

## **Norfolk County Council**

### **Minutes of the Meeting Held on Monday 12 December 2016**

**Present:**

Mr A Adams	Ms A Kemp
Mr S Agnew	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
Ms C Bowes	Mr S Morphew
Mrs A Bradnock	Mr G Nobbs
Mr B Bremner	Mr R Parkinson-Hare
Mrs J Brociek-Coulton	Mr J Perkins
Mr A Byrne	Mr G Plant
Mr M Carttiss	Mr A Proctor
Mr M Castle	Mr D Ramsbotham
Mrs J Chamberlin	Mr W Richmond
Mr J Childs	Mr D Roper
Mr S Clancy	Ms C Rumsby
Mr T Coke	Mr M Sands
Mrs H Cox	Mr E Seward
Mr D Crawford	Mr N Shaw
Mr A Dearnley	Mr R Smith
Mrs M Dewsbury	Mr P Smyth
Mr N Dixon	Mr B Spratt
Mr J Dobson	Mr B Stone
Mr T East	Mrs M Stone
Mr C Foulger	Mr M Storey
Mr T Garrod	Dr M Strong
Mr A Grey	Mrs A Thomas
Mrs S Gurney	Mr J Timewell
Mr P Hacon	Miss J Virgo
Mr B Hannah	Mrs C Walker
Mr D Harrison	Mr J Ward
M Chenery of Horsbrugh	Mr B Watkins
Mr H Humphrey	Ms S Whitaker
Mr B Iles	Mr A White
Mr T Jermy	Mr M Wilby
Mr C Jordan	Mrs M Wilkinson
Mr J Joyce	

**Present: 77**

Mr J Ward, Vice Chairman, in the Chair.

### **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Aldred, Mr D Collis, Ms E Corlett, Mr T FitzPatrick, Mr P Gilmour, Mr W Northam and Mr M Kiddle-Morris.

## **1 Minutes**

- 1.1 The minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 October 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- 1.2 The minutes of the extraordinary Council meeting held on 7 November 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **2 Chairman's Announcements**

- 2.1 The Chairman welcomed Andrew Bunyan, the Interim Executive Director of Children's Services to his first meeting of Council.
- 2.2 The Chairman advised Council that all members had received an 'In Good Company' pledge card asking them to show their support by making a personal pledge to do something to make sure that no one in Norfolk spends a lonely day if they don't want to. He asked all members to spread the word in the areas that they represented and to make a personal pledge to help the campaign.

## **3 Declarations of Interest**

- 3.1 Michael Chenery of Horsburgh declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7 (Report from the Norfolk Records Committee) as he was a Trustee of the Archive Heritage Development Foundation Trust.

## **4 Questions to Leader of the Council**

### **4.1 Question from Mr G Nobbs**

- 4.1.1 Mr Nobbs asked whether, following the departure of Michael Rosen and the speed at which his successor was appointed, the Leader could assure him that the normal procedures for recruiting a full time replacement Executive Director of Children's Services would be followed and that the post would be appointed by a panel of Members.

- 4.1.2 The Leader replied that they would.

### **4.2 Question from Mr T Coke**

- 4.2.1 Mr Coke asked, with regard to the third motion on the agenda, whether the Leader had whipped his group or whether they had been given a free vote.

- 4.2.2 The Leader replied that the Conservative Group did not have a whip.

