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COUNCIL MEETING

30 October 2008 – 7.00 pm

PRESENT:

The Mayor, Councillor Easter (in the Chair); Councillors Ames, Barker, Blyth, Burroughs, Castle, B Coleman, M Coleman, Collins, Cook, Cunniffe, Field, P Hacon, Hewitt, Holmes, Jeal, Jermany, Linden, Peck, Plant, Reynolds, Shrimplin, Smith, Stone, Tate, B Taylor, M Taylor, D Thompson, M Thompson, Walker, Watts, Weymouth and Williamson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Butcher, Garrod and Pettit.

Mr R Packham (Managing Director), Mrs J Ratcliffe (Executive Director – Customers and Resources), Mr C Skinner (Head of Central Services), Mr S Duncan (Head of Financial Services), and Mr R Hodds (Member Services Manager and Scrutiny Officer).

1. MINUTES

The minutes of 28 August and 24 September 2008 were confirmed.

2. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members were advised that no questions had been raised by a member of the public.

3. REPORTS TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION

(a) Appointment of Independent Members and Parish Council Members to the Standards Committee

Council considered the Monitoring Officer's report with regard to the appointment of additional Independent Members and Parish Council Members to the Standards Committee.

In response to a question from Councillor Jeal, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that the issue with regard to undertaking formal interviews for future Parish Council Members of the Standards Committee would be an issue for consideration by the Standards Committee at a future meeting.

Proposer: Councillor B Coleman

Seconder: Councillor Stone

That approval be given to the following appointments to the Standards Committee:-

- Mr N Pownall and Mr J Lynch as Independent Members of the Standards Committee.

- Mr T Howlett and Mr J Russell as Parish Council Members of the Standards Committee.

CARRIED

(b) The Council's Corporate Plan 2008-2011

Council considered the report of the Consultant Supporting Policy and Improvement with regard to the Council's Corporate Plan 2008-2011.

The Executive Director (Customers and Resources) reported that the Corporate Plan still required a number of formatting changes and that once completed a final copy of the Plan would be sent to all Members of Council.

Proposer: Councillor B Coleman

Seconder: Councillor Stone

That the Corporate Plan 2008-2011 be approved.

CARRIED

(c) Sustainable Community Strategy

Council considered the Interim LGR Advisor's report on a Sustainable Community Strategy for Great Yarmouth.

The Executive Director (Customers and Resources) reported that the Strategy required a number of formatting changes and that once finalised, a final copy of the Strategy would be sent to all Members of Council.

Proposer: Councillor B Coleman

Seconder: Councillor Stone

That the Sustainable Community Strategy for Great Yarmouth be approved.

CARRIED

(d) Gambling Act 2005 – Statement of Principles for Large Casino

Council considered the Licensing and Election Manager's report which sought approval to the Licensing Authority's Draft Gambling Statement of Licensing Principles in relation to the Large Casino Licence.

Proposer: Councillor Stone

Seconder: Councillor Castle

That the Licensing Authority's draft Gambling Statement of Licensing Principles in relation to the Large Casino Licence be approved for consultation.

CARRIED

(e) Budget Mid Year Report

Council considered the Head of Financial Services' report which presented a General Fund Revenue Budget Mid-Year Review based upon the Budget Monitoring Performance Report as at 31 August for the five months from 1 April to 31 August 2008.

In response to a question from the Shadow Leader with regard to the Icelandic Bank Investments, the Cabinet Member (Resources) reported that in respect of 2008/09, services would not be affected by the loss of the investment income on the Council's investment with Heritable Bank. With regard to the 2009/10 budget process, there are a number of pressures on the budget, including the loss of this investment, and the Council is working on an efficiency agenda to find a savings which is intended to balance a budget without impacting on Council services. Council was advised that it was too soon in the budget process to guarantee that there will not be any services affected as a result but this would be a Member decision to be taken at budget time. It is also hoped that the Council will have more information on the recoverability of the £2m in November and the Head of Financial Services will be working with the LGA and the Government to ensure that any losses have the minimum impact on the Council Tax Payer.

Proposer: Councillor Ames

Secunder: Councillor B Coleman

That the Budget Mid Year Report be approved.

CARRIED

(f) Annual Governance Statement

Members were reminded that Council at its meeting on 26 June 2008 had approved the Annual Governance Statement. Council now considered the Head of Financial Services' report on proposed revisions to the Statement following consideration of this document by the external Auditors.

Proposer: Councillor Ames

Secunder: Councillor B Coleman

That the revised Annual Governance Statement 2007/08, as detailed in the Head of Financial Services Report, be approved.

CARRIED

4. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

(a) Council – 28 August and 24 September 2008

The Mayor presented the minutes of the Council meetings held on 28 August and 24 September 2008.

(b) Cabinet – 24 September, 3 October and 22 October 2008

The Leader presented the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 24 September, 3 October and 22 October 2008.

(c) Scrutiny Committee – 15 September and 20 October 2008

The Chairman presented the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 15 September and 20 October 2008.

With regard to the item in respect of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, Councillor Walker reported that this matter would be the subject of discussion at the Gorleston Area Liaison meeting on 1 December 2008.

In connection with the item relating to Section 106 Funds, Councillor Holmes referred to the obligations on Developers as part of their Section 106 Agreements, and on issues relating to Affordable Housing, and reference was also made to the need to give consideration to the appointment of a dedicated Section 106 Officer.

(d) Audit and Risk Committee – 8 September 2008

The Chairman presented the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 8 September 2008.

Proposer: Councillor B Coleman

Seconder: Councillor Stone

That the minutes of Council of 28 August and 24 September 2008, Cabinet of 24 September, 3 October and 22 October 2008, Scrutiny Committee of 15 September and 20 October 2008, and Audit and Risk Committee of 8 September 2008 be received.

CARRIED

5. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

In accordance with paragraphs 10.2 and 10.4 of Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) of the Constitution, Council considered the following Member's question:-

(a) Question from Councillor Jeal

"Why have the residents of The Square on Russell Road near Trafalgar Road not had any maintenance carried out on their car parking spaces which they have paid £80 per year since 1989? The surfaces have become unsafe and need urgent repair. These people pay so should have them maintained.

Also, why has there been no treatment of the weeds in any of the Squares in this area for over two years?"

In response to the above question, the Cabinet Member (Environment) reported that County Highways had received no complaints over the past two years in this area. However, the area of the Squares would be placed on the Weed Killing Register.

The Cabinet Member (Regeneration and Tourism) reported on the details of the maintenance to the above areas carried out during the period of June 2006 to June 2008. Council was advised that the Highway Authority remains responsible for maintenance of the adopted highway around the perimeter of the bleach areas. The Cabinet Member also reported that parking bays are currently available to let at £152.75 per year (inclusive of VAT) and that currently 24 of the 32 bays are either let or under offer.

6. REPORT OF LEADER ON URGENT KEY DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING WHICH WERE NOT IN THE FORWARD PLAN

The Leader reported that there were no issues for consideration.

7. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm.