

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**COUNCIL**

**Held on Thursday, 2 September 2021 at 10.00 am in the  
The Breckland Conference Centre, Anglia Room, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,  
Dereham, NR19 1EE**

**PRESENT**

Cllr Roy Brame (Chairman)	Cllr Chris Harvey
Cllr Tristan Ashby	Cllr Paul Hewett
Cllr Stephen Askew	Cllr Jane James
Cllr Roger Atterwill	Cllr Terry Jermy
Cllr Gordon Bambridge	Cllr Tina Kiddell
Cllr Timothy Birt	Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cllr Robert Kybird
Cllr Claire Bowes	Cllr Ian Martin
Cllr Hilary Bushell	Cllr Keith Martin
Cllr Marion Chapman-Allen	Cllr Linda Monument
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	Cllr Mark Robinson
Cllr Ed Colman	Cllr Ian Sherwood
Cllr Paul Claussen	Cllr Sarah Suggitt
Cllr Philip Cowen	Cllr Taila Taylor
Cllr Helen Crane	Cllr Stuart Terry
Cllr Vera Dale	Cllr Lynda Turner
Cllr Susan Dowling	Cllr Alison Webb
Cllr Richard Duffield	Cllr David Wickerson
Cllr Phillip Duigan	Cllr Nigel Wilkin
Cllr Kay Grey	Cllr Peter Wilkinson

**In Attendance**

Maxine O'Mahony	- Executive Director Strategy & Resources and Head of Paid Service
Rob Walker	- Executive Director Place & Delivery and Monitoring Officer
Sarah Wolstenholme-Smy	- Legal Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Anton Bull	- Procurement & Contracts Manager
Teresa Smith	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer
Ruth Tudge	- Democratic Services Officer

**Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**81/21 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brindle, Carter, Clarke, Eagle, Gilbert, Morton, Nairn, Nunn and Oliver.

**82/21 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

**Action  
By**

**83/21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

None declared.

**84/21 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

The Chairman announced that Mrs June Sangster, had served Ashill Parish Council as the clerk for 40 years. Mrs Sangster had carried out a tremendous amount of work for her community and it gave him great pleasure to recognise her achievement at this Full Council meeting.

He asked members that if they had anyone in their Wards that they felt deserved some form of official recognition to let him know and he would mention them at Full Council meetings in future.

Finally, all members would have received an invitation to the joint Chairs' reception with the previous Chair of the Council, Councillor Lynda Turner.

He praised all members for their help and assistance within their communities over the last 18 months as all deserved some recognition and he and Councillor Turner looked forward to seeing members accompanied by their partners at this forthcoming social event.

**85/21 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen, the Leader of the Council made the following announcements.

He was delighted that this meeting was being held in the council chamber, for the first time in a very long while. Although most Members had met in person in July, to be back in a familiar setting, was truly a major milestone in this Council returning to a 'new normal' - whilst taking steps to mitigate against covid – such as receiving vaccinations, adhering to social distancing and using hand sanitiser – it had not stopped the democratic process.

He was proud of the support that this Council had provided – and continued to provide – to local businesses and residents, keeping local lives and livelihoods at the forefront of activity throughout the pandemic, and as everyone began to emerge from the pandemic, this Council already had a number of initiatives underway to ensure Breckland had a bright future.

For example, as part of the Council's Future Breckland programme, a draft plan for Dereham had recently been released for feedback. This could mean some bold changes being made to the town, including rerouting traffic, creating new housing and business opportunities, and brightening up the high street.

Through the same initiative, residents in Watton and Swaffham were being invited to attend imminent engagement events to discuss their towns, there were so many things that were fantastic about Breckland's market towns whilst also recognising that things could be made even better going forward.

Finally, Attleborough and Thetford residents would get their turn to have their say on their town in the New Year.

Further works were underway to improve the district to make it more attractive for

residents and visitors.

Just recently, in Thetford, the former riverboat restaurant which had sat for years at the town's riverside had been removed by this Council, in response to residents and businesses in the area identifying it as an eyesore which was bringing the town down.

This was an opportunity to address, and Breckland Council took action. It was a great example of this Council listening to local voices and investing in its towns, making the riverside more attractive and constantly pushing the towns forward. It was fantastic news residents and coincided with the entertainment complex now being fully let and further improvements being made to the surrounding area.