### **4.3 Question from Mr B Watkins**

- 4.3.1 Following the collapse of the joint Norfolk and Suffolk devolution deal, Mr Watkins asked what steps the leader proposed to take in order to find an alternative 'Devo 2' solution which would have the broad consent of District Councils, the business community and the general public of Norfolk.
- 4.3.2 The Leader responded that any future way forward would need to ensure that it was built from the bottom up rather than top down.
- 4.4 **Question from Mr R Bearman**
- 4.4.1 Mr Bearman said that despite growing evidence that global climate change was occurring at a much faster rate than previously realised, at the meeting of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) on 14th November a member of another authority argued that the region's climate change commitments should be downgraded in the new Greater Norwich Local Plan. He asked if the leader of the Council could guarantee that he and other Norwich representatives on the GNDP would do everything in their power to ensure action on climate change was at the heart of the local plan, including on the issues of housing standards, transport emissions and infrastructure.
- 4.4.2 The Leader replied that the Council needed to take notice of climate change, full stop.
- 4.5 **Question from Ms A Kemp**
- 4.5.1 Ms Kemp asked the Leader if he thought it was right that Norfolk County Council should give away its assets at a time when it was stopping core services such as school road crossing patrols. She asked if the decision of Policy and Resources Committee could be revisited carefully to make sure that the Council was putting money where it was needed.
- 4.5.2 The Leader replied that he was always careful to put money where it was needed.
- 4.6 **Question from Mr J Childs**
- 4.6.1 Mr Childs asked if the Leader would put the full weight of the Council behind Great Yarmouth's quest to get Universal Credit sorted out as it was causing problems within the borough. He said that some people from European countries were facing the threat of being deported as under the EU Act of 2006 they no longer had the right to reside in this Country.
- 4.6.2 The Leader responded that this was a detailed subject and asked if Mr Childs could write down his concerns and send them to him so that he could follow it through as there was an issue being highlighted regarding people feeling persecuted.
- 4.7 **Question from Mrs C Walker**
- 4.7.1 Mrs Walker asked the Leader who would have ownership of the budget and when the Council would have sight of it
- 4.7.2 The Leader responded that the relevant information was in the Council papers.

#### **4.8 Question from Mr D Ramsbotham**

4.8.1 Mr Ramsbotham said that he was sure that like him other Councillors would be disturbed to see that letters from the public to Officers and Members on important issues were being left unanswered. He asked if the Leader agreed that the Council should promote transparency and openness and not treat the electorate with contempt.

4.8.2 The Leader replied that he did agree and that all letters were responded to within agreed standards. He added the caveat that often it took time to obtain the relevant information and answers to questions raised by which time often further correspondence was received asking why a response hadn't been sent immediately.

4.8.3 By way of clarification Mr Ramsbotham said that he was not directing his question specifically at the Leader but at all Councillors and Officers.

#### **4.9 Question from Ms S Whitaker**

4.9.1 Ms Whitaker asked the Leader what action would be taken to rectify the areas of poor performance which had been highlighted in the recent damning Ofsted report on Children's Services

4.9.2 The Leader responded by saying there had been new appointments in the department and they were working extremely hard to try and reverse the poor performance highlighted in the Ofsted report.

#### **4.10 Question from Mr T Garrod**

4.10.1 Mr Garrod said that he was astounded to read in the EDP Cllr Bremner's comments regarding Council spending around investing in people. He asked if the Leader could comment on the story.

4.10.2 In response, the Leader asked the Managing Director to respond.

The Managing Director said that the County Council had 120 senior managers and was investing £900 each in their training and development. This was the first time in recent years that the County Council had invested in leadership development for senior managers, which was standard practice in large organisations. She said that money had already been budgeted for the training, which was introducing a more systematic approach to development to ensure that the County Council was meeting the development needs of individual members of staff.

#### **4.11 Question from Mr R Bird**

4.11.1 Mr Bird asked the Leader why there were 11 notices of motions originally on the agenda but that only 5 of them would be heard, particularly in light of the fact that the next ordinary Council meeting would be in April 2017. He asked what arrangements would be made for these motions to be heard.

4.11.2 In response the Leader said that this was a decision of the Chairman.

The Chairman replied that he had given consideration to how to make the

meeting more manageable and that the decision to reduce the number of motions to be debated on the day had been taken in consultation with the group leaders.

**4.12 Question from Mr Bremner**

4.12.1 Mr Bremner asked the Leader a question regarding psychometric testing for staff and said that the reply from the last meeting stated “the programme will be subject to value for money evaluation”. He asked what value for money testing had been undertaken before squandering £124,000 by the Managing Director which could have been spent on Looked after Children and vulnerable adults, and could the Leader explain the shock news that over £1 million was being spent in this way.

4.12.2 In reply the Leader said that Mr Bremner needed to look again at the budget that the Council passed in February 2016.

