3(a)

Minutes of the Extraordinary Cabinet Meeting held at Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft on **Wednesday, 11 October 2017** at **6.30pm**

Members present:
Councillors M Bee (Chairman), S Ardley, P Ashdown, N Brooks, G Catchpole, J Ceresa, M Ladd, B Provan, C Punt, D Ritchie, C Rivett, M Rudd and C Topping.

Also in attendance:
Councillors S Allen, M Cherry, Y Cherry, T Gandy, J Murray and S Woods.

Officers present:
S Baker (Chief Executive), K Blair (Head of Operations), M Fitzsimmons (Valuer, Asset Management), N Khan (Strategic Director), A Jarvis (Strategic Director), T Rudd (Valuer, Asset Management), J Segrave-Daley (AAP Project Manager), H Slater (Head of Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal & Democratic Services), P Wood (Head of Economic Development & Regeneration) and N Wotton (Democratic Services Manager).

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1 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Cackett.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made on this occasion.

3 ISSUES ARISING FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OR THE AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

(a) The Overview & Scrutiny Committee

There were no matters to report from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The Leader of the Council took the opportunity to request that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewed the Council's response to St Peter's Court, Lowestoft, following the fire at Grenfell Tower in London, at an Extraordinary Committee meeting to be convened in November 2017.

In relation to St Peter's Court, the Committee was asked:

- To consider whether the Council's response to the events since the Grenfell Tower fire and all events in response since then, has been timely and proportionate.
- To assess whether there has been adequate and effective communication with tenants.
- To establish whether the Council has an action plan that is pertinent and comprehensive, and delivers actions in a timely manner.

Any changes to the wording of the above request, could be made subject to the agreement of the Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal & Democratic Services.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed that an Extraordinary Committee meeting to consider this matter would be a sensible and proactive approach. It was therefore

RESOLVED

That an Extraordinary Meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be held on Monday, 27 November 2017 at 6.00pm at Riverside, Lowestoft, in relation to St Peter's Court, Lowestoft:

- To consider whether the Council's response to the events since the Grenfell Tower fire and all events in response since then, has been timely and proportionate.
- To assess whether there has been adequate and effective communication with tenants.
- To establish whether the Council has an action plan that is pertinent and comprehensive, and delivers actions in a timely manner.

Any changes to the wording of the above request, could be made subject to the agreement of the Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal & Democratic Services.

(b) The Audit & Governance Committee

There were no matters to report.

4 NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK STRATEGY

The Cabinet Member for Tourism & Economic Development presented the report, which sought the Cabinet's endorsement of the Norfolk and Suffolk Strategy. It was noted that the new Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy would be the key document for setting the region's overall strategic approach to growth. The strategy and associated delivery plan would be instrumental in securing both national and EU (until 2019) funding for the region and its constituent areas. By ensuring that East Suffolk's key sectors, growth areas and critical infrastructure were highlighted in the plan, it would ensure that further investment was made in the districts economies.

Members noted that the sectors which were key strengths in East Suffolk included:

- Energy – Off Shore Renewables, Gas and Nuclear
- Life Sciences – Marine (CEFAS)
- Visitor Economy – Tourism and Culture
- Ports & Logistics – Ports of Felixstowe and Lowestoft
- Agriculture, Food and Drink – East Suffolk Wide

- Digital Creative & ICT – BTs Adastral Park

Members were advised that by endorsing this plan, Cabinet would signal its approval of this strategic approach and the Council's commitment to work collaboratively to grow the local and regional economy.

The Head of Economic Development & Regeneration reported that Norfolk and Suffolk had a combined economy worth £35 billion pa. The level of growth in Norfolk and Suffolk had been significantly higher than the northern power house regions, since 2010. Members were reassured that the Strategy was for the whole region and that extensive consultation had taken place. The data included within the Strategy had been commissioned by the LEP and was very detailed and robust. Members noted that the Strategy and Action Plan were live documents.

A Member commented that the Strategy mentioned the creation of 88,000 jobs and they queried the location and type of jobs which had been created. It was reported that this information could be provided outside of the meeting. However, the data provided was accurate and the LEP had been very successful in achieving growth in this area. It was anticipated that the majority of the jobs created would be around the Norwich hub or in the renewable energy sector.

