



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

Minutes

Tuesday, 28 September 2021 at 19:00

PRESENT:-

His Worship The Mayor, Councillor Thompson, (in the Chair); Councillors Annison, Bensly, Bird, Borg, Cameron, Candon, P Carpenter, Fairhead, Flaxman-Taylor, Freeman, Grant, Hanton, D Hammond, P Hammond, Jeal, Lawn, Martin, Mogford, Plant, Price, Robinson-Payne, Smith, Smith-Clare, Talbot, Wainwright, B Walker, C Walker, Waters-Bunn, Williamson, A Wright & B Wright.

Ms S Oxtoby (Chief Executive Officer), Ms K Sly (Finance Director), Ms C Whatling (Monitoring Officer), Mrs P Boyce (Strategic Director), Ms K Watts (Strategic Director) & Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Carpenter, Cordiner-Achenbach, Galer, Hacon, Stenhouse & Wells.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest given at the meeting.

3 APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Smith proposed and Councillor Plant

seconded that Councillor Adrian Thompson be elected Mayor of the Borough of Great Yarmouth for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

Proposer: Councillor Smith.

Seconded: Councillor Plant.

That Councillor Adrian Thompson be elected Mayor of the Borough of Great Yarmouth for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

CARRIED.

His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Adrian Thompson, hereby signed the Declaration of Office and gave an acceptance speech.

4 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Smith, proposed that Councillor Graham Plant be elected Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year. This was seconded by Councillor P Carpenter.

Councillor Wainwright started to address Council. The Leader of the Council asked for a point of order when no platform for discussion or debate was allowed following the proposal and seconding of Councillor Plant as Deputy Mayor. Councillor A Wright and Councillor Jeal asked the Monitoring Officer to clarify where this was stated in the Council's Constitution.

The Corporate Services Manager reported that the protocol for the election of Mayor & Deputy Mayor had been due to be discussed at a meeting of the Constitutional Working Party in 2020 but this meeting had been postponed due to Covid19. However, the Constitutional Working Party would now meet on Thursday, 18 November 2021 where this item would be discussed and a report taken to full Council in December 2021.

Proposer: Councillor Smith.

Seconded: Councillor P Carpenter.

That Councillor Graham Plant be elected Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

CARRIED.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Graham Plant, hereby signed the Declaration of Office and gave an acceptance speech.

5 APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAIN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Thompson, announced that Canon Simon Ward would be appointed as his Chaplain for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

That Canon Simon Ward be appointed as Mayor's Chaplain for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

CARRIED.

6 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(i) His Worship the Mayor announced that his mayoral charities for 2021/22 would be Caister Lifeboat, the Royal British Legion, the Samaritans and Winterton Troop 901 Cadets.

(ii) His Worship the Mayor announced that on 15/12/2021 there would be the Civic Carol Service at The Minster, on the 02/03/2022 there would be a Charity Evening, on 06/05/2022 there would be the Mayor's Ball, and on 22/04/2022 there would be a Civic Service at Filby Parish Church.

(iii) His Worship the Mayor announced that Councillor Hacon's charities; Dial, Go Ahead and Coastwatch would be supported with donations of £1750 each from the Councillor's ward budgets which had been approved by the Council's S151 Officer.

7 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

His Worship the Mayor reported that there were no items of urgent business.

8 MINUTES

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 July 2021 were confirmed.

Proposer: Councillor Smith.

Seconder: Councillor Annison.

CARRIED.

9 LIST OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS 2021-22

The Leader of the Council presented the updated Committee Memberships for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year for approval. This was seconded by Councillor Candon.

Councillor Wainwright asked for clarification as it was not normal practice for the Mayor to sit on Committees during their year of office and where this could be found

in the Council's Constitution. Councillor Jeal also asked for clarification as he had not sat on any committees during his time as mayor.

The Monitoring Officer referred Councillor Wainwright to Article 46.5(b) where it stated that the Mayor was advised to not sit on Standards and Development Control and Licensing as these were regulatory committees.