**4.13 Question from Mr P Smyth**

4.13.1 Mr Smyth said that at the budget meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 it was acknowledged that the late and final settlement by the Government on 10<sup>th</sup> February meant that an additional £7.7million allocated for over 2 years could not be dealt with at the February meeting. A process was outlined where the service committees would consider proposals and priorities for spending of this money for consideration by full Council on 25<sup>th</sup> July. He said that this didn't happen however there had been an announcement from P&R Committee regarding the efficiency plan referring to the fact the ‘the administration is minded to propose’ a different use of the money and a decision on funding would shift to the October meetings. He said that in doing so P&R committee had taken steps that he believed were beyond its remit.

Mr Smyth said that he believed that there had been another incident when P&R Committee had also acted outside its remit when £2.75 million of public health money was agreed to be moved without reference to the Communities Committee which was informed of it later on. He asked if the Leader would ask the Monitoring Officer to look at the review of the P&R Committee decision over the summer and whether it has breached the Constitution and its remit.

4.13.2 The Leader said that he did not believe that the P&R Committee had gone beyond the constitution and that he did not think they would be allowed to go beyond their remit but that he would ask the Monitoring Officer to look into this further.

4.13.3 In response Mr Smyth asked that in light of the fact that his original motion on the agenda related to the 2016/17 budget rather than 2017/18, his motion should now be considered.

4.13.4 In response the Leader said that the motion was pre-empting the budget for the next financial year.

**5 Notice of Motions**

5.1 The following motion was proposed by Ms A Kemp and seconded by Mr T East:

“This Council lost £34 million in extricating Norfolk from a costly and insufficiently scrutinised contract for an incinerator in South Lynn but unfortunately and ill-advisedly voted not to complete the Revell Enquiry so that lessons could be learnt to prevent a repetition of the same costly errors in the future.

This Council therefore recognises that the right option and legacy to leave to the new Council in May is a Council committed and resourced to deliver as priority an amendment to the Council's Waste Plan to embed its commitment to eliminate all forms of waste treatment involving Incineration on the Willows site.”

5.1.1 Ms Kemp proposed an alteration to the motion that the last sentence be amended to take out the words ‘on the Willows site’ to read, ‘...to eliminate all forms of waste treatment involving incineration *anywhere in Norfolk*’. Council did not give consent to the alteration to the motion and so the debate was on the original motion.

5.1.2 Following debate, and upon being put to the vote, with 30 votes in favour and 43 votes against the motion was **LOST**.

5.2 The following motion was proposed by Mr T Coke and seconded by Mr Bird:

Following the motion agreed by Council in July 2015 which stated:

“That this Council reviews the governance options set out under the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, at both county and district levels, with a view to identifying significant savings, improving efficiency, democracy and accountability” and further to the Secretary of State’s decision to abandon Devolution for Norfolk and Suffolk last month and in consideration of the report recently sent to members, to move the process to the next stage:

‘This council resolves to ask officers to prepare detailed options with a view to submitting proposals to the Secretary of State for an alternative governance structure for Norfolk. Officers will provide a breakdown of the savings, efficiencies and implementation costs that each option would provide in a coherent business plan.

The governance structure options will include but will not be limited to:

- Current two tier system
- Single unitary council
- 2 unitary councils
- 3 unitary councils”

5.2.1 Following debate, and upon being put to a vote with only 9 votes in favour, the motion was **LOST**.

5.3 The following motion was proposed by Mr R Bearman and seconded by Dr A Boswell:

**“Reducing single-use plastic (SUP) use in Norfolk**

According to recent research, eight million metric tons of plastic waste ends up in the world’s oceans each year, endangering marine life. There is also a growing understanding of the risks posed to human health by toxic chemicals present in plastics.

Seven months after the introduction of the 5p bag charge, use of single-use plastic bags had already dropped by 85%, while the TV programme Hugh's War on Waste has raised public awareness of the problems of our throwaway culture. It is time for us to take a lead on this issue.

This Council RESOLVES to:

1. request officers to develop a robust strategy to move towards making Norfolk County Council workplaces 'single-use-plastic-free' by the end of 2017 and encourage other institutions, businesses and citizens to adopt similar measures;
2. end the sale and provision of SUP products such as bottles, cups, cutlery and drinking straws in council buildings by the end of 2017, by using reusable or fully recyclable alternatives.
3. investigate the possibility of requiring pop-up food and drink vendors at council events to avoid SUPs as a condition of their contract; and to replace with reusable or fully recyclable alternatives.
4. work with tenants in commercial properties owned by Norfolk County Council to encourage the phasing out of SUP cups, bottles, cutlery and straws, by using reusable or fully recyclable alternatives."

