Minutes of a Meeting held at Riverside, Lowestoft on Wednesday, 6 July 2016 at 6.00 pm

Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Councillors A Cackett (Chairman), G Elliott, J Ford, T Gandy, L Gooch, J Murray, B Provan, C Rivett, L Smith and N Webb

Cabinet Members in attendance

Councillor M Barnard – Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms
Councillor F Mortimer - Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities
Councillor M Rudd – Cabinet Member for Community Health & Safety

Also present

Ray Wang, Chairman of the Waveney Youth Council
Nathan Bowkett, Waveney Youth Council

Officers present

R Best (Active Communities Manager), P Gore (Head of Environmental Services & Port Health), S Halsey (Active Communities Officer), A Jarvis (Strategic Director), M Sims (Food & Safety Manager) and A Stapleton (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Barker, N Brooks, P Light, S Logan and C Topping.

Councillor J Ford attended as a substitute for Councillor S Barker, and Councillor J Murray attended as a substitute for Councillor S Logan.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Elliott declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 6 on the agenda – East Suffolk Food and Health and Safety Service Plan 2016/17 – as he ran a registered food business.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 June 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, RESPONSES OF THE CABINET TO ANY REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OR REPORTS OF ANY DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET

The Chairman reminded the Committee that all non-Cabinet Members had been provided with details of the Waveney Built Facilities Review Task and Finish Group, and asked to nominate themselves to that group. Seven Members had nominated themselves for one of the three places on the group, and out of these the Chairman and Vice Chairman had selected Councillors Murray, Springall and Topping, who had the most relevant experience and knowledge of outdoor sports provision.
The Chairman also discussed the half-hour question setting pre-meetings which had been held immediately prior to the Committee during 2015/16. As individual question setting meetings had been scheduled for significant reviews, it was agreed that the half-hour briefings were no longer necessary. Members were also reminded that a question setting meeting had been set for 6pm on Thursday 21 July 2016 for the Review of Lessons Learnt from the Withdrawal from the Sanyo Contract, and that a question setting meeting had been set for 6pm on Monday 24th October for the annual reviews of Sentinel Leisure Trust and Waveney Norse.

5 WAVENEY YOUTH COUNCIL ANNUAL UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities introduced the annual report from the Chairman of the Waveney Youth Council (WYC), Ray Wang, on the work and progress of the WYC. The Council continued to offer support to the WYC in the form of officer time, with a member of the Active Communities Team attending meetings and supporting with the organisation of events and circulation of information through email. The Council also contributed funding for refreshment costs at meetings, for the printing of agendas and minutes, and for supporting events organised by the WYC. The schools equally contributed by providing free venues for meetings and covering transport costs to attend meetings.

Ray presented his annual report to Members, assisted by Nathan Bowkett, another member of the WYC, saying that he was pleased that members of the WYC now sat on the East Suffolk Partnership (ESP) Board. In the seven years that the WYC had been running, it had moved from a small forum for youth engagement to a major driver of youth provision in Waveney. Ray explained the key objectives of the WYC for this academic year, which had been identified by young people. Building on the previous year, the WYC had made real strides forward against all priority areas, and had been successful in achieving a number of awards, which recognised the hard work of all members of the WYC, as well as schools and partners, in supporting the youth agenda locally. An example of this was the Raising the Bar Award for Innovation of the Year for the Transition Ambassadors project.

Ray explained that the first key objective for 2016/17 was to increase and enhance the provision of holiday activities for young people in Waveney. A Youth Holiday Activities Commissioning Panel had been set up for East Suffolk through the East Suffolk Youth Priority Action Group, supported by the District Councils and the ESP. The project had been successful in obtaining £50,000 of ESP funding for the Panel, which consisted of 6 young people from across East Suffolk and would meet bi-annually to score and assess funding applications for up to £800 to deliver holiday activities. The Panel would be meeting in mid-July 2016 to assess applications for activities to be delivered over the Summer, October half term and Christmas. Ray advised that the next round of funding would commence in October 2016, and asked Members to get in touch if they knew of any suitable youth activity providers who may wish to bid for funding to deliver activities.

