



GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

Minutes

Monday, 09 October 2023 at 14:00

Councillor Smith (Leader & Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Major Projects) (in the Chair), Councillors Bensly (Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Culture & Coastal), Candon (Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Growth), Flaxman-Taylor (Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Communities), Plant (Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder for Operational Property and Asset Management) & Wells (Portfolio Holder for Environment & Sustainability, Waste and Licensing).

Also in attendance

Ms S Oxtoby (Chief Executive Officer); Ms C Whatling (Monitoring Officer), Mrs N Hayes (Executive Director - Place), Ms K Sly (Executive Director - Finance), Mr C Furlong (Executive Director - Housing Assets), Mrs N Turner (Head of Housing Assets), Mr S Hubbard (Strategic Planning Manager), Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager), Mr K Balls (Principal Strategic Planner), Mr D Glason (Head of Growth and Capital Projects) Mr N Medle (CityFibre Representative) Ms V Mallender (Economic Growth Manager) Ms L Snow (Finance Manager); Mrs C Dyble (Head of Marketing, IT and Communications) and Mr D Zimmerling (IT Support)

Councillors Wainwright and Jeal attended as observers to the meeting.

01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

03 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman advised that he had received no items of urgent business to be discussed at the meeting.

04 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11 September 2023 were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

05 CITYFIBRE PRESENTATION

Cabinet Members received a presentation from Mr Neil Medle from CityFibre.

The Leader sought clarification as to what had been shown as an area in grey and asked what would be happening within this area as he was concerned about the vast number of houses included within this area. Neil Medle confirmed that as far as he was aware this area had been removed from the programme in light of costs and the area being embargoed during certain times of the year. The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that the only message that had been given from the Council was that there was a need to be mindful of works taking place at these areas during the summer period and also during the period of the 3rd river crossing build, but advised that it had never been the intention of the Council to have these areas removed from the programme completely. Neil confirmed that he would feed back to the head office.

A question was raised with regard to the Project Gigabit and clarification was sought as to what this program consisted of. It was confirmed that Project Gigabit was a subsidised programme that would look at the areas that were not included within the Cityfibre £15m investment.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Growth, Councillor Candon commented that he appreciated the work that had been undertaken within his ward, however, commented that he had received a number of complaints from residents regarding the standards of work that had been completed. Councillor Candon asked for assurance that quality control checks were being undertaken. He further added that he felt this was a fantastic scheme that would hopefully work towards solving the technical / digital divide.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, Licensing and Waste, Councillor Wells raised further concern with regard to the apparent exclusion of the houses within the Nelson Ward and hoped that this could be looked into, he asked if a detailed map could be provided to show all the properties that were and were not included within the programme.

The Leader also commented that there was a need to consider the Energy enterprise zone areas which were also currently excluded from the approved areas.

The Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Tourism and Culture, Councillor Bensly asked with regard to the northern parishes in which he represented and asked if any roll out had been planned for these areas in light of numerous new builds being built in these

areas, he also made reference to the smaller villages which were likely to have little or no internet or fibre and asked whether consideration could be given to these areas.

The Portfolio Holder for Operational Property and Assets asked if having full fibre available within a property was likely to increase its value, this was confirmed.

Councillor Jeal commented that he believed that some of the properties within the Nelson ward may already have full fibre installed within the area and this may be why this area had not been included, however agreed that this matter should be looked into.

Councillor Wainwright commented that he felt the project roll out was going well and advised that he had currently not received any complaints with regard to the works that had been completed.

The Cabinet asked if information regarding Project Gigabit could be brought back to Members to advise on the areas being considered for this project and to provide further information to Members on the project. Mr Medle advised that he would feed this request back to the relevant Officers.

06 23-139 - COASTAL ADAPTATION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT ADOPTION

Cabinet received and considered the Principal Strategic Planner's report.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Growth, Councillor Candon advised that the report set out recommendations to adopt the Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document, which supports the implementation of existing coastal planning policies in the Great Yarmouth Local Plan, and help inform planning decisions relating to development within the borough's Coastal Management Area, and potential rollback and relocations away from the coast.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted Local Plan. The Coastal Adaption SPD cannot be in conflict with the adopted Local Plan, depart from current coastal management approach in the existing Shoreline Management Plan, nor can it address large scale coastal infrastructure projects, which are determined by central guidance.

Guidance with the Coastal Adaptation SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and support planning decisions relating to development within the borough's Coastal Management Area, and for potential rollback and relocation proposals away from the coast.

The Coastal Adaptation SPD has been prepared by a partnership of Great Yarmouth Borough Council, East Suffolk Council, North Norfolk District Council, The Broads Authority (The Broads), with the support of Coastal Partnership East. These authorities and Coastal Partnership East are

signatories to the 'Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Authorities Statement of Common Ground on Coastal Zone Planning' (July 2018), which recognises the importance of cross boundary working in relation to coastal management. The Coastal Adaptation SPD is an example of positive cross boundary working to support the common goal of coastal adaptation.