Meanwhile, in Dereham, the Council was supporting the delivery of the Ellenor Fenn community garden, which was being delivered in partnership with the About Dereham Group, Dencora and the local Baptist Church, with funding from Central Government and this Council's Market Town Initiative.

The new public space off Dereham's high street had brought together a number of local groups and businesses to turn a disused wasteland into a beautiful garden meeting space for the community, and he was thoroughly looking forward to it being officially opened on Saturday, 11th September.

Finally, in Swaffham, work would shortly get underway as part of Heritage Action Zone programme, which would see a £700,000 programme focusing on enhancing the town while protecting its rich heritage.

This was expected to include making repairs to buildings on the historic high street to bring them back to their former glory, while developing a plan for the town's future which made the most of the town's history and heritage, to make it even more attractive to residents, visitors and shoppers.

The district had faced an immense challenge during the covid pandemic but was getting through it and was now set to take further strides forward into a bright future, ensuring Breckland remained a place where people and businesses could thrive.

The Leader then introduced Mr Ronnie Coutts MBE MA, Managing Director for Serco Environmental Service, in attendance who was going to provide Members with an update of the Serco contract.

Mr Coutts supported 24 other councils across the UK and joining him at the meeting was Emma Windle, Senior Contract Manager for Norfolk who led the Teams in Breckland, North Norfolk & Kings Lynn & West Norfolk.

There was currently a shortage of approximately 65,000 HGV drivers not just in Breckland but across the UK. There were several factors to consider for this shortage - the loss of EU nationals and the significant increase elsewhere for Amazon drivers, increased salaries, and the move to other industries.

In Breckland, the contract was working well but it had been a difficult mobilisation, not only in respect of the new contract but building a new depot and receiving the new vehicles during Covid.

During this transition weaknesses were found in the management team and these issues had been addressed. Serco's commitment to Breckland was for the long term and was about getting the right people in place to serve the communities.

There were around 1700 properties (2% in total) that had not had their bins collected. Overall, over 90,000 bins were collected by Serco every single week in Breckland.

In terms of drivers and vacancies - 17 refuse trucks were deployed each day, there were currently 8 vacancies with 3 new starters joining the company very soon. Jobs were being advertised on the Council's website to attract drivers, rates of pay were being changed and 7 loaders were being trained as drivers. There was a backlog of HGV tests until November and would take a few months to bring the staff up to full complement – it was not a quick fix.

The crews, supervisors and managers were all doing a fantastic job, working all hours and were very keen to help and make a better service. Drivers from other councils were being utilised and were volunteering to come to Breckland and work at weekends to catch up. Agency drivers were being used but only for the short term.

There were benefits from the tri party arrangements as it enabled managers, vehicles, and crews to be moved to support demand and provide further assistance when needed.

Reducing carbon footprint formed a big part of the work by reducing the number of vehicles on the road and finding shorter routes.

The Chairman asked that any in-depth questions should be emailed to the Chairman of O&SC before the O&SC meeting on Thursday so that responses could be provided.

Cllr Jermy mentioned staff welfare and was pleased that it was being addressed. Earlier this year, opposition members had raised numerous concerns about the Serco contract and these issues had continued and it had been reported that agency workers were being paid 20% to 30% more than permanent staff and asked for an estimate for these additional costs and who was paying for it, Breckland or Serco.

Mr Coutts stated that agency rates were higher than what the individual would receive as an agency had to take their costs into account. Serco was increasing its rates of pay for the drivers and the Team had been briefed. Serco was responsible for paying those additional costs. Serco did not want to hire agency staff, permanent employees was preferred and the benefit of working for a company long term was quite different to agency work, such as paid holidays etc.

Councillor Kiddell asked for reassurance that Watton would be kept tidy in the same manner as it had been before under this new contract.

Mr Coutts stated that teams had been brought in to help with the street cleansing schedules but occasionally road sweepers/cleaners would have to be moved to help with refuse and recycling for continuity, particularly with the current shortages of staff and drivers. Tactical short-term decisions had to be made.

Cllr Dowling asked the Leader about the significant pressure and reported bullying of Serco workers and asked if Breckland Council had a duty of care to these workers and how it ensured that their welfare was being treated fairly.

