

Confirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of **Full Council** held in the **Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Melton** on **Thursday 23 March 2017** at **7.00pm**

Members present:

J Bidwell, S Bird, C Blundell (Vice Chairman), S Burroughes, R Catchpole, P Coleman, A Cooper, M Deacon, J Fisher, A Fryatt, S Gallant, T Green, G Harding, S Harvey, C Hedgley, R Herring, G Holdcroft, M Jones, J Kelso, G Lynch, D McCallum, M Newton (Chairman), C Poulter, I Pratt, D Savage, A Smith

Officers present:

K Abbott (Democratic Services Business Manager), S Baker (Chief Executive), H Hanslip (Principal Planner), H Slater (Head of Legal and Democratic Services)

Others present:

S Graffham (Communications Manager, Police and Crime Commissioner's Office), T Passmore (Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk)

Full Council stood to observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect and support for all those affected by the attack at Westminster Bridge and the Houses of Parliament on 22 March 2017.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Amoss, Councillor Block, Councillor Bloomfield, Councillor Bond, Councillor Dean, Councillor Dunnett, Councillor Haworth-Culf, Councillor Hudson, Councillor Kerry, Councillor Lawson, Councillor Mower, Councillor Mulcahy, Councillor Whiting and, Councillor Yeo

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hedgley declared a Local Non Pecuniary Interest in respect of item 9 on the Agenda, Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan (reference CL 15/17), as both a Parish Councillor for Great Bealings and as a member of that Parish's Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

3. Minutes

By majority vote, there being one abstention, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 February 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Announcements

The Chairman advised he had been requested to write to the Prime Minister to extend the Council's sympathies and support following the terror attack at Westminster and the Houses of Parliament on 22 March 2017. It was proposed by Councillor McCallum, seconded by Councillor Deacon and unanimously supported by all those present that such a letter be sent by the Chairman.

There were no other Announcements.

5. Written Questions

There were no Written Questions.

6. Notices of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion.

7. Annual Update by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk

Councillor Gallant, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health, introduced the annual update by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk, Mr Tim Passmore. The Cabinet Member referred Council to the background of the neighbourhood policing model including the implementation of PCSOs and highlighted the importance of visible community policing and accessible locally-known authority figures. The Cabinet Member referred to the reduced role of Safer Neighbourhood Teams and the reduction in the number of PCSOs and highlighted the public's concerns around safety and crime.

In response to Councillor Gallant's remarks, Mr Passmore emphasised the importance of continuing to effectively police an area which had low levels of crime but that there was also a need to find efficiencies where possible. Mr Passmore referred to several budgetary pressures as a result of changes to financial rules and schemes and that these had contributed to the need to increase the police and crime element of the Council Tax. Mr Passmore said that the new police and crime plan would be customised to the needs of Suffolk.

Mr Passmore stated that Safer Neighbourhood Teams had been reduced from 29 to 18 and so each would now be responsible for larger areas. He referred to a campaign to recruit PCSOs and that, at present, the Constabulary was under strength by approximately 25 PCSOs and 30 Police Officers. With reference to Councillor Gallant's comments about visible community policing, Mr Passmore said that the Local Policing Review would also consider how best to maintain public confidence as well as the impact of changes in the pattern of crime. Mr Passmore referred to the cybercrime unit established in Halesworth to help address what was an increasingly significant area of criminal activity and, therefore, had necessitated additional resources. He also referred to 'hidden harm' crimes such as domestic violence which, he said, would remain a top priority.

Mr Passmore outlined the continuing and future collaborative working with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service including joint fire and police stations and the potential to undertake aspects of procurement and vehicle maintenance jointly. Mr Passmore emphasised the importance of partnership working and welcomed the introduction of the civil enforcement of parking by the

Council which would help to release police officers for other roles. Mr Passmore said that the coming year would see an innovative website introduced which would include options to report crime or to seek advice rather than, necessarily, to make a 999 call.

Mr Passmore outlined plans to improve issues with the 101 telephone system, the roll-out of body-worn video cameras to aid the protection of officers, to act as a deterrent and to collate evidence, and the provision of technology in patrol cars to enable their use as 'mobile' stations.

Mr Passmore advised that the recent HM Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) report had rated Suffolk as 'Good' and within the top quartile nationwide. The HMIC had also commented positively on the significant improvements made in addressing anti-social behaviour. Council was advised that, in Suffolk, the caseload per officer was one of the highest in the UK and Mr Passmore said that he hoped the police funding formula, under review by the Government, would recognise this and make a more equitable allocation going forward.

