

Confirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of **Council** held in the Council Chamber, Melton Hill,
Woodbridge on **Thursday, 24 March 2016 at 7.00pm**

Members present:

J Bidwell, S Bird, S Bloomfield, C Blundell, M Bond, R Catchpole, P Coleman, A Cooper, J Day, M Deacon, J Fisher, A Fryatt, S Gallant, T Green, G Harding, S Harvey (Chairman), C Hedgley, R Herring, G Holdcroft, C Hudson, M Jones, J Kelso, R Kerry, S Lawson, G Lynch, S Mower, M Newton, C Poulter, P Rous, D Savage, A Smith, N Yeo.

Officers present:

S Baker (Chief Executive), M Edgerley (Principal Planner – Policy and Delivery), H Hanslip (Principal Planner – Policy and Delivery), A MacGibbon (Planning Officer – Policy and Delivery), D Reed (Planning Policy and Delivery Manager), C Roberts (Democratic Services Business Manager), H Slater (Head of Legal and Democratic Services).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Block, S Burroughes, D Dean, P Dunnett, T-J Haworth-Culf, D McCallum, P Mulcahy, I Pratt, and R Whiting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Following Local Non Pecuniary Interests were declared in agenda item 7:

- Councillor Blundell as a member of the Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.
- Councillor Catchpole as a member of Walberswick Parish Council.
- Councillor Fisher as a member of Saxmundham Town Council.
- Councillor Jones as a member of Aldringham-cum-Thorpe Parish Council.
- Councillor Holdcroft as a member of the Woodbridge Neighbourhood Plan Team.
- Councillor Hudson as Chairman of the Ipswich Policy Board and as Deputy Leader of Suffolk County Council.
- Councillor Newton as a member of Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council.

The following Local Non Pecuniary Interests were declared in agenda item 8:

- Councillor Bird as a member of Felixstowe Town Council Planning Committee which had been consulted on these documents and as a member of the Felixstowe Area Action Plan Working Group.
- Councillor Coleman as a member of Felixstowe Town Council.
- Councillor Deacon as a member of Felixstowe Town Council.
- Councillor Gallant as a member of Felixstowe Town Council.
- Councillor Green as a member of Felixstowe Town Council.
- Councillor Harding as a member of Trimley St Mary Parish Council.
- Councillor Harvey as a member of the Felixstowe and District Working Group.
- Councillor Kerry as a member of the Working Group and as a member of Trimley St Martin Parish Council.
- Councillor Savage as a member of the Felixstowe Town Council Working Group.
- Councillor Smith as a member of Felixstowe Town Council.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 February 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that she would be singing with the local choir in Rushmere St Andrew on Friday. This would complete her visits to the District's 118 parishes which had been an invaluable experience. The Chairman had taken many photographs during those visits which would be presented on a rolling screen at the Chairman's Reception on Tuesday, 12 April 2016 at Bruisyard Barn. This would also be an opportunity to thank volunteers in the area.

The Chairman also announced that she had been handcuffed and imprisoned to raise funds for 'Homestart', her chosen charity. The target was £500 but this increased to over £850, including gift aid.

The Leader updated Council on Devolution and referred to the recent signing of a high level East Anglia Devolution agreement by 22 Leaders within Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridge which was available on the website and Members were asked to appraise themselves of its content. This was the end of the second stage and they would now be moving into the third stage to include the level of powers and funding to be devolved down which would involve six months of detailed work. The agreement was predicated on economic and housing growth and, should the councils go down the devolution route, the Government required that there would be a directly elected mayor. It may be necessary to call an Extraordinary Full Council meeting sometime in late June as this would be a major decision to be made in a short space of time. There would also be briefing meetings late April/May to update Members.

Councillor Deacon sought clarity around Cambridge's current position and what would happen if a decision was taken not to ratify the agreement.

The Leader responded that Suffolk's local authorities had a similar approach to devolution and had a good working partnership. The other two counties would need to come to a view on whether or not they wished to pursue the development of a devolution agreement. Norfolk had discussed this and it was expected that they would move on to the next stage. Both Cambridge and Peterborough had been working on their own scheme and Cambridge City Council had decided not to take part but would be having their own discussions. The Leader was unsure whether an agreement would succeed and receive Government approval if only half or three quarters of local authorities were in agreement.

