

Norfolk County Council**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 19 October 2015****Present:**

Mr A Adams	Mr M Kiddle-Morris
Mr C Aldred	Mr J Law
Mr S Askew	Mrs J Leggett
Mr M Baker	Mr B Long
Mr R Bearman	Mr I Mackie
Mr R Bird	Mr I Monson
Mr B Borrett	Mr J Mooney
Dr A Boswell	Ms E Morgan
Mr B Bremner	Mr S Morphew
Mrs J Brociek-Coulton	Mr G Nobbs
Mr A Byrne	Mr W Northam
Mr M Carttiss	Mr R Parkinson-Hare
Mrs J Chamberlin	Mr J Perkins
Mr J Childs	Mr G Plant
Mr T Coke	Mr A Proctor
Mr D Collis	Mr D Ramsbotham
Ms E Corlett	Mr W Richmond
Mrs H Cox	Mr D Roper
Mr D Crawford	Ms C Rumsby
Mr A Dearnley	Mr E Seward
Mrs M Dewsbury	Mr N Shaw
Mr N Dixon	Mr R Smith
Mr J Dobson	Mr P Smyth
Mr T FitzPatrick	Mr B Spratt
Mr C Foulger	Mr B Stone
Mr P Gilmour	Mrs M Stone
Mr A Grey	Mr M Storey
Mrs S Gurney	Dr M Strong
Mr P Hacon	Mrs A Thomas
Mr B Hannah	Mr J Timewell
Mr D Harrison	Miss J Virgo
Mr M Chenery of Horsbrugh	Mrs C Walker
Mr H Humphrey	Mr J Ward
Mr B Iles	Mr B Watkins
Mr T Jermy	Ms S Whitaker
Mr C Jordan	Mr A White
Mr J Joyce	Mr M Wilby
	Ms M Wilkinson

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Mr S Agnew, Mr M Castle, Mr S Clancy, Mr T East, Mr T Garrod, Ms A Kemp and Mr M Sands.

1 Minutes

- 1.1 The minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 July 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- 1.1.1 Mr Borrett said that he had not received a response to the question he asked at the meeting on 27 July about how many LEP meetings the Leader had attended in the last twelve months. The Leader apologised and said that he had wanted the opportunity to reply in person. He said he had attended 16 out of a possible 21 meetings of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), with Mrs Walker substituting on two occasions. Since then he had attended 2 more meetings, which meant he had attended 18 out of 23 meetings. He added that during the previous administration the attendance had been 17 out of a possible 19 meetings which included 4 where Ann Steward had attended as a substitute and was not able to vote, which equated to 13 out of 19 meetings. During the time Mr Borrett was Leader he had not attended any LEP meetings.
- 1.2 The minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 2 September 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 Chairman's Announcements

- 2.1 The Chairman announced the sad passing of Mr Mike Ferris, former Leader of the Labour Group, and Council stood in silence as a mark of respect.

The Chairman welcomed Roy Harold, Chief Fire Officer to his first meeting of Council since taking over the role.

The Chairman referred to the Safeguarding booklets that had been distributed and urged Council to read them as part of their corporate safeguarding responsibilities.

The Chairman also announced that the Leader of the Council would be leaving the meeting early to attend a meeting about devolution in Bury St Edmunds.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 Mr P Hacon declared an interest in agenda item 6 (Report of the Communities Committee – 9 September), as he had two sons employed in the Fire Service.
- 3.2 Ms E Corlett declared an interest in item 6 (Report of the Adult Social Care committee) relating to questions on the Mental Health Trust as she was employed by the Mental Health Trust (Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust).

4 Questions to Leader of the Council

4.1 Question from Dr M Strong

Dr Strong asked if the Leader could tell Council how much money the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) had contributed to projects in Norfolk.

The Leader replied that he believed the figure was £44,450,000 for Norfolk and approximately £41m for projects in Suffolk and that he would circulate a breakdown of the information to Council. He added that it showed the importance of the Leader of the County Council attending meetings and being available to vote, because substitutes were not eligible to vote. He also added that he had been heartened recently to see a contribution of £10m from the LEP towards the costs of the Northern Distributor Route (NDR).