The Central Government funded Waveney Transition Ambassadors Project Phase One had seen 75 young people in 5 secondary schools and special schools trained as Transition Ambassadors, undertaking 6 hours of training with the aim of supporting new students as they progressed from primary to secondary education. For Phase Two, 135 young people would be trained in 8 schools and colleges, with the support extending from secondary to further education. This was particularly helpful for pupils transitioning from special needs schools to mainstream further education. The 30 Further Education (FE) students taking part would also receive accreditation in the form of a Level 1/2 Peer Mentoring Qualification. Whilst funding was available for all 135 students to be accredited, unfortunately none of the secondary schools had taken up the free offer for their students, and the Project Team would encourage this take-up again next year, whilst recognising the significant other support the secondary schools gave to the Youth Council and the pressure to release students for many competing activities.

Another focus of the WYC was addressing the mental health wellbeing of young people, and four projects were outlined in the report. Due to the work of the WYC, the views of young people were being sought more regularly by partner organisations, for example in a survey.
of young peoples’ views on school nurses as part of the school nursing contract re-tendering, and 200 young people had also been asked for their views on Lowestoft Seafront by the Coastal Communities Team. The two WYC places on the ESP Board also ensured that young people had significant input into service delivery across East Suffolk.

Ray ended his presentation by thanking the Council for their support, and he looked forward to sharing even more good news next year.

The following questions and issues were raised during the discussion of this report:

- A Member asked whether representatives of the WYC had visited Parliament. Ray advised that the WYC worked closely with Peter Aldous, Waveney’s MP, and that some schools had been invited to visit Parliament. Additionally, Nathan had attended a parliamentary debate in his role as a member of the Youth Parliament, and another current WYC member would attend the next debate in November 2016. Ray added that he was sure Peter Aldous would invite the WYC to visit Parliament, if they were able to secure the funding for travel costs.

- The WYC engaged with all the High Schools in Waveney except one, and each school voted members onto a school council. Each school council then voted representatives onto the WYC, and the WYC then voted for its Chairman. The WYC aimed to engage with all young people, including those who were traditionally harder to reach such as non-mainstream young people and those from special schools, and worked with partners to achieve this.

NB: Councillor Barnard arrived at this point in the proceedings, at 6.25pm.

- Concerning the lack of uptake of funding by secondary schools for pupils to take up the peer mentoring qualification, Councillor Gooch would discuss this with the Parents, Teachers and Friends Association of Pakefield High School, and Councillor Murray would discuss with Benjamin Britten High School, which she knew was delighted with the Transition Ambassadors Project. Ray added that the Project had been well publicised at Benjamin Britten High School, and included in the school prospectus.

- A Member asked whether there were any specific criteria for organisations to apply for funding to deliver youth holiday activities, and was advised that it was hoped to offer a mixture of activities, eg educational or sport related. The young people on the Commissioning Panel had not been easy to recruit, particularly for the Suffolk Coastal side, as it did not have a Youth Council. On the Waveney side, the young people had been chosen based on their experience, in order to put together a Panel with a broad range of experience. There was a good geographical spread of Panel members, with two from the Ashley School, one from Beccles and one from Ormiston Denes Academy. Ray added that guidelines for applicants were available on the ESP website. To date 6 applications had been received for Waveney activities, and one for Suffolk Coastal, but this again reflected the stronger networks of the WYC, and it was hoped that links in the Suffolk Coastal area would be improved in the coming months. The organisations which could apply for funding to deliver activities included town and parish councils, charities, schools, statutory organisations and community groups, and the scoring process was a recognised system used by the Waveney Small Grants Programme.