- 5.3.1 Mr Wilby proposed the following amendment, which was agreed by the proposer and became the substantive motion:

"To delete the final sentence of paragraph two, starting "It is time..."

And then, after 'This Council Resolves', to add:

"...to ask the Norfolk Waste Partnership to research the Reduction of single-use plastic in Norfolk. This should include the following proposals for consideration:"

The four resolutions then come underneath."

- 5.3.2 Following debate, and upon being put to a vote, the motion was **CARRIED** unanimously.

- 5.4 The following motion was proposed by Mr M Wilby and seconded by Mrs A Thomas:

"This Council recognises the vital importance of improving our transport infrastructure and that this will help to deliver the new jobs and economic growth that is needed in the years ahead.

This Council also recognises the importance of giving a clear message of its infrastructure priorities to the government and its agencies, and so ensure that there is universal recognition of their importance to the people of Norfolk. We need to consistently project this clear message and build and maintain the necessary momentum until we have eliminated this infrastructure deficit.

Therefore, the council agrees the following projects as its priorities for the coming years:

- Norwich western link

- Long Stratton bypass
- Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing

In addition, this Council notes the commitment of government to various A47 improvements, but is concerned that Highways England will not make any substantial start on construction until 2020.

The Council therefore urges government to commit to:

- timely improvement of all the A47 (from Peterborough to Lowestoft)
- a full dual carriageway standard, with appropriate grade separated junctions.
- in particular, early government confirmation of the Acle Straight and Tilney to East Winch dualling projects.”

5.4.1 In proposing the motion Mr Wilby proposed an amendment to the first sentence to delete the word ‘transport’ and replace it with ‘road’ so that it read “This Council recognises the vital importance of improving our *road* infrastructure ...”

5.4.2 Following debate, and upon being put to a vote, with 3 votes against, the amended motion was **CARRIED**.

5.5 The following motion was proposed by Mr J Dobson and seconded by Dr Boswell:

“Consequent upon the Council’s decision at its last routine meeting not to resurrect the abandoned Revell Inquiry into the Incinerator Project fiasco (£34m loss of tax payers’ money) and to avoid further accusations of a cover-up, this Council needs to provide for the benefit of Norfolk taxpayers a formal, final statement in order to bring closure on the subject within its municipal term. We therefore have only until April 2017 to finalise the matter. This motion comprises a text for Council’s approval or otherwise, which goes as far as is possible in the present circumstances to indicate where the key processes are recorded and can be publicly accessed by which the flawed decision to sign the contract was made, outline what in consequence of the major lessons learned has already been changed, and propose a final piece of work on the apparently unsatisfactory audit and risk aspects of the matter.

The decision to proceed with the contract to build and operate an industrial-scale, mass-burn incinerator immediately upwind of King’s Lynn to dispose of Norfolk’s residual household waste was taken by the Cabinet at a time when the Council operated under a “Strong Leader and Cabinet” form of governance. The Cabinet took the decision despite the fact that planning permission for the Project had not been received, the credits of £169m were not necessarily secure and substantial penalties were enforceable if planning permission was not received within the laid-down time-scale. The circumstances of the complex and prolonged series of meetings held at the time are all reported in detail on the Council web site and the names of those Councillors and officers involved, in particular the then Council Leader, the Portfolio holder and Director of ETD, to whom authority to proceed with the final implementation stages of the contract had been delegated, are included. By way of avoiding any recurrence of such a major disaster in future, early in the term of the present Council, it was decided, in major measure because of many of the processes and individual behaviours evidenced during the implementation stages of the project, that the “Strong Leader and Cabinet” system, should be changed immediately to a “Committee” system of governance,



whereby individual Councillors cannot make decisions on their own and there is no Cabinet. Under this changed system matters of major policy have to be decided on by full Council. This should go a long way to ensure that the publicly damaging criticisms of “democratic deficit” in the Incinerator Project pronounced at the time cannot be repeated in future large-scale procurement projects, nor can such projects be undertaken without full Council involvement and hopefully a less disastrous outcome.