4.2 **Question from Mr C Jordan**

Mr Jordan asked what the Leader was going to do about the increased permit charges for businesses in Norwich which was compromising the ability of home care providers to deliver a service against the contractual obligation they had with the council. He added that it also meant money was simply being transferred from one authority to another, causing unnecessary bureaucracy.

The Leader delegated the question to the Chair of Adult Social Care Committee (ASC) who replied that the issue was only applicable in the Norwich area and the way the permit charges had been changed. The Chair of ASC continued by saying that she knew some lobbying had taken place, but was unaware of the latest position. She said she understood that there had been consultations with businesses before the changes were implemented and she suspected that some of the businesses had not, at that time, realised what the implications were and therefore had not lobbied. The Chair also mentioned that she had been contacted by two businesses, whom she had directed to Norwich City Council and that it was not just businesses within Adult Social Care that were affected, other businesses were also affected.

As a supplementary question, Mr Jordan said it was causing a real problem and suggested that a meeting be convened to identify what the problems really were.

The Chair of Adult Social Care replied that it did not just affect Adult Social Care, therefore convening a meeting was not the right way of dealing with the issue. She continued that she thought it was a City Council issue and it would be inappropriate to convene a meeting about matters under their remit.

4.3 **Question from Mr J Childs**

Mr Childs said that, at the last Environment, Development and Transportation (EDT) meeting the following motion had been agreed:

“The Committee invite Norfolk MP’s to a meeting where they could be made fully aware of the proposed budget cuts and service changes and have the opportunity to put forward the opinions of their constituents and therefore have a better understanding of the consequences of the decisions that the County Council are having to make.”

He asked if the Leader would agree that it was an issue which covered all Committees and as such should come to full Council. He added that it would be more viable if MPs could come and talk about how they were fighting to protect Norfolk’s vulnerable and dependant people. He asked if the Leader would ask the Managing Director to write to all Norfolk’s MPs on behalf of Council to express the views expressed in the EDT motion.

The Leader responded that under the old Cabinet system, Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

had invited MPs to attend meetings and that there had been a very poor attendance. He added that this was not a criticism of MPs, but it was difficult for MPs to attend. He also added that if it was the wish of EDT and of Council that MPs be invited, he would speak to the Managing Director and the Chairman and consult with Members as to whether or not a full Council meeting was held, or whether the matter should be dealt with by the EDT Committee. He did say that if the topic was to be dealt with by Council, a special meeting would need to be convened as such an item would take up too much time on a normal agenda.

4.4 Question from Mr R Bearman

Mr Bearman said that given the worsening situation with Syrian refugees, and the Government's stated intention for the UK to take refugees over the next 5 years, was it now time for the leader to invite representatives of our local organisation, Norfolk Sanctuary, to be involved in a co-ordinated county wide task force, and also to invite them to give a presentation to full Council as soon as possible?

The Leader replied that a task force had been set up and a meeting with Sanctuary had been held at the beginning of the year. He continued that the task force meetings already had a great many people taking part and it was his wish to keep the meeting as small as possible so it did not become a talking shop. The Bishop of Norwich attended task force meetings and represented faith groups, of which Sanctuary was one and he did not feel it was necessary to add any more attendees to the group. The task force was made up of representatives of the County Council and all District Councils who were intending to supply housing and he again emphasised that more action was needed rather than more meetings.

The Leader continued by stating that money was a significant stumbling block as government funding was only available for the first year, which officers had deemed as inadequate for covering the likely needs of the refugees. He informed Council that, although people had offered to house some refugees, the Government required that refugees had their own separate premises. Norwich City Council had been at the forefront in offering accommodation provided there was sufficient government funding to cover at least five years and at a time when the authority was telling citizens that we could not provide them with services, we could not justify providing for refugees without government funding, even though there was great sympathy with their plight.

4.5 Question from Mr B Bremner

Mr Bremner asked the Leader, in relation to the Northern Distributor Route (NDR), if he could explain how much a full judicial review of the recent Council decision on the NDR would cost the Norfolk taxpayer and how much the procedural delays had added to the cost of the NDR to date.