- A Member asked why the funding for the Kirkley Community Bakery Project had been reduced by 55% and was advised that an application had been submitted to Community Action Suffolk’s Kirkley Local Conversations Fund, but that a funding decision had been delayed, and then finally reduced. The original bid had been for £1,000 to purchase equipment for schools’ food technology departments in order to take part in the Bakery Project, but funding had only been offered for containers, which was not sufficient to make the project viable. However, WYC were working with WDC to source other avenues for funding.

- Parish and Town Councils had not been targeted directly with regard to bids for the youth holiday activities, however there had been a press launch and it was hoped that internal communications would be undertaken via the District Council and the ESP. The
Chairman advised that it might be more productive to contact town and parish councils direct, particularly those in the south of the District. Nathan thanked the Chairman for this advice, saying that this had been a pilot round focusing primarily on youth organisations, but that the publicity structure would be reviewed and the Chairman’s advice taken on board. It was also hoped that once the first funded projects commenced, word would spread, and the next funding round would attract more applications.

- A Member suggested that the WYC may wish to contact Kirkley Poor’s Land Estate for funding, and was advised that this organisation had funded projects at the Sixth Form College.

- Concerning the school nursing contract re-tendering, a Member asked the age of pupils surveyed, and was advised that they had been aged 7 and above. Ray advised that there was currently only one school nurse in Waveney, due to several others being on long term sick leave, but that the WYC was working with the Suffolk Health Improvement Commissioner for Children and Young People to ensure that locum provision was put in place should similar circumstances arise in future. The school nurse service would also be better publicised, as following a recent survey very few pupils either knew who the school nurse was, or how to contact them.

The Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities expressed his thanks to Ray for his excellent chairmanship of the WYC, and also to Stuart Halsey and Richard Best, who worked hard behind the scenes to support the work of the WYC. This was echoed by the Chairman, who asked Ray and Nathan to take back the Committee’s congratulations to the WYC on its work and achievements. Stuart Halsey also thanked the Cabinet Member for his continued support, and wished Ray and Nathan all the best for the future, saying they were an inspiration.

**RESOLVED**

That the annual report from the Chairman of the Waveney Youth Council be received.

NB: The Committee adjourned at this point in the proceedings, at 6.45pm, to enable those present who wished to leave the meeting to do so, and re-convened at 6.47pm.

NB: The Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities left the meeting at this point in the proceedings, at 6.47pm.

6 EAST SUFFOLK FOOD AND HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2016/17

The Cabinet Member for Community Health & Safety introduced the report, which appended the East Suffolk Food and Health and Safety Service Plan which was required to be submitted for Member approval, and would be considered by Full Council on 21 September 2016.

The Council’s performance in meeting targets identified within the 2015/16 Service Plan was contained within this year’s Service Plan, attached as Appendix A to the report. Members’ attention was drawn to the key achievements delivered in 2015/16, as well as areas for service improvement. The performance figures for 2015/16 were the best the team had delivered, with improvements in the percentage of premises inspected against the programme, an increase in the number of the highest rated premises in the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, and an increase in the percentage of food businesses broadly compliant with food hygiene requirements.

In the four years that the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme had been operating in Waveney, the Council had seen a 65% increase in the number of premises achieving the highest rating of 5. This represented an additional 298 premises that had improved standards to achieve the highest rating. In premises with a rating of 4 (good) there had been an increase of 21%, the equivalent of an additional 35 premises. Social media was being used to celebrate those premises achieving the highest rating, in order to encourage
lower rated businesses to aim to achieve the same. The percentage of premises broadly compliant with food safety legislation had also increased to 94%.

The national picture had seen an increase in the number of food premises of 7%, but a fall in the number of full time equivalent food safety enforcement officers, which had seen a 25% reduction in food interventions being undertaken. Workshops were being held looking at the national enforcement strategy and whether it was still fit for purpose.

