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**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**CABINET**

**Held on Monday, 20 September 2021 at 9.30 am in  
The Breckland Conference Centre, Anglia Room, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,  
Dereham, NR19 1EE**

**PRESENT**

Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen  
(Chairman)  
Cllr Paul Claussen (Vice-  
Chairman)  
Cllr Philip Cowen

Cllr Mark Robinson  
Cllr Sarah Suggitt  
Cllr Alison Webb

**Also Present**

Cllr Roger Atterwill  
Cllr Roy Brame  
Cllr Harry Clarke  
Cllr Helen Crane

Cllr Jane James  
Cllr Robert Kybird  
Cllr Philip Morton  
Cllr Peter Wilkinson

**In Attendance**

Anton Bull  
Andrew D'Arcy  
Andrew Holdsworth  
Adrian Mills  
  
Maxine O'Mahony  
  
Rob Walker  
  
Simon Wood  
Teresa Smith  
Julie Britton

- Procurement & Contracts Manager
- Planning Policy Manager
- Assistant Director Economy and Growth
- Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (Revenues & Benefits) ARP
- Executive Director Strategy & Resources and Head of Paid Service
- Executive Director Place & Delivery and Monitoring Officer
- Director of Planning & Building Control
- Democratic Services Team Leader
- Democratic Services Officer

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**75/21 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

**76/21 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bambridge, Hewett and Sherwood.

**77/21 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

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**78/21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None declared.

**79/21 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING**

The Chairman welcomed all non-Members present to the meeting.

**80/21 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)**

The Chairman explained the Government Cabinet re-shuffle that had occurred and what that meant for Local Government.

**81/21 BRECKLAND COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS (STANDING ITEM)**

The Executive Member for Housing, Health and Communities, Councillor Alison Webb informed Members that the following applications had been received for approval during September:

- GW Staniforth Charity £5,000 to carry out a range of repairs to Kings House Gardens, Thetford
- £2722 to Narborough & Narford Community Centre to run a new digital support project
- £1000 to Narborough Local history society to construct a bird watching photography hide.
- £3439 to Weeting Village Hall to provide a new youth shelter.

Councillor Wilkinson thanked Breckland Council for the funding that would support great projects within his ward.

Councillors Robinson and James thanked Breckland Council for the grant provided to Staniforth trust as it would mean a lot to the friends of the gardens.

Councillor Kybird was also pleased to add his support to the application for Weeting Village Hall.

The Executive Member for Housing, Health and Communities pointed out that the remaining amount of funding had been allocated to be used for grants for towns and villages to help celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

**82/21 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (LCTRS) FOR 2022 - 2023**

The Executive Member for Finance, Revenue and Benefits welcomed the report that considered options for the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2022 – 2023.

Adrian Mills, the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (Revenues & Benefits) ARP, explained that each year the Council was required to review its Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) and the report outlined several options for consideration in relation to recommendations for scheme amendments for 2022-23.

Councillor Clarke welcomed the proposed changes and was pleased to see changes had been made to the Capital threshold that would help residents

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during challenging times.

The Executive Member for Customer, Digital and Performance was pleased to see that the process for claiming would be streamlined and made simpler and easier for the customer to access.

The Executive Member for Finance, Revenue and Benefits went on to encourage the Department for Work and Pensions to share information directly with the Anglia Revenues Partnership which would allow the streamlining of applications further for the residents.

**Options**

The detailed options were outlined within the report.

**Reasons for Recommendation**

These options were recommended to improve the customer journey and reduce customer contact and the burden of evidence requirement.

**RESOLVED** that the annual review of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the 2022-23 year and undertaking consultation on the options below, with a final report back to Cabinet in January to approve final scheme changes be approved.

The consultation would include the following options:

- Option 3 - Reducing the capital threshold to £10,000 and abolish tariff income
- Option 5 - Introducing a fixed rate deduction of £7.40 for non-passported non-dependants
- Option 6 - Streamlining the claim process
- Option 7 - Increasing tolerance for Universal Credit data re-assessments

**83/21 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economic Development and Growth, Councillor Paul Claussen introduced the report that sought Cabinet's approval for changes to the proposed approach in respect of the Local Plan Review.

Andrew Holdsworth, the Assistant Director for Economy and Growth provided Members with a presentation that outlined the context and background of the report, together with the financial implications and the proposed timeline.

Councillor Atterwill asked the following questions:

- 1) It was understood that the existing Local Plan policies would not hold weight until the new Local Plan would be adopted in 2027. What would that mean for communities that experience aggressive development, and in particular to those that do not have a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2) Had the Local Plan Working Group agreed to the option proposed.
- 3) Would there be flexibility within the budget if more resources were required to carry out the review.