Regarding what would happen if Suffolk Coastal did not ratify the agreement, decision making and funding would be devolved down from Government to a directly elected mayor and Suffolk Coastal could find itself in an isolated situation if the other authorities decided to accept devolution.

The Chief Executive announced that the election for the Police and Crime Commissioner would take place on 5 May 2016. The Notice of Election had been posted that day and five candidates had expressed an interest.

The Chief Executive also announced that Tony Osanski, who retired from his post of Strategic Director in 2015, had suffered a heart attack but was recovering well. Council sent its best wishes to Mr Osanski.

5. WRITTEN QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 8(2)

There were no Written Questions.

6. NOTICES OF MOTION RECEIVED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 7(3)

There were no Notices of Motion.

7. SITE ALLOCATION AND AREA SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT – PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT

Council received report **CL06/16** which was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Planning who informed Council that both this and the Felixstowe Peninsula and Area Action Plan Development Plan document (agenda item 8) had been through the consultation process with Town/Parish Councils and Members and had also been subject to a great deal of discussion over the past 18 months. Both documents had been before the Planning Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet and amendments resulting from those meetings were included in the Addendum sheets to Appendix A of this report and Appendix A to report **CL07/16** (agenda item 8) circulated to Members ahead of the meeting.

This exercise had shown that the Council could meet at least the 7,900 Core Strategy housing requirement and where those dwellings could be located in the district, although this number would need to be increased going forward.

It was expected that it would be October/November before the document was agreed by the Planning Inspector and would then become adopted policy.

Councillor Fryatt referred to the loss of the Yoxford appeal where the Council had challenged Paragraph 49 of the NPPF and informed Members that progress on this document and the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan strengthened the Council's five year housing supply position.

Councillor Fryatt invited Hilary Hanslip (Principal Planner - Policy and Delivery) to give a presentation to Council.

Council was informed that it was important that the Council could provide a full set of up to date housing supply policies and demonstrate a rolling five year housing supply. Redefining physical limits boundaries had also been addressed and the importance of business growth and protecting and enhancing the natural environment had been considered. The adopted Core Strategy provided an overall vision for growth and the two documents before Council had been subjected to Sustainability Appraisals (SA) and Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) and were on target for adoption by the end of the year; however the time frame would be in the hands of the Inspector once the documents were submitted.

The presentation highlighted the following points:

- Plan Preparation and Consultation.
- One to one's offered to Town and Parish Councils regarding housing numbers.
- Formal process undertaken in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.
- Local Plan Working Groups established with a combination of District Councillors and Town and Parish Council representatives which acted as a discussion forum and sounding board.
- Five meetings of the Site Allocations Working Group; six meetings of the Felixstowe Peninsula Working Group and two joint meetings of both Working Groups had taken place since 8 December 2014.
- Submission for consideration by the Council's Planning Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

The two issues highlighted for consideration, following the meeting of Cabinet, were the Neighbourhood Plans and Policy SP32 (Visitor Management). There were currently eight Neighbourhood Plans in the process of being prepared under a separate regulatory framework and running to their own timeframes. Although good progress was being made, the Council was giving support to ensure those plans were workable and progressing well. Leiston and Framlingham Neighbourhood Plans were currently at a similar stage of progress to the Council's own plans and would contribute significantly to the overall district wide housing requirement.

The policy on Visitor Management SP32, as written, had a number of unintended consequences in terms of limiting car parking to support town centre viability. Comments had been taken on board and the policy redrafted in consultation with Natural England to a more flexible approach. The re-drafted policy had also been subject to assessment under HRA to be provided as an addendum to the main HRA report. The HRA addendum had been circulated to Members ahead of the meeting.

Council was informed that the remit of the document was not to update and amend housing numbers, as this was a matter for the Local Plan review, but to revise the retained Saved Policies. A number of saved policies would still remain in place where they were relevant to those Town and Parish Councils producing Neighbourhood Plans and which would be superseded as those plans progressed.

It was also noted that the Adastral Park area was still being progressed by way of a planning application.

The following policies were summarised:

Employment Allocations: Nacton had expanded their Statement of Common Ground with the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which was due to be signed off in April. Bentwaters also had long term business plan proposals and the policy reflected that growth.

