

Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held at Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft on **Wednesday 2 November 2016 at 5.30pm**

Members present

Councillors C Law (Chairman), S Allen, S Ardley, M Barnard, G Catchpole, M Ladd, F Mortimer, D Ritchie and M Rudd

Also in attendance

Councillors S Barker, J Craig, J Murray, N Webb and S Woods

Officers present

C Ames (Head of Business Development for Sentinel Leisure), S Baker (Chief Executive), K Blair (Head of Operations), A Carey (Head of ICT), A Charvonia (Strategic Director), L Rogers (Finance Manager, Financial Planning), P Wood (Head of Economic Development & Regeneration) and N Wotton (Democratic Services Manager)

**1 APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**3 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 20 September 2016 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.

**(b) The Audit & Governance Committee**

There were no matters to report.

**5 CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

With the agreement of the Cabinet Members, the Leader of the Council changed the order of business to allow Item 7 – Review of Members Use of IT – to be considered first on the agenda.

Members were also advised that Item 11 – Asset Transactions – had been withdrawn from the agenda and would be considered at the next Cabinet meeting on 7 December 2016.

## 6 REVIEW OF MEMBERS USE OF IT

The Leader of the Council presented a report which sought to review Members use of their IT equipment and to evaluate the number of paper copies of agendas and meeting papers that would be produced for Councillors in future. Members were advised that following recommendations received by the Independent Remuneration Panel on 11 March 2015, Full Council had decided to limit any increase in Basic Allowances to a one off payment in 2015 of £1,000, to cover the expense of Councillors purchasing IT equipment, which would assist them to undertake their duties as a Councillor. Since June 2015, Members have been able to purchase their preferred choice of laptop or tablet to assist them in their role as a Councillor. Members have had sufficient time to become proficient in the use of their new equipment and advice and support has been available from the Council's ICT Team.

During January 2016, Members had completed a survey to evaluate how their IT Allowance had been utilised. The results showed that 50% of Councillors were happy to use their IT packages to access the agendas and reports for Waveney District Council meetings. Many of the remaining 50% who would prefer to receive paper copies of the agenda papers stated that they felt unsure about going paperless but were willing to try and use their IT in this way.

It was therefore suggested that the use of paper copies of the agenda papers for Members be phased out, commencing with Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Audit & Governance Committee meetings. Members would instead receive their meeting papers by email, which they could then either access via the internet during meetings or they could download the meeting papers in advance and save the files onto their IT equipment.

It was proposed that copies of the agenda papers would initially continue to be printed for Members for meetings of the Regulatory Committees (Licensing Committee and Planning Committee) and Full Council.

Further work would be undertaken by the Democratic Services Team, in liaison with the ICT Team, to ensure that the transition of moving to paperless meetings was as seamless as possible. Further training and support would be provided, as requested. Reassurance was given that any Councillors who required a paper copy of the meeting papers for accessibility reasons, would be able to continue to receive them.

A Member queried whether it would be easier to stop printing agenda papers for all meetings with immediate effect, as this would force Councillors to use their IT. It was reported that it would be unhelpful and unfair to make such a change. A phased approach would be preferable as it would allow those Members who were struggling with IT to get additional help and support. The Head of ICT confirmed that additional support would be provided immediately prior to the meetings which would be 'paperless' so that Members would be able to participate fully in meetings. Additional help with accessing and managing meeting papers would also be available and the ICT Team would liaise with Democratic Services to ensure that all Member IT queries were answered.

A Member commented that they had been initially reluctant to purchase an ipad for their Council work and now they had got used to it, they could not manage without it. It was confirmed that reducing the number of paper copies of meeting papers would be beneficial for the environment and would also save money in terms of printing and postage costs, which would assist with the budget gap in future years. It was noted that the savings would be measured and Council would be kept apprised of these in due course.

In response to a comment from a Member, the Chief Executive advised that officers regularly used IT, however it was not always practical for all officers to use IT during meetings, such as when taking notes, therefore some officers would still continue to receive paper copies.

## RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL

1. That the Council takes a phased approach to reducing the amount of paper copies, starting with the Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Audit & Governance Committees.
2. That meetings papers will initially continue to be printed for the Regulatory Committees (Licensing Committee & Planning Committee) and Full Council.
3. That spare copies of the meeting papers will continue to be provided for members of the public.
4. That the reduction in printing copies of meeting papers be monitored and additional support be provided to those Members that require it.
5. That Members use of IT at Council meetings be kept under review.

N.B. The Head of ICT left the meeting at this point in the proceedings.

## 7 FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2017/18

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms presented the report, which sought approval of the Discretionary Fees and Charges for implementation from 2 January 2017 and asked Cabinet to note the level of Fees and Charge set by Statute also for implementation from 2 January 2017.

Members noted that the income from fees and charges was an integral part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which generated essential funding for the Council to help minimise Council Tax increases and/or service reductions. It was also vital to ensure that the charges reflected any changes in costs or demands, that had either already occurred, or were expected to occur over the next year. In addition, the financial constraints currently faced by the Council made it essential to ensure its income from fees and charges was consistent with the East Suffolk Business Plan and relevant central Government legislation.

Members were advised that when setting fees and charges, the Council must apply the principles of sound financial management and need to consider a range of 'Best Value' principles, including cost and quality standards, value for money as well as affordability and accessibility of their services.

A Member queried why the Private Hire Operators Licences had increased so significantly (between 54 – 68%) when compared to other fees. It was reported that the period of the licences had increased from 3 to 5 years, and this was reflected in the increased fee. Clarification was also provided that on Page 27, the percentage in brackets reflected that the charge had been reduced, when compared to the previous year.

The Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships & Lowestoft Rising took the opportunity to report that the fortnightly Garden Waste Collections were a Waveney District Council charge, not a Waveney Norse charge.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that community events could be held at Parks operated by the Council and the first three events could be undertaken for free. Subsequent events would warrant a fee to the Council, to help to recoup the costs incurred for clearing up after the events and maintaining the Parks.

### RESOLVED

1. That the Discretionary Fees and Charges, as set out in Appendix A, be approved for implementation from 2 January 2017, or alternative date if specified.
2. That the level of fees and charges set by statute and the timing of any increase in these, as set out in Appendix B, be noted.

## 8 LOCATION FILMING IN SUFFOLK: DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO FILM FIXER LTD (TRADING AS SCREEN SUFFOLK) FOR ISSUING PERMISSIONS IN EAST SUFFOLK

The Cabinet Member for Tourism, Economic Development & Rural Affairs presented a report, which sought approval for the Council to engage Film Fixer (trading as Screen Suffolk) as the Council's agent for location filming agreements in the District.

It was noted that at present, each district in Suffolk had its own process for granting permissions to film on council land. This was confusing for Location Managers who were not familiar with council boundaries and were faced with a plethora of different permissions processes and fee structures across the county.

At the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders meeting in March 2016, it was agreed in principle that Suffolk authorities would adopt a common process for granting permissions for filming in the county on council-owned land and premises and that Film Fixer Ltd would administer this process through its existing online service. Before work could begin on this part of the contract, each district was required to delegate authority to the company to act as its agent for the issue of filming permissions. Similar action was required by Suffolk County Council in respect of the delegation of highways closure permissions.

Clarification was provided that delegation of authority to Film Fixer would only apply to the district, borough and county councils in Suffolk. Where a company wished to film on land or premises owned by Town and Parish Councils, they would continue to negotiate those arrangements separately with the relevant Town and Parish Councils, as they have done previously.