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 require two stages of consultation during the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document. The first initial draft consultation to inform the scope and content of the SPD took place between 4 September and 16 October 2020. Following endorsement of the final draft Coastal Adaptation SPD by the Policy & Resources Committee on 6 December, a consultation took place over 6 weeks between 25 January and 8 March 2023.

A Consultation Statement has been prepared and is appended to this report as Appendix 2 which includes the responses received at both stages of consultation and how they have been addressed in the final version of the Supplementary Planning Document.

The final version of the Coastal Adaptation SPD that is to be adopted by Cabinet is provided in Appendix 1 to this report.

The Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Culture and Coastal, Councillor James Bensly, thanked the Officers for their hard work in presenting such a big piece of work, he advised that he did have some concern with regard to the Shoreline Management Plan however acknowledged that this could be looked at as part of the review and feedback into the Plan. The Principal Strategic Planner agreed that this could be looked into and changes if required could be incorporated as part of a review.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to :

1. Adopt the Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document (included as Appendix 1 to this report); and
2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Planning Manager, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Growth, to make any presentational or typographical amendments to the Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document prior to it being published.

07 23-144 - SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - INITIAL CONSULTATION DELEGATION

Cabinet received and considered the Strategic Planning Manager's report which sought approval from the Cabinet to delegate authority to the Head of Planning to approve the first stages of consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Growth, Councillor

Candon presented the item and advised Cabinet of the following :-

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan. They do not form part of the 'development plan' but are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Council currently have four adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) for Hall Quay, North Quay, Open Space provision and a design guide for Shopfronts.

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 require at least two stages of consultation during the preparation of an SPD. Firstly, consultation is required during the initial preparation of the document to inform a draft SPD. This consultation is typically more informal and could be in a questionnaire format (such as the initial consultation on the North Quay SPD) or in the form of a first draft of the SPD. More than one consultation could be undertaken if necessary and some consultations could be more tailored to be focussed on certain interest groups. The point of consultation at this stage is to give people an early say on the content of the SPDs before the Council has formalised a final position on the matter.

Once a final draft of the Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared it must then be subject to a more formal public consultation prior to adoption.

In order to support the timely production of these documents, the Policy and Resources Committee in September 2021 gave delegated authority to the then Director of Planning and Growth, in consultation with the Local Plan Working Party and the Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee, to approve public consultation at the initial stages of preparation as detailed above. Given the new constitution and new executive structure of the Council it is considered necessary to renew this delegation. As such this report now requests this delegation is given to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Strategic Planning.

The formal stage of consultation on the final draft of the SPD will still be subject to approval by Cabinet. Cabinet also has the responsibility for adoption of SPDs on behalf of the Council.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to :-

Delegate authority to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Strategic Planning, to approve the first stages of public consultation on future emerging Supplementary Planning Documents as and when they are prepared.

08 23-247 - RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUND (REPF) GRANT SCHEME

Cabinet received and considered the Head of inward Investment's report.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Growth, Councillor Candon presented the item and advised Cabinet of the following :

The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) forms part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan and covers similar themes to the old EU rural programmes. REPF is additional UKSPF funding which has been allocated to rural areas in recognition of their specific needs, including connectivity, access to key services and lower economic development rates.

GYBC was allocated £400,000 REPF funding over the period 2023/24 and 2024/25. The REPF prospectus sets out an expectation that the funds are distributed to external beneficiaries.

This report provides members with an overview of the approved Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) addendum to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan. The REPF prospectus set out a clear presumption that the funds would be distributed to external beneficiaries in the form of delegated, discretionary grant. Recommendations for the arrangements to deliver grant aid under REPF are set out and delegated authority for officers to proceed on that basis.

The portfolio Holder for Operational Property and Assets asked with regard to the reporting of the awarding of grants and it was advised that these would be reported to Members through the quarterly programmed performance reports.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to :-

(1) Note and consider the proposed grant scheme and process

(2) Delegate delivery of the scheme outlined herein to officers, with regular ongoing reporting to be aligned with the UKSPF programme.

09 23-063 - STAR SURVEY ACTION PLAN

Cabinet received and considered the Head of Housing Asset's report.

The Portfolio Holder for Operational Property and Assets presented the item and advised Cabinet of the following :

This report details the outcome of the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR Survey) undertaken by the Council in December 2022 and January 2023. The last survey was completed in 2019 and the report provides a comparison, whether this is possible of changes in scores between the two surveys.

Reflecting the introduction of new Tenant Satisfaction Measures by the Regulator of Social Housing which the Council must collect this year, the STAR survey provides a useful benchmark of tenant and leaseholders perception of the Housing Assets Service.

The STAR survey has been used to identify those areas where tenants and

leaseholders are least satisfied with the service and an action plan has been developed to address those areas where improvement is required.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and sustainability, Waste and Licensing, Councillor Paul Wells asked if a breakdown of the 181 responses to the survey could be provided, this was confirmed.