The Leader replied that he was aware that a judicial review had been launched by Friends of the Wensum Valley and that the minimum cost to Norfolk County Council in legal terms was estimated to be approximately £20k although this could rise considerably to approximately £50k. The Leader added that everyone knew what that money could do in the current budget situation.

He informed Council that the actual delay costs to construction were in the region of £500k per month for not being "shovel ready", which had been anticipated would happen in October 2015.

The Leader read out the following statement, "Officers continue to review the legal

challenge and were taking appropriate legal advice and that in view of the potential implications of the timescales of delivering the project, it could be prudent for Council to retake the decision regarding the funding required for the NDR in order to expedite a resolution to this matter”.

He added that Group Leaders had discussed the issue and there was a possibility there may be an additional Council meeting to consider this issue.

4.6 Question from Mr B Long

Mr Long asked when the refurbishment of County Hall was likely to be completed and how much over budget the project would be.

Mr Nobbs deferred the question to the Vice-Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee who reassured Council that the project was on budget and was expected to be completed by April 2016.

5 Recommendations from Service Committees

5.1 Children’s Services Committee – 15 September 2015

Mr J Joyce, Chairman of Children’s Services Committee moved the recommendations to approve the statements of purpose for the Adoption Agency, Norfolk’s Fostering Service and Norfolk Residential Service.

- 5.1.1 The Council **RESOLVED** to endorse the Statements of Purpose for the Adoption Agency, Norfolk’s Fostering Service and Norfolk Residential Service.

6 Reports from Service Committees (Questions to Chairs)

6.1 Report of the Policy and Resources Committee meetings held on 1 and 28 September 2015

Mr D Roper, Vice-Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee, moved the report.

6.1.1 Question from Mr B Watkins

Mr Watkins stated that by the end of this week, service committees would have finalised proposals for the remodelling of their services during the next three years based on 75% of addressable spend. Policy and Resources would then consider the submissions from each committee and decide what went out to public consultation. He asked if the Deputy Leader would like to comment on how he saw the process developing over the coming weeks and if there was any advice he would like to offer Council at this stage.

The Deputy Leader replied that it was clear in the reports to service committees that a substantial amount of work had been done in looking at every aspect of the council’s budget so far. He added that the 75% model was extremely ambitious for all departments and that every department had to look deeply at their budget and justify every penny they spent. No departmental exceptions had been made.

The Service Committees had been considering 75% models which would be referred to Policy & Resources Committee for consideration at its meeting on 26 October. He continued that there had been some discussions about recommendations and about whether they should be agreed, referred or considered. He said he was not

concerned about the wording as long as they were passed to Policy and Resources.

Policy and Resources Committee had commissioned this work in the first place and there had been some discussions as to the full list of options presented to service committees. He said that whatever service committees passed to Policy & Resources needed to be a 75% model. If any service committee was tempted to take out a proposal, they needed to put something else back in to ensure it remained a 75% model.

He continued by saying that he knew there had been discussions that service committees should have more options for consideration, but spokespersons from all groups had regular meetings with officers and if they had wanted to suggest savings, they could have asked for the work to be done, likewise they could have had discussions with Chairs of the Committee.

Policy and Resources Committee would be considering which proposals to consult on when it met on 26 October and he thanked committees and officers for the work that had been completed.

6.1.2 **Question from Mr R Smith**

Mr Smith stated that, before looking at future budgets which presumably were based on the current budget, how the current year's budget was looking as the figures in the report looked very daunting.

The Deputy Leader referred Council to the updated report for the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 26 October which had been published and that the budget situation had moved in the right direction, albeit not hugely. He added that Children's Services and Adult Social Care departments remained a cause for concern. The Children's Services figures were largely driven by Looked After Children (LAC) numbers which, despite firm evidence that they would reduce, hadn't moved as quickly as had been forecast.

The Deputy Leader said that all departments were carrying out a lot of work in order to try to bring about a balanced budget.

6.1.3 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6.2 **Report of the Adult Social Care Committee meeting held on 7 September 2015.**

Ms S Whitaker, Chair of Adult Social Care Committee moved the report.

