

Confirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of **Full Council** held in the **Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Melton** on **Thursday 25 January 2018** at **7.00pm**

Members present:

J Bidwell, S Bird, S Bloomfield, C Blundell (Chairman), M Bond, P Coleman, A Cooper, M Deacon, D Dean, S Gallant, S Harvey, C Hedgley, R Herring, C Hudson, M Jones, J Kelso, R Kerry, S Lawson, G Lynch, P Mulcahy, M Newton, C Poulter, I Pratt, A Smith, N Yeo

Officers present:

K Abbott (Democratic Services Business Manager), S Baker (Chief Executive), R Best (Communities Manager), S Brown (Planning Officer), M Edgerley (Principal Planner), H Javadi (Chief Finance Officer), N Khan (Strategic Director), A Mills (Strategic Manager (Benefits)), L Rogers (Finance Manager), H Slater (Head of Legal & Democratic Services), S Taylor (Finance Manager)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Amoss, C Block, S Burroughes, P Dunnett, J Fisher, A Fryatt, T Green, G Harding, T-J Haworth-Culf, G Holdcroft, D McCallum, S Mower, P Rous, D Savage and R Whiting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED:

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

4. Announcements

There were no Announcements.

5. Written Questions

There were no Written Questions.

6. Notices of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion.

7. Update and amendments to the Code of Good Practice in Rights of Way

Council received report **CL 01/18** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning; in the absence of the Cabinet Member, the Leader of the Council presented the report which sought approval of a number of amendments to the Code of Good Practice in Rights of Way following a periodic review. The Leader of the Council said the proposed amendments would reflect current practice and processes and, as they necessitated changes to the Council's Constitution, had also been formally considered and approved by both the Planning Committee and the Audit & Governance Committee. The Leader of the Council advised that the majority of the revisions to the Code were minor; he highlighted the more significant changes at paragraphs 1.4, 3.9, 5.1, 8.2 and 11.1 of the Code (at Appendix A to report CL 01/18). With regard to paragraph 3.9, which related to decisions taken under delegated authority by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in determining applications, the Leader of the Council proposed a small addition to the Code to indicate more clearly when such a decision could be applied in accordance with delegated powers and as stated elsewhere in the Constitution. The Leader of the Council also referred Members to the minor change about site visits undertaken by the Planning Committee in relation to Rights of Way applications, in that interested parties would no longer be invited to attend the site visit. The Leader proposed a change to the recommendation to reflect the additional delegated authority to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which was supported by Councillor Lynch as Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee.

There being no questions or matters raised for debate, it was proposed by the Leader of the Council, seconded by Councillor Gallant and unanimously resolved

RESOLVED:

1. That Full Council approved the proposed amendments and updates to the Code of Good Practice in Rights of Way, as set out in Appendix A of report **CL 01/18**.
2. That, in addition, delegated authority be given to the Head of Legal and Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to make a minor amendment to the Code in order to clarify when delegated authority could be applied to determine an application

8. Melton Neighbourhood Plan

Council received report **CL 02/18** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning; in the absence of the Cabinet Member, the Leader of the Council presented the report which sought Council's approval to "Make" the Melton Neighbourhood Plan part of the Development Plan for the area and to sit alongside the adopted Core Strategy, Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Document, Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan and the Neighbourhood Plans of Rendlesham, Framlingham, Leiston and Great Bealings. The Leader of the Council said the Plan had been subject to independent examination and had proceeded to referendum subject to a number of modifications. The Leader of the Council welcomed the positive process associated with Neighbourhood Plans which enabled a parish to express what it would like in terms of future planning. The Leader of the Council described Melton as a vibrant parish for housing and employment and that it was seen as the 'gateway' to the Deben peninsula and Woodbridge.

The Chairman invited questions. There being no questions the Chairman invited Members to debate the report and its proposals.

Councillor Bidwell expressed his immense gratitude for the work undertaken, over a protracted period of time, which had contributed to the preparation of the report and its positive result at referendum. Councillor Bidwell said that the “Making” of the Plan would be a great positive for the parish of Melton.

Councillor Smith commended the Plan as well thought though, well produced and presented; he added that the Plan was an admirable example for other Parishes to follow.

