M. Dimoglou	Mrs A M Webb
Mrs J. Hollis	

In Attendance

Helen McAleer	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Teresa Smith	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Jason Elliott	- Spatial Information Manager
Gareth Kinton	- IT Manager
Tim Rogers	- Performance & Change Manager
Riana Rudland	- Breckland Place Manager
Rob Walker	- Executive Director Place

85/16 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

86/16 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jermy and Oliver.

Councillors Bowes and Wilkinson were present as Substitute Members.

87/16 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

88/16 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

Agenda Item 9: Outside Body Feedback – For transparency, Councillor Crawford declared that he was a Member of the NCC Adult Social Care Committee.

Agenda Item 15: ICT Strategy - For transparency, Councillors Bowes

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and Crawford declared that they were Norfolk County Councillors as Breckland Council had a service agreement with NCC for ICT provision.

89/16 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)

Councillors Bambridge, M Chapman-Allen, Darby, Dimoglou, Hollis, Martin, Newton, Turner and Webb were in attendance.

90/16 Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 6)

The Performance & Change Manager presented the report which provided a summary of the status of the Council's key indicators for Quarter 2. One indicator was not reported due to the data being unavailable. The red indicator for short term investment income was due to high interest rates on the Breckland Bridge loan and would be addressed in the future budget.

The Chairman asked who decided which indicators were included. She noted that the overall performance had been assessed as fair, but in his presentation the Performance & Change Manager had described it as good. He explained that over 70% of indicators were green and the amber and red variances were due to budget issues, so performance actually was good. He would check and let Members know why only pre-defined indicators were used.

It was clarified that the indicator was red because the figures were outside the target. The Council was receiving more money than expected, so it was not a negative.

The Chairman was concerned that it was difficult to scrutinise performance when it was presented in a form that was difficult to understand.

The Executive Director Place suggested that a description column could be added to explain what the performance was and how it fitted in with the Corporate Plan.

The Chairman asked the Officers to provide the Commission with a draft before the next performance report was presented.

The report was otherwise noted.

91/16 REVIEW OF STREET NAMING & NUMBERING POLICY (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The Executive Member Growth presented the report and explained that the Policy was reviewed every two years. He explained the key points and said that the aim was to seek better collaboration with Town and Parish Councils by getting them to provide a list of their preferred names for future developments which could then be made available to the Developers at an early stage.

It was confirmed that none of the changes would be retrospective; they would apply to new addresses only.

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Councillor Bowes asked if the changes were due to an EU Directive. She was advised that the advice was national and based on best practice.

Councillor Stasiak asked if there was currently a problem with street names. He did not see any need to change and thought that it was good to use people's names in recognition of good works they had done in the community.

The Executive Director Place explained that issues had been raised by the emergency services. The small changes proposed would address those issues and the proposal to collaborate with the Town & Parish Councils would also address the tensions that sometimes occurred between them and developers.

Councillor Joel asked who had responsibility for cleaning street signs and why a request for a sign giving the street name and saying 'leading to' another street name had been refused.

The Executive Member for Growth did not know why the request had been refused as such signs were provided in some places. He said he would look into the matter. With regard to street sign cleaning he believed that Norfolk County Council Rangers were responsible for that. Members should ask their Parish Clerks to notify them where necessary.

Councillor Crawford thought that the parish input should be strengthened because currently the Council could only refuse a Developer's suggested street name if it was invalid. He also asked who was responsible for repairing broken signs. He was advised that Serco was responsible for repairing street signs on behalf of the Council

The Chairman reiterated that parishes should provide a list of their preferred names and plan ahead to be pro-active. Only three parishes had done so, so far.

Councillor M Chapman-Allen asked how parishes would be notified early enough to provide input. She did not think they could provide suggested names until they knew which land was being developed.

The Executive Director Place said the aim was to encourage Town & Parish Councils and Developers to reach agreement. Developers had to have the street names early in the development to provide infrastructure. Therefore parishes needed to provide a pre-populated list regardless of where the development might be.

The Breckland Place Manager informed Members that the feedback from the emergency services was that having a number of properties in the same area with similar names caused issues and they had asked the Council to avoid that if possible.

Councillor Darby was aware that a number of new developments were causing confusion by numbering new houses off the development estate on which they were built giving rise to properties being addressed on roads which run at the back of their properties.

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The Spatial Information Manager agreed that it did cause problems and it would be avoided if future if possible. Generally all properties were addressed on the street that they faced.

Councillor R Richmond said the system worked well. One of his parishes had provided a list and they had been involved. However, the problem arose when the Developer would not accept the suggested names. He asked if the parish proposals would be superseded in that situation.