The Leader stated that Breckland Council as an employer had a very clear whistle blowing policy in place and in respect of Serco, they would have the same standards and processes. He implored members that if they had any concerns or if any issues had been reported directly to them, they had a moral duty and a duty of care to report

the matter to Maxine O'Mahony, the Head of Paid Services who would pass these concerns onto Serco who was responsible for the welfare and duty of care for their staff. He knew that Serco would take a robust approach if that type of behaviour was taking place. They were private HR issues between the employer and the employee.

Cllr Terry mentioned the significant delay for residents getting replacement or new garden waste bins and asked what the estimate was for lost income for Breckland Council whilst these delays persisted.

The Leader stated that members may or may not be aware that there were very few suppliers across the country who were manufacturers of bins and for numerous reasons there was a delay across the country for the delivery of new bins. However, he was pleased to inform Members that the deliveries had arrived, and Serco had been extra resilient within their Teams to be able to transport those bins to new customers and to get the replacement bins out to those in need. Both Breckland and Serco had been in communication with those residents who had experienced such delays and had apologised accordingly.

Members were reminded that Breckland Council had continued to provide garden waste collections throughout the pandemic unlike Rotherham County Council who had disregarded their garden waste scheme completely.

Cllr Atterwill asked Mr Coutts about grass cutting particularly in his Ward where the grass used to be cut every 2 to 3 weeks but since the new contract it was being cut a lot less. The Leader thought this was quite a technical question and was aware that Mr Coutts would not be aware of the zoning position and the rates of cut across the whole of the district. The focus of the conversation was around missed bins and he asked Cllr Atterwill to defer his question until the O&SC meeting next Thursday.

Cllr Atterwill did not feel that this was acceptable.

It was agreed that the Leader would send a written response to Councillor Atterwill.

Councillor Ian Martin said that the experience within the Mattishall Ward over the last few weeks had been remarkably good. Bins had been missed one day and had been dealt with the following day (except for one) but overall, he felt that it had been a remarkably good service. He asked if there was a contact number/email that Councillors could use to make direct contact with Serco or via a particular Officer if there were any particular concerns that needed to be raised within Members' Wards. An updated contact list would be provided for Members after this meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Martin to the meeting as he had been unwell for quite a while.

Mr Coutts said that contact details would be provided but the best and quickest way to make contact was through the call-centre as the call was sent directly to the cabs and pushed straight through to the crews so that the issue could be sorted immediately. All this was done via Whitespace and was working well. If it was a complicated matter, then the preferred method would be to email or contact one of the officers direct such as Emma Windle (Serco) or Riana Rudland (BDC).

The Leader and the Chairman thanks Mr Coutts for attending the meeting.

**86/21 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 6 (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

Councillor Tim Birt had submitted a question on notice which had been sent to Members in the form of a supplementary agenda. The response had been included.

The Chairman asked Councillor Birt if had a supplementary question he would like to ask that related to his original question.

With regards to the boat disposal, the floating restaurant in Thetford, Councillor Birt declared that he had been a registered bidder at this particular auction but had bid on other lots and not on the boat.

The written response that he had received had made a great deal of effort, in his opinion, to attempt to justify why a twitter account in the name of the Leader was not his personal account. He felt that twitter was not an official way to disclose expenditure when the monies involved came collectively from the residents of the district. There should have been an Officer report or a member briefing on this matter particularly as this was going to be in the public arena. The Leader had stated in his response that it was not in the Council's best interests for the floating restaurant to be reopened and yet had paid well over the guide price.

The Chairman interrupted Councillor Birt at this point but understood what he was trying to get across, but it was supposed to be a question not a statement and reminded Councillor Birt that he was allowed one supplementary question only.

Councillor Birt then asked the Leader how this complied with the asset disposal regulations set out within the Council's Constitution.