The crucial issue of audit and risk surrounding the failed contract, however, has not been pronounced upon and requires further examination. We have time to do this and inform the public before the Council stands down. The issue primarily concerns the actions of the relevant senior officers comprising the Chief Officers Group at the time (all since gone). The function of corporate risk on the Council at the time was in the “ownership” of the Chief Officers Group. We have since learned from a National Audit Office report that the Council was officially advised by DEFRA at the time that the time-scale allowed for securing planning permission was too short, given the draconian penalties for not achieving it. What we now need is a report from the Managing Director (who was not in post then) to explain why the Chief Officers at the time had apparently ignored the warning and continued to advise that the project should go ahead. We also need to know whether the measures which have since been taken to ensure that the Chief Officer Group’s successor body would heed such a warning in future are adequate; also how and why the Audit Committee, its staff, as well as the Council’s external auditor, did not see fit to pass any criticism in their annual reports on the processes involved or those members/officers exercising the relevant functions at the time. This should be presented to the Council in time for its (final) 10 April 2017 meeting.”

- 5.5.1 Mr East proposed the following amendment, which was agreed by the proposer and became the substantive motion:
- 5.5.2 To delete the final paragraph from “What we need now..” to add “ I am asking you to support a request to the Managing Director to write a short report to explain how our risk function on the Council could witness this disastrous loss, but still maintain that the function is fit for purpose.”
- 5.5.3 Following debate, and upon being put to a vote, with 22 votes in favour and 49 votes against, the motion was **LOST**.

## **6 Recommendations from Service Committees**

### **6.1 Policy & Resources – 31 October / 28 November 2016**

- 6.1.1 Mr C Jordan, Chair of Policy & Resources Committee, moved the recommendations in the report.

Council **RESOLVED** to:

#### **6.2.1 Finance Monitoring Period 5, August 2016**

- **Agree** additions of £4.710m to the 2016-17 capital programme for ICT projects, library books and capital project support, as set out in Appendix A to this report.

#### 6.2.2

##### **Finance Monitoring Report Period 6 September 2016**

1. To note the period 6 forecast Revenue overspend of £20.746m (Period 5 £21.393m);
2. **Approve** reserves use in 2016-17 as set out in Appendix 1, paragraph 3.6, table 3d, or as explained in paragraphs 3.11 to 3.15 of the report that can be found at Appendix B to this report:
  - a. Adult Social Services £0.651m
  - b. Community and Environmental Services £6.987m
  - c. Finance and Property £0.115m(note only the Adult Social Services proposed use of reserves will reduce the forecast overspend as the proposed use by other services is already reflected in the forecast)
1. To note the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2017 of £19.252m, before taking into account any over/under spends;
2. To note the forecast financial information in respect of Resources and Finance budgets which are the responsibility of this Committee, as set out in Appendix 2;
3. To note the revised expenditure and funding of the 2016-20 capital programme as set out in Appendix 3 of the report;
4. To support and contribute to the development of the 2017-20 capital programme, including the capital strategy, prioritisation scoring method, and potential new schemes, as set out in Capital Annex 2.

#### 6.2.3

##### **Mid-Year Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2016-17**

- **Agree** the Mid-Year Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2016-17 detailed in Appendix C to the report.

#### 6.2.4

##### **Appointment of Directors in NCC related Companies – Supplement**

1. **confirm** the Directors of Norse Care Limited and Norse Care Services Limited as set out in Table 1 at Appendix D of the report.
2. **Appoint** Joel Hull as a Director of Norfolk Energy Futures Limited, replacing Paul Borrett.
3. **Agree** to the Director appointments in respect of Norfolk Safety CIC as set out in Table 3 at Appendix D of the report.

#### 6.2.5

##### **Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group**

**Agree** the recommendations contained in the report at Appendix E subject to the addition of the following posts in whose appointment members are formally involved:

Head of Law  
Head of Democratic Services  
Head of ICT and Information Management  
Head of Programme Management Office  
Head of Procurement

## **7**

### **Reports from Service Committees (Questions to Chairs)**

#### **7.1**

##### **Report of the Policy and Resources Committee meetings held on 31 October and 28 November 2016.**

Mr Jordan, Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, moved the report.