The Executive Director Place confirmed that the Council could not overturn the Developer's request if a compliant name was put forward otherwise they could challenge it through the Courts.

Councillor Bowes was still concerned about the loss of local identity and the fact that parishes were being discouraged from using local people's names, as they could provide important historical context.

It was confirmed that it was still acceptable to put a surname forward for use as a street name.

Councillor Stasiak said that being able to use a surname overcame his objection to the Policy. He also thought it was a good idea for parishes to prepare a list.

The Chairman proposed an additional recommendation that all Parishes be consulted and asked to provide a list of preferred names for future developments. Members supported that suggestion.

Councillor Brame thought that the adjoining parishes should be able to put forward suggested names as well for developments close to parish boundaries and for large developments such as the Thetford Sustainable Urban Extension.

The Executive Director Place agreed that in such cases lists from all parishes in the area would be considered. If the parishes provided a list the Council would encourage Developers to use those names.

RESOLVED to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

- (1) The proposed amendments to the existing Street Naming and Numbering Policy be accepted and the new version (July 2016) be adopted; and
- (2) All parish councils be contacted and requested to provide a list of proposed names for future developments in their area.

92/16 TASK AND FINISH GROUPS (AGENDA ITEM 8)

Councillor Stasiak (Chairman, Performance T&FG) summarised the work they had undertaken. They had looked at income generation and had talked about some assets to be disposed of. Generally the Council had a well balanced portfolio which would be strengthened by the new Riverside Development in Thetford.

The Corporate Asset Management Strategy would be reviewed shortly.

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Assets were achieving above target income with low arrears. Power issues at Snetterton were being resolved and future focus would be on partnerships for high quality development of the A11 corridor.

He congratulated the Asset Team for their excellent performance. The portfolio was generating a profit which underpinned the Council's ability to maintain low Council Tax. A future T&FG could look at the Corporate Asset Management Strategy.

Councillor Wilkinson (Chairman, Transformation T&FG) had received a comprehensive report from the Executive Director Place. The early intervention hubs and the co-location with the DWP were working well. Work was on-going to determine future opportunities for Elizabeth House.

He suggested that a future workstream could look at the transformation and digitalisation programme.

The Chairman thought that was something that the whole Commission should look at and it would be added to the work programme.

She thanked everyone that had participated in the Task & Finish Groups. The next one would look at Clinical Commissioning and Health Provision and would commence in January. She asked Members interested in taking part to contact the Scrutiny Officer.

93/16 OUTSIDE BODY FEEDBACK (AGENDA ITEM 10)

Feedback from Councillor Bambridge about the Annual Conference of the Internal Drainage Board had been circulated by e-mail.

Councillor Wilkinson had also sent round his report on Norfolk Health Scrutiny. A report was being prepared on the ambulance service for the NHS.

The Youth Advisory Board had received funding of £8,500 for a mental health project and early indications were that further funding would be forthcoming from NCC.

The Executive Director Place said there was a lot of national coverage about sustainable transformation plans and how communities would meet future needs. A document from NCC would be going out for consultation soon and a report would be presented to Council to receive comments before a response was made to that consultation.

94/16 SCRUTINY CALL-INS (AGENDA ITEM 11)

Councillor Wilkinson asked if there had been any follow-up about the Flagship empty homes turn-around times.

The Chairman said it was important to advise tenants to speak to the appropriate people and to get the housing team to help.

The Executive Member Growth said that Housing was in his new portfolio. He would be spending time with that team in January and would be happy to give a brief report to the Commission in February or

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March if required.	
95/16 <u>COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION (AGENDA ITEM 12)</u>	
None.	
96/16 <u>WORK PROGRAMME (AGENDA ITEM 13)</u>	
The Chairman advised that the next scheduled meeting on 5 January had been cancelled. At the following meeting the Disabled Facilities Grant would be reviewed.	
97/16 <u>NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 14)</u>	
The arrangements for the next meeting on 16 February 2017 were noted.	
98/16 <u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 15)</u>	
<u>RESOLVED</u> 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 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.	
99/16 <u>ICT STRATEGY (AGENDA ITEM 15)</u>	
Councillor Bowes declared an interest in this item as a Norfolk County Councillor (as the ICT service agreement was with NCC).	
The Executive Member People & Information presented the report which had been requested at the last meeting. There was an urgent need to build a new platform as the current infrastructure was reaching the end of its life. Modern IT was needed and the budget was already available. The opportunities and finances were explained.	
The report had already been presented to Cabinet.	
<u>RESOLVED</u> to <u>RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL</u> that recommendations 3 and 4 of the report be approved.	

The meeting closed at 3.35 pm

CHAIRMAN