Reference was made to the score of 68% satisfaction with tenants landlord and it was acknowledged that this was a low score, however it was advised that with the introduction of the new policy coming into force it was hoped that this score could be rectified.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to :-

Note the report and action plan.

10 23-140 - ADOPTION OF REPAIRS POLICY

Cabinet received and considered the Executive Director, Housing Asset's report which sought approval for the adoption of a new Council Housing Repairs Policy.

The Portfolio Holder for Operational Property and Assets presented the item and advised Cabinet of the following :

The report outlines the purpose of the Policy, how it was developed, its objectives and the key problems it is addressing, and the Policy's main features. The Policy is the first of a group of overarching Housing Asset Service related policies coming to Cabinet.

The purpose of the Policy is to provide an excellent, cost-effective repairs and maintenance service for council tenants that is responsive to tenants needs, meets regulatory requirements, and supports the Council's Housing Investment Plan.

Councillor Wainwright asked with regard to the void properties and advised that First Move Furnish Aid had offered their support with removal of furniture within properties once they become void. The Head of Housing Assets advised that tenants were given information and advised of First Move Furnishaid when requiring furniture removal.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to :-

Approve the adoption of the Housing Repairs Policy.

11 23-133 - LONG TERM LEASE ARRANGEMENT AND CONSTRUCTION UPDATE FOR "THE PLACE"

Cabinet received and considered the Executive Director, Place's report.

The Leader presented the item and advised Cabinet of the following :-

As part of the of Future High Streets and Town Deal programmes the Borough Council, in partnership with East Coast College (ECC)(working with University of Suffolk (UoS)) and Norfolk County Council (NCC) are developing a Library and University Learning Centre “The Place” in the town centre. The “Place” will offer an ambitious and wide ranging list of services including skills and employment support to help residents access sustainable and long term employment opportunities.

The project is at the stage where the development is progressing to construction stage and part of this includes the disposal of the building through granting 125-year leases to the project partners noted above, to operate their library and learning services and support the Council to realise the outcomes of this aspirational project for the Borough.

This report also provides an update on the progress of the build stage, the main contractor procurement and timelines to completion which will see the building open in Autumn 2024.

The Portfolio Holder for Operational Property and Assets, Councillor Plant asked with regard to the maintenance of the building and whether a clause had been added to ensure there was a responsibility for the maintenance by the operator, the Executive Director, Place advised that there was a service charge payable annually which included maintenance.

The Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Culture and Coastal asked if Members could look round the building before works commenced, this was confirmed and could be arranged by request.

Councillor Plant congratulated Officers for the work completed to date on the project.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to :

(1) Note and approve the project progress to date.

(2) Approve the disposal of 37-39 Market Place, Great Yarmouth, subject to agreed heads of terms, by way of granting 125-year leases to East Coast College and Norfolk County Council, in line with the acquisitions and disposals policy.

12 **23-081 - 2022/23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT**

Cabinet received and considered the Executive Director, Resources report.

The Leader presented the item and advised Cabinet of the following :-

This report presents the treasury management activity for the 2022/23 financial year and includes the overall treasury position for 2022/23, our borrowing requirement and debt for 2022/23 Reporting on the quarter 1 2023/24 treasury and capital prudential indicators.

The Council's treasury management strategy for 2022/23 was approved at a meeting of the Council in February 2022 this report provides the outturn against the strategy following outturn.

CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement, and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority.

Main points to note are firstly that total borrowing fell in 2022/23 from £135m to £121m from the previous financial year. Secondly, a reduction in the level of investments held by the Council. The main reason being due to the final settlement and repayment of £23m Government funds during 2022/23 that were received in advance of spend in relation to COVID business grants.

Finally, interest paid was lower than budgeted for and interest received was higher than budgeted for recognising the prudent approach used when setting the budgets in these areas.

The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period. This indicator was not achieved at year-end as of total investments of £14m, £10m of the investments were long term with local authorities and the pooling fund with only £4m held in short-term investments rather than the £12m level set. This target was set at a point of having had high balances available for investments which have subsequently reduced at the end of the year as mentioned previously due the repayment of COVID funds at the end of the financial year.

For 2023/24 we now need to report quarterly prudential indicators for treasury management and capital which are also provided within this report. All indicators for Q1 are currently being met except for the interest rate risk indicator. This was breached as the indicator was based on anticipated lower loan and investments balances than those subsequently held in the first quarter of 2023/24. This indicator is to be reviewed with our treasury advisors and will be reset as required and submitted for reapproval. The impact of this is low risk.

Cabinet is being asked to approve the Treasury management outturn report and indicators for the 2022/23 financial year.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to :-

Recommend to Council approval of the Treasury Management outturn report and indicators for 2022/23.

The meeting ended at: TBC