

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

**Held on Thursday, 23 January 2020 at 10.00 am in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mrs L.S. Turner (Chairman)	Mrs K. Grey
Mr R. F. W. Brame (Vice-Chairman)	Mr C. Harvey
Mr T. J. Ashby	Mr P.J. Hewett
Mr S Askew	Mrs J. James
Mr R. Atterwill	Mr T. J. Jermy
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Cllr T. Kiddell
Mr T. Birt	Mr M. Kiddle-Morris
Mr W.P. Borrett	Mr R.G. Kybird
Councillor C. Bowes	Mr I. Martin
Mr M. P. Brindle	Mr K. Martin
Miss H. Bushell	Mrs L.H. Monument
Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mr P. Morton
Mr S. H. Chapman-Allen	Mr M. J. Nairn
Mr E. Colman	Mr J.W. Nunn
Mr P.D. Claussen	Mr I. Sherwood
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mrs S. E. Suggitt
Mrs H Crane	Miss T. Taylor
Mrs V. Dale	Mr S. Terry
Mrs S. Dowling	Mrs A. M. Webb
Mr R.W. Duffield	Mr N.C. Wilkin
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr P. S. Wilkinson
Mr K.S. Gilbert	

In Attendance

Maxine O'Mahony	- Executive Director of Strategy & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Rob Walker	- Executive Director Place
Mark Stinson	- Executive Manager Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

1/20 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carter, Clarke, Eagle, Oliver, Robinson and Wickerson.

2/20 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

(a) 28 November 2019

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(b) 6 December 2019

The Minutes of the Special meeting held on 6 December 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Action By

3/20 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

Councillor Duffield declared a personal and prejudicial interest that had arisen from the Planning Committee meeting held on 13 January 2020.

4/20 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

The Chairman announced that two Councillors were celebrating very significant birthdays, and on behalf of Terry Jermy, the Leader of the Labour Group, she wished them both a very Happy Birthday.

Attention was drawn to the recent formation of a Mixed Shed for Carers, a new Group for staff and Members within Breckland Council. This she felt was an invaluable support Group whether it was sharing information, tips and ideas, or just for a friendly chat. The Group had already met twice and it had been found to be very useful and supportive. All information and links to a wealth of appropriate resources would be made available on the intranet for staff and the Breckland Members' page. Karen Hitchcock in HR was the main point of contact and the coordinator.

The Member Development Panel had been resurrected under the Chairmanship of Councillor Kiddell and a very lively and enthusiastic inaugural meeting had recently taken place.

The Chairman was pleased to announce her Community Tea Party to be held on 24 April 2020 in Watton; this would be her final official event as her year as Chairman. This would be an opportunity for Members to say thank you to their residents and Members were asked to put this date in their diaries. Further information would follow in due course.

Finally, Members were reminded and encouraged to attend the two presentations at the end of the meeting. Referring to the second presentation, and for clarity, Councillor Hewett explained that EHC was a critical part of the Breckland and South Holland District Council's training consultancy service. EHC provided a vital role for the residents in both locations and this would be an opportunity for all Members to discover more about the background of EHC, how it worked and how Members could help promote it. It was noted that EHC stood for Environmental Health & Consultancy.

5/20 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 5)

The Leader of the Council announced the following changes to his Cabinet:

Councillor Sarah Suggitt – Executive Member for Governance
Councillor Paul Claussen, Deputy Leader - Executive Member for Planning
Councillor Gordon Bambridge – Executive Member for Environmental Services & Public Protection.

The Leader welcomed Councillor Suggitt to his Team. The updated Portfolio Holder responsibilities would be released at the end of the meeting.

WorkSmart 20:20 Programme

Members were reminded that this programme of works had been signed off at an earlier Full Council meeting. The programme was already moving forward with the initial first project of the refurbishment and enhancement of the Committee Suite

being implemented including the installation of new technology and replacement of the air conditioning units. The delivery of numerous other Worksmart 20:20 projects would be phased in over the coming months including the on-going digitalisation of services, a revised office layout and making new technologies available to staff and Members. This would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all the Council's services and ensure that this Council could meet the changing needs of both its residents and businesses. The WorkSmart Member Board was made up of Councillors Claussen, Sherwood and Hewett who would be happy to answer any questions relative to the programme and he urged all Members to feed any initiatives or ideas that they might have to the Board.

