

Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held at Riverside, 4 Canning Road,
Lowestoft on **Wednesday, 13 June 2018 at 6.30pm**

Cabinet Members present:

Councillors M Bee (Chairman), G Catchpole, M Ladd, B Provan, C Punt, D Ritchie and M Rudd.

Assistant Cabinet Member present:

Councillor P Ashdown.

Also in attendance:

Councillors P Byatt, A Cackett, J Craig, T Gandy, J Murray and S Woods.

Officers present:

S Baker (Chief Executive), K Blair (Head of Operations), A Jarvis (Strategic Director), N Khan (Strategic Director), L Rogers (Financial Manager for Financial Planning), A Turk (CPE Project Manager), P Wood (Head of Economic Development & Regeneration) and N Wotton (Democratic Services Manager).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Rivett.

Apologies for absence were also received from Assistant Cabinet Members Councillors N Brooks, J Ceresa and C Topping.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 11 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

(a) The Overview & Scrutiny Committee

There were no matters to report on this occasion.

(b) The Audit & Governance Committee

There were no matters to report on this occasion.

5 RENAISSANCE OF EAST ANGLIAN FISHERIES

The Cabinet Member for Tourism & Economic Development presented a report which sought approval for the Council to accept £159,500 of external funding from the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF), via the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). The funding would be used to commission a feasibility study into the future opportunities for the local fishing industry, following the UK's withdrawal from the EU in March 2019. It was noted that there was a major opportunity for the local, regional and national fishing industry to grow the domestic fishing sector following BREXIT and the commissioned report would consider the strategy required for Lowestoft to take advantage of this and re-establish itself as a significant regional fishing hub.

A successful conference had taken place on 15 March 2018 where George Eustice, Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food was the keynote speaker. The event had been well attended, involving representatives from all sectors of the related industries and supply chains, as well as NGOs, local authorities and other public bodies. All those present had been supportive of the proposal for the feasibility study to be commissioned. The various phases of the feasibility study were contained in detail within Appendix A to the report.

A Member queried how far along the coast the feasibility study would cover. It was confirmed that it was a regional project and therefore would cover from Kings Lynn to Southend. However, reassurance was provided that Lowestoft would be the main focus of the study, as it had been affected greatly by the decline in the fishing industry. It was noted that this would be a high profile project for the Council and district, and it would provide the opportunity to proactively shape strategy. The EMRF were very positive and supportive of the bid and it was hoped that a decision would be made by the end of the month.

Members noted that smaller fishing communities, such as Southwold, were also affected by the fishing quotas which had been imposed and the feasibility study was an opportunity to help many coastal towns in the region. It was noted that the supply chain was also greatly affected by the decline in fishing and significant jobs could potentially be created in the region by a renaissance of the fishing industry.

A Member queried whether there was sufficient capacity in Lowestoft Harbour, should there be an increase in the number of fishing vessels in Lowestoft. It was reported that capacity had increased over time and some additional fishing boats could be accommodated.

RESOLVED

That an award of funding from the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) of £159,500 to enable the undertaking of research into the potential economic growth opportunities for the local fishing industry resulting from BREXIT be accepted.

N.B. Councillor Punt arrived at this point in the proceedings at 6.41pm.

6 LOWESTOFT REGENERATION GOVERNANCE

The Cabinet Member for Tourism & Economic Development presented the report which was to consider a new proposed governance structure to drive forward the delivery of the Lowestoft Growth and Regeneration Programme, with a particular focus on the next five years. Approval was sought for the proposal to create a Lowestoft Growth and Regeneration Board, to bring together key stakeholders to lead the regeneration of Central Lowestoft. Approval was also sought for the replacement of the AAP Project Manager post (previously funded for three years) with 1.6 full time equivalent posts, to support the delivery of projects led by Waveney District Council.

It was noted that the Delivery Plan would focus upon six priority areas, covering the key employment sites, housing-led regeneration developments and improved retail and leisure. The priority places were: Southern Lake Lothing, South Beach, Lowestoft Town Centre, Heritage Action Zone, Enterprise Zones and Inner and Outer Harbour/PowerPark. Members were advised that there were also two broader themes covered in the Plan, which were: Transport and infrastructure (including road, rail, port, sustainability, flood protection and broadband), and Culture and Heritage (including natural heritage).

A Member commented that the Enterprise Zone at Ellough still needed to expand further, as there were a significant number of houses planned for the Beccles area and additional jobs would be needed for the new residents. The Head of Economic Development & Regeneration advised that the Ellough Enterprise Zone had been challenging, due to the lack of utilities on the site, however this would be addressed when the additional posts were filled. It was confirmed that should a company choose to take up residence at a new Enterprise Zone, they would be responsible for installing the various utilities required on the site, which would be a considerable cost. Work would soon get underway, to try to find some solutions to reduce costs to companies who were interested in moving onto the Enterprise Zone, which would help unlock its potential.