The Leader felt that he had already responded satisfactorily but he would follow up this supplementary question in writing. He pointed out that Thetford Members had been very supportive with the Councils direct intervention for the removal of the boat and Councillor Jermy, the Leader of the Labour Group and a Thetford Member had been very supportive of the action taken. In respect of the financial cost, it had been advertised on the auction site and the delegation within the Constitution allowed that type of activity to happen within budget. This asset had not been purchased for the Council to use as it was for regeneration purposes only and therefore fell out of the parameters of disposal. The price had been higher than expected but Breckland Council was committed across all five of its market towns to have direct intervention when it was financially practical to do so and within budget and within its Constitution. If outside the framework, it would have to go through the correct procedures to ensure that a budget was in place and with Council or Cabinet approval if required.

Councillor Birt raised a point of order under the said part of the Constitution and asked the Monitoring Officer to investigate.

Rob Walker, the Executive Director of Place & Delivery and the Council's Monitoring Officer asked Councillor Birt to explain the section in the Constitution that he was referring to.

The Chairman reminded Members of the correct procedure for raising a point of order.

Councillor Birt provided the Chairman with the relevant details, page 151 of the Constitution, Section 3.7.

It was agreed that the Monitoring Officer would provide Councillor Birt with a written response.

**87/21 QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 7 (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Chairman reminded Members that this part of the meeting was for questions only and not statements and had a time constraint of 30 minutes. All questions should be directed to the relevant Portfolio Holder or to the Leader.

Councillor Jermy, the Leader of the Labour Group, directed his question to the Leader, Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen.

He mentioned a report that had recently been released by the Salvation Army, 'Understanding People Understanding Places' that looked in detail at the Government's 'Levelling Up Agenda' and the release of new funding.

This report claimed that numerous areas would be left behind by the Government as the formula did not adequately look at entrenched deprivation and morality. One of the areas that it listed of being unfairly penalised was the Breckland district as the formula relied heavily on employment figures and whilst Breckland had always had good levels of employment it struggled with the numbers of zero hours contracts, seasonal employment, and low wages.

He asked the Leader if he would commit to writing to the Government to urge them to review the formula used for the said funding, citing the Salvation Army report that detailed how Breckland residents would be unfairly missing out.

The Leader said that he had not seen the Salvation Army report but had made a note of it and would read it cover to cover; however, he assured Members that he had, via the District Councillors Network (DCN), lobbied the Secretary of State in relation to the formula, and in particular with the emerging 'Levelling Up White Paper' in October/November of this year to ensure that the formula was changed. He would also write again individually as a Council rather than via the DCN to ensure that the Secretary of State had taken account of the Salvation Army report.

Councillor Atterwill, the Leader of the Independent Group, asked the Leader if he would support the creation of a Task & Finish Group to closely monitor the Serco contract and make suggestions for any improvements.

The Leader advised that he would support any decision made by any Committee Chairmen but there was already a clear framework in place in respect of the contract. There was an Oversight Board not just for Breckland but across the three Councils that had a clear ability to feed into the Contract Monitoring Board but if the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission decided that a Task & Finish Group was required on any matter as Leader of the Council, he would support that decision.

Councillor Birt asked a question on behalf of Saham Toney Parish Council. The Leader had attended the Parish meeting on 2 August 2021 where there was some discussion about the Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan and the problems the parish was experiencing and, the Leader at the time, had said he would investigate these issues. A letter had been sent from the Parish Council to the Leader that included some of the issues outstanding including an instruction that Breckland Council would provide livestreaming when the examination period was set but yet the Council had since advised that it would not be able to do accommodate this. There were also out

of date elements on the Breckland website as according to the website Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan had yet to undergo Regulation 16 Consultation but that had been completed in December 2020.

The Chairman interrupted Councillor Birt, he had asked the question but again was trying to make a statement and asked the Leader if he would like to respond.

The Leader said that he had been delighted to attend the Parish meeting at the invitation of Councillor Crane and the Chairman of Saham Toney Parish Council. A plethora of very good questions had emerged from this meeting not just in respect of the Parish but across the district and quite rightly members were challenging him on matters pertaining to their Neighbourhood Plan. He had raised these issues with the Cabinet Member and the Director of Planning in relation to Councillor Birt's questions pertaining to the website and had notified the Parish Council that this would be updated following the referendum that was due to take place and the communication was still on-going with the clerk and the Chairman of the Parish Council.

