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BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

Held on Thursday, 25 February 2016 at 10.00 am in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham

PRESENT

Mr T J Ashby	Mr K. Martin
Mr S.G. Bambridge (Chairman)	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Mrs E J Bishop	Mrs L.H. Monument
Mr W.P. Borrett	Mr M J Nairn
Councillor C Bowes	Mr J Newton
Mr R F W Brame	Mr D R R Oliver
Mr T R Carter	Mr R. R. Richmond
Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mr W. R. J. Richmond
Mr S H Chapman-Allen	Mr M. S. Robinson
Mr H E J Clarke	Mr J.D. Rogers
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mr D M Crawford	Mr I. Sherwood
Mr P M M Dimoglou	Mr W.H.C. Smith
Mr R.W. Duffield	Mr A.C. Stasiak
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr M Taylor
Mr K.S. Gilbert	Mrs L.S. Turner
Mrs J Hollis	Mr M. A. Wassell
Mr T. J. Jermy	Mr N.C. Wilkin
Mrs E. M. Jolly	Mr P S Wilkinson

In Attendance

Rhonda Booth	- Democratic Services Manager (SHDC)
Alison Chubbock	- Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151 Officer)
Anna Graves	- Chief Executive
Julie Kennealy	- Executive Director (Commercialisation)(S151 Officer)
Maxine O'Mahony	- Executive Director of Strategy & Governance
Rory Ringer	- Democratic Services Manager

16/16 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

With regard to Minute No 9/16a (Appeals Committee – Objection to serving of TPO) it was confirmed that the protocol had changed and Ward Members would be informed of future appeals.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17/16 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies were received from Councillors C Carter, Claussen, Darby, Gould, Hewett, Joel, Millbank, T Monument, Nunn, Pettitt and Webb.

18/16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman had both attended the opening of a new classroom at Bawdeswell Community Primary School which had been a very

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enjoyable event.

The Chairman advised Members that Agenda Items 11 and 12 would be moved up to follow Agenda Item 5 as questions about the Leader's Announcements and 'Questions Without Notice' had a combined time limit of 30 minutes.

19/16 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

The Leader of the Council mentioned the Local Plan consultation which had closed recently. The responses would be studied and any appropriate amendments to the document would be made. The aim was that the Local Plan would be adopted by the end of the year and he encouraged all Members to be fully involved.

The DWP integration with Elizabeth House would commence on Monday 29 February. The project had been finished on time and on budget and he gave great credit to all the Breckland Officers involved.

He then gave an update on Devolution which was a fast moving, constantly changing and very complex scenario. He asked Members to consider the following:

- If it went ahead it would be a generational change;
- It was much more about central Government than local Government;
- Members had to imagine how the district would be in 40, 50 or 60 years; and
- Look at the effects at District, County and Regional level – not Ward level.

He then explained:

- Why we are doing this?
It was National Government policy; resource pressures; the need to redesign public services; local control over resources; and a more equal partnership with central Government.
- Who we are doing this with and why this has changed
With Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as the Government was unlikely to pursue any single county deals
- What had been agreed
On 17 December 2015 the Council had resolved to formal engagement by the Leader and the CEO to ensure that Breckland Council interests were served by the development of a New Anglia Devolution proposal.
- What was happening now, next steps and timescales
The Norfolk/Suffolk and Cambs/Peterborough drafts were being combined setting out devolution 'asks'. The contents of that document should be agreed in early March. The central Government Budget on 16 March was the time for a potential announcement.

There were two key points:

1. There would need to be extensive development and negotiation after any announcement and any final deal would need to be approved by each Council.
2. A governance review will be needed and a scheme to enable the statutory introduction of the combined authority and Mayoral powers requiring to be conferred from Government. Again, each Council would need to consent to the Order before it was laid.

The prize to aspire to was local control over issues such as:

- Employment and skills
- Infrastructure and Transport
- Inward investment and business growth
- Strategic Planning
- Housing Growth

The Leader concluded by saying that he would send out a further update the next day (following a meeting that afternoon with Leaders and CEOs) and also a guide to the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act.

20/16 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 6 (AGENDA ITEM 11)

None.

21/16 QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 7 (AGENDA ITEM 12)

Councillor Clarke asked the Executive Member for Finance how much the European Union (EU) had invested in Breckland in the last ten years and whether a contingency plan would be set up in case the country exited the EU. The Executive Member for Finance would provide a written response.