The Leader of the Council reported that as a result of changes to the Council and to adhere to the Widdocombe system that the Mayor had been appointed to the Environment and Appeals Committee.

Proposer: Councillor Smith.

Seconder: Councillor Candon.

That the updated Committee Membership for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year be approved.

CARRIED.

10 APPOINTMENT TO WORKING GROUPS

The Leader of the Council presented the revised appointments to Working Groups for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year. This was seconded by Councillor Candon.

Proposer: Councillor Smith

Seconder: Councillor Candon

That the updated appointments to Working Groups be approved for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

CARRIED.

11 OUTSIDE BODY REPRESENTATION 2021-22

The Leader of the Council presented the revised Outside Body list for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

Proposer: Councillor Smith

Seconder: Councillor Candon.

That Council approve the revised Outside Body Representative list for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

CARRIED.

12 CLIMATE CHANGE - OUTSIDE BODY NOMINATION

Councillor P Carpenter proposed that Councillor Wells be appointed as the elected Member to represent the Council on the newly formed Norfolk Elected Members Climate Change Partnership Board. This was seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Smith.

Proposer: Councillor P Carpenter.

Seconder: Councillor Smith.

That Council approve that Councillor Paul Wells be appointed as the elected Member to represent Great Yarmouth Borough Council on the Norfolk Elected Members Climate Change Partnership Board.

CARRIED.

13 SERVICE COMMITTEE DECISION LIST FOR THE PERIOD 2 JUNE 2021 TO 27 JULY 2021

Council received and considered the Service Committee Decision List for the period 2 June to 27 July 2021.

Proposer: Councillor Smith

Seconder: Councillor Candon.

That Council endorse the Service Committee Decision List for the period 2 June 2021 to 27 July 2021.

CARRIED.

14 ROUGH SLEEPING ACCOMODATION PROGRAMME BID - HOUSING FIRST SCHEME

Councillor Grant presented and proposed the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Bid - Housing First Scheme report to Council. This was seconded by Councillor D Hammond.

Councillor Grant requested approval to purchase and repair five homes to provide a self-contained home with dedicated support for a period of up to two years for a cohort of entrenched rough sleepers with high needs in order to deliver a significant reduction in rough sleeping.

Councillor Martin asked her thanks be recorded to all officers concerned as this scheme would help residents with complex needs and that she was extremely proud to be part of this Council as they implemented this much needed scheme.

Proposer: Councillor Grant

Seconded: Councillor D Hammond.

That Council:-

(i) Approve the purchase and renovation of five properties to be used to meet the needs of rough sleepers with high support needs within the parameters of the project as set out in this report and the Confidential Appendix,

(ii) Approve, subject to a successful application for grant funding, the expenditure and the borrowing set out in the report at paragraph 3.1. i.e. the purchase, repair and renovation and furnishing of the properties,

(iii) Delegate decisions in relation to the purchase of the properties and the completion of the required renovation works to the Head of Property and Asset Management and the Section 151 Officer in accordance with the Property Acquisitions and Disposals Policy,

(iv) Approve the procurement of a third-party support provider to deliver the support and manage the five homes; and

(v) Accept the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme grant funding and conditions.

CARRIED.

15 NOTICE OF MOTION

(i) Motion submitted by Councillors Plant, Candon, Flaxman-Taylor, Mogford, Hammond and Wells.

The motion was presented and proposed by Councillor Plant and seconded by Councillor Candon who informed Council that he would defer his comments until the end of the debate.

Councillor Plant reported that the Council recognises the multiple benefits that offshore wind power off the Norfolk coast presented:

- A sustainable and renewable energy source which will assist in meeting the Government's target of delivering 40 gigawatts of offshore wind power by 2030.
- A major contribution to our shared ambition to tackle climate change.
- Significant employment and skills opportunities, especially in areas like Great Yarmouth. Norfolk has the potential to benefit more than any other area in England from growth in offshore wind, that will require a diverse mix of skills, with an additional 6,150 full-time well-paid jobs forecast to be created by 2032 (New Anglia Energy Recovery and Resilience Plan).

