

**Norfolk County Council**

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 21 July 2014**

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

## **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies were received from Mr B Borrett, Mr S Clancy, Mr J Dobson and Mrs E Morgan.

### **1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27 May 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **2 Chairman's Announcements**

- 2.1 Following on from an announcement concerning Hilary Cox that was made at the previous meeting, the Chairman handed to Hilary Cox an illuminated address from Members of Norfolk County Council thanking her for all that she had done for the County Council during her demanding year of office.
- 2.2 The Chairman introduced two young people who were attending the meeting to talk about Take Over Day 2014. One of these young people was a member of the UK Youth Parliament for North Norfolk (who had stood for election following Takeover Day last year) and the other was a member of the In Care Council. They explained how this annual event gave young people the chance to work with adults working in all sorts of organisations including Councils, Government departments and businesses and to get involved in making decisions.
- 2.3 It was pointed out that during Take Over Day in 2013 young people had taken on many different roles, including:
- the County Council's Acting Managing Director
  - the Interim Director of Children's Services
  - the Chief Fire Officer
  - a library manager
  - the Police and Crime Commissioner
  - the Managing Directors at KLM Engineering and Norwich Airport
  - the Senior Creative Account Manager at Heart Radio, and
  - the constituency office of a MP
- 2.4 The following examples were given of decisions and issues that young people got involved in last year:
- Young people and the Interim Director of Children's Services decided to give more money to the Norfolk In Care Council so that they could continue to improve the lives of children in care.
  - Some of the young people involved in Takeover Day said that they felt young people often got a bad press. As a result the Council had worked with the EDP to have a section of the paper written by young people. This had given young people a chance to share their experience of life in Norfolk.
  - Young people helped to choose books the Millennium Library in Norwich.
- 2.5 In reply to questions from Members, it was pointed out that last year more than sixty young people from 13 years of age to 19 years of age and from many different backgrounds had taken part in the Take Over Day. This year the event would be held

on 21 November 2014 and involve over a hundred young people. One of the main aims would be to get more organisations involved, including construction companies, catering companies and health services. Another of the aims would be to get more Members to apply to take part in Takeover Day and for a few Members to be involved in the planning for the event. The Chairman said that he would be more than happy to take part in the planning process and for Member participation to extend beyond the day that was set aside for the event. It was noted that information about Take Over Day would be included in Members Insight. Feedback would be provided to Members after the event ended.

- 2.6 The Chairman went on to thank those who had attended the Chairman's Summer Reception and to remind Members of the display of work which the Council did with Children with disabilities that could be found outside of the Council Chamber.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

- 3.1 Mr Hacon declared an "Other Interest" in the report of the Communities Committee in that he had two sons employed by the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 3.2 Ms E Corlett declared an "Other Interest" in the report of the Adult Social Care Committee in that she was employed by the Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust.

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

#### **4.1 Question from Mr T FitzPatrick**

- 4.2 The Local Member Protocol appeared for the most part to be working very well but on occasions it was not applied evenly across all departments of the Council; could the importance of the protocol be re-emphasised to all officers so that it was applied evenly?

- 4.3 The Leader said that while he agreed that for the most part the local Member protocol worked very well there would always be the odd times where it did not work in the way that it should and that he would discuss the matter with the Head of Democratic Services to see whether any procedural changes were needed.

#### **4.4 Question from Dr M Strong**

- 4.5 When the Council had previously discussed the concept of a Living Wage it was felt advisable that the matter should be left until a later date. In the meantime the financial situation for so many people for whom the County Council were responsible had become increasingly difficult. Not only would the Living Wage be good for those who served the county but also for Norfolk businesses generally. Could an assurance therefore be given that at the September 2014 meeting of the Personnel Committee the issue of a Living Wage would be at the top of the agenda?