Retail Policies: Boundaries had been considered and policies had been updated to reflect the latest Government guidance.

Snape: Identified in the Habitats Regulations Assessment as one area which had potential implications for European sites. Issues identified were now reflected in updated policy wording.

Recreation and Open Spaces: This was linked to the Ipswich Garden Suburb which was identified as an important open space and part of the mitigation measures required to address the cumulative impact of development across Ipswich Borough and Suffolk Coastal. Part of that area extended into Suffolk Coastal and would, in addition, help maintain separation with Westerfield. The Working Group was also of a strong view that the policy relating to the open space/recreation area around Rushmere St Andrew should be retained.

Environmental Policies: The Newbourne area required wider discussion as part of the Local Plan review. Several additional areas had been included as areas to be protected from development.

Coastal Management: Areas had now been defined and the policy approach taken was around how to address development on the coast and development which might be at risk in the future i.e. areas where significant change might occur.

With regard to the test of soundness, the Inspector would be looking to see that the document was evidence based and in accordance with national policy.

Councillor Holdcroft confirmed he was content that the Neighbourhood Plans issue had been addressed. He commended officers for addressing Visitor Management as the lack of car parking in Woodbridge was seen as a serious barrier to growth and enquired whether it was their view that they had struck the right balance and whether discussions had taken place with

Development Management colleagues regarding whether this policy would prevent future developments similar to Whisstocks. It would not be appropriate to build houses close to the river which would therefore be a natural place to provide car parking.

The Principal Planner (Policy and Delivery) responded that officers considered that the right balance had been struck. The policy had been re-drafted in conjunction with Natural England and would not apply retrospectively to schemes which had already been granted planning permission. The policy, as re-drafted, would however allow the Council to consider different activities generated around Woodbridge's riverside area and to differentiate between those already well used areas and those which were more tranquil where additional activities would likely have a more significant impact.

Councillor Blundell suggested that a shuttle service between Martlesham Park and Ride, Woodbridge and perhaps Felixstowe would provide cheaper parking and be a solution to the car parking issue.

Councillor Jones enquired why an area of Aldringham had been allocated 40 houses which had not been included in the original document and of which the Parish Council had no knowledge.

It was clarified that the site in question had been resubmitted for consideration having previously been excluded. The site linked to the waste water treatment works at Leiston, which had capacity issues. Leiston was a market town and expected to provide a significant amount of growth. It had since been confirmed by Anglian Water that the constraint linked to waste water treatment capacity no longer applied. It was acknowledged that officers had not spoken to the Parish Council regarding its re-instatement; however it had been considered by the Working Group and the Parish Council could submit an objection at consultation stage provided it was linked to one of the tests of soundness.

With regard to Visitor Management, Councillor Smith thanked the team for its quick response to issues raised at Cabinet and to the amendment to the policy on page 93 of the document. Councillor Smith noted that there were potential planning applications which came under this policy and asked whether this was around estuaries as a whole or as European sites. His interpretation was that it did not refer to the AONB but to specific SPA RAMSAR sites within the AONB.

It was clarified that this referred to European sites across the district and designated for their nature conservation interest and were a subset of the entire AONB.

Regarding access points and jetties, it was also clarified that this would only be an issue where the access points were within European sites and not within the AONB as a whole.

Councillor Hudson referred to the Government's consultation around the provision of broadband and to people's expectation that broadband would be available in residential areas and asked whether more thought should be given to ensure that houses were fit for purpose in terms of broadband provision as this was virtually the fifth service and may need to be revisited as a matter of urgency. Councillor Hudson sought assurance that policies were robust and resilient as people would be seeking adaptability and connectivity in their homes.

The Cabinet Member responded that the Council took the view that broadband was essential; however some areas experienced poor broadband service which was not something which the Council could address at this stage but going forward the Council wished to ensure that there would be proper infrastructure, including broadband provision.

Council was informed that recommendation one of the report had been amended, as set out on the slide presented, to reflect the changes made.