6.2.1 **Question from Mr B Borrett**

Mr Borrett stated that, a while ago, this Council had given £700k to Age Concern Norfolk to pay pension costs and that we had been told at that time that the money was necessary to stop Age Concern collapsing. He asked the Chair if, after seeing a report in the EDP that Age Concern had made a profit of over £600k in the last financial year, she would be asking for a repayment of the money.

The Chair replied that Age Concern no longer existed and had become Age UK Norfolk. She added that there had been an obligation under the Norfolk County Council pension fund because a number of the staff had worked for NCC originally before transferring to the Mental Health Trust. She informed Council that Age UK Norfolk would not be asked to repay the money.

Mr Borrett responded that there had not been any contractual obligation as this had been a decision made by Council out of choice.

The Chair replied that she believed there had been a partial contractual obligation as well as a moral obligation because the staff had previously worked for the county council and that it had been the right decision.

6.2.2 Question from Mr B Watkins

Mr Watkins said that the care sector had traditionally seen many of its staff under paid and undervalued in carrying out the work that they performed and that it was little wonder that retention had proved to be a major problem in the care sector. He continued that news of the introduction of a national living wage with a minimum payment of £9.24 per hour by 2020 would be welcomed in many quarters. However, there would undoubtedly be concerns about the effect this policy might have on the sustainability of small care homes and he asked if the Chair would like to offer her view on how it might affect care providers across Norfolk.

The Chair replied that she welcomed the introduction of a national living wage and thought this was something that should have happened a long time ago. She added that everyone needed to work hard to ensure that working in the care sector moved from being a career of last resort to being a career of choice and if introducing a national living minimum wage helped achieve that, she supported it.

The Chair added that this would be an issue for all of the sector, not just those smaller residential homes and that Part 2 of the Care Act was supposed to have come into effect on 1 April next year, although it had been deferred until 2020. When the Chair had attended the Social Care conference, the Care Minister had been adamant that the introduction of the Care Act had not been shelved, only deferred and that £570m had been set aside nationally for the implementation of the second part of the Care Act and the national living wage as this could not be implemented without additional funding from central government. She added that everyone needed to work towards ensuring staff working in the care sector were properly rewarded, as it was recognised that the better staff were treated, the better care they gave to the most vulnerable residents.

6.2.3 Question from Ms C Rumsby

Ms Rumsby asked if there had been any improvements made in care inefficiency and what the results had been since social workers had moved from the Mental Health Trust to the County Council.

The Chair replied that Mental Health Social Workers had been transferred to the Norfolk and Waveney Mental Health Trust in 2008 and since then, the Trust had combined with Suffolk. The arrangements had not worked as well as had been envisaged and on 1 October 2014, the mental health social workers had returned to County Council employment. At that time, there had been significant vacancies with about 25% of the social worker posts left unfilled. The Chair was pleased to advise Council that since then, additional social workers had been recruited and a full management team was now in place. This meant that everyone with a mental health need, who was in residential care, had received a case review in the last six months, which had led to approximately 30 people being able to live within the community in supported living rather than being in residential care.

The Chair advised that a strong working relationship had been maintained with the Mental Health Trust. She was a Governor on the Council of Governors and was very pleased to report that an infinitely better service was now being offered to service users than had happened previously.

6.2.4 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6.3 **Report of the Children's Services Committee meeting held on 15 September 2015**

Mr J Joyce, Chairman of Children's Services Committee moved the report.

6.3.1 **Question from Mr B Long**

Mr Long asked the Chairman what his plan B was in light of the fact that the in-year budget was between £6m and £7m adrift from where it was expected to be and the assumption that the number of looked after children would be reduced.

The Chairman referred Council to the reports for the Children's Services Committee meeting on 20 October and the fact that the budget deficit had reduced by approximately £1m. He added that the reduction on the looked after children spend was dependant on what was happening around the county and that in the previous week, 2 children had left the service, but 2 children had come into care; in the week previous to that 5 children had left the service but approximately 12 had come into the service. The Chairman said that although the budget was still approximately £5.5m overspent, it was being tackled, although he could not guarantee that the budget would be zero by the end of the financial year.