The Chairman invited questions.

Councillor Deacon referred to the reduced Safer Neighbourhood Team within Felixstowe and asked Mr Passmore to comment on local concerns, perceptions and the potential implications of a reduced police presence. Mr Passmore replied that he understood the public's concerns about the visibility and presence of police officers; he stated that there was a need to better publicise what was being done to address crime to ensure the public's trust and confidence was maintained. Mr Passmore undertook to raise Councillor Deacon's concerns with the Chief Constable.

Councillor Burroughes outlined a particular case and the experience of a constituent within a rural ward when ringing 999; he said the response which had been received from the central communications/command centre had been unacceptable and had not reassured local residents. Mr Passmore asked that Councillor Burroughes provide him with more precise details outside of the meeting so that the incident and the police response could be investigated. He added that the target response to crime in rural areas was 20 minutes, and 15 minutes in urban areas; this target was achieved in 91% of calls for assistance. Mr Passmore added that a new rural crime strategy had been recently launched and within each of the 14 rural Safer Neighbourhood Teams one Officer was now designated to lead on rural crime issues.

Councillor McCallum referred to levels of domestic violence and asked what initiatives were being taken to address this crime and its long term impact. Mr Passmore replied that grant funding had been invested in an Advisory Service with, at the moment, 12 practitioners. There was also a three-year contract in place for help and support to be provided via the voluntary sector and, by the end of 2016, some 68,000 police officers had been trained to identify the signs of domestic violence. Mr Passmore added that in 2017/18, £100,000 would be available for counselling and support services. He suggested that there was a need to further improve multi-agency approaches to domestic violence, which remained one of the top priorities in the new police and crime plan.

Councillor Kelso referred to difficulties with PCSOs being able neither to attend annual Parish Council meetings nor to submit a written report. Mr Passmore asked to be advised of specific examples. He said that a report should be available to download from the website and that

improvements to this were underway. Mr Passmore said he would raise the issue of PCSO shifts with the Chief Constable.

Councillor Harvey asked about the possibility of linking police officers to schools to talk about problems associated with 'sexting'. Mr Passmore responded that, as part of the Local Policing Review, three dedicated schools liaison officers had been appointed and they attended schools as part of students' personal, social and health education studies to discuss 'sexting' and on-line security etc.

The Chairman concluded the discussion by thanking Mr Passmore for attending the meeting and providing a useful update.

8. Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan

Council received report **CL 14/17** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning. In summarising the report, the Cabinet Member highlighted the independent examination of the Plan and the result of the referendum which had been held in February 2017 and in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. A majority of 92% of those who had voted were in favour of the Plan and so the Council was required to 'make' (adopt) the Plan as soon as was reasonably practical. Once 'made', the Plan would become part of the statutory development plan and, as such, would have full statutory weight in the determination of planning applications within the defined area in Framlingham. The Cabinet Member referred Council to the main objectives of the Plan, as summarised at paragraph 1.2 of the report.

The Chairman invited questions.

Councillor Newton asked about the review processes for the Plan. The Cabinet Member for Planning explained that the related neighbourhood plan policies would be reviewed five-yearly.

The Chairman moved to debate.

Councillor Smith commented on the scale and clarity of the maps contained within the Plan; the Cabinet Member stated that, within the final version, the Principal Planner would ensure these were resolved within the final version.

It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote

RESOLVED:

1. That Council approved the "Making" of the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan
2. That Council approved, for ease of reference and clarification, the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan be re-published to include within its title, headers and footers that this was the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan as "Made March 2017"

9. Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan

Council received report **CL 15/17** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning. The Cabinet Member summarised the report and highlighted, in particular, the Plan's mission

statement (as detailed on page 102 of the report). The Cabinet Member referred Council to the result of the referendum on the Plan, held in February 2017 in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, which had seen 97% of those who had voted in favour of the Plan. The Council was, therefore, required to 'make' (adopt) the Plan as soon as reasonably practical. Once 'made', the Plan would become part of the statutory development plan and, as such, would have full statutory weight in the determination of planning applications within the defined area in Great Bealings.

There being no questions, the Chairman moved to debate.

Councillor Hedgley requested that Council and the Chief Executive formally recognise the appreciation of Great Bealings for the excellent support provided by Officers, particularly the Principal Planner, in assisting the preparation of its Neighbourhood Plan. This was agreed.

Councillor Blundell welcomed the Plan's focus on historic and natural environmental matters and design, as summarised in the mission statement.