#### **7.1.1 Question from Mr S Morpew**

Mr Morpew asked the Chair when the Council would get an update on devolution and also to confirm whether he needed a fresh mandate from Council to proceed with any future discussions.

The Chair replied that he was currently looking at devolution going forward and he would talk to different group leaders as information came in. He said that he had requested a meeting with the Secretary of State to discuss how devolution could now move forward and wanted to do this before asking Council for a fresh mandate.

#### **7.1.2 Question from Ms S Whitaker**

Ms Whitaker said that the Chancellor's Autumn statement had not mentioned an increase in funding for the NHS or Adult Social Care and outlined that Members of Parliament were currently discussing whether to allow Local Authorities to raise the cap on the social care precept of 2%. She asked whether the Leader would support this and do all within his power to campaign for this to happen.

The Chair replied that he was aware that the Chair of Adult Social Care had sent a letter to the Government lobbying for funding for adult social care. This was a national issue and it would be raised at a national level.

#### **7.1.3 Question from Mr G Nobbs**

Mr Nobbs referred to paragraph 17 of the report relating to the disposal and acquisition of assets. He said that the Council had many premises that were let at a less than commercial rent to give support to certain organisations. As he understood it the proposal was to regularise this arrangement to charge a commercial rent for everyone and that organisations could apply for a grant. He said that Council needed to consider this as to charge certain organisations a commercial rent without any guarantee that they would have a grant to make up for it would mean that we could cause them a great deal of distress.

The Chair replied that Policy and Resources Committee were in charge of properties and determining their value, not the allocation of grants to the organisations that rented the properties. He said that the County Council were custodians of the properties and needed to ensure that they received the best commercial value rent for properties. Organisations would not lose out as they would still be able to apply for a grant from the relevant Committee to subsidise any potential changes in cost.

Mr Nobbs said that at the moment no organisation, getting a reduced subsidised rent from the Council should be told that they would have to pay a commercial rent before they had been given a guarantee that the loss of income would be made up for them by the Council.

In response the Chair said it was a commercial decision and that organisations would be able to apply for a grant to pay for the commercial rent.

#### **7.1.4 Question from Mr T Jermy**

Mr Jermy said that when the Chair was Cabinet Member for Efficiency, a school was closed in his division and a free school was prevented from moving into the Sixth Form block until the Secretary of State intervened and forced the Chair to rent it to them. He asked if the Council would have similar issues with this policy.

The Chair responded by saying that the people of Norfolk were entitled to a commercial rent on properties that they owned.

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

7.2 **Report of the Adult Social Care Committee meetings held on 10 October and 7 November 2016.**

Mr B Borrett, Chair of Adult Social Care Committee moved the report.

7.2.1 **Question from Mr B Watkins**

Mr Watkins asked the Chair if he would agree that chronic underfunding was a matter for the Government to address rather than passing the problem through to local Councils to deal with through increases in Council tax.

The Chair responded that there was no easy solution to the problem. The Committee had supported a 2% increase in Council tax to fund adult social care previously however he did not want to pre-empt the will of the Committee to support an increase of Council tax by a larger amount to fund adult social care. He reiterated that the Committee had asked the Chair to write to the Secretary of State regarding financial sustainability for the delivery of adult social care in Norfolk prior to the announcement of the Autumn Settlement and he had been disappointed that there had been no further money allocated in the budget. He said that the Committee would need to discuss this and form an opinion when they next met.

7.2.2 **Question from Mr M Sands**

Mr Sands said that his recollection of the motion put forward to the Adult Social Care Committee was that the Council would send a deputation to lobby Norfolk MPs to apply pressure on the Minister to put in extra funding. He asked the Chair if he now needed to 'add teeth' to the letter by making this deputation.

The Chair responded that he was happy to raise the issue to be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee.

7.2.3 **Question from Mrs C Walker**

Mrs Walker said that wardens and residents were currently being consulted on their future as part of the budget consultations. She asked the Chair if consideration could be given to look again at the issue of funding wardens who support vulnerable people to live independently.