In response, Simon Wood, the Director for Planning and Building Control explained that the solution proposed was a pragmatic approach. The Local

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Plan policy was one of a suite of policies [for example the five-year land supply] and would be in a robust position to make planning decisions going forward.

The Deputy Leader informed Members that the Local Plan Working Group had not been involved or had met to make any recommendations to Cabinet.

The Assistant Director for Economy and Growth advised that the allocation was considered to be generous and would provide the best plan going forward and that the resource allocation would be reviewed continually to ensure it was fit for purpose.

Councillor Morton felt that the Government had encouraged Local Authorities to have Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans and asked how Breckland Council would justify the delay. In addition, he asked why there was a budget shortfall of £600,000; and as the Council had declared a climate emergency, he felt the Local Plan would help to implement those policies.

The Deputy Leader stated that it had been a constant changing environment that the Officers had been working with and the best decisions had been made on the information that had been provided at the time. He added that it was a technical report to enable the Council to get back in the right place at the right time.

Councillor Atterwill asked the Director of the Planning and Building Control that the partial review would take place between 2021-2024 but the new Local Plan would not be adopted until 2027, and therefore would the existing policies still hold weight until 2027. He also asked why the working group had not been consulted upon as he felt it would be diligent to gain input from Members.

The Director of Planning and Building Control said that it would not be possible to provide a commitment that those policies would continue to hold weight.

The Deputy Leader added that he had made the decision as an Executive Member for the item to be discussed at Cabinet and that it did not have to be taken to the Local Plan Working Group first.

The Executive Member for Finance, Revenue and Benefits summarised that the Local Plan had been adopted by Members in 2019 but the Inspectors had said that the Council had until November 2022 to undertake a partial review, specifically in regard to housing, non-travelling gypsy and travellers, accessibility of home standards and economic development. A response had been received from the High Court in July 2021 which was why questions could not be answered until now. However, work had not stopped, and a decision had been made to look at climate and environmental changes and if this Council wanted to make a difference the Local Plan needed a fundamental refresh. He reminded Members that it was a technical paper that had outlined the process and that Members would have the opportunity to influence the policies.

**Options:**

There are 3 options:

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- 1) Undertake a 'single policy' Partial Review that seeks to amend the wording of Policy INF 03 and remove the date by which the Partial Review should be submitted for examination to reflect the submission date proposed for the Substantive Review.
- 2) Undertake a Full Review of the Plan only.
- 3) Undertake the Partial Review as set out in Policy INF03 and a full review of the Plan within 5 years in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework.

**Reasons for Recommendation**

The Preparation of a Local Plan is a statutory requirement. Plans must be underpinned by an appropriate evidence base, much of which is required at an early stage of the preparation process to inform future decisions over development strategies and allocations.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) a Single Policy Partial Review of Policy INF 03 is prepared in parallel with a Substantive Review of the whole Local Plan as outlined in Section 4 of the report
- 2) timetables for both the Single Policy Partial and Substantive reviews are approved as set out in the revised Local Development Scheme
- 3) further work is undertaken and continued challenge and monitoring to agree the ongoing financial resource required for the preparation of the Single Policy Partial and Substantive reviews of the Plan
- 4) the Statement of Community Involvement is approved for public consultation for a period of 6 weeks.

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**84/21 NORFOLK STRATEGIC FLOOD ALLIANCE - STRATEGY**

Rob Walker, the Executive Director for Place and Delivery presented the report in the absence of the Executive Member for Waste and Environment.

The Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA) had formed earlier in 2021 under the chairmanship of Lord Dannatt, with the purpose for Members to work together to ensure Norfolk's communities and water infrastructure was safer and more resilient to the risks of inland and coastal flooding.

One of the early outputs of the NSFA was that a single telephone number had been created for the reporting of all flooding incidences whether an emergency or not. In addition, as part of the NSFA's Strategy a target to focus attention on a set of specific sites that required more dedicated assistance to alleviate flood risk had been set. In the first tranche of 16 sites there were six located in Breckland which were, Watton/Saham Toney, Cranworth, Yaxham, Mattishall, Necton and Kenninghall. All of these locations in Breckland had suffered with flooding for specific reasons in those communities. It was intended that future sites would be included within future tranches.

Councillor Clarke hoped that those areas affected by flooding, particularly within his ward, would not be overlooked and asked if the flyer had been sent out to all residents and whether those properties that were affected, could apply for a grant.