Councillor Smith noted that there had been only limited support by respondents to a questionnaire in June 2014 for the provision of affordable housing (as detailed in paragraph 3.5 of the Plan, page 120 of the report) which, he said, was regrettable; however, Councillor Smith welcomed the modest provision for affordable housing made by the Parish Council within the Plan.

It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote

RESOLVED:

1. That, subject to the inclusion of the additional appendix listing policies to be superseded by the Plan, Council approved the "Making" of the Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan
2. That Council approved, for ease of reference and clarification, the Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan be re-published to include within its title, headers and footers that this was the Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan as "Made March 2017"

10. Leiston Neighbourhood Plan

Council received report **CL 16/17** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning. In summarising the report, the Cabinet Member highlighted, in particular, the Plan's key objectives as detailed on page 244 of the report, page 269 of the Plan. The Cabinet Member referred Council to the result of the referendum on the Plan, held in February 2017 in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, which had seen 83% of those who had voted in favour of the Plan. The Council was, therefore, required to 'make' (adopt) the Plan as soon as reasonably practical. Once 'made', the Plan would become part of the statutory development plan and, as such, would have full statutory weight in the determination of planning applications within the defined area in Leiston.

There being no questions of items raised for debate, the Chairman moved to the recommendations. It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote

RESOLVED:

1. That Council approved the “Making” of the Leiston Neighbourhood Plan
2. That Council approved, for ease of reference and clarification, the Leiston Neighbourhood Plan be re-published to include within its title, headers and footers that this was the Leiston Neighbourhood Plan as “Made March 2017”

11. Cabinet Members’ and Outside Bodies Representatives’ Report

Council received report **CL 17/17**.

The Chairman indicated that the reports would be taken as read, unless Cabinet Members wished to provide an update. The Chairman also invited Council to question Cabinet Members on their reports.

Councillor Holdcroft – Cabinet Member for Economic Development

Councillor Holdcroft referred to the consultation on a new industrial strategy following the publication of a Green Paper in late January. In this regard, Councillor Holdcroft had attended a recent meeting of the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and that a pan-Suffolk response to the consultation was being prepared by the deadline of 17 April 2017.

Councillor Fryatt – Cabinet Member for Planning

Councillor Fryatt highlighted the current consultation on the Government’s White Paper “Fixing the Broken Housing Market” and wished to encourage Members to comment on its significant proposals on planning process, starter homes, the housing infrastructure fund, public-sector land, objectively assessed housing needs, stalled sites, and planning fees.

Councillor Kelso referred to the current planning inquiry and suggested that the Cabinet Member should attend to hear the arguments being presented and to support the Officers called before the Inspector. Councillor Fryatt acknowledged the demands the inquiry placed upon Officers and commented, in particular, on the arguments being put before the Inspector regarding the status of the Council’s five-year building supply.

Councillor Blundell supported Councillor Kelso’s comments. He added that appeals had been lost because the Planning Inspectorate had ruled that the Council did not have a five-year building supply and had criticised the delayed review of the Council’s Core Strategy. Councillor Fryatt said the review of the Core Strategy had commenced in 2015. He also referred to the on-going development of the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Framework (SPIF) which would be pivotal in determining and delivering ambitious housing targets.

Councillor Gallant – Cabinet Member for Community Health

There were no questions from Council.

Councillor Smith – Cabinet Member for Coastal Management

There were no questions from Council.

Councillor Lawson – Cabinet Member for Resources

In Councillor Lawson's absence, Councillor Herring highlighted the Chancellor's announcement within the Government's recent Spring Budget of the creation of £300m discretionary relief for those businesses affected by the Business Rates Revaluation and to be spread over the period 2017/18 to 2020/21. Councillor Herring advised that the Leaders of Councils in Suffolk had jointly agreed to produce a report on Business Rate Revaluation across Suffolk in order to ensure the best understanding of the impact on local businesses.

Councillor Poulter – Suffolk Coast and Heath Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

There were no questions from Council.

Councillor Poulter – Suffolk Coastal Norse Partnership Liaison Board

Councillor Green asked for additional information on the criteria for the issuing of fixed penalty notices for fly tipping offences as opposed to warning letters. Councillor Poulter undertook to provide additional detail to Councillors outside of the meeting.

Councillor Hedgley – East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board

Councillor Smith and Councillor Herring commented on the valuable service the Internal Drainage Board provided in ensuring flood plains and the rural environment were effectively maintained, protected and managed.

Councillor Cooper- Association of Suffolk Museums

There were no questions from Council.

The Meeting concluded at 8.53 p.m.