Councillor Newton asked the Chairman if the Commonwealth flag would be raised on 14 March. The Chairman confirmed that it would, most probably at 10.00am. If timings were changed Members would be notified.

Councillor Taylor was concerned that a flytipping problem on private land in Thetford had not been resolved by the County Council, Breckland Council or Serco. He asked if the Serco contract could be looked at as residents were unhappy. The Executive Member for Place would provide a written response.

Councillor Stasiak had heard that the County Council was thinking of closing the tip at Wymondham. He asked if the Council knew anything about that. Councillor Borrett advised that the County Council had set its budget on Monday and all recycling facilities would stay open.

22/16 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 5)

No declarations were made.

23/16 CABINET MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 6)

- a) Quarter 3 Financial Performance Report 2015-16

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The full year below budget spend in 2015-16 on the NNDR levy payment is contributed to the Revenues and Benefits reserve in 2015-16 to fund the NNDR collection deficit in 2016-17; and
- (2) The remaining full year below budget spend for 2015-16 at 31.3.16 is contributed to the Council's investment fund reserve, to support the budget objectives.

b) Section 47 Discretionary Business rates Relief (Minute No 23/16)

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The revised Business Rates Relief eligibility guidance and precise boundaries of the zones were suitable for the scheme to commence from April 2016; and
- (2) Delegated authority be granted to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, to award discretionary business rates relief in line with the policy guidance.

c) Budget Setting, Medium Term Plan (MTF) & Capital Strategy (Minute No 24/16)

The Recommendations were noted and would be moved under Agenda Item 9.

d) Adoption

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 February 2016 be adopted.

24/16 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION (AGENDA ITEM 7)

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held of 28 January 2016 be adopted.

25/16 PLANNING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 8)

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 11 January 2016 be adopted.

26/16 BUDGET SETTING, MEDIUM TERM PLAN (MTP) & CAPITAL STRATEGY (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Executive Member for Finance noted that a lot of work went into the preparation of the MTF and he thanked Julie Kennealy, Alison Chubbock and the Finance Team for their efforts.

A balanced budget which completely phased out reliance on the RSG by 2019-20 had been achieved. He sought approval to take up the opportunity to accept a draft four year settlement from central Government to provide greater clarity on the future.

Councillor Clarke proposed an amendment to earmark £98,000 from the under-spend from the current financial year to fund a one year pilot to establish locality budgets for all 49 Councillors.

Following some debate the amendment was not supported.

A further amendment was proposed to ring-fence £35,000 from sale of land at Fairfields, Thetford for future play equipment project within the Fairfields vicinity and to help alleviate traffic issues generated by the development being allowed to proceed.

The amendment was not supported.

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	Gilbert	Clarke	C Carter
Bambridge		Jermy	Claussen
Bishop			Darby
Brame			Duffield
Borrett			Gould
Bowes			Hewett
T Carter			Joel
M Chapman-Allen			Jolly
S Chapman-Allen			Millbank
Cowen			T Monument
Crawford			Nunn
Dimoglou			Pettitt
Duigan			Webb
Hollis			
Martin			
Matthews			
L Monument			
Nairn			
Newton			
Oliver			
R Richmond			
W Richmond			
Robinson			
Rogers			
Sharpe			
Sherwood			
Smith			
Stasiak			
Taylor			
Turner			
Wassell			
Wilkin			
Wilkinson			

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Breckland revenue estimates and parish special expenses for 2016-17 and outline position through to 2019-20 (as set out in appendix B and E) are approved
- 2) The capital estimates and associated funding for 2016-17 and outline position through to 2019-20 (as set out in appendix H) are approved
- 3) A 100% disregard of war pensions, war widow's pensions, war widower's pensions and armed forces compensation payments or any other successor scheme in the calculation of Housing Benefit be approved

- 4) The fees and charges shown at appendix D and D2, for adoption 1 April 2016 are approved
- 5) The Council Tax for a band A property in 2016-17 be set at £49.32, a £3.30 per annum increase on 2015-16 levels (band D £73.98, a £4.95 per annum increase on 2015-16 levels)
- 6) The financial medium term plan at appendix A is approved
- 7) The Council applies for the four year settlement from central Government
- 8) The capital strategy at appendix G is approved
- 9) The release of budget up to £1million from the investment and growth funds be delegated to the S151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance to jointly approve on receipt of a fully worked and appropriate business case which generates an agreed ongoing return.