- 4.6 The Leader said that the Living Wage issue would be placed at the top of the agenda for the next Personnel Committee. Those employed by the County Council were mostly on salaries above the Living Wage and the issue had more to do with when people were employed directly by schools rather than employed by the County Council.

#### **4.7 Question from Dr A Boswell**

- 4.8 Why was the contract to move 40,000 tonnes of Norfolk waste to Suffolk for incineration not discussed at the Environment, Development and Transport

Committee prior to the contract being signed?

- 4.9 The Leader said that this was an example of a very good deal that had been achieved by joint working between Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils. The contract related to approximately 10% of all Norfolk's waste and 20% of Norfolk's residual waste which would otherwise have gone to landfill in Norfolk. Mr Coke speaking as Chair of Environment, Development and Transport Committee endorsed the comment that had been made by the Leader and said that this decision had been taken under the previous Cabinet governance system and was in the best interests of Norfolk residents and could not have waited for the issue to be discussed by the Waste Advisory Group.
- 4.10 **Question from Miss Kemp**
- 4.11 Would the Leader commit the County Council to holding high level discussions about the prevention of waste in the county with industry, supermarkets, Suffolk County Council and other Local Authorities?
- 4.12 The Leader said that this was a serious problem which officers took up whenever the opportunity arose. It was however essentially for industry and the supermarkets themselves to tackle issues such as preventing excessive packaging of products.
- 4.13 **Question from Mr P Hacon**
- 4.14 Would the Leader agree to approach the management of Marks and Spencer about the planned closure of their town centre store in Great Yarmouth and work with the Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council on this issue?
- 4.15 The Leader said that he would be glad to write to Marks and Spencer on this matter in conjunction with the Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council. He also suggested that this should be done with the full support of all the Party Spokespersons at County Hall and the Council agreed to proceed on that basis.
- 4.16 **Question from Mr B Watkins**
- 4.17 Would the Leader report on progress with joint services with Suffolk County Council and the joint initiatives with Suffolk that were planned for the future?
- 4.18 The Leader said that a joint public health appointment had been made for the Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG area, Norfolk had plans for shared arrangements for the management of property, a deal had been made on the disposal of waste, and a joint approach to customer services was being developed, as well as a joint approach to adult social care consultation and joint working on economic development. These very important initiatives were leading to improved services as well as cost savings.
- 4.19 **Question from Mr R Bird**
- 4.20 Mr Bird said that he had not been consulted in the correct procedural manner concerning changes in the Norfolk coast hopper bus service and asked what could be done to prevent this situation happening again?
- 4.21 The Leader said that he would discuss with Communications and with the Head of Democratic Services whether any changes were needed in the local member protocol.

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

### **5.1 Reports of the Adult Social Care Committee held on 16 June 2014 and 7 July 2014**

#### **5.2 Question from Mrs M Somerville**

Would the Chair comment on the situation regarding the level of social care reserves, the redistribution of funding from preventative care to the provision of essential services and how service committees could work together to identify integrated solutions. She gave as an example a house that was being sold on a county farm near Clinks Farm (Care Farm) and suggested that the funding from this should be used to provide respite care services at Clinks Farm.

5.3 The Chair said that that the reserves amounted to £13.3 m and that some of this was set aside for specific social care items. There was a forecast use of reserves of about £4.3 m for this year. Specific issues such as the Care Act and the Better Care Fund would lead to more integrated working. Savings were expected to be made in 2014/15 from improvements in the integrated community equipment service, changes in mental health social work, new joint management posts with other organisations and areas of joint working with Suffolk County Council. It was not within the remit of the Committee to reach decisions on the sale of county farm land.

#### **5.4 Question from Dr M Strong**

The Council had ceased delivery of social care in the Broadland area by Care UK; could the Chair inform Members which Divisions had people living in them that were affected by this decision?

5.5 The Chair said that she would discuss the matter with Dr Strong after the meeting. The Council was working with Care UK on a phased withdrawal of its services and was putting in place alternative arrangements that meant the public should not be affected by the changes.

