



Environment Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, 09 June 2021 at 18:30

Present:

Councillor Wells (in the Chair): Councillors Annison, Bensly, Bird, Cameron, P Carpenter, Fairhead, D Hammond, Robinson-Payne, Thompson, Waters-Bunn & B Wright

Mrs P Boyce (Strategic Director), Mrs M Lee (Head of Customer Services), Mr C Silverwood (Director of Operational Services), Mrs J Leeder (Bereavement Service Manager), Mr M Wyton (Street Scene Manager), Mr J Holder (Waste Collection Manager), Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager) & Mrs T Bunn (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Mr A Minns (Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councilor Talbot.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wells declared a personal interest in item 7 as he is a Director of GYBServices.

However, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, he was allowed to both speak and vote on the matters.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January were confirmed by assent.

The following matters arising were noted from the above minutes:

Councillor Robinson Payne stated that the item in respect of Selective Licencing had not been circulated to this Committee from the Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee. She also asked that this item be added to the Environment Committee forward plan.

The Chair advised that he would check the reasoning behind this report being submitted to the Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee and update members.

Councillor Waters-Bunn queried why there had not been a follow up social media campaign in respect of damage and consequences of illegal parking on grass verges.

The Strategic Director apologised that this had not already taken place but would arrange for it to be added to the forward plan.

Councillor Fairhead, asked for confirmation that Councillor P Carpenter would be the lead member in respect of the WRE, bearing in mind the importance of the issues and the linkages with other outside bodies work. The chair confirmed that Cllr Carpenter would be the outside bodies representative and that they are discussing issues in relation to this important matter.

Councillor Waters Bunn asked for an update on the Technical assistant post. It was reported that this post had been appointed to and a playground audit was being undertaken which would see a report being brought back to the Committee in November following a comprehensive review.

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) Outdoor spaces review paper to be added for November.
- (ii) Councillor Bensly asked that the Roman Place Car Park surface should

be discussed. The Head of Customer Services advised that Members had agreed that the Transport and Infrastructure working group would be asked about this resurfacing and a commitment has been received from the County Council in respect of a full resurface to be approved for a future date.

(iii) Members discussed questions that they had been asked in respect of the use of pesticides across the borough and how this could be addressed. The Strategic Director suggested that a report detailing how the Borough Council can support Bio Diversity be brought to a future meeting.

Agreed

5 CARBON REDUCTION – THE PATHWAY TO NET ZERO

The Committee received a presentation from Asher Minns of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research in respect of Carbon Reduction - The Pathway to Net Zero in advance of consideration of the report of the Strategic Director.

The Chair thanked Asher Minns for his informative and useful presentation which clearly set the scene for the report discussion.

The Strategic Director gave an update on the report contents in relation to the Borough Council's activities in respect of Environmental Sustainability matters. She reminded Members that this Committee and Council has a role for leadership and guardianship and therefore anything done is important and can link together.

The Chair emphasised the importance of this work and its potential impact at all levels.

Councillor Carpenter asked if officers are liaising with all other councils in Norfolk. The Strategic Director confirmed that this is the case.

Councillor Bensly reminded members of the FACET project and the benefits that this will provide for the community.

Councillor Waters-Bunn asked for clarification in respect of the allocation amount. The Strategic Director confirmed that this was £30,000.

RESOLVED:-

- To confirm ongoing support for the finalisation of the carbon footprint mapping work for the Council, to be completed by September 2021, alongside the development of an action plan to reduce the Council's carbon footprint.
- To recommend to Full Council that the Chair of Environment Committee be appointed to sit on the Norfolk Elected Members Climate Change Partnership Board.
- To allocate £30,000 from the special projects reserve to develop an Environmental Sustainability Strategy and action plans to detail our pathway to

Net Zero.

6 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES PRESENTATION

A presentation was given by the Head of Customer Services and the Bereavement Services Manager providing an overview of the crematorium and cemetery provision.

Members discussed the new tea room and function facility which has a completion launch date of November 2021. They asked why there was a function capacity limited to 20 rather than 50 as originally proposed. The Head of Customer Services advised that the business case had not changed from what had been approved at Policy & Resources Committee and Full Council. The business case was based on accommodating 20 – 25 in the tea room and 20 in the function room, so 45 in total with the addition of outside space for the tea room and the function area. Following award of contract officers would work with the contractor to see if this capacity could be increased by flexible use of the space.

The Chair asked the Head of Customer Services to undertake further investigation and clarify whether the business case in respect of a larger function capacity had changed.

Members noted that there had been a 25% reduction in cremations at Gorleston following the opening of other Crematoria in the local area.

Thanks were given for all the work undertaken and for an informative presentation.

7 STREET CLEANSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Committee received the report and presentation from the Director of Operational Services.

The Director of Operational Services gave an update on the improvements to the service which had been achieved by implementing the Street Cleansing Improvement plan.

The Director and his team were thanked and congratulated on the dramatic improvement achieved, with a particular mention for the Hit Squad.

Councillor Waters-Bunn asked for clarification in respect of the weed spraying activities instead of edging as this was impacting on surrounding vegetation.

Councillor Fairhead asked if consideration could be made for a no-mow May in order to support bees and other insects.

The Strategic Director advised that use of pesticides and mowing schedules could be considered as part of an item on the Committee's Forward Plan regarding how the council can support biodiversity as part of its Sustainability Strategy & Pathway to Net Zero work..

Members agreed that this would be considered at a future meeting and should be entered on the forward plan.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted the findings and updates on Street Cleansing Improvement Plan

8 RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY CONSULTATIONS

The Committee received and considered the report from the Strategic Director who provided an overview in respect of the Resources and Waste Strategy Consultation that has been released by Government.

Committee were advised that the Council is working with colleagues across the Norfolk Waste Partnership to complete a joint Norfolk response as well as completing its own response.

RESOLVED

That the Committee note the details of the consultations and officer comments.

That Members note that an officer working group to look at the implications and prepare the Council for these proposed changes is being set up and will feedback to Environment Committee.

Agreed

11 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES (Confidential Minute on this Item)

10 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 1 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act."

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was one item of any other business: Members were aware of the local campaign to remove Frisbees from sale in the borough due to the environmental impact to wildlife, specifically the Seals.

The Friends of Horsey Seals have written to the council and have provided details of premises which have already agreed to stop selling these toys and have provided information in respect of other stores who would be prepared to join them but would require head office approval.

Committee agreed that the Chair should write to the relevant organisations to both thank them and to provide support to those who would need information to send to their head offices.

The meeting ended at: 21:00