27/16 COUNCIL TAX SETTING (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Executive Director Commercialisation presented the report which had been issued in the supplement to the Agenda.

Councillor Gilbert had no issues with the Council Tax setting. However, he could not support Recommendation 1 as the Council was asking for extra money for work it was not doing.

The Labour Group proposed an additional recommendation that Breckland Council reviews its localised Council Tax Support Grant scheme and reviews the financial impact of providing 100% support for working age persons. A report to be brought forward to a future Full Council meeting.

This proposal was not supported.

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:

RECOMMENDATION 1:

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Apologies / Not Present</i>
<i>Councillors:</i>	<i>Councillor:</i>		<i>Councillors:</i>
<i>Ashby</i>	<i>Clarke</i>	<i>NONE</i>	<i>C Carter</i>
<i>Bambridge</i>	<i>Gilbert</i>		<i>Claussen</i>
<i>Bishop</i>	<i>Jermy</i>		<i>Darby</i>
<i>Brame</i>			<i>Duffield</i>
<i>Borrett</i>			<i>Gould</i>
<i>Bowes</i>			<i>Hewett</i>
<i>T Carter</i>			<i>Joel</i>
<i>M Chapman-Allen</i>			<i>Jolly</i>
<i>S Chapman-Allen</i>			<i>Millbank</i>
<i>Cowen</i>			<i>T Monument</i>
<i>Crawford</i>			<i>Nunn</i>
<i>Dimoglou</i>			<i>Pettitt</i>

Action By

<i>Duigan</i>			<i>Webb</i>
<i>Hollis</i>			
<i>Martin</i>			
<i>Matthews</i>			
<i>L Monument</i>			
<i>Nairn</i>			
<i>Newton</i>			
<i>Oliver</i>			
<i>R Richmond</i>			
<i>W Richmond</i>			
<i>Robinson</i>			
<i>Rogers</i>			
<i>Sharpe</i>			
<i>Sherwood</i>			
<i>Smith</i>			
<i>Stasiak</i>			
<i>Taylor</i>			
<i>Turner</i>			
<i>Wassell</i>			
<i>Wilkin</i>			
<i>Wilkinson</i>			

RECOMMENDATION 2:

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstain</i>	<i>Apologies / Not Present</i>
<i>Councillors:</i>	<i>Councillors:</i>	<i>NONE</i>	<i>Councillors:</i>
<i>Ashby</i>	<i>Clarke</i>		<i>C Carter</i>
<i>Bambridge</i>	<i>Jermy</i>		<i>Claussen</i>
<i>Bishop</i>			<i>Darby</i>
<i>Brame</i>			<i>Duffield</i>
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<i>S Chapman-Allen</i>			<i>Millbank</i>
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<i>Matthews</i>			
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<i>Robinson</i>			
<i>Rogers</i>			
<i>Sharpe</i>			
<i>Sherwood</i>			

				Action By
<i>Smith</i>				
<i>Stasiak</i>				
<i>Taylor</i>				
<i>Turner</i>				
<i>Wassell</i>				
<i>Wilkin</i>				
<i>Wilkinson</i>				

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the special expenses for 2016-17 be approved; and
- 2) the formal council tax resolutions for 2016-17 (at paragraph 1.4.1 to 1.4.5 of the report) be approved.

28/16 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS (AGENDA ITEM 11)

RESOLVED that Councillor Gould should replace Councillor M Chapman-Allen on the Planning Committee.

29/16 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (AGENDA ITEM 12)

None.

30/16 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION (AGENDA ITEM 13)

RESOLVED that the following amendments to the Constitution be confirmed:

- (a) vary Standing Order 5 – order of business – so that questions with/without notice follow Leader’s Announcements;
- (b) vary Standing Orders 5 and 7 so that it is clear that questions without notice and questions on Leaders Announcements are for 30 minutes in total (not 30 minutes for each); and
- (c) Part 3 – Council terms of reference – item 3 insert “Except for” before “Executive Functions”

The meeting closed at 12.04 pm

CHAIRMAN