A Member queried whether Town and Parish Councils would be involved in discussions affecting the areas affected by the Lowestoft Growth and Regeneration Programme. It was confirmed that Town and Parish Councils would be consulted and involved wherever possible and that a co-ordinated response was needed for the development of these sites.

With regards to an early development plan, a Member queried whether it would be possible to have further information about the individual projects, with timelines, so that progress could be monitored closely. It was reported that all of the projects had detailed plans and the aim of this project was to bring all the plans together, so that the work could be easily overseen, as a superstructure, rather than in isolation. It was noted that all of the projects had similarities and would therefore need to link together within the district.

RESOLVED

1. That the proposal to create the Lowestoft Growth and Regeneration Board, to bring together key stakeholders to lead the regeneration of Central Lowestoft, be approved.

2. That the replacement of the AAP Project Manager post (previously funded for three years) with 1.6 full time equivalent project management posts, to support the delivery of projects led by Waveney District Council, be approved.

7 WEBCASTING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Leader of the Council presented a report to consider a project to enable the webcasting of some Council Meetings at Riverside, Lowestoft. This would mean that a Council meeting could be 'live' video streamed and accessible online. Although Council meetings were open to the public to attend, actual attendance at meetings tended to be low, except for those meeting involving high profile or contentious issues.

Webcasting of meetings was increasing, with over 100 Councils now regularly webcasting some or all of their meetings, with many others providing audio recordings. There were many associated benefits of webcasting, including increasing democratic engagement and debate, especially on key local issues such as planning, as well as improving the transparency of council processes and decision making. It would also enable members of the public who were unable to attend a meeting, to see and hear the debates that influence the decisions that the Council makes.

The introduction of webcasting at Riverside, Lowestoft, would require a major investment in new audio visual equipment, including cameras and a new microphone system. In order that the system was compatible with the Suffolk Coastal District Council systems at East Suffolk House, it was recommended that the Bosch Dicontis microphone system was used. Members were advised that as the Riverside building was shared with Suffolk County Council (SCC), any proposed changes to the AV systems would need to be agreed with SCC before the requirements specification was finalised.

Members were informed that the costs of upgrading the audio visual equipment at Riverside, to enable webcasting, was estimated to be £75,000, with annual subscription support costs of £20,000 per annum. The support was based on providing 120 hours of web casting per year and a 12 month archive service.

Members were supportive of the proposal, which would improve the openness and transparency of the Council's decision making processes. It would also facilitate closer working with colleagues from Suffolk Coastal District Council and would help those people who were unable to travel to meetings.

A Member queried whether Suffolk County Council would be paying a contribution to the costs of the project, as they would also be able to benefit from the new system. It was confirmed that discussions were already underway with Suffolk County Council, who were interested in using the new system and there had been an indication that they may make a contribution towards the costs of the proposals.

RESOLVED

That the implementation of a web casting system at Riverside, Lowestoft, be approved.

8 ICT DESKTOP REFRESH PROJECT FUNDING

The Leader of the Council presented a report, which sought approval to alter the scheduling of the ICT Desktop Refresh Project and to seek approval for the changes necessary to the approved project funding, to support the revised project plan timescale.

Members were advised that the existing ICT service model for user computing was based on a Citrix thin client platform, with Microsoft software for office productivity applications and server management systems, supplemented by specialist business applications. A refresh of the ICT Desktop environment was scheduled for 2019/20, as the hardware and software would become end of life and would no longer be supported. An ICT Desktop Refresh Project was established to create the detailed project plans necessary to deliver a refreshed desktop environment which would meet business requirements to the agreed budget and timescale.

The project included the replacement of all of the existing thin client workstations with laptops and PC's, migrating users to MS 0365 and migrating users to a new remote access solution. The existing Microsoft licences would expire in January 2020 and cannot be extended, therefore all users must be migrated to MS 0365 by December 2019. Detailed analysis had taken place and this had identified that a longer implementation period was required to ensure the achievement of the December 2019 target. As a consequence, it was therefore proposed that the implementation start date be brought forward from April 2019 to July 2018.

Members were supportive of the proposals and were pleased that the implementation date be brought forward to enable additional testing, to allow for lessons to be learned and to build resilience.

A Member raised concerns that they had former colleagues who used MS 0365, who had given the system bad feedback and they had felt that it had caused many problems. It was noted that MS 0365 was currently used successfully by many Councils, as it was flexible and suitable for home and mobile working. No system would ever be perfect, however the additional timescale would allow problems to be rectified at an early stage.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the use of reserve funding to cover both the Capital and Revenue elements of the project be approved.
- 2) That the Uniform underspend be moved to the ICT Revenue budget.
- 3) That an advance of £70,000 from the Transformation Budget to the 2018/19 ICT Revenue Budget be approved.

