

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

**Held on Thursday, 7 December 2017 at 10.00 am in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr T. J. Ashby	Mr R.G. Kybird
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mr K. Martin
Mr W.P. Borrett	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Councillor C. Bowes	Mrs K. Millbank (Chairman)
Mr R. F. W. Brame	Mrs L.H. Monument
Mr M. P. Brindle	Mr T. F. C. Monument
Mr S. H. Chapman-Allen	Mr M. J. Nairn
Mr H. E. J. Clarke	Mr J. Newton
Mr P.D. Claussen	Mr J.W. Nunn
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mr D. R. R. Oliver
Mr D. M. Crawford	Mr R. R. Richmond
Mr P. R. W. Darby	Mr W. R. J. Richmond
Mr P. M. M. Dimoglou	Mr M. S. Robinson
Mr R.W. Duffield (Vice-Chairman)	Mr J.D. Rogers
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mr K.S. Gilbert	Mr W.H.C. Smith
Councillor E. Gould	Mr A.C. Stasiak
Mr P.J. Hewett	Mr M. Taylor
Mrs T. Hewett	Mrs L.S. Turner
Mrs J. Hollis	Mrs A. M. Webb
Mr T. J. Jermy	Mr N.C. Wilkin
Mr A.P. Joel	Mr P. S. Wilkinson

In Attendance

Anna Graves	- Chief Executive
Maxine O'Mahony	- Executive Director of Strategy & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Christine Marshall	- Executive Director Commercialisation (S151 Officer)
Rob Walker	- Executive Director Place
Mark Stinson	- Executive Manager Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Adrian Mills	- Strategic Manager (Benefits)
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

170/17 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Askew, Carter, M Chapman-Allen, Sherwood and Wassell.

171/17 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

a) Policing in Breckland (Minute No. 148/17)

Under question 11 on page 8 of the agenda pack the word 'provide' be added to read: "What mechanisms are going to be put in place to review

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these proposals and 'provide' reassurance of how this will be monitored".

b) Review of Political Balance (Minute No. 158/17)

The word 'Bi-Election' be corrected to 'By-Election'.

c) Minutes

Subject to the aforementioned amendments, the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

172/17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

173/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

The Chairman thanked all those who had very kindly donated to her charity following the cancellation of her Winter Wonderland Ball.

She was pleased to announce that her Civic Service would be held on 29 April 2018 at 2pm at St Nicholas Church in Dereham; this would be followed by afternoon tea at the Memorial Hall.

The Chairman's engagement list had been attached to the Agenda. She had not been as busy as previous months but had been honoured to attend the Remembrance Sunday event in Norwich and for raising the flag in respect of the White Ribbon Campaign at Breckland Council.

174/17 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 5)

The Leader made the following announcements:

The Silver Social project – Breckland Council was supporting its older people by aiming to confront the issue of isolation experienced by older residents in rural areas. A daytime arts programme had been launched in five villages across Breckland that had already attracted 161 participants. In the New Year a 'Sing Your Song' workshop hosted by the daughter of David Dimbleby would be going on a tour of all the libraries in Breckland.

Community Fridge – Breckland Council, the Wayland Partnership and Recycle for Norfolk had launched Norfolk's first ever 'community fridge'. The fridge had been located in the Wayland Partnership's offices at Wayland House in Watton and was open every day to enable residents and businesses to share surplus food for free. Since the launch, 103kg of food had been donated and any that had not been distributed to those in need had been given to the Wayland Academy to feed their chickens. Building on this success, and as part of the Market Towns Initiative, two more fridges were going to be provided in Swaffham and Thetford before Christmas. This programme would form the largest network of community fridges outside of London.

Norfolk and Waveney Stars – unfortunately, budgets were becoming more constrained; however, Breckland Council wanted to do as much as possible to support its communities. The Leader had attended an Award Ceremony run by Archant and sponsored by Breckland Council along with other District, County and

City Councils in the area to celebrate the real heroes in our communities. Lewis Tibbs won the Volunteer of the Year Award for the Breckland area.

On 21 November 2017, Breckland Council joined local authorities across the Country in participating in the #OurDay social media event that aimed to raise awareness of the range of work being delivered in a typical day by elected members, staff and partners to support local communities and businesses. A positive public engagement campaign had been held and the Leader had been encouraged by the support of Breckland's local services.

As for the present day, Breckland Council's draft Local Plan, a blueprint for growth in the District to meet housing, employment and infrastructure needs to 2036, had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination following a very long period of work. The Leader conveyed his thanks to members, staff, the community representatives and partners for getting the Council to this point. An independent Planning Inspector would now consider whether the draft Plan was sound and legally compliant and it was likely that an Examination in Public would be held in early 2018. If found sound, it was anticipated that the Local Plan would be adopted by Breckland Council in late summer 2018. Alongside this, communities in Breckland were successfully taking advantage of preparing their own Neighbourhood Plans and to date, Yaxham, Mattishall and Attleborough already had Plans and 9 others were being progressed.