5.6 Council **RESOLVED** to note the reports.

### **5.7 Reports of the Children's Services Committee held on 17 June 2014 and 15 July 2015**

#### **5.8 Question from Mr S Askew**

Having received an assurance that Eccles Primary School would not close before the matter was discussed by Members, residents were concerned that a decision had been made before the Committee met. Could an assurance be given that should another school find itself facing closure its future would be discussed and decided at the Committee?

5.9 The Chair said that the decision to close Eccles Primary School had been reached in accordance with the Council's previous system of governance and the local Member was kept informed of developments. Eccles Primary School had high pupil costs, had attained fluctuating academic results, subject to a fall in projected pupil numbers and unable to set a balanced budget for future years. The Vice-Chair, Mr Bearman, added that at its meeting on 15 July 2014 the Committee had agreed on the procedure for proposing and deciding on future significant changes to school reorganisation.

#### **5.10 Question from Ms D Gihawi**

Could the Chair give some indication of the biggest issues for the year ahead and the financial implications?

- 5.11 The Chair said that the biggest issue for the future was to ensure that the improvement plan was carried through successfully. Significant Early Years improvements had been made in the King's Lynn and West Norfolk area and other significant improvements were being made elsewhere.
- 5.12 Council **RESOLVED** to note the reports.
- 5.13 **Reports of the Communities Committee held on 18 June 2014 and 9 July 2014**
- 5.14 **Question from Mr D Roper**  
What steps were being taken to learn from the excellent way in which the Fire and Rescue Service had tackled the issue of flash flooding in Norfolk in recent weeks?
- 5.15 The Chair said that he was due to hold a discussion with officers on this matter later today and he was hopeful of being able to produce a briefing note on this matter for Members in due course.
- 5.16 **Question from Mr J Ward**  
Would the Chair of the Committee join me in thanking the Fire and Rescue Service for the excellent way in which they had dealt with the big fire at Pinebanks last week?
- 5.17 The Chair said that he wholeheartedly agreed with this comment and was happy to do so.
- 5.18 **Question from Mr H Humphrey**  
There appeared to be some confusion as to what responsibility for flood and water management issues rested with this Committee and what responsibility rested with Environment, Development and Transport Committee; what was being done to clarify the situation?
- 5.19 The Chair said that flood management was the responsibility of Environment, Development and Transport Committee but responsibility for flood resilience was with the Communities Committee. Discussions were taking place between Chairs of both Committees with a view to making the levels of responsibility more clearly understood.
- 5.20 **Question from Mr M Sands**  
  
Could the Chair comment on how the Fire and Rescue Service might be affected by changes imposed by Central Government?
- 5.21 The Chair said as there was insufficient time to answer this question he would discuss the matter with Mr Sands after the meeting.
- 5.22 Council **RESOLVED** to note the reports.
- 5.23 **Reports of the Environment, Development and Transport Committee held on 20 June 2014 and 8 July 2014**
- 5.24 **Question from Mr M Wilby**  
Could an assurance be given that no more major decisions would be reached on issues such as waste management without reference to the Committee?