The Chairman informed Council that following its inspection in July, the Ofsted results would be published on 20 October. He said he would brief all Committee Members of Children's Services Committee after the Council meeting about the results of the inspection as he considered it was important that all 17 Members of the Committee worked together on the outcome from the inspection. He reminded Members that the information in the Ofsted report was embargoed until it had been published.

6.3.2 **Question from Mr B Bremner**

Mr Bremner asked for comments from the Chairman with regard to the Hewett School becoming an academy and introducing a new school uniform, giving only six weeks' notice to parents. He asked the Chairman why the new school uniform had not been phased in as it could cause hardship for some parents, including those who had applied to charity.

The Chair replied that he had raised this issue with the Headteacher of the school.

6.3.3 **Question from Mrs M Dewsbury**

Mrs Dewsbury asked how many children had been affected by attending a school outside their catchment area, not through choice, and what the cost of transporting these children was.

The Chairman replied that pupil planning ensured there would be a classroom place available for every child, although it may not be at everyone's first choice of school.

The Chairman agreed to provide a written response to all Members giving a breakdown of the exact numbers of children who were attending a school outside

their catchment area and how they were being transported to that school.

6.3.4 Question from Mr R Smith

Mr Smith referred to the provisional GCSE results which had recently been announced and the fact that the performance report to be presented at the Children's Services Committee meeting on 20 October did not contain too much information about the results. He asked how the Chairman viewed the results compared with the national rankings, which had improved, and said that Norfolk's youngsters should be congratulated on the results. Mr Smith also referred to recent media reports saying that the County Council had oversight of schools and that it didn't control schools which he considered was an important distinction in terminology.

The Chairman replied that although the County Council did have oversight of schools, they could not control what was happening in schools, as this was the responsibility of Governors. The Chairman added that it was pleasing to see that Maths results were above the national average on achievement, and although English was still below the national average the gap was closing, with national averages up by 0.2% and Norfolk County Council results up by 1.8%. He said he was pleased to see the results and wished to congratulate all Headteachers on the achievement.

6.3.5 Question from Mr J Childs

Mr Childs referred to recent Eastern Daily Press (EDP) reports which had stated that summer exam results in Great Yarmouth were below half of what the normal standards were. He continued by saying that, in Great Yarmouth around 1170 school children aged under 17 years had a first language other than English, speaking around 50 languages with Portuguese being the most widely spoken language other than English. He said that amongst 0-5 year olds there were around 180 children speaking 28 languages with Portuguese being the most widely spoken. He continued by stating that among the 6-11 year olds there were around 600 children speaking 39 languages with Portuguese being the most widely spoken and of the 12-16 year olds there were around 390 children speaking 30 different languages with Portuguese being the most widely spoken. He said these figures were from the Norfolk information database and asked if the figures had an impact on the standard of education of school children in Great Yarmouth. He said he had information from teachers that it did have an impact, but he asked for reassurance from Children's Services that everything was being done to ensure the indigenous population was not suffering at the hands of European newcomers.

The Chairman replied that everything affected how a child was educated - their family, their background, etc. however every child was an individual and every child was given as much help by their teachers as possible, with the aim of every child being well educated.

6.3.6 Question from Mr H Humphrey

Mr Humphrey referred to an earlier comment about early family intervention being something which needed to be aspired to, and that Re-Imagining Norfolk was about getting help early. He continued that in the Children's Services budget considerations, early care was given great prominence as a way of helping to keep children safe although the children's centres budget had been slashed, taking £1.8m out of the budget next year. He said this did not seem to tie up with the idea that children's centres were so important to early help and for the youngsters going forward.

The Chair replied that the children's centres budget had not been slashed, and referred to the Children's Services Committee meeting taking place on 20 October where the budget proposals would be debated. He added that nothing had been decided at the moment, although everyone was aware that savings needed to be made and ways of achieving efficiencies needed to be found.

6.3.7 Question from Mr M Baker

Mr Baker said, in view of the ever increasing busing of children out of their catchment area and their parents area of preference to where their children were being educated, could the Chairman confirm if there was a policy of offering preferential places to British nationals over and above those who were coming to live in this country and use our resources and whether they should be given preference over our own people.