Councillor Wickerson directed his question to Councillor Webb, Executive Member for Housing, Health & Communities. He drew attention to the previous Council minutes where he had raised a question about Flagship and the fact that Members had still not received lists of properties in their own Wards. It was promised that this would be delivered by the end of July, and he asked for an update from Councillor Webb as to what had happened to that list.

Councillor Webb stated that the Housing Team had been chasing Flagship for this list and it was expected imminently but assured Members that following this meeting she would ask the Housing Team to send another reminder and she thanked Councillor Wickerson for raising this again.

Councillor Dowling stated that it was estimated that approximately 9,000 families in Breckland would receive a cut in income of £1,040.00 a year from 6 October 2021 as the government scrapped the £20 top-up to Universal credit that was over £9m in reduced support for the most deprived families in Breckland. £9m less available to spend in the local economy and had been described as the biggest overnight cut to the basic rate of social security since the foundation of the modern welfare state. She asked the Leader if he would join other Council Leaders and write to the Government asking them to keep the support at the current levels.

Members were reminded that the increase to Universal Credit was only a temporary measure through the pandemic that was communicated quite clearly to all recipients. As a District Council, it had its own internal Hardship fund that stood up through the pandemic and still had money available for those who found themselves in financial hardship. There was also the Council Tax Hardship fund that had not had a high uptake thus far and the money was still ringfenced for those who found themselves in financial difficulties.

Once again, Breckland District Council was setting a precedent compared to its colleagues and was the only council in Norfolk at district level that still financially supported the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) that did incredible work on money advice across the district. He was aware that Stephen James, the Council's Assistant Director for Communities & Housing and Councillor Alison Webb as the Cabinet Member were both working closely with the CAB to ensure that it was the first point of contact to ensure that residents received the help they needed in respect of financial and debt advice.



Councillor Atterwill referred to the previous meeting in July where he had asked a question about the refresh of the Breckworld App. At that time, the Leader had stated that the refresh should take place in time for the school summer holidays and he asked whether this had been actioned.

Members were informed that the update had taken place and went live the first week of August.

Following on from the comments that had been made previously, Councillor Birt stated that if the Council was confident in the quality of the Council's Covid Risk Assessment why had it not been published in full along with the methodology and the test results. Otherwise, he felt that he was in the perverse situation as a Member having to make an FOI request on his own Council.

The Leader was quite perplexed at the question and did not have that technical detail to hand and referred the question to Rob Walker, the Monitoring Officer.

Members were informed that at several meetings previously the Council had published everything it was required to publish as an authority and was comfortable in that position; therefore, the question had already been answered.

Councillor Birt asked how many Afghan refugees had the Council offered to resettle in the District and how many did the Council plan to accept.

The Leader thanked Councillor Birt for his question. The Council's position on this matter and was no different to the Syrian refugees and being a large District of 500 square miles with urban and rural settlements, the Council had to ensure that those individuals who were settled within Norfolk were settled where those wider wrap around services were available.

The East of England Local Government Association was liaising with the Home Office, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCO) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) to ensure that all those Government departments were working collectively. Norfolk County Council was taking the lead on behalf of Norfolk and the current position was the exact same as the Syrian refugee relocation and was currently happening in the Norwich and the Norwich hinterland areas where those support services were available.

This Council had set a precedent during the Syrian refugee situation as it offered financial support to those authorities to ensure that they could deliver the service required and Breckland Council was doing the same again and was poised ready to support those Councils if and when they asked for it. Breckland Council had also been working with the private sector and the social landlords across the District to ensure that if properties were available that a list was created and if the position moved away from the Norwich area that such refugees could be settled within the District. At this point in time, Breckland did not have any Afghan families settled in Breckland.

The Chairman thought it was very pleasing to know that as a District, it was getting involved in this terrible situation that those people had found themselves in. He asked the Leader to continue with his updates to Members on this matter.

**88/21 MINUTES (FOR INFORMATION ONLY) (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

(a) Cabinet: 26 July 2021

It was noted that the recommendation under Minute No. 74/21 (Shared Procurement Service) would be discussed under Agenda item 16.