- 5.25 The Chair said that no such assurance could be given. Decisions on a number of waste management issues had been made before the Waste Advisory Group took on responsibility for considering such issues.
- 5.26 **Question from Mr J Mooney**  
Surface water flooding difficulties in Wymondham were caused by a lack of maintenance to gullies and street cleaning, could the lack of such maintenance activity across the county be reviewed and a report brought back to the Committee?
- 5.27 The Chair said that a full report on this issue would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.
- 5.28 **Question from Dr M Strong**  
Would the Chair be willing for the Coastal Working Group to seek and evaluate expert opinion on the subject of flood sirens and then report back to the Committee?
- 5.29 The Chair said that he had no objection to the Working Group doing this.
- 5.30 Council **RESOLVED** to note the reports.
- 5.31 **Report of the Economic Development Sub-Committee held on 24 June 2014**
- 5.32 **Question from Mrs C Walker**
- 5.33 Would the Chair give an update on training skills in advanced engineering that were being learnt at the Hethel Innovation Centre?
- 5.34 The Chair said that he would be pursuing this matter with the Hethel Innovation Centre in the weeks ahead.
- 5.35 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.
- 5.36 **Report of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 23 June 2014 and 14 July 2014.**
- 5.37 **Question from Mr T FitzPatrick**  
Should the information contained in the press release about the termination of the waste management contract have been brought before Members at the Committee meeting?
- 5.38 The Chair referred to the factual position concerning the termination of the contract that was fully set out in the press release. He said that nothing that was said in the press release was in any way different from what was said or implied in the Committee meeting and there was no attempt to mislead anyone.
- 5.39 **Question from Mr B Watkins**  
What early observations would the Leader like to make about the operation of the Committee?
- 5.40 The Chair said one of the key lessons was that the Committee structure was about reaching informed decisions on important issues rather than having political debates of issues without purpose.

- 5.41 Council **RESOLVED** to note the reports and to endorse the Annual Treasury Management Report 2013-14 that was attached as an annex to the report.

**Other Committees**

5.42 **Report of the Audit Committee held on 19 June 2014**

- 5.43 Mr I Mackie moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

5.44 **Report of the Personnel Committee held on 24 June 2014**

- 5.45 Mr G Nobbs moved the report including the recommendation that sought approval of the draft 2014/15 Pay Policy Statement.

- 5.46 Council **RESOLVED** to note the report and **to agree** to the publication of the 2014/15 Pay Policy Statement that was attached to the report.

5.47 **Report of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 May 2014**

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

5.49 **Report of the Planning (Regulatory) Committee held on 6 June 2014**

- 5.50 Mr D Collis moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

5.51 **Report of the Joint Museums Committee held on 27 June 2014**

- 5.52 Mr J Ward moved the report and in so doing highlighted the many good news stories that were mentioned in it.

The Leader spoke about the national recognition that the Museums Service was achieving under its Head of Service, the success of the Roman Empire and Birds exhibitions and the positive impact that the Service had on economic development in the county.

Council **RESOLVED** to note the report and to place on record its congratulations to Jamie Everett of the Museums Service on being recognised by the Collections Trust as being the national collections manager of the year and to Wayne Holland and Dayna Albright who were runners up in the category of young collections manager of the year.

5.53 **Report of the Records Committee held on 27 June 2014**

- 5.54 Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

5.55 **Report of the Norfolk Highway Agency Committee held on 12 June 2014**

- 5.56 The report was moved. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

6 **Appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees and Joint Committees for 2014/15**



- 6.1 The Council **RESOLVED** to ask the Environment, Development and Transport Committee to make the appointments for 2014/15 to the Norfolk Parking Partnership Joint Committee (1 member of the Council) and the Planning and Traffic Regulation Outside London Joint Committee (1 Member of the Council).
- 6.2 **Chair of the Norwich Highways Agency Joint Committee**
- 6.3 Tony Adams and Bert Bremner were moved and duly seconded for the position of Chair of the Norwich Highways Agency Joint Committee.
- 6.4 **RESOLVED** (on a show of hands)  
That Mr Adams was elected Chair of the Norwich Highways Agency Joint Committee. There were 35 votes in favour of Mr Bremner and 40 votes in favour of Mr Adams and 4 Abstentions.
- 7 **To answer questions under Rule 8.3 of the Council Procedure Rules**
- 7.1 There were none.
- 8 **Thanks to Anne Gibson for her work as Acting Managing Director**
- 8.1 Members placed on record their thanks to Anne Gibson who was attending her last meeting of the Council as Acting Managing Director although remaining with the County Council.

The meeting concluded at 11.40 am