Members were advised of a minor typographical error on page 69 of the report in paragraph 4.1, which should read Section 93, not Section 63. Members also noted that it was proposed that the recommendation within the report be amended slightly and this was duly seconded:

*'That delegated authority is granted to the Head of Service for Economic Development and Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, to negotiate and complete an agreement with Film Fixer (trading as Screen Suffolk) to facilitate the promotion and use of Council owned land and premises in Waveney for filming purposes, upon such terms and conditions which best protect the Council's interests.'*

The Head of Economic Development & Regeneration reported that had been an increase in the number of filming enquiries being received within Suffolk, as more Location Managers were becoming aware of the high quality of the natural and built environment throughout Suffolk. It was noted that many tourists liked to visit the areas where filming had taken place, which was particularly noticeable in places such as Yorkshire, which had seen visitors flocking to where Last of the Summer Wine was filmed. It was hoped that

additional filming in Suffolk would lead to a boost for the tourist trade and associated businesses.

Members were very supportive of the proposals, which would help to simplify a very complicated process.

### RESOLVED

That delegated authority is granted to the Head of Service for Economic Development and Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, to negotiate and complete an agreement with Film Fixer (trading as Screen Suffolk) to facilitate the promotion and use of Council owned land and premises in Waveney for filming purposes, upon such terms and conditions which best protect the Council's interests.

## 9 EAST SUFFOLK PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE – QUARTER 2 2016/17

Members considered a report which provided an update on Corporate Performance for the period 1 July to 30 September 2016. 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 and was a new approach for reporting performance.

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).

Members were advised that there were currently 4 Key Performance Indicators which were red and a brief update was provided in this respect:

- **'Business Creation (Support)' and 'Job Creation':** There were a high proportion of live business enquiries around land and premises, however the nature of those discussions made it challenging to accurately profile achievements. However, it was expected that whilst Quarter 2 was below our business and job creation targets, this would be addressed in Quarters 3 and 4.
- **Complaints:** The number of complaints received was below target with 111 complaints received in Quarter 2. During this period unsubscribed green bins were removed which caused some minor issues including the alleged removal of bins from behind property lines which had not been left out for removal. Complaints would be fully reviewed in 2017/18 to include the implementation of significant indicators such as percentage upheld, percentage responded to on time and learning implemented.
- **Abandoned call rates:** Although below target, there had been a significant improvement in performance with abandoned call rates recorded at 11.6% in Quarter 2 (only 1.6% over target) compared to Quarter 1 which was 34.71%. It was projected that performance in Quarter 3 would meet or exceed its target as staff resource had been addressed and the team was at full capacity.

Other performance highlights included:

- 96% of homeless decisions made within 33 days (target: 95%).
- 306 fly tipping incidents reported and 69 fly tipping enforcement notices issued.

- 199,756 leisure participants.
- 78% homeless prevention outcomes (target: 75%)
- 31 affordable homes completed.
- 83.33% (5 of 6) major planning applications determined in 13 weeks (target: 60%).
- 95.52% (64 of 67) minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks (target: 65%).
- 97.43% (152 of 156) other planning applications determined in 8 weeks (target: 80%).
- 60 businesses supported (met target of 60).
- 92 net dwellings completed in Q2.
- £39,402.11 income generated through Enterprise Zone sites (Target: £35k)
- 150,401 visits to East Suffolk website (launched 14 June 2016).
- 10.5 days taken to process Housing Benefit new claims (within 12 days).
- Sickness absence below national level (0.69 days/shifts lost per FTE, target: 1.7 days).

A Member commented on the positive trend for the number of dwellings being completed in the District and it was noted that the Woods Meadow development would be making progress shortly. A new Local Plan was under development and this would identify additional sites for development, which was extremely important in future years.

A Member requested further information on the two Red Risks which were identified on the Corporate Risk Register. It was noted that these related to the Medium Term Overview, which continued to reflect uncertainty around national Government initiatives and the potential impact on funding changes. The second Red Risk was in relation to the Utilisation of Council Assets and it was confirmed that the Asset Management Group continued to meet on a regular basis to get the best possible value for its assets for the Council.

Members also noted that four Business Plan actions were significantly behind target. These included the development of suitable short stay stopping sites in Suffolk for Gypsies and Travellers, to deliver the Housing and Health Charter in East Suffolk and Improving the infrastructure, access and to extend the Enterprise Zone. It was noted that the first two actions involved working with other districts and these would gather momentum later in the year. The action regarding the Enterprise Zone required approval from the DCLG and this was also anticipated later in the year. In respect of the Enterprise Zone, Members were pleased to note that it was the most successful in the UK, with a high demand for additional units. The final action which was behind target, related to Suffolk Coastal District Council and delivering better broadband, and it was reported that work was still continuing in this respect to improve the current level of service.