The Leader thanked the Chief Executive and her team, and all staff for all their hard work and commitment at a time when budgets were tight.

Councillor Jermy felt that the Silver Social project was a really good example to help stress the need for public transport in Breckland and was concerned that Norfolk County Council (NCC) was proposing more cuts in its budget which would mean fewer bus routes in the area. He asked the Leader if he would be submitting a response to NCC. The Leader advised that Breckland Council would indeed be submitting a response to these budget cuts.

Referring to the Planning Team, a member felt that the Director of Planning and Building Control, Alex Chrusciak and the new Interim Head of Development Management, Jon Berry were both doing a sterling job in the absence of Mike Brennan. It was agreed that Jon Berry would be invited to a future Council meeting to meet Members.

175/17 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 6 (AGENDA ITEM 6)

None.

176/17 QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 7 (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Councillor Jermy asked the Leader if he had seen the State of the Nation 2017 Report in relation to Breckland Council which had been ranked 300th in terms of social ability. He wanted to know if the Leader could provide any reassurance to Breckland residents on this matter. The Leader explained that he had read the report with interest and had recognised that more joined up thinking was needed between NCC and public sector colleagues. He assured Members that this very subject, as well as rural transport issues, had already been included on the agenda at the next Norfolk Leaders' meeting. He recognised the current challenges but everyone worked in very short political cycles and some were very difficult to deliver and he suggested that a Working Group be formed to deliver these

challenges.

Councillor Newton asked the Leader if the £900K that had been set aside for Better Broadband had been drawn down yet. He also asked if any other broadband systems other than fibre optic were being looked at. The Leader highlighted the fact that the village he lived in had terrible broadband speed but Norfolk County Council had rolled out the scheme to the majority of Norfolk and whilst this appeared to be going well, for the Breckland area it had been very challenging. He pointed out that Karen O’Kane, the Better Broadband for Norfolk Programme Director, was visiting the office to discuss these issues as it was crucial that a proper broadband system was provided to Breckland residents and businesses alike. He assured Members that the said Director would be more than happy to provide Members with a presentation at a future Council meeting.

Councillor Clarke commended the Leader for his comments on the Silver Social project and the community fridge in relation to trying to prevent food waste but wanted to know what support, if any, Breckland Council gave to the Mid-Norfolk food bank. The Leader said that he would find out and respond accordingly.

Councillor Brindle asked the Leader if the Council would be providing any support to the people who had lost their jobs due to the recent closure of many large businesses in the area including some banks. Members were informed that as a local authority, the Council was doing all it could to support those people as it was a very skilled workforce that the Breckland area could not afford to lose.

Councillor Taylor mentioned the caravans behind the Abbey Estate. This was the same question that he had asked at the previous meeting and wondered if anything had been progressed. Rob Walker, the Executive Director of Place advised that a plan of action had been put in place.

177/17 PLANNING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 8)

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 23 October 2017 be adopted.

178/17 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION (AGENDA ITEM 9)

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 2 November 2017 be adopted.

179/17 LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (LCTRS) 2018-19 REVIEW (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Executive Member for Place presented the report.

Adrian Mills, the Strategic Manager (Benefits) for the Anglia Revenues Partnership advised that this report aimed to modernise the Council’s Council Tax Reduction Support Scheme and bring it up to date with the Government’s Welfare Reforms to make it simpler for our customers.

Councillor Jermy had been surprised that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had not been considered necessary and whilst he appreciated that this report was classed as a tidying up exercise he felt that it would have been prudent to carry out such an assessment. Also, he could not understand the rationale behind the consultation exercise as not a single response had been received and he felt that the Council had not carried out the consultation in an appropriate manner. In

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conclusion, he felt that Breckland Council should have chosen a different route and provided more options to support low income vulnerable groups in the District. Taking all the aforementioned concerns into account, he would be voting against the recommendations.

RESOLVED that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2018/19 be revised in accordance with the proposals outlined in paragraphs 8.2 and 8.6 of the report (as summarised at paragraph 10.2).

The Labour Group voted against the recommendation.

180/17 AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION (AGENDA ITEM 11)

The Executive Member for Governance presented the report that asked Members to consider and approve a number of amendments to the Constitution.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the amendments detailed in Appendices A to F of the report be approved and the Constitution be amended accordingly; and
- 2) the membership of the Governance and Audit Committee at Part 3 Section D1 (Delegations to Committees), which currently referred to "6 members and 2 substitutes politically balanced", be amended to read "6 non-Cabinet members and 2 substitutes politically balanced".

181/17 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS (AGENDA ITEM 12)

RESOLVED that:

a. Planning Committee

Councillor Nairn be replaced by Councillor William Richmond (Cllr Nairn becomes the substitute Member).

b. Community Governance Review Sub-Committee

Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen be replaced by Councillor Smith.

182/17 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (AGENDA ITEM 13)

The Growth & Commercialisation Directorate presentation had been postponed.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am

CHAIRMAN