The Chair responded that all decisions had to be made within the law.

6.3.8 Council RESOLVED to note the report.

6.4 Report of the Communities Committee meeting held on 9 September 2015

Mr P Smyth, Chairman of Communities Committee, moved the report.

6.4.1 Question from Mr I Mackie

Mr Mackie stated that the libraries in Norfolk had been seen for many years as a jewel in the crown of the services the county provided. He asked if the Chair could rule out the closure of any libraries and if not, how many libraries did he expect to close and where?

The Chair responded that there were no plans to close any libraries at the moment and that the Communities Committee would be discussing a range of savings proposals at its meeting on 21 October. He added that officers had looked at the impact of a 25% saving on each of their service delivery areas. He referred to a pilot scheme which had been successfully implemented at Acle library, which allowed members of the public, who had the correct swipe card, to access libraries outside of normal working hours. This had meant that people who wanted to use their library outside of normal opening hours, now had an opportunity to access their local library and, although this scheme required some investment, it could deliver savings in the future.

6.4.2 Question from Mr J Ward

Mr Ward asked if the Chair would agree with the point that was agreed at the last Communities Committee meeting, that libraries should have a strengthened role in supporting the County Council's early help and community agenda. He added that libraries should be used as hubs in communities for supporting literacy, information, learning and for facilitating access to communities. He said that if this was the case, how the Chair could consider closing libraries.

The Chair responded that it was intended to help libraries become more formal community hubs, as was the case in many parts of the county. Although real estate put limitations on some of the libraries, they could offer spaces for groups such as mother and toddler groups and for knitting and crocheting activities.

The Chair endorsed the idea that libraries should be seen as more than just a place

to borrow books from and recognised the contribution they made to early learning through working with children from 0-5 years, particularly through the summer reading challenge, which had been highly successful again this year, with approximately 14,000 children registering across the county. The reading challenge had seen some children not only read the six books required to receive a certificate, some of the children had read over 20 books, with one mother in the library at Swaffham highlighting that, when her daughter went back to school she had gone up to level 4 for reading.

The Chair continued by saying that libraries were actively promoting the wider agenda in Norfolk County Council, not just in Children's Services, but in Adult Social Care, and quoted a case of an older lady whose husband had become ill, leaving her isolated and unable to get to the shops. He said that through the activities libraries offered to older people in teaching them to use the internet, older people were able to get their shopping delivered and use skype to contact family members, helping them to live independently for longer.

The Chair also quoted a case about a young person who wished to join the army. He had joined the library and received some help on how to write a CV, which had resulted in him successfully joining the army.

The Chair said he fully endorsed that libraries were more than places to borrow books from and reiterated that there were no plans to shut libraries at present and reiterated that Communities Committee would be discussing savings proposals at its next meeting.

6.4.3 **Question from Dr M Strong**

Dr Strong informed Council that Wells was an excellent example of how a local library should be run. Dr Strong asked if there was a separate consultation about libraries to the budget consultation and if there was, when would the consultation be run. She also asked if the consultation included details about the proposed reasonable distance for travel to a library and how the reasonable distance had been measured?

The Chair replied that the library consultation had been borne out of the working group, although it had been overtaken by events with the budget planning process. An independent questionnaire had been sent out which was happening in parallel with the public consultation which had not yet commenced.

In referring to the term reasonable distances, the Chair said he had not been involved in the working group so he would reply in writing as to how it had been measured.

Following a request, the Chair agreed to circulate a copy of the questionnaire and the circulation areas.

6.4.4 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6.5 **Report of the Environment, Development and Transport Committee meeting held on 18 September 2015.**

Mr R Coke, Chairman of EDT Committee moved the report.

6.5.1 **Question from Mr M Wilby**

Mr Wilby asked if, following the vote at the recent Environment, Development and Transportation Committee meeting, the Chairman was having a rethink over the closure of Docking recycling centre, and the proposed part-time opening at Heacham, Ashill and Morningthorpe recycling centres. He also asked if the Chairman would be taking notice of the public meeting he had attended at Docking and the results from the consultation.