### **RESOLVED**

That the East Suffolk Performance Report for Quarter 2 2016/17 be received.

## **10 STRATEGIC PLAY EVALUATION AND ACTION PLAN**

The Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities presented the report, which provided an update on the findings of the 2015 Play Evaluation Report, which was conducted by Sentinel Leisure Trust and Waveney Norse. The report also sought approval to execute the recommendations from the report to improve the service for Play Development and Play Maintenance to sustain quality provision for the future.

The Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities took the opportunity to thank Sentinel's Head of Business Development and his team for their hard work in relation to this report. It was noted that this report had been withdrawn from the 20 September 2016 Cabinet meeting, to allow additional work to be undertaken.

The Head of Operations reported that the evaluation had provided the opportunity to take a strategic review of the play provision and service throughout the district, to

ensure that it was run efficiently and sustainably for the future. It was confirmed that the evaluation had been undertaken by Sentinel Leisure at no additional cost for the Council.

A Member queried paragraph 4.6 within the report, which stated that ‘Waveney owned play spaces will remain under the ownership of Waveney District Council until transferred to an appropriate organisation through the devolution process supported by Waveney Norse and Sentinel Leisure Trust.’ Clarification was provided that the objective was to transfer the ownership and future responsibility for Play Spaces to the appropriate Town and Parish Councils in the future, as they were best placed to undertake this particular role. The wording ‘appropriate organisation’ had been used because there were some anomalies with regards to current Play Space ownership eg some Carlton Colville Play Space was owned by the Carlton Colville Community Council, not the Town Council, therefore the wording used was deliberately flexible to accommodate this. It was confirmed that transferring ownership of play spaces to Town and Parish Councils was the preferred choice, however if they were unwilling or unable to take on this responsibility, other alternatives could be explored, as appropriate.

A Member queried whether there were any play spaces specifically for adults to use in the district. The Head of Business Development for Sentinel Leisure Trust reported that the age bandings for play spaces had been created by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), however those play spaces suitable for the age 13 years and above were suitable for adults to use, should they wish to do so. It was confirmed that there were currently no adult only play spaces in the district, however Manchester had recently created an OAP Park, which was proving to be popular.

A Member commented that it would be helpful to have the current ownership of the play space underneath its location in future documents and it was reported that this could be provided.

With regard to Section 106 money (S106) it was reported that the fund was currently held by Waveney District Council as the Planning Authority and was being used in agreement with the approved action plan. It was noted that Town and Parish Councils could submit proposals on how the S106 money should be spent and they would also receive a proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, to spend in their particular areas.

In response to a query from a Member, it was confirmed that should a Town Council be created for Lowestoft, those Town Councillors would decide on how to spend the appropriate funding on the play spaces in their area.

The Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities reported that this would be a live document and would be brought back to Cabinet for further information in the future. The play spaces in the district would be closely monitored by Sentinel Leisure Trust and Waveney Norse and Members would be kept updated on developments, as appropriate.

A Member commented that Beccles Town Council had match funded the S106 money which had been received for the area and had been used to create a skate park, which was very well used by the local young people. Members commended the Evaluation and report and it was

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That the Play Evaluation Report, its recommendations and its play space action plan is adopted by the Council as the strategic document for Play Development and Play Maintenance services.
2. That the Council accept the recommendations with the Play Evaluation Report and enable Sentinel Leisure Trust in partnership with the Council and Waveney Norse to deliver against the Reports action plan. The Play evaluation will be updated bi-annually as a minimum to inform the action plan as a ‘live’ document going forward.

3. That delegated power is given to the Strategic Director, for the allocation and specification of s106 monies on WDC owned sites & equipment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities, in accordance with the Play Evaluation Report.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm.

Chairman