The Chairman confirmed that the Executive Member for Waste and Environment would welcome an opportunity to speak with Members or communities that had concerns or experienced flooding issues. Whilst those listed within the first tranche would be a priority, other areas had not been forgotten. He also confirmed that the flyers were being distributed across the County.

**Options:**

- 1) The Council endorse the NSFA strategy and the work being undertaken by the members of the NSFA to support communities in Norfolk to lessen the threat of flood risk.
- 2) The Council does not endorse and support the NSFA strategy. This is

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not recommended as it is not in keeping with its policy position on climate change and sustainability.

**Reason for Recommendation**

It was recommended that the Council endorsed the NSFA strategy and work programme outlined within it. If the Council were not to do so it would be in contradiction to the Council's policy position on sustainability and its climate emergency declaration. Positively supporting the NSFA strategy provided a strategic commitment to assist the important need to help Breckland's communities with the alleviation of flood-risk and in-time improve the infrastructure needed in the face of the environmental changes occurring.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet endorse the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance Strategy.

**85/21 QUARTER 1 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021-22**

The Executive Member for Finance, Revenue and Benefits presented the report that provided information on the forecast full year financial position of the Council as at 30 June 2021.

Members noted the report.

**86/21 CONSTITUTION – CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES**

The Executive Member for Planning, Leisure and Contracts, Councillor Sarah Suggitt presented the report that asked Members to consider the proposed amendments to the Contracts Procedure Rules and the associated delegations to Officers.

**Options:**

To approve or decline any of the proposed amendments to the delegations detailed in Appendix A of the report and any of the proposed amendments to the Contract Procedure Rules set out in Appendix B of the report.

**Reasons for Recommendation:**

The proposed amendments to in Appendix B of the report will comply with audit requirements.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) the proposed amendments to the Log of Delegations to officers relating to contracts, detailed in Appendix A within the report, be approved; and
- 2) the proposed amendments to the Contracts Procedure Rules, detailed in Appendix B of the report, be approved; and

**RECOMMEND to FULL COUNCIL:**

- 3) the Constitution be amended in accordance with Appendix B within the report, and so that the Contract Procedure Rules are inserted after the Financial Management Standards.

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**87/21 THETFORD TOWN CENTRE THRIVING PLACES PROGRAMME AND THE MAHARAJAH RANJIT & DULEEP SINGH PARK**

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economic Development and Growth presented the report that updated Members on the progress with the Thetford Town Centre activity programme and sought approval to progress the name change of 'Butten Island' in Thetford to the 'Maharajah Ranjit & Duleep Singh Park'.

Councillor James thanked the Council for enhancing the areas that were within her ward which had received a positive response from residents.

Councillor Brame said he was speaking on behalf of the Sikh community who did not want to rename Butten Island but had asked if the park could be called the 'Maharajah Ranjit & Duleep Singh Park on Butten Island'. By renaming the park, it would create a tourist attraction and allow their culture to be involved within Thetford.

The Executive Member for Customer, Digital and Performance, Councillor Mark Robinson endorsed the report and added that the links between Thetford and the Sikh community were very strong.

It was proposed that recommendation 2 be reworded to: "the renaming of Butten Island in Thetford to "Maharajah Ranjit & Duleep Singh Park on Butten Island" in recognition of the important cultural and historical connections to Thetford". This was seconded.

**Options:**

- 1) Note the report, and progress the proposed renaming of Butten Island (Recommended)
- 2) Note the report, and do nothing, keeping the current name of Butten Island

**Reasons for Recommendation:**

The Council's "Thriving Places" agenda prioritises innovations at a local level which help enhance local areas, increase public and visitor engagement, and increases investment in local areas. It is believed this change, whilst modest in scale, could have significant positive impacts in regard to all these elements.

The renaming of the island would enhance the Punjab history and culture and the significance to the town of Thetford, encouraging visitors. It would also provide a further national-level point of interest to highlight the strength and diversity of Thetford's culture, and significance within historic and modern UK.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) the recent progress in supporting the ongoing regeneration and growth in Thetford Town centre under the Council's Thriving Places programme, and future plans to support the Town be noted.
- 2) the renaming of Butten Island in Thetford to "Maharajah Ranjit & Duleep Singh Park on Butten Island" in recognition of the important cultural and historical connections to Thetford be approved.

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**88/21 NEXT MEETING**

The arrangements for the next meeting on Monday 15 November 2021 at 9.30 am were noted.

The meeting closed at 11.13 am

CHAIRMAN