9 PROPOSED EAST SUFFOLK AREA PARKING PLAN

The Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships presented the report which sought approval of the East Suffolk Area Parking Plan, which needed to be adopted, prior to submitting an application for Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) powers.

It was noted that all local authorities applying for civil parking enforcement (CPE) powers must provide a summary of their parking strategies and policies, as part of its submission, and the detail and outcome of its parking management review. As such, Suffolk County Council had prepared the high level Suffolk Parking Management Strategy. Each enforcement district needed to have regard to the strategy and set out its own local parking policies and objectives in area parking plans. The East Suffolk Area Parking Plan had been drafted to meet those objectives. In order to meet the timeframe for submitting an application for CPE powers, the East Suffolk Area Parking Plan needed to be adopted at the 13 June 2018 Cabinet meeting.

Members were advised that the East Suffolk Area Parking Plan, which was Appendix A to the report, also had an appendix, which had been circulated after the publication of the meeting papers, which provided an additional summary of further points for clarification.

A Member commented that they were surprised by the cost of some residents parking permits, as they felt that the £22 cost per year would not cover the administration costs associated with providing the scheme. They also requested that parking fees should not be increased significantly, as this may have a negative impact upon tourism and deter people from visiting. It was reported that parking fees would be thoroughly reviewed as part of this area of work. Another Councillor commented that although the residents parking permit fees were not significant, £22 per year was a lot of money for those residents living in deprived parts of Lowestoft and any further increases in costs would cause financial hardship for these residents.

A Member raised concerns that it was cheaper for people to park in the market towns in the district, than it was to park in Lowestoft, which many people thought was unfair. Members were advised that there was a £250,000 shortfall in CPE funding, therefore the costs of parking would need to be reviewed as part of this project, to mitigate this.

In respect of the table on pages 81 and 82 of the report, regarding parking tariffs, a Member queried whether further explanation could be given about how to understand the table, as it was complex. It was also suggested that it would be helpful to see which tariff was being charged in each car park.

With regard to the new on-street parking schemes mentioned on page 52, in Policy ESAPP 7, it was confirmed that the standard operational hours were between 9.30am to 4.30pm. It was reported that these were reasonable hours and provided working day protection. Clarification was provided that different hours could be applied, as appropriate, and each street was enforced according to its own circumstances and the scheme it had in operation. It was possible to enforce parking until 10.00pm, if required, it would depend upon the individual situation of each street. However, it was important to maintain the movement of traffic and it would help to enable residents to park.

In relation to checking parking in car parks, it was noted that Waveney Norse currently undertook spot checks in council car parks, to check that tickets were being purchased. The spot checks would take place at different times in the morning, afternoon and evening and it was important to be flexible in this respect.

A Member reported that when there had been some previous public consultation about on-street parking in Beccles, it had been reported that the public had preferred residents parking, so that they could park when they returned home from work, therefore 8.00am to 6.00pm may be preferable. It was reported that this could be too restrictive, however the public could take part in the consultation and let their views be known.

A Member commented that it was really important to gain the opinions of people that already had a residents parking scheme in operation, so that their views on what worked well and any issues could then be taken into account. Clarification was provided that resident's visitors were able to park during the day and that the system was quite flexible.

In respect of the Parking Orders, a Member queried whether Waveney District Council would make them or whether it was the responsibility of Suffolk County Council. It was confirmed that the responsibility for the creation of Parking Orders had been devolved to Suffolk County Council.

N.B. Councillor P Byatt arrived at this point during the discussions at 7.20pm.

In respect of footway parking, a Member queried whether all footway parking caused some damage to the pavements. It was reported that legislation had been implemented to ban all HGVs from parking on the footway, as the size and weight of the vehicles caused significant damage. Other vehicles were not banned in this way and they were unlikely to cause any problems.

With regards to the 'double buggy' test, clarification was provided that a footway should be 1.2 metres wide, which would allow for a double buggy or wheelchair to get past. It was noted that this test was also used by the police, regarding parking issues. However, a common sense approach needed to be taken for all parking matters and the recognised standards would assist with this process.

A Member queried whether Suffolk County Council made any efforts to clear the footpaths which were occasionally very overgrown with vegetation and they reported that many paths were so overgrown that they were difficult to use. It was reported that this could not be confirmed at the meeting, however a common sense approach was needed. The correct markings and signs needed to be installed on all roads, which could then be properly enforced. A service level agreement (SLA) would need to be signed in this respect and Waveney Norse would be able to undertake the appropriate grass cutting and tidying.

A Member asked whether there would be a harmonisation of parking fees when the new East Suffolk Council was created in 2019. It was reported that no decisions had yet been taken in that respect. However, there were currently 48 different tariffs in operation, which was very complex and difficult to manage. It was hoped that there would be a review of tariffs in due course and it was noted that some car park fees had not been reviewed for many years.