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, seconded by Councillor Bidwell and unanimously

RESOLVED:

That Full Council agreed to “Make” the Melton Neighbourhood Plan.

9. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2018/19

Council received report **CL 03/18** by the Cabinet Members with responsibility for Housing and Resources, respectively. Councillor Kerry, Cabinet Member for Housing, presented the report which sought approval of proposed changes to the Scheme including retention of the 8.5% payable amount to ensure individuals were not adversely impacted and that benefit rates would be uprated in line with the Prescribed Scheme for Pensioners on Housing Benefit to 2015 rates. The other proposals included the harmonisation of the Scheme to the DWP Welfare reforms introduced in the Prescribed Scheme and the introduction of links to the award of Universal Credit.

The Chairman invited questions. There being no questions, the Chairman invited Members to debate the report and its proposals.

Councillor Gallant welcomed the initiative and the help and assistance it would provide through the simplification of a complex system. Councillor Gallant commended the Council for putting the health and wellbeing of its residents to the forefront in the proposed changes to the Scheme.

It was proposed by Councillor Kerry, seconded by Councillor Lawson and unanimously

RESOLVED:

1. That, with effect from 1st April 2018, Council approved
 - (a) the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme remained paying maximum benefit of 91.5% for working age claimants, leaving 8.5% to be paid by the individual(s);
 - (b) benefit rates, known as applicable amounts, be uprated to 2015 rates; and
 - (c) the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme be harmonised with the DWP Welfare Reforms introduced in the Prescribed Scheme for Pensioners and Housing Benefit.

2. That, once the Council entered the Full Universal Credit Service, links to the award of Universal Credit would be introduced for entitlement to the Council's Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, removing the requirement for a separate application to be made.

10. Capital Programme 2018/19 – 2021/22

Council received report **CL 04/18** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources. The Cabinet Member introduced the report which set out the Capital Programme for the financial years 2018/19 to 2021/22, including revisions to the 2017/18 Programme. The report also included the main principles applied to set the Programme and provided details of the expenditure and financing for the same periods. The Cabinet Member said the Capital Programme had been compiled taking into account the main principles, namely, to maintain an affordable four-year rolling Capital programme; to ensure capital resources were aligned with the Council's Business Plan; to maximise available resources by actively seeking external funding and disposal of surplus assets; to not anticipate receipts from disposal until they were realised.

There being no questions, the Chairman invited Members to debate the report and its proposals.

The Leader of the Council commended the Capital Programme which outlined an anticipated total capital investment for the period of £43.58m, the largest for the Council in recent years. The Leader of the Council referred Councillors to the wide range of projects detailed at Appendix A to the report and said that these would make a significant difference to all aspects of the district's communities. The Leader of the Council reminded Members that, whilst there were a number of opportunities for the Council to receive future capital receipts, the Authority had adopted a prudent approach which did not rely on any anticipated capital receipts until such time as the income had been received and realised.

It was proposed by Councillor Lawson, seconded by Councillor Herring and unanimously

RESOLVED

That, the Capital Programme for 2018/19 to 2021/22, including revisions to the 2017/18 Programme, be approved.

11. Cabinet Members' Reports and Outside Bodies Representatives' Reports

Council received report **CL 05/18**.

The Chairman stated that the reports would be taken as read, unless Cabinet Members or Outside Bodies representatives wished to provide further updates. The Chairman also invited Council to question Cabinet Members and Outside Bodies representatives on their reports.

Councillor Fryatt – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Planning, the Leader of the Council presented the report. With reference to the item on the Brownfield Land Register, Councillor Kelso asked if there had been a consultation undertaken on the document. The Leader of the Council said that a written response would be provided to Councillor Kelso after the meeting.

Councillor Gallant – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health

Councillor Deacon referred to the item on Health and Wellbeing and asked for some additional information on the work with partners on a funding bid for a rural social prescribing project. Councillor Gallant said the rural social prescribing project aimed to improve mental well-being and the funding bid, if successful, would help to roll-out the initiative to both rural and urban areas thereby building on previous work in Leiston and Lowestoft

Councillor Poulter – Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Green Environment

There were no questions on the report.

Councillor John Fisher – East Suffolk Travellers' Association

There were no questions on the report.

The Meeting concluded at 7.45pm