



**GREAT YARMOUTH**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Environment Committee

## Minutes

Wednesday, 27 January 2021 at 17:30

### PRESENT:

Councillor P Carpenter (in the Chair); Councillors Annison, Bensly, Bird, Borg, Cameron, Fairhead, D Hammond, Hacon, Robinson-Payne, Talbot, Waters-Bunn & B Wright.

Ms K Watts (Strategic Director), Mrs P Boyce (Strategic Director), Mr J Wilson (Head of Environmental Services), Mr C Silverwood (Director of Operational Services), Mr S Hubbard (Strategic Planning Manager), Mrs J Beck (Head of Property & Asset Management), Mr D Wiles (Communications & Media Manager) & Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager).

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2020 were confirmed by assent.

The following matters arising were noted from the above minutes:-

Councillor Waters-Bunn reported that the access to Northgate Primary School was still not Covid safe and she was reluctant to take her child to school as she did not feel safe in doing so. She asked that the Council give further support and deploy the Covid Marshall's to monitor the situation on a regular basis. The Head of Environmental Services reported that he would ask the Covid Marshall's to re-visit the school and monitor the premises for Covid compliance.

Councillor Talbot reiterated the concerns of Councillor Waters-Bunn and asked if consideration for funding for the provision of a ramp for the school to allow a separate ingress and egress from the school had been undertaken by the County or Borough Council. The Head of Environmental Services reported that he was aware of the ramp request and that he would chase this via the County Schools Team.

## **4 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee received and considered the Forward Plan.

Members asked that the following items be considered for inclusion on the Forward Plan:-

(i) Councillor Fairhead asked if areas of green spaces could be left uncut to allow local wildlife habitats to be established for insects, butterflies and bees. The Strategic Director reported that grass verges would not be cut so regularly at the present time due to resource issues arising as a result of Covid and the grass cutting timetable would be reviewed. She advised that this item could be put on the Forward Plan as it could be implemented around this time in 2022.

(ii) Councillor Robinson-Payne reiterated her request from the last meeting that an update on Selective Housing was given to this Committee and why it was given to Housing & Neighbourhoods (H & N) Committee in the first

instance. The Strategic Director reported that a report was going to Housing & Neighbourhood Committee on 4 February 2021 and that she would circulate a copy to the Committee after this date. The Strategic Director would discuss with the Monitoring Officer the rationale as to why this report went to H & N Committee and not this Committee and report back.

(iii) Councillor Waters-Bunn raised the issue of illegal parking by residents on grass verges/hedging/over-hanging trees & shrubs and the damage which resulted which had to be put right by the Council, let alone it resulted in an eyesore/danger to residents right across the Borough. She suggested that a social media campaign be launched to tackle this issue to remind residents of their obligations via community engagement. The Strategic Director reported that she was aware of a Council who had implemented the use of a PSPO to tackle this and would discuss options/legislation with Planning and report back. Councillor Cameron reported that all Parish Council's would await this update with bated breath as it was difficult to pinpoint who was responsible for these issues. Councillor Talbot asked if the Council could undertake this work if residents were not physically able to do so. The Strategic Director reported that the Council could assist but the cost would be passed onto the resident.

## **5 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP OF WATER RESOURCES EAST (WRE) LIMITED**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Senior Strategic Planner.

The Strategic Planning Manager reported that Water Resources East (WRE) was a collaborative membership organisation in the East of England, which brought together companies with a stake in water to safeguard a sustainable supply of water for all users. Membership of the Strategic Advisory Group offered the ability for members to vote on key matters including shaping the emergent resource management plan.

The Strategic Planning Manager reported that membership of WRE might result in efficiency savings for the Council through collaborative planning of water resources across Norfolk, as part of discharging its "Duty to Co-operate".

The Chairman asked if the Monitoring Officer had approved the report as it mentioned funding requirements. The Strategic Planning Manager reported that the report had been to ELT for consideration of which the Monitoring Officer was part of.

Councillor Fairhead reported that she supported this request as it would assist the Council in assessing planning applications in the future.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) That the Committee endorse the report; and
- (ii) That the Committee recommend to Full Council the appointment of Great Yarmouth Borough to membership of the Water Resources East (WRE) Strategic Advisory Group.

## **6 OUTDOOR SPACES PAPER**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Strategic Director.

The Strategic Director gave an update regarding outdoor spaces across the Borough which covered management of our outdoor spaces, outdoor play inspections, Section 106 agreements and playing pitch strategy.

The Strategic Director reported that a proposal for a Play Officer was presented to this Committee in September 2019 and funding was allocated of £15,790, however, this was not progressed and this funding was therefore still available. She asked the Committee to use this funding to appoint a Technical Assistant, on a part-time basis, to survey and log all of the Council's outdoor assets, to enable a detailed, strategic review of assets could then be undertaken and a report presented to this Committee.

The Chairman requested that suppliers of play equipment be vetted to ensure that they could supply parts in a timely manner as she had personal experience of parts taking four months to arrive which was unacceptable.

Councillor Waters-Bunn reported that she was pleased that this funding had come across to this Committee as in general, the state of play equipment across the Borough was very poor. There was also a lack of green gym equipment across the borough which was much needed during these difficult times.

Councillor Bensly also welcomed this report as the outcome of the s106 review by Strategic Planning would have an impact of the parishes. He suggested that the Council introduce safe, running spaces for runners, for example, by utilising the edges of playing fields.

### **RESOLVED:-**

That the Committee note the content of the report and approve to use the previous committed funding allocation of £15,790, to appoint a Technical Assistant, on a part-time basis, to survey and log all of the Council's outdoor assets, to enable a detailed, strategic review of these could then be undertaken and presented to this Committee.

## **7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman reported that she would allow three items under any other business:-

(i) The Head of Environmental Services gave an update regarding Covid19 work being undertaken across the Borough. Councillor Robinson-Payne asked that her thanks, and those of the Committee, be passed onto the Marshall's for all their hard work across the Borough. Councillor Waters-Bunn asked that the Marshall's be reminded to observe social distancing when they were out on patrol.

(ii) The Head of Property & Asset Management gave an update regarding Coastal Partnership East. Councillor Bensly thanked all the officers concerned for their continued support of these works which greatly benefited many residents in his ward.

(iii) Councillor Fairhead gave a brief overview of the important work undertaken by the Broads Internal Drainage Board (IDB), such as restoring the pumps to help to mitigate overtopping & flooding in rural areas, such as Martham & Repps. Councillor Fairhead hoped that County would ensure that the surrounding dykes were clear, for example, those at Burgh Road, Gorleston prior to starting construction on the Third River Crossing. She requested that Members get a regular update from the IDB via this Committee and the Head of Environmental Services agreed to pursue this request.

## **8 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:-

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act.

## **9 CONFIDENTIAL GYB SERVICES - UPDATE**

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

The meeting ended at: 19:30