**RESOLVED** that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 26 July 2021 be noted.

(b) Overview & Scrutiny Commission: 22 July 2021

**RESOLVED** that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 22 July 2021 be noted

(c) Governance & Audit Committee: 24 June 2021

Councillor Birt stated that he had attended and contributed to all Governance & Audit Committee meetings as a non-member and there had been a possibility that this particular meeting could not take place due to it being inquorate until the very last moment. In order to prevent this happening again, he asked if it would be possible for him to be appointed as a substitute Member for Councillor Grey, even though Councillor Grey was in a different political party.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Birt for his offer, but this was a matter that needed to be considered under agenda item 11, nominations for committees and other seats.

**RESOLVED** that the confirmed Minutes of the Governance & Audit Committee meeting held on 24 June 2021 be noted.

(d) Licensing Committee: 21 July 2021

**RESOLVED** that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 21 July 2021 be noted.

(e) Committee of the Licensing Authority: 21 July 2021

**RESOLVED** that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Committee of the Licensing Authority meeting held on 21 July 2021 be noted.

(f) Planning Committee: 5 July 2021

**RESOLVED** that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 5 July 2021 be noted.

(g) Planning Committee: 2 August 2021

**RESOLVED** that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 2 August 2021 be noted.

**89/21 PERMANENCY OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen, the Leader of the Council presented the report.

Members were asked to cast their minds back to the time when he had written to all Members about the departure of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and since then to appoint an interim Head of Paid Service for the authority to see the organisation through the parting of the ways with South Holland District Council after a very successful 12 years.

Members were asked to note other areas within the report, such as the wider strategic partnership with other councils across Norfolk.

Approval was being sought to undertake 5 recommendations, and these were proposed and seconded accordingly.

Councillor Birt was content with the first recommendation; however, the other aspects of this report did not seem to offer a clear justification as to the need of a CEO and the report itself had not explored any possible alternatives. He had noticed that there was also a very precise figure of £68,000 per annum budget increase but again he felt there was no justification for that figure. He felt that some further work should be carried out on these matters before considering the recommendations.

Councillor Jermy said he was always nervous about interim arrangements and more nervous when such arrangements dragged on for a long period of time and therefore was pleased with the recommendations. He asked the Leader for clarification on whether it would be a Full Council decision on the appointment of a new CEO and if the role of the CEO would be the same as the Head of Paid Service and would these two roles be combined. He also drew attention to the draft structure as he had noticed that there were still quite manager level vacancies within the organisation and was concerned about the number of vacancies and asked if these would be progressed in tandem with the recruitment of the CEO.

In response to Councillor Birt's question, the Leader advised that the Scheme of Delegation was capped at £68,000 and anything beyond that for this purpose would need to come back to Full Council for ratification.

The Leader agreed with Councillor Jermy that interim was not fit for purpose. The CEO post would go through internal recruitment first of all and the Constitution did not require this matter to come back to Full Council for clarification; however, he would ensure that this would happen on this particular appointment. This would be an Appointment & Disciplinary Panel's recommendation to Full Council and of course debated as to whether the recommendation should be agreed.

The CEO and the Head of Paid Service position would be merged once a CEO had been appointed. In relation to gaps in the organisation structure most of these positions had now been filled and it was the responsibility of the Assistant Directors and the Head of HR to move those forward as quickly as possible. With regard to the wider structure if a Director or an Assistant Director applied for the post of CEO and was successful, the position would be backfilled but not at the same time. With regard to the backfilling of a Director or an Assistant Director position that might not come back to Full Council for ratification depending on the timeline.

The recommendations were taken enbloc, and subject to Councillor Birt voting against recommendations 2 to 5, it was:

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) the interim Senior Management Structure be made permanent;
- 2) an Appointments & Disciplinary Panel be convened, and an internal recruitment process be undertaken to appoint a permanent Chief Executive Officer. If an internal appointment is unsuccessful an external recruitment process be undertaken;
- 3) delegation be granted to the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Leader, to make changes to the current Senior Management Structure as necessary, providing such changes do not increase the budget by more than £68,000 per annum;
- 4) subject to successful recruitment of an internal candidate for the recruitment of a Chief Executive Officer, the Appointments & Disciplinary Panel be convened for any consequential recruitment within the Senior Management Structure; and
- 5) delegation be granted to the Leader in consultation with the S151 Officer, to change the salary of the Chief Executive Officer.

**90/21 SHARED STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS - SECTION 113 AGREEMENT (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

Councillor Ian Sherwood, Executive Member for People, Communications and Governance presented the report.