Fireworks and Sky Lanterns

The Leader was sure that many Members had received a number of communications from residents and businesses about fireworks and sky lanterns. The Council would be taking some form of action to protect animals from fear and distress caused by fireworks. This was something he felt passionately about and therefore he intended to ask Officers to investigate ways in which these matters could be addressed. For example, the Council would encourage all organisers of public displays within the District to advertise well in advance to allow any residents or farmers to take necessary precautions. To promote awareness of animal welfare and vulnerable people and to lobby Government to limit maximum noise levels through legalisation and encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock quieter ones. These matters were being championed by the RSPCA across the Country. This was also an opportune moment to consider the release of balloons and sky lanterns, both of which could cause potential hazards to animals and livestock. Local Authorities' powers were extremely limited on private land, but this Council could choose to ban lanterns on its own land and land that it leased to other bodies. As such, the Leader asked Officers to look into these matters and as most would become executive functions, he therefore proposed to take these matters forward in the coming months and support from Members would be sought.

Town & Parish Council Forum

A Town & Parish Council Forum was being organised to take place on Wednesday, 12 February 2020 at 5.30pm. The Forum would be picking up all the salient points that had been fed back from newly Elected Councillors and from the previous Town & Parish Council Forum. The first part of the evening would be a market stall event where Councillors and Town & Parish Clerks would have the opportunity to engage with Officers and discuss issues that were significantly important to them. The formal part of the Forum would contain a presentation by the Leader and the Chief Executive. Members were asked to encourage their Town and Parish Councils to attend this event.

Budget

The budget papers had already been presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission in December, but in terms of the financial position of this Council moving forward, the Leader was in no doubt that there would be challenges ahead with huge levels of uncertainty on the fairer funding and business rate retention and the front bench of the Government not yet being confirmed. Whilst the Council was in a strong position due to its decisions in the past, of just not Members of this Council but of its predecessors too, he had no doubt that difficult choices would have to be made if funding was to be reduced from Government on already precedential levels; however, he was certain that through previous sound financial planning, Breckland Council would remain in a strong financial position moving

forward.

Market Town Support Officers

Finally, after listening to all the concerns from Town and District Members during his coffee call/sessions over the last six months, a restructure had taken place to provide greater support. Market Town Support Officers were now in place overseen by Rob Walker, the Executive Director of Place, and included Stephen James, the Communities Manager who would be responsible for Watton, Riana Rudland, Breckland Place Manager, responsible for Attleborough, Cassie Ruffell, the Regeneration Manager, responsible for Dereham, Sarah Shipley, Public Protection Manager, responsible for Swaffham and Rob Walker for Thetford. Additionally, when the Greater Thetford Partnership Officer had been recruited that post would be responsible for Thetford too. He hoped that these Officers would provide greater support for Members in those localities.

Councillor Gilbert referred to the firework issues as he had private firework parties every year in his garden for his friends and family. He knew that some animals were very nervous of fireworks but wanted clarity on the noise levels that would be allowed. The Leader was not aware of the noise levels but a lead would be taken from the RSPCA to work with Government on these matters. At no point was he trying to deter firework celebrations but he just wanted to ensure that Breckland Council was doing everything in its power to communicate to its residents a better way to engage with their neighbours if they had a private firework display.

Councillor Jermy mentioned the Committee Suite upgrade and asked if these upgrades would provide the Council with the ability to livestream Council meetings that had been discussed on a number of occasions. In response, Members were informed that the technology would be put in place; however, the Council had not made a decision to live-stream its meetings, this would be something that the Overview & Scrutiny Commission would have to debate first followed by a recommendation to Full Council. The technology; however, would also be available for other bodies/businesses who used the Committee Suite for their meetings – livestreaming would be a valuable asset.

Councillor Philip Cowen drew attention to the Cabinet reshuffle and asked the Leader if he would agree with him in thanking Councillor Gordon Bambridge for tackling the newly adopted Local Plan that had been at the forefront of everyone's minds for the past five years - a thankless task. The Leader concurred with the comments made. Being a Cabinet Member could be, on occasion, an immense and thankless task and for those who had been previous Cabinet Members or higher level Committee Chairmen, could be, at times, quite overwhelming. The Planning Portfolio was a truly emotive portfolio and Councillor Bambridge, under his stewardship, had managed to get the Council through some very turbulent times. He welcomed Councillor Claussen who would be taking over the reins for 2020 and taking charge of the new Local Plan review.

Councillor Bambridge had not expected the aforementioned announcement but did want to mention that most of the improvements had been down to the excellent team of Planning Officers and felt that this should be acknowledged. He also thanked all Members for their assistance.

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

None.