In respect of the recent announcement that two significant employers, Britvic and Colman's, may be leaving Norwich, a Member queried whether the Strategy would have any influence over those companies decisions. It was reported that central government would be involved in this respect and negotiations would be taking place. It was noted that various incentives may be offered by central government, as part of the negotiation process, to try and encourage both companies to stay in Norwich. Members were reassured that the LEP would also be lobbying and using their influence to stop those companies from leaving. However, it was noted that if a company was undertaking a global restructure of their assets, it may not be possible for central government to affect or reverse their decisions. However, the Strategy would encourage collaborative working and there would be a combined effort to try to stop those companies from leaving Norwich.

A Member queried whether any work was being undertaken, or was planned, to develop tidal energy in the region. It was confirmed that the Norfolk and Suffolk Strategy was high level and did not include individual projects at this time. However, the Action Plan would contain information about those projects. It was confirmed that Orbis Energy was investigating tidal energy and had been successful in securing external funding to help pay for the trials for this new technology. It was noted that the LEP were committed to supporting the Energy Coast.

A Member raised concerns that the Strategy did not mention Brexit, which would have a significant impact on the future. The Head of Economic Development & Regeneration advised that Brexit would bring a number of challenges and opportunities for growth. Members attention was then drawn to the Executive Summary of the report which stated that '*The new plan for growth had been influenced, and will influence the national government's emerging Industrial Strategy, and also reflects the challenges and opportunities presented by Brexit*.' Members noted that the region would need to prepare

to be more competitive globally and that it would need to develop strong foundations so that the region would be ready to trade with anyone, regardless of their location. Reassurance was provided that the whatever the outcome of Brexit, the core objectives and foundations would hold true and the Strategy was a live document, which could be updated to meet changing circumstances over time.

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet endorse the new Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy.

2. That Cabinet directs the Economic Development & Regeneration team and other relevant teams to work collaboratively with all partners and stakeholders to support the delivery of the objectives set out within the new strategy and thereby promote local and regional economic growth.

5 PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF LAND ADJACENT TO KENSINGTON GARDENS, LOWESTOFT

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented a report, which sought approval to dispose of a strip of land adjacent to Kensington Gardens in Lowestoft. The land would be used in connection with the development of a pre-school facility at the adjoining St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School.

Members noted that the sale of the land would bring a capital receipt and, subject to negotiation, this was likely to be in the region of £10,000 to £20,000. This valuation was based on an attempt to value the land as 'educational' land using rateable values, with a resulting value of approximately £16,000. Members were advised that the school was working to a very tight time frame, which required the Council's consent to the proposed disposal by mid October 2017 at the latest. This timescale had not permitted the completion of the negotiations, prior to this Cabinet meeting.

RESOLVED

1. That the transfer of the land adjacent and to the north of Kensington Gardens Lowestoft, as shown edged in red on the plan attached to this report be approved, in principle, to the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia for use as part of the school grounds at St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, subject to the necessary advertisements required under the Open Spaces Act 1906 being placed and responses to them being considered further.

2. That if objections to the necessary advertisements referred to in recommendation 1 above are received, they be reported back to Cabinet for its further consideration.

3. That if no objections to the necessary advertisements referred to in recommendation 1 above are received, Delegated Authority be granted to the Head of Operations Strategic Management, acting in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources, and Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to finalise all aspects of the transfer on terms that best protect the Council's interests.

6 EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

RESOLVED

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

7 PURCHASE OF HOUSING UNITS IN LOWESTOFT

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the report, which sought approval to purchase 3 properties within Lowestoft.

RESOLVED

1. That Waveney District Council proceeds to purchase the freehold of the three properties, for the sums as discussed at the meeting, plus stamp duty and disbursements.

2. That Delegated Authority be granted to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to conclude the purchases on terms that best protect the interests of the Council.

3. That once purchased, additional works required to bring the properties up to standard, as identified and as costed within the report, are undertaken.

4. That thereafter, these properties become part of the Council's housing stock to be managed accordingly.

8 PURCHASE OF LAND IN CENTRAL LOWESTOFT

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented a report which sought approval to purchase land in Central Lowestoft, as part of the Council's policy to support and enhance Lowestoft's town centre.

RESOLVED

1. That the purchase of the land and for the payment of stamp duty, for the sums as discussed at the meeting, be approved.

2. That Delegated Authority be granted to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources, to develop a detailed scheme for the site.

3. That the sum as discussed at the meeting, for carrying out of the necessary viability studies on the site, be approved.

4. That a further report be brought to Cabinet, to up date Members as to progress, once a final development scheme has been designed.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm.

Chairman