The Chair replied that the budget for the Adult Social Care Committee was increasing overall however the department was being faced with increased demands which was why the Committee was looking at an overspend. This was a complex area as the County Council no longer received the money to pay for

these services as it was now allocated to the District Councils to give to Housing Authorities. The Committee had decided on the budget areas for consultation and would need to make a decision and decide on the most appropriate way to balance the budget.

#### 7.2.4 **Question from Mr P Smyth**

Mr Smyth raised an issue regarding empty respite beds that were available in care homes in Swaffham which he believed were being paid for by the County Council.

The Chair asked Mr Smyth to email him the exact details and he would look into the issue further.

#### 7.2.5 **Question from Ms S Whitaker**

Ms Whitaker asked the Chair if he had identified any areas of good practice across the Country that could be applicable to Norfolk when he attended the Social Services Conference in Manchester.

The Chair replied that there were a number of areas of interest that he had identified and he would discuss them with group leads on the Committee to consider whether to take them forward in Norfolk. He stressed that the pressures facing Norfolk were similar to those faced in other local authorities across the Country.

#### 7.2.6 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### 7.3 **Report of the Children's Services Committee meetings held on 18 October and 15 November 2016**

Mr R Smith, Chair of Children's Services Committee moved the report.

#### 7.3.1 **Question from Ms A Kemp**

Ms Kemp asked whether the Children's Services Improvement Plan would be sent to all members of the Council.

The Chair replied that the Improvement Plan had been considered by the Children's Services Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> November and was publically available on the Council's website in the papers for the meeting. Children's Services would receive a monitoring visit from Ofsted in March 2017 and it was important that the Council rose to the challenge to address and review the issues in the Improvement Plan.

#### 7.3.2 **Question from Mrs J Leggett**

Mrs Leggett said that it had been a while since Barnados had arrived to work with Children's Services in Norfolk. She said that she was aware that the relationship was being developed and asked if the Chair could tell her how far it had developed as she believed that it was a key part of the Children's Services improvement journey.

The Chair replied that it was a key part of the Government's requirement for the

Council that it linked to a national charity to co-ordinate processes within Children's Services in order to improve leaving care and care leavers in particular. He said that there had been a slight increase in the number of looked after children for which there was no apparent pattern but related to large numbers of sibling groups that had been taken into care recently.

#### 7.3.3 **Question from Mr Nobbs**

Mr Nobbs asked if the Chair could explain the precise circumstances of Mr Michael Rosen's resignation and whether the Leader of the Council's television interview the day before had influenced the decision in any way.

The Chair replied that it had been Mr Rosen's decision to resign and the normal resignation costs would apply. He was pleased that Andrew Bunyan had been appointed on an interim basis and had been able to take up the post so quickly.

#### 7.3.4 **Question from Mr D Ramsbotham.**

Mr Ramsbotham said that many parents in Norfolk were angry and dismayed that the wellbeing and the lives of their children were being put at risk by the withdrawal of school crossing patrols across the county. He asked if the Chairman agreed that a child's life was worth a lot more than £150,000 and would he do all he could to retain this service in its entirety by persuading this Council to divert the necessary finance from other sources – for example from the Parish Partnership Scheme.

The Chair replied that he was aware of the controversy around this issue, which had been agreed in the budget in February when the Council had agreed to look at those areas where the service was essential. He said that there were 38 sites where the threshold of the number of cars and number of children crossing had not been met and these areas were subject to public consultation. He said that it was within the power of the Children's Services Committee to look at this issue within the budget and make a decision.

#### 7.3.5 **Question from Mr E Seward**

Mr Seward asked whether in areas where it was proposed that school crossing patrols cease, schools would be allowed to fund the service themselves. He asked if the Chair would give consideration to other sources of funding should the school wish to continue the crossing through other means such as Parish Councils or Parent Teacher Associations etc.

The Chair replied that this would need to be a decision of the Committee but he could look at it. Only the County Council could employ school crossing patrol staff and would need to still be responsible for supervision, recruitment and security checks.

#### 7.3.6 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

#### 7.4 **Report of the Communities Committee meetings held on 19 October and 16 November 2016**

Mrs M Dewsbury, Chair of Communities Committee, moved the report.

#### 7.4.1 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

7.5 **Report of the Environment, Development and Transport Committee meetings held on 14 October and 11 November 2016.**

Mr M Wilby, Chair of EDT Committee moved the report.