7/20 QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE UNDER STANDING ORDER NO 7 (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Action By

Councillor Atterwill asked about previous Agenda and Minutes relating to the former Local Plan Working Group meetings not being available on the website. He felt that these should be re-instated as these were of historical significance and the public should still have the right of access. Also, with regard to the new Local Plan Working Group, he asked if the Minutes from the first meeting held would be published for the benefit of all Members. The Leader stated that he would speak to the Democratic Services Team in respect of the first question; however, as far as the inaugural meeting was concerned he was unsure whether any Minutes had been taken but would ensure that these would be circulated to all Members if indeed any notes were taken.<1>

**Julie Britton,
Andrew
D'Arcy,
Teresa
Smith**

Councillor Jermy directed his question to the Leader. He was aware that the Leader of Norfolk County Council had written to the Prime Minister with a wish list for Norfolk and asked if the Leader had done the same, and if so, what had he asked for Breckland. The Leader advised that Councillor Proctor, the Leader of Norfolk County Council, had written a wish list for Norfolk to the new Prime Minister; however, from a District perspective, a joint letter had been written via the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP). The letter included a wish list for housing, infrastructure, roads, the skills agenda, access to the wider Cambridge tech corridor and more importantly utility provision across the whole of the County. The letter had been written by the Chairman of NALEP.

Councillor Jermy asked if a copy of the letter could be circulated to all Members accordingly.<2>

Jo Elks

Councillor Moreton asked what progress was being made on forming a Climate Change Working Party. Councillor Sherwood advised that at a recent Cabinet meeting it had been agreed that a verbal update on this matter would be provided at every Cabinet meeting in future. He had been working with Officers and many of his Councillor colleagues and would shortly be announcing a programme which would involve Members' engagement, public engagement and stakeholders' engagement and he expected that announcement to be made in early February where the full progress of where the Council was at on this matter would be made. Members would be fully briefed.

As a resident of Breckland, Councillor Dowling was concerned about climate crisis too and asked a question about household waste and how this could be made better for the environment. She wanted to know if the Council was considering offering residents the opportunity of having their food waste composted as neighbouring districts did. Councillor Webb advised that food waste was one of the options discussed as part of the new waste contract; however, there was a balance that needed to be made between the introduction of a food waste collections and the effect that additional vehicle movements collecting such waste would have on the environment. The Council had agreed not to include food waste in the new contract but instead was trying to encourage people not to waste food by buying less. The Leader stated that the Council would have had to pay a great deal extra if food waste had been included in the new contract taking into account the current budget position. Breckland Council supported Norfolk County Council in its composting scheme, which was a free initiative that encouraged residents to reduce waste.

8/20 CABINET MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 8)

(a) 6 December 2019

1. Quarter 2 Financial Performance Report 2019-20 (Minute No. 106/19)

RESOLVED that funding of up to £500,000 be released from the Revenues and Benefits Reserve to cover the expected above budget spend in the Housing Service for this financial year.

2. Swanton Morley Neighbourhood Plan – Making (Adoption) of the Swanton Morley Neighbourhood Plan (Minute No. 107/19)

RESOLVED that the Breckland District Policies map be amended to meet the requirements of paragraph 9 of the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

3. Waste and Related Services Contract (Minute No. 109/19)

The recommendation had been dealt with at the Full Council meeting on 6 December 2019.

4. Adoption

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 6 December 2019 be adopted.

(b) 13 January 2020

1. Review of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2020-21 (Minute No. 11/20)

This recommendation was being dealt with under Agenda item 14 below.

2. Anglia Revenues & Benefits Partnership (Minute No. 12/20)

This recommendation was being dealt with under Agenda item 15 below.

3. Adoption

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 January 2020 be adopted.

9/20 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION (AGENDA ITEM 9)

(a) 6 December 2019

1. Waste & Related Services Contract (Minute No. 94/19)

This recommendation had been dealt with at the Full Council meeting on 6 December 2019.

2. Adoption

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 6 December 2019 be adopted.

(b) 19 December 2019

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 19 December 2019 be adopted.

10/20 PLANNING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 10)

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 16 December 2019 be adopted.

11/20 LICENSING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM 11)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 13 November 2019 be adopted.

12/20 COMMITTEE OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY (AGENDA ITEM 12)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Committee of the Licensing Authority meeting held on 13 November 2019 be adopted.

13/20 POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES & POLLING STATIONS REVIEW (AGENDA ITEM 13)

Mark Stinson, the Executive Manager for Governance presented the report.

Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a requirement for local authorities to undertake a review of their Parliamentary polling districts and polling places every 4 years. The last review of the Breckland area was completed in the autumn of 2014. Subsequent amendments to this legislation by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 now means that all local authorities must undertake a review every 5 years, and the current round of reviews must be completed by 31st January 2020.