Council therefore

RESOLVED

1. That, the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD Proposed Submission document be approved as the final version of the Plan for publication to receive representations in relation to soundness, subject to the amendments recommended by Cabinet at its meeting on 15 March 2016, as set out in the Addendum Sheet to Appendix A of Agenda Item 7 (**CL06/16**).
2. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, to make the changes agreed under recommendation 1 together with any other typographical or presentational/format changes necessary linked to the publication for consultation of the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies DPD Proposed Submission Document.
3. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, following the six week period to receive representations relating to soundness, to agree any minor modifications suggested by representations and submit the Site Allocations DPD for Examination by the Planning Inspectorate.
4. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, during the Examination into the Site Allocations DPD to address minor modifications that may arise as part of the Examination.

Councillor Hudson left the meeting at 8.20pm.

8. **FELIXSTOWE PENINSULA AND AREA ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT – PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

Council received report **CL07/16**, which was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Planning who invited Mark Edgerley (Principal Planner - Policy and Delivery) to give a presentation to Council.

Council was informed that the Site Allocations document and this document had run in parallel throughout the process and had been the subject of considerable consultation with Towns and Parishes and communities across the Felixstowe Peninsula.

As with the Site Allocations document, many Members had been part of the Working Groups and this document had also been presented to the Planning Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet where discussion had taken place around transport links and access to the current Rifle Club site; appropriate uses within the town centre boundary and the links between the town centre and Felixstowe seafront. Similar discussions had taken place around the Visitor Management policies. Comments from Cabinet were set out in the Addendum Sheet to Appendix A of the report.

A number of the policies replaced some Saved Policies from the 2001 Local Plan and it was officers' view that the policies, as written, met with examples of best practice and gave guidance and clarity and expanded the Core Strategy vision and objectives.

Housing policies within both documents would allow the Council to over provide across the district and employment and retail policies would ensure the availability of a range of facilities for communities and the level of infrastructure, expected as part of any growth, was included at the back of the document.

Councillor Savage thanked the officers for the work undertaken in the Felixstowe Area and was delighted to see the end product.

The Cabinet Member thanked Councillor Savage for her comments and asked that the team's hard work be put on record. He also thanked all those who had attended the Working Groups for their enthusiasm.

Councillor Deacon thanked the team for producing the document although he had not always agreed with its views and had opposed much of the Plan over many years due to the scale of development as the biggest impact would be in his Ward. Councillor Deacon commented that he could have agreed with the document if it had shown organic growth rather than using prime agricultural land. He also expressed concern around the number of houses and the level of infrastructure which would not be appropriate. Councillor Deacon could not support the document and would be voting against it.

Council was informed that recommendation one of the report had been amended, as set out on the slide presented, to reflect the changes made.

Council therefore

RESOLVED

1. That the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan DPD Proposed Submission document be approved as the final version of the Plan for publication to receive representations in relation to soundness, subject to the amendments recommended by Cabinet at its meeting on 15 March 2016 as set out in the Addendum Sheet to Appendix A of Agenda Item 8 (CL07/16).
2. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, to make changes agreed under recommendation 1 together with any other typographical or presentational/format changes necessary linked to the publication for consultation of the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan DPD proposed Submission document.
3. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, following the 6 week period to receive representations relating to soundness to agree any minor modifications suggested by representations and submit the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan DPD for Examination by the Planning Inspectorate.
4. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, during the Examination into the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan DPD to address minor modifications that may arise as part of the Examination.

Council joined the Chairman in thanking all officers involved in the production of both documents.

11. CABINET MEMBERS' REPORT AND OUTSIDE BODIES REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT TO COUNCIL AND QUESTIONS

Council received report **CL08/16** which provided a summary by Cabinet Members of key issues within their portfolios and reports by representatives of outside bodies to Council.

These reports were taken as read.

Councillor Fryatt – Cabinet Member for Planning

The Cabinet Member referred to the ramifications of the loss of the Yoxford appeal which emphasised the importance of the Site Allocations document and the Felixstowe Area Action Plan document.

Councillor Blundell referred to submitting objections to various developments on planning grounds and those views appearing not to be taken into account and to no notification being received regarding why those views were not considered.

The Cabinet Member responded that, should a request be submitted for a particular application to go before the panel, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee reviewed each

request and decided whether there was any material planning grounds to justify an application coming before the Committee. This information should then be fed back to the Ward Member. A review of the new system would be taking place in the near future and Members were invited to submit their comments at that time.

Councillor Harvey informed Council that she had attended a panel meeting the previous Monday and found it very reassuring that everything had been fully discussed.