7.5.1 **Question from Mr R Bird**

Mr Bird asked for clarification on paragraph 5.2 of the report that the Committee agreed to recommend Option C but that this was ultimately agreed was 5%.

The Chair clarified that this was correct.

7.5.2 **Question from Mrs C Walker**

Mrs Walker clarified that in the report of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November the parking problems referred to in paragraph 1.1 where in fact in 'Sussex Road' and not 'Magdalen Way'.

7.5.3 **Question from Dr M Strong**

Dr Strong asked the Chair to agree the following amendments to the report with reference to the Broadband, Mobile Phones and Digital working group:

~~"Asked the better-Broadband, Mobile Phone and Digital for Norfolk working group if not enough progress had been made by January, to write a letter to the Minister requesting intervention in technology going in to help improve Norfolk's access to Superfast Broadband-mobile phone coverage signals.~~

This amendment was agreed by the Chair.

7.5.4 **Question from Mr A Grey**

Mr Grey asked if the Chair could make it a priority to put pressure on the Government and the Environment Agency to look at the sea defences for the County of Norfolk and ensure that we were doing all that we could to protect the coastline.

The Chair replied that work was being undertaken with all the relevant authorities regarding coastal erosion and he was happy to support the District Councils in this role.

7.5.5 **Question from Mr Long**

Mr Long raised a query regarding the local levy for the Regional flood and Coastal Committees and said that he had always argued for a larger increase than 2% as money put into the levy could bring back further funding. To limit the increase to 2% was, in his opinion, not helpful.

In response the Chair said that it was the will of the Committee that this be set at 2% but that this had been revised to 5% and everyone was happy with this outcome.

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

7.6 **Report of the Economic Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 24 November 2016**

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

**Other Committees**

7.7 **Report of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 13 October 2016.**

Mr M Carttiss moved the report.

7.7.1 **Question from Ms Whitaker**

Ms Whitaker asked whether the Chairman had any update on the alternative arrangements proposed for patients following the closure of the Henderson re-ablement unit.

The Chairman replied that the Democratic Support and Scrutiny Team Manager would be able to provide further information if she contacted her directly.

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

7.8 **Report of the Planning (Regulatory) Committee meeting held on 21 October 2016**

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

7.9 **Reports of the Personnel Committee meetings held on 21 October 2016 and 5 December 2016.**

Mr C Jordan moved the reports. Council **RESOLVED** to note the reports.

7.10 **Report of the Norfolk Joint Museums Committee meeting held on 28 October 2016**

Mr J Ward moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

7.11 **Report of the Norfolk Records Committee meeting held on 28 October 2016.**

M Chenery of Horsbrugh, Vice-Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

**8 Senior Management Arrangements**

8.1 Council received the report by the Managing Director setting out the context and detailed proposals for new senior management arrangements for the corporate strategy, support and finance functions following recommendations made by an external review.

8.2 In introducing the report the Managing Director said it set out the rationale for the new senior management arrangements and was part of an ongoing review in the organisation to ensure that it was fit for purpose to support the Council to function



effectively within reduced resources. The report followed previous reports in October 2014, proposing a reduced management structure, and in July 2016, when Council agreed to the deletion of the post of Executive Director of Resources. The Managing Director said that there were no additional posts in the proposed structure and assured members that the Policy and Resources budget proposals from February 2016 would be met in full when the reorganisation was completed.

- 8.3 Following the debate and upon being put to the vote (49 in favour and 18 against) Council **RESOLVED** to **approve** the new senior management arrangements outlined in the report.

## **9 Appointment of Independent Persons**

- 9.1 The report by the Head of Law and Monitoring Officer was received. The report set out the requirement for the appointment of Independent Persons and asked Council to approve the recommendation of the Interview Panel to appoint Stephen Jones and Alan Squirrell to be the Council's Independent Persons.

- 9.2 Council **RESOLVED** to

- approve the recommendation of the Interview Panel to appoint Stephen Jones and Alan Squirrell to be the Council's Independent Persons

## **10 Appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees and Joint Committees (Standard Item).**

There were none.

## **11 To answer questions under Rule 8.3 of the Council Procedure Rules**

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 1.25pm

## **Chairman**



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Customer Services 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.