The Council also:

- Recognises the need for some of these projects to make landfall and grid

connection in various parts of the county, involving cable routes and new sub-stations.

- Acknowledges the disruption that this may cause to local communities in the short term and therefore supports the need for a coordinated and integrated approach to connecting the electricity generated from offshore wind farms to the grid.
- Recognises the need for further detailed work to be carried out by National Grid on the implications of the various options, including the:
- Wider onshore environmental implications of any new transmission network• Economic opportunities for those coastal areas and communities affected.
- Opportunities for local communities to be appropriately compensated for any impacts caused by the need for either onshore or offshore infrastructure.
- Would support any offshore transmission infrastructure which reduces the environmental and community impacts that the current approach (radial, point to point) has on the county, subject to there being no anticipated long term impact on the marine environment off the Norfolk Coast.

- Reiterates its ongoing ambition to make Great Yarmouth the energy capital of the Eastern Region.

The Council resolves to continue to work closely with:

- The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), National Grid; the Office for Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM), New Anglia LEP, local councils and energy companies to progress the work needed to secure the long term environmental and economic benefits of offshore wind, whilst minimising its impact on local communities as far as possible.
- BEIS on the Government Offshore Transmission Network Review.
- Major companies, their supply chains and local colleges to develop employment and skills strategies to ensure that the high quality jobs set to be created in the sector over the next 50 years, are accessible to, and promoted to, Norfolk residents.

Councillor Myers reported that he welcomed the offshore wind proposal which would attract inward investment of up to £240 million pounds into the Borough and help to up-skill our local work force.

Councillor A Wright reported that he had been fully supportive of this project over many years and asked why this motion had come before Council as the Economic Development Committee received regular reports/updates in regard to the offshore wind industry and, as a committee, were fully supportive of the project. Was this motion intended to put pressure on North Norfolk District Council to allow the cables to come onto their land which was essential for the project to succeed. Councillor Wright was sceptical regarding the forecast of the number of well-paid, skilled jobs which would result from this project as the projected figure of 1,000 new jobs arising from the Outer Harbour had yet to be confirmed. Councillor Wright once again emphasised that Great Yarmouth ranked 462/462 in the skills league table for the country and that the skills agenda in the Borough must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Councillor Candon reported that he fully supported this motion and was pleased to second the motion.

Councillor Plant thanked Councillor Candon for his support and gave his summing up. The Council should not miss out on this opportunity for the Borough and must put the infrastructure in place for the project and asked all members to support the motion.

PROPOSER: Councillor Plant

SECONDER: Councillor Candon

MOTION CARRIED.

(ii) Motion submitted by Councillors Wainwright, Williamson, A Wright, B Walker & C Walker.

This motion was presented and proposed by Councillor Wainwright and seconded by Councillor Williamson who reserved the right to speak later.

Councillor Wainwright proposed that this Council to write to The Rt Hon Therese Coffey MP Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, and The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP Chancellor of the Exchequer to reverse the proposed cut to Universal Credit of £20 per week, £1040 PA.

This cut is being called the biggest overnight Social Security cut since World War 2. Doctors, charities and even some Conservative MPs are calling on the Government to reverse its decision.

The Trussell Trust estimates that nearly a quarter of a million parents on Universal Credit fear not being able to sufficiently put Dinner on the table for there children when the £20 cut comes into force from October. Many of these parents in Great Yarmouth.

In Great Yarmouth 18.4% of the population was income-deprived in 2019. Of the 316 local authorities in England, Great Yarmouth is ranked 32nd most income- deprived.

Of the 61 Neighbourhoods in Great Yarmouth 21 were amongst the 20% most deprived in England.

In June 2021 there were 14076 people claiming Universal Credit in Great Yarmouth, many of these people in work, and 5511 Children living in poverty.

This cut is creating nervousness, and many residents fear and worry about what is going to happen, and how can they manage when they have £20 less per week, how are they going to put food on the table and heat my home in the winter.