The Shared Management Agreement entered into by Breckland District Council and South Holland District Council was now largely obsolete except that it allowed the Councils to continue to share officers when and where necessary. Currently the Legal and Contracts Officers all remained shared and were likely to remain as such until both authorities have a better understanding on how they wished to provide those services in future.

One Business Support Officer from the Environmental Protection Team also remained shared.

The Agreement for these Officers to remain shared had thus far been agreed by way of a side matter to the original Agreement. The arrangements required to be formalised by a new Agreement so that the former Agreement could eventually fall away.

This report sought formal approval for the new Agreement and paragraph 2.1 of the report detailed the proposed basic principles of the new arrangement that would allow both authorities some flexibility.

It was proposed that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to approve the detail and the terms. A similar report would be presented to South Holland District Council on the 22 September 2021.

The recommendations were proposed and seconded.

Councillor Jermy, the Leader of the Labour Group referred to the financial section of

the report that highlighted the employment costs and presumed there would not be any additional costs arising from this course of action in respect of additional travel costs.

Rob Walker, the Monitoring Officer advised that the funding arrangements would mirror those previously in existence under the shared arrangements with South Holland DC and from a budget sense it would be a neutral position.

Councillor Birt did not have any particular problems with the shared Agreement; however, one of the reasons cited for separating from South Holland DC was the carbon impact and being so distant. This had been mentioned in section 6 of the report, but he could not find any details on this matter and asked for clarity on what the carbon footprint environmental impact might be.

Members were informed that there would be an expectation that those Officers would be working in a virtual environment reducing the need for travel between the two sites.

The recommendations were taken enbloc, and it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) the Council agrees to enter into a Section 113 Agreement with South Holland District Council in relation to the sharing of the Legal Services Team Officers, the Procurement and Contracts Team Officers and the Environmental Protection Business Support Officer; and
- 2) delegated authority be given to the Monitoring officer to approve the final terms of the Agreement.

#### **91/21 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS (AGENDA ITEM 11)**

Councillor Birt mentioned his offer in respect of being appointed as substitute on the Governance & Audit Committee.

Rob Walker, the Monitoring Officer explained that given the Committee was politically balanced containing 5 Conservative seats and 1 Labour seat it was not possible to achieve the outcome that Councillor Birt had requested but would be considered accordingly.

#### **92/21 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION (IF ANY) (AGENDA ITEM 12)**

None.

#### **93/21 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (AGENDA ITEM 13)**

None.

#### **94/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 14)**

The Chairman read aloud the relevant paragraphs for each of the private & confidential reports.

Councillor Birt proposed not to go below the line in respect of various reasons

pertaining to Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972. The proposal was not carried.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded, and subject to one vote against, it was:

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

Prior to moving into private session, the Chairman thanked everyone who had been watching the meeting on YouTube.

**95/21 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION PRIVATE MINUTES: 15 JULY 2021 (AGENDA ITEM 15)**

**RESOLVED** that the private & confidential Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 22 July 2021 be noted.

**96/21 SHARED PROCUREMENT SERVICE (AGENDA ITEM 16)**

Members were informed that the first two recommendations had already been approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 26 July 2021. There was just one recommendation for Members to consider that could be found on page 95 of the agenda pack.

Councillor Sarah Suggitt, Executive Member for Planning, Leisure & Contracts presented the report.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded, and subject to one vote against, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the recommendation be approved.

**97/21 SERVICE REVIEW - PROPERTY (AGENDA ITEM 17)**

Councillor Paul Hewett, Executive Member for Property & Projects presented the report and proposed the recommendation at Option 1 of the report that related to the restructuring of the Property Service Team.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded, and following a vote, it was

**RESOLVED** that the recommendation as listed in the report on page 128 of the agenda pack be approved.

**98/21 ECONOMY & GROWTH SERVICE REVIEW (AGENDA ITEM 18)**

Councillor Paul Claussen, Executive Member for Economic Development & Growth presented the report.

The recommendation was proposed and seconded, and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the recommendation as listed in the report on page 136 of the agenda pack be approved.

**Action**  
**By**

The meeting closed at 11.40 am

CHAIRMAN