The Chairman referred to the budget setting which had taken place in February 2014 where it was agreed that one of the savings would be to charge £2 per visit for all the discretionary waste recycling centres, which would raise £167,000, and become effective on 1 April 2016. He said that in April 2015, just before the election, a pledge had been made by the Conservatives that discretionary waste recycling centres could not charge and that those that were already charging would have to cease this. After the election this pledge had been upheld which meant that other options now needed to be considered, such as some recycling centres moving to 3-day a week opening to make the necessary savings imposed by the Government. The Chairman had attended a parish council meeting at Docking where feelings were running very high. He said that Docking was the smallest recycling centre in Norfolk, where the tonnage had been consistently falling since 2010, and whilst he realised that there would be inconvenience caused by the closure, with the scale of cuts that were required, inconvenience was not a reason to keep the centre open.

The Chairman continued by informing Council that there were two other facilities – at Heacham and Hempton, nr Fakenham which were both within a 20 minute drive from Docking. He added that one of the main concerns raised by the Docking Parish Council meeting was that the closure could lead to more fly-tipping, although such concerns had not been borne out by the change in policy to no longer allow hazardous waste to be accepted at recycling centres, except on amnesty days.

The Chairman said the only valid concern he had seen had been about the proposed supermarket which was going to be built near to Heacham recycling centre and he informed Council that he had already asked officers to look into the planning process to ensure that planning conditions for the supermarket prevented congestion on the road leading to the recycling centre.

6.5.2 **Question from Mrs M Stone**

Mrs Stone asked how the proposed closure of Docking Recycling Centre equated to the policy of zero waste, whilst only saving £70,000. She asked where the logic was, where the innovation and vision was and if the Chairman was doing what his Labour leader was telling him so he could continue to have the little power he had. She added that it sounded like the ex-deputy leader did the right thing, by resigning before the car crash.

The Chair replied that he would like to know what Mrs Stone had done in lobbying the government to stop the cuts that were being imposed on this council by the conservative government.

6.5.3 **Question from Mr M Chenery of Horsburgh**

Mr Horsburgh said he would like to comment that Mr Coke had been noble in facing the very angry and aggressive parish council meeting at Docking and asked if the Chairman would reconsider keeping Docking recycling centre open.

The Chairman reiterated that he had already asked officers to look into the supermarket access at Heacham, but that no-one attending the Docking parish council meeting had put forward any arguments other than inconvenience to keep Docking open.

6.5.4 **Question from Mr B Spratt**

Mr Spratt asked what could be done to improve traffic on the outer ring road, where businesses had complained that they could not travel round the outer ring road at all and asked if anything we could do about this if the NDR was delayed.

The Chairman asked Mr Morpew to reply, as Chairman of the Norwich Highways Joint Agency Committee.

Mr Morpew responded that there were two significant schemes for improving traffic on the outer ring road. One was on Guardian Road and another around the Notcutts roundabout which were being implemented to speed up traffic on that route. He realised that increased traffic entering the city from the south was creating problems, although it was good news for the economical vibrancy of Norwich. There was a need to ensure that traffic was managed properly in getting cars and people into the city conveniently so they could park their cars, carry out their business, return to their cars and drive straight out of the city, not filling up the roads unnecessarily. He added that one thing about a beautiful, historic medieval city was that visits were spoilt when the roads were crammed with cars.

6.5.5 **Question from Mr B Bremner**

Mr Bremner asked the Chairman if, with the conservative and green group members voting against budget proposals at the recent EDT meeting, without offering any alternative proposals, he thought this represented good governance.

The Chairman replied that he did not. He said the EDT meeting had been interesting as only two days before the meeting, three Conservative members had attended a budget challenge meeting. One of the Conservative group members had said that he considered the £22m of cuts was doable over the next three years and a definite way forward. On asking him how he was going to vote, he had become more elusive, resulting in the Conservative group voting against the proposals. He added that the Conservative group was a complete shambles, they had no alternatives to the proposals at all and thought it was highly irresponsible attitude to take and did not represent the interests of the people of Norfolk.