Councillor Kelso referred to an issue with notifying to Parish Councils of decisions taken; however the Planning Development Manager was now dealing with this matter. Councillor Kelso sought assurance that this would be resolved.

The Cabinet Member assured Councillor Kelso that this would be included in the programme review.

Councillor Catchpole noted that feedback had been mentioned during Delegation Panels and it was his understanding that officers had this in hand.

Councillor Gallant – Cabinet Member for Community Health

The Cabinet Member had nothing to add to his report.

Councillor Holdcroft – Deputy Leader and Resources

The Cabinet Member commented that it had been reported in the news that EDF Energy expected to make a final decision on Hinkley Point C mid-May and it had always been stated that a decision on the Sizewell 'C' Stage 2 Consultation would follow the Hinkley decision.

Regarding the Suffolk Energy Gateway (Segway), the Cabinet Member had met with Robert Goodwill MP (Minister of State in the Department of Transport) and his civil servants together with Therese Coffey MP, Dan Poulter MP and Councillor Aldous. Tim Norwood from EDF Energy and Chris Darby of the LEP were also in attendance. Although there was no funding available to assist with a business case, the Minister had been very supportive of the scheme in principle and, in particular, the growth ambition of this district. He was also keen to visit the area. EDF Energy's contribution at the meeting had been helpful as this signalled a willingness to work together and for EDF Energy to make a contribution to the wider scheme.

The Cabinet Member referred to an NNLAG meeting earlier in the month which included a keynote speech by Lee McDonough, Director of the Office for Nuclear Development. Mr McDonough also wished to come back and meet with them.

Councillor Kerry – Cabinet Member for Housing

The Cabinet Member highlighted paragraph 3.2 of his report relating to Universal Credit and informed Council that he had attended a meeting in Thetford on Tuesday and there would be a briefing for Members closer to the roll out date.

Councillor Kelso referred to dual ownership which he considered was not really affordable housing as it was very difficult to obtain mortgages when only 80% of a property could be purchased.

The Cabinet Member informed Council that he had attended a meeting in London where he had asked that question, although it appeared that the shared ownership model was the Government's preferred option. The Cabinet Member and the Head of Housing were currently looking at other models to bring affordable housing forward and would update Council at a future date regarding this.

Councillor Kelso asked whether Members could be informed when these properties were coming forward in their areas. The Cabinet Member assured Councillor Kelso that Members would be informed to allow them to inform their Parishes.

Councillor Poulter – Cabinet Member for the Green Environment

Referring to car parks on page 31 of the papers, Councillor Smith suggested that it may be appropriate to consider the financial viability of moving to pre-plate recognition.

Councillor Smith – Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Coastal Management

The Cabinet Member informed Council that he had been invited by Radio Suffolk to speak on the Etholfe George programme on Monday to discuss Felixstowe and tourism on the coast which was an excellent opportunity to promote Felixstowe.

With regard to the creation of a joint Coastal Management Team for the Suffolk and Norfolk Maritime Councils, there had been three extremely good candidates for the post of Manager and Bill Parker had now been appointed. The Portfolio Holders had not been part of the interview panel but had questioned candidates.

The Cabinet Member had attended a stakeholder focus group in London and had taken the opportunity to discuss concerns around the management of the saltmarshes. A one-to-one meeting with the director and head of service would now take place to see if a way could be found of reducing the cost of the Walberswick scheme.

Councillor Rous left the meeting at 8.58pm.

Referring to page 33 of the papers regarding filming in Suffolk, the Leader informed Council that the Suffolk Leaders' Group would be extending £270,000 over two years to establish the Suffolk Film Office. This funding would be drawn from Business Rate Retention monies, much of which came from Suffolk Coastal's contribution.

The Cabinet Member commented that, although this initiative had been exclusively led by Suffolk Coastal, there was a need for this to be Suffolk-wide although every effort would be made to ensure that Suffolk Coastal was not left in the background.

At this point Councillor Blundell declared a Local Non Pecuniary Interest as he understood that Suffolk County Council was going to invite student members from the University of Suffolk to participate in filming and his son was a member of that team.

Outside Bodies Representatives' Report to Council

It was agreed that these reports would be taken as read.

The meeting concluded at 9.00pm.