The differences between a 'Polling District', a 'Polling Place' and a 'Polling Station', and whose responsibility these came under, were explained.

As part of the review process (Acting) Returning Officers were required to make representations to the local authority on the existing polling stations and the polling stations that would likely be used on the proposed arrangements. These were published on 1st August and a consultation on these proposals ran until 11th September 2019.

Councillor Harvey thanked the Council for this review particularly in respect of St Martin's Way which formed part of the review in relation to the new Polling District for Thetford Burrell (West). He wholeheartedly supported the recommendations.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the Polling Districts and Polling Places, as listed in Appendix 1 to this report, which include the following changes, be adopted: -
 - i. The creation of a new Polling District SA2/1 Parish of Carbrooke (West), allowing for an additional Polling Station in the West of the Parish on the Carbrooke/Watton border (Appendix 2) as and when a suitable venue becomes available.

- ii. The creation of a new Polling District TBU3 Parish of Thetford Burrell (West), allowing for the residents of St Martin's Way Canon Walk, Jubilee Close and Saxon Bank to vote at the Meet Up Café, St Martins Way, Thetford. (Appendix 3).
 - iii. The creation of a new Polling District TBU4 Parish of Thetford Burrell (East) allowing for the residents of the St Michaels Road/Nunnery Drive area to vote at St Michaels Close Community Room, Thetford (Appendix 3).
- 2) by law, the location of Polling Stations is the responsibility of the Returning Officer and to note the locations determined by the Returning Officer as listed in Appendix 1 to this report, which includes the following changes, be noted: -
- i. To relocate the Polling Station for Polling District DEN1 Parish of Dereham Neatherd (East) from the Dereham Cricket Club to the Dereham Football Club.
 - ii. To relocate the Polling Station for Polling District HE2 Parish of Horningtoft from Horningtoft Manor Room to Whissonsett Village Hall.
 - iii. The creation of a new Polling Station for Polling District TBU4 Thetford Burrell (East) at St Michaels Close Community Room, St Michaels Close, Thetford.

14/20 REVIEW OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (LCTRS) FOR 2020-21 (AGENDA ITEM 14)

Councillor Cowen, the Executive Member for Finance & Growth presented the report.

Each year the Council was required to review its Local Council Tax Reduction Support Scheme (LCTRS). This report advised Members on the findings of the 2019 annual review, the consultation on these findings and the resultant proposals for the LCTRS scheme to take effect from 1 April 2020.

Where it had been determined to retain the existing scheme for the forthcoming year this must be decided by 11 March 2020.

It was noted that no objections to the scheme had been received.

Councillor Jermy felt that the proposals seemed perfectly sensible; however, he had noticed that the responses to the actual consultation had been very poor and felt that the Council should take a look at how it promoted and advertised such consultations in future.<1>

RESOLVED that:

- a) the 8.5% benefit scheme (i.e. the maximum benefit to working claimants is 91.5%) be retained; and
- b) a tolerance rule to the treatment of Universal Credit income in the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme be introduced.

**Alison
Chubbock**

**15/20 ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE AGREEMENT
RECONSTITUTION (AGENDA ITEM 15)**

Councillor Cowen, the Executive Member for Finance & Growth, presented the report that concerned the regularisation of a situation that had arisen as a consequence of four of the partner councils of the Anglia Revenues Partnership amalgamating into two councils – East Suffolk and West Suffolk. As a consequence, the Constitution of the partnership required updating to recognise the new status quo. No other changes had been applied it was simply to identify the fact that instead of seven Councils there were now only five.

Councillor Borrett congratulated Councillor Cowen for the negotiations on the matter and the professionalism of the ARP Team.

RESOLVED that the revised ARP Partnership Agreement at Appendix 1 of the report to have effect from 1 April 2019 be approved.

16/20 NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE AND OTHER SEATS (AGENDA ITEM 16)

Councillor Claussen announced the following appointments, and it was:

RESOLVED that:

Planning Committee:

Councillor Suggitt be replaced by Councillor Dale and Councillor Kybird be appointed as a substitute (in place of Cllr Dale).

Outside Bodies:

Norfolk Police & Crime Panel – Councillor Webb be replaced by Councillor Bambridge.

Norfolk Rail Group –Councillor Bambridge be replaced by Councillor Claussen.

Norfolk Waste Partnership – Councillor Claussen to be replaced by Councillor Bambridge and Councillor Claussen be appointed as his substitute.

There were no further nominations.

17/20 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION (AGENDA ITEM 17)

None.

**18/20 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT
(AGENDA ITEM 18)**

None.

The meeting closed at 10.40 am

CHAIRMAN