In respect of footway parking, it was queried whether residents could be encouraged to park in nearby council-owned car parks, by the Council providing them with discounted season tickets etc. It was noted that a creative approach was needed to try to solve the parking problem.

Clarification was provided that no decisions had been taken at this stage and the consultation process would allow for the public to raise concerns and make suggestions as they saw fit. It was noted that parking had been under review for some time, and progress would be made slowly.

RESOLVED

- 1 That the draft content of the ESAPP be approved and that the commencement of a stakeholder consultation process during the summer be authorised.
- 2 That the result of the consultation and recommendations arising from it be presented to Cabinet at its 12 September 2018 meeting, for approval.

10 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES FOR 2018/19 (EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS)

The Leader of the Council presented a report, which sought approval to make appointments to a number of statutory and non-statutory Outside Bodies for 2018/19, where the role related to an Executive Function of the Council, as outlined in Appendix A to the report. It was noted that representation on Outside Bodies was deemed to be relevant to the Council's Community and Business Interests.

During the discussions about the Outside Bodies, it was noted that 1 additional Outside Bodies had been omitted from the list:

- Suffolk Association of Museums – One place – Cabinet Member for Tourism & Economic Development.

It was noted that the Outside Bodies which would have been represented by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Merger & Communities. These positions would remain vacant until the results of the investigation were known.

RESOLVED

That the relevant Cabinet Members be appointed to those Outside Bodies outlined in Appendix A to the report, for the 2018/19 municipal year, subject to the inclusion of the Suffolk Association of Museums, to which the Cabinet Member for Tourism & Economic Development would be appointed.

11 EAST SUFFOLK PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE – QUARTER 4 2017/18

The Leader of the Council presented a report, which provided an update on Corporate Performance for the period 1 January to 31 March 2018. It was noted that the East

Suffolk Performance Report provided an overview of the Council's performance and progress against the deliverables within the East Suffolk Business Plan. It also provided information regarding Suffolk Coastal District Council, which allowed for direct comparison.

The report highlighted activities and key achievements under each of the strategic deliverables – Economic Growth, Enabling Communities and Financial Self-Sufficiency and provided updates on the 23 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

A Member sought further information about the Council's target for Household Waste recycling, which was 55% by 2025. It was confirmed that recycling was high profile, however there had been a national decline in recycling rates over recent years and the reasons for this were complex. The Suffolk Waste Partnership were due to undertake a further programme of education for householders about what should and should not be recycled. This would include information about not putting nappies in the blue bin, as it would contaminate the whole load, which could not then be recycled. Due to the success of the 'Blue Planet' series, the public were now more concerned about pollution and plastics going into the sea, water ways and the broads, which had a significant negative effect on wildlife. It was also confirmed that there would be a campaign later in the year to try to reduce food waste, by encouraging people to buy less, in order to reduce spoilage. The Member then sought further information about the recycling rates of commercial waste companies and it was reported that this information was not readily available and was likely to be commercially sensitive.

A Member wished to record their thanks to Ian Gregory and Ben Ablet from Waveney Norse, for their help and support for the recent 'Kirkley Clear Out' event, which had removed a lot of unwanted waste and had been a successful initiative.

A Member raised concerns about the waiting times at the Household Waste Recycling Centre at Pakefield. There were often significant queues for people wanting to use the service and many people travelled to other tips outside of the district, as a result. They queried whether the opening times could be reviewed at a future Suffolk Waste Partnership meeting. It was confirmed that this issue could be raised. There had also been some discussion about revising the layout of the site to make it easier to use and improve traffic flow.

With regard to information about recycling, a Member queried whether general questions and answers could be put on a Facebook page or something similar. It was confirmed that this method could be considered.

A Member queried the Enabling Communities section on page 97 and 98 of the report, as it was reported that 50 affordable homes had been built in Suffolk Coastal, however there was no figure available for Waveney. It was reported that the figures were available, however they had not been included within that particular part of the report, as they had been below target and so were not classed as a 'highlight'. Approximately 120 affordable homes had been created in Waveney, however further information in this respect would be provided outside of the meeting.

Following a query from a Member, it was confirmed that the Asset Management Strategy was no longer a red risk in the Council's Corporate Risk Register, it had recently been down

graded to an amber risk. It was noted that there had been a review of the policies and procedures and that the records of assets had been updated. An update on this matter would be taken to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 14 June 2018. Although some concerns still remained, the Council was confident that the risks had been reduced substantially and further work was underway in this respect.

RESOLVED

That the East Suffolk Performance Report for Quarter 4 be received.

12 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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

13 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Exempt Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 11 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 7.50 pm.

Chairman