6.5.6 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6.6 **Report of the Economic Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 21 September 2015**

6.6.1 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

Other Committees

6.7 **Report of the Audit Committee meeting held on 24 September 2015**

Mr I Mackie, Chairman, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6.8 **Report of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held**

on 3 September 2015.

Mr M Carttiss moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6.9 Report of the Planning (Regulatory) Committee meeting held on 24 July 2015

Mr B Long moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6.10 Report of the Norwich Highways Agency Joint Committee meetings held on 23 July and 17 September 2015.

Mr S Morpew moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

7 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2015-16 (Revision) and 2016-17)

7.1 Council received the report by the Executive Director of Finance proposing a revision to the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy. The revised policy would release revenue to support the revenue budget, without compromising the Council's responsibility to set aside amounts sufficient to repay its debt.

7.2 Members were asked to approve the revised 2015-16 Minimum Revenue Provision statement set out in Appendix 2 of the report, to be applied in 2015-16 and 2016-17.

7.3 On being put to a recorded vote (Appendix A) Council **RESOLVED NOT** to approve the revised 2015-16 Minimum Revenue Provision statement.

8 Appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees and Joint Committees (Standard Item).

There were none.

9 To answer questions under Rule 8.3 of the Council Procedure Rules

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 11.45am.

Chairman



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Appendix A

VOTING – ITEM NUMBER: 7 – Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2015-16 (revision) and 2016-17.

FOR	AGAINST.	ABST.		FOR	AGAINST	ABST	
	X		ADAMS Tony		absent		KEMP Alexandra
	absent		AGNEW Stephen		X		KIDDLE-MORRIS Mark
X			ALDRED Colin		X		LAW Jason
	X		ASKEW Stephen		X		LEGGETT Judy
X			BAKER Michael		X		LONG Brian
X			BEARMAN Richard		X		MACKIE Ian
X			BIRD Richard		X		MONSON Ian
	X		BORRETT Bill		X		MOONEY Joe
X			BOSWELL Andrew	X			MORGAN Elizabeth
X			BREMNER Bert	X			MORPHEW Steve
X			BROCIEK-COULTON Julie		absent		NOBBS George
	X		BYRNE Alec		X		NORTHAM Wyndham
	X		CARTTISS Michael	X			PARKINSON-HARE Rex
	absent		CASTLE Mick	X			PERKINS Jim
	X		CHAMBERLIN Jenny		X		PLANT Graham
X			CHILDS Jonathon		X		PROCTOR Andrew
	absent		CLANCY Stuart	X			RAMSBOTHAM David
X			COKE Toby		X		RICHMOND William
X			COLLIS David	X			ROPER Daniel
X			CORLETT Emma	X			RUMSBY Chrissie
	X		COX Hilary		absent		SANDS Mike
X			CRAWFORD Denis	X			SEWARD Eric
X			DEARNLEY Adrian		X		SHAW Nigel
	X		DEWSBURY Margaret		X		SMITH Roger
	X		DIXON Nigel	X			SMYTH Paul
	X		DOBSON John		absent		SPRATT Bev
	absent		EAST Tim		X		STONE Barry
	X		FITZPATRICK Tom		X		STONE Margaret
	X		FOULGER Colin		X		STOREY Martin
	absent		GARROD Tom	X			STRONG Marie
X			GILMOUR Paul		X		THOMAS Alison
X			GREY Alan	X			TIMEWELL John
	X		GURNEY Shelagh		X		VIRGO Judith
X			HACON Pat	X			WALKER Colleen
X			HANNAH Brian		X		WARD John
X			HARRISON David	X			WATKINS Brian
	X		HORSBRUGH Michael Chenery of	X			WHITAKER Sue
	X		HUMPHREY Harry		X		WHITE Tony
	X		ILES Brian		X		WILBY Martin
X			JERMY Terry	X			WILKINSON Margaret
	X		JORDAN Cliff				
X			JOYCE James				

With 35 votes in favour, 38 votes against and 0 abstentions Council voted **NOT** to approve the revised 2015-16 Minimum Revenue Provision statement as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.