I am sure that £20 per week is not a lot of money for some people, but for others it is a matter of survival, and I urge all Members to support this Resolution.

Councillor Myers reported that this cut would affect low paid workers who would loose 63 pence out of every pound they earned and that he fully supported this motion.

Councillor Talbot reported that they was a stigma that people who were on benefits did not work but they did and that the loss of 320 a week would result in residents having to choose between eating or putting the heating on and there was now a chasm between the rich and the poor which was getting wider every day.

Councillor Smith-Clare highlighted the cases of the proud women who were born in

the 1950's and who had had their retirement date put back and who were struggling as a result of the hold on the triple lock to their pension and cuts to Universal Credit. He urged all Councillors to support this motion and put an end to additional suffering and desperation for these people.

Councillor Fairhead reported that she supported her local Foodbank on a regular basis and that the demand was rising and rising and the loss of 320 would exacerbate the demand on Foodbanks which was a disgrace in this day and age.

Councillor Jeal urged all Members to support this motion if they cared about the residents of Great Yarmouth and the cut would result in a loss of over £15 million of revenue which might have been spent in the town.

The Leader of the Council summarised the support that the Government had given since the start of the pandemic and that the Conservative Members did fully support all residents but would not support this motion as the Government's plan for jobs was working.

Councillor A Wright asked for a point of order to allow for a full debate on this important motion without time restraint and asked that the Council suspend standing orders for this one item. Councillor Wright referred to page 77 of the Council's Constitution, paragraph 31.12; Motion without Notice. This was seconded by Councillor Jeal.

The Leader of the Council reported that standing orders were only normally suspended at Budget Council but he was quite happy for this to be undertaken following a vote, although this should have been taken at the start of the motion.

His Worship, The Mayor, asked the Monitoring Officer for her advice regarding this point of order. Councillor Wainwright also asked for the advice of the Monitoring Officer. Councillor A Wright was concerned that debate was being stifled. His Worship, The Mayor reported that he was in the Chair and that there had been no stifling of debate and he was prepared to let the debate continue.

Councillor Martin was concerned that thousands of residents who relied on Universal Credit to live would be forced further in to poverty and they, and their children, would be facing a miserable winter. This was not levelling-up but pushing down families and communities into poverty and despair. The system and its people were broken and together with the six former DWP Ministers who supported the continuation of the £20 weekly payment, she urged Members to collectively stand by the people of Great Yarmouth.

Councillor Williamson gave statistics from the Joseph Roundtree Foundation and from Government data regarding levels of poverty across the country and our Borough. Wages in the town were way below the county average and the Council had a duty to look after the weakest and most vulnerable in our society and urged all members to support the motion and support all of our residents.

Councillor Wainwright summed up and urged all members to support the motion to alleviate untold suffering for 14,441 local people who should not have to choose between heating or food and to ensure that no child slipped into poverty as a result of this appalling cut to their lifeline which was Universal Credit. He informed Council that the primary school, which a child of Councillor Waters-Bunn attended, had set up a Foodbank to help parents which should not be happening in this day and age and was an outrage.

Councillor Jeal asked for a recorded vote to be undertaken. This was seconded by Councillor C Walker. Following a vote, this motion was lost and the ensuing vote would not be recorded.

MOTION LOST.

16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Councillor Jeal asked that a letter be sent to Councillor Stenhouse, who was poorly, on behalf of Council, wishing her a speedy recovery.

(ii) The Monitoring Officer responded to Councillors' A Wight & Jeal concerns regarding agenda item number 4 and clarified that under Article 31.1 of the Council's Constitution, nominations at Annual Council, Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor; that this was a nomination and not a motion, as a motion would be capable of amendment, but as a nomination this did not allow for discussion which would be deemed out of order.

17 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

18 CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX - ROUGH SLEEPING ACCOMODATION PROGRAMME BID - HOUSING FIRST SCHEME

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

19 CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE COMMITTEE DECISION LIST FOR THE PERIOD 2 JUNE 2021 TO 27 JULY 2021

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

The meeting ended at: 21:00