The report also set out details of the Eat Out Eat Well food award scheme, which aimed to reward food businesses that offered foods low in fat, salt and sugar and had healthy foods on their menus and healthy preparation methods. Since the launch of the scheme, food sold at two of the Council’s own premises had been assessed against the award criteria, and the Waterlane Leisure Centre had achieved a gold standard and Café East at Riverside a bronze award.

Issues raised during the discussion of the report were as follows:

- The table on Page 39 summarised food interventions, enforcement actions and compliance data for 2014/15 and 2015/16. The table showed an increase in written warnings over the two years from 418 to 463. A written warning meant any report left with a food business requiring work to be carried out to comply with food safety legislation. These highlighted improvements which needed to be made, and might be significant issues, or more minor items. Should significant failings be found, the next steps available were improvement notices or prosecutions, however informal action was preferred as a first step, and generally businesses were compliant in acting on advice and recommendations, with no need to prosecute being seen in the two years shown.

- The table on Page 26 showed the profile of food establishments according to risk. Those in Category A might be so categorised for a number of reasons, for example they may be serving food to vulnerable groups, or it might be related to the type of food processing which occurred. There was also an element of confidence in management of a business, however in Waveney there was a good track record of compliance. Finally, cleanliness and structure of premises were taken into account, as well as working practices, for example temperature control and systems monitoring.

- The 3% of food interventions to be carried forward into 2016/17 were included on monthly reports and would be picked up as soon as possible alongside the plan for 2016/17. The reason for carry forward might be that the businesses concerned were seasonal in their opening. There had also been some challenges in the team during 2015/16, for example the move to the new offices at Riverside which required a lot of scanning of documentation, and re-organisation of the support team which was now embedded to work more closely with the rest of the team.

- A Member who ran a food business stated that the first visit by the team could be a daunting prospect, however feedback from other small businesses in his ward was that the feeling at the end of the visit was that it had been very positive and constructive, and that the inspectors were there to help.

- Felixstowe was the largest container port in the UK, and was a self contained unit of 54 staff with no crossover into the rest of the Food and Health and Safety Team. It was self financing due to it being able to charge for its work, with the surplus being reinvested, for example to develop software, which was now being licensed for use by other port authorities.

- The majority of the remainder of the Team worked either at one Council or the other, although one officer split his time equally over both, and the partnership meant there was increased flexibility and resilience in the Team when needed. There had also recently been a restructure of the Team, resulting in a £34k cost saving.

- Concerning the national food hygiene rating scheme, a Member advised that the FSA was looking to make display of a business’s rating mandatory, and asked whether Waveney could introduce its own mandatory scheme. Officers advised that this was not
possible, but that the FSA was providing grant funding to encourage premises rated 3, 4 or 5 to display their ratings, and would provide evidence to Central Government with the aim of making display of ratings mandatory. Publicity of the scheme was also increasing, and more people were aware that they could find out these ratings on the FSA website.

- Concerning the Eat Out Eat Well healthier food award, a Member asked whether this could be widened to include a requirement to source food locally. The award was at an early stage, however the suggestion would be fed back to the organising group. Another Member asked why there was no local advertising about the award, and was advised that this was a new scheme which had not yet expanded nationally but that the concern about wider advertising would also be taken back to the organising group.

- Table 11 on Page 42 showed that there had been 22 food hygiene rating scheme revisit requests but no appeals in 2015/16. Premises could apply for a re-visit if they could demonstrate sufficient improvement since the last, and could also appeal against the rating given.

- Table 13 on Page 43 showed an increase in Cryptosporidiosis between the two years. Gastrointestinal disease cases were monitored nationally to identify any common themes and to follow these up if necessary.

- A Member suggested that a unique selling point for Waveney to boost tourism could be the introduction of a vegetarian-friendly campaign, with food premises evidencing no cross-contamination with animal by-products. This was not, however, something which fell within the Team's remit, and there was also no legislation in this regard. The Team probably did not have the expertise to roll out such a scheme, however other bodies may be better equipped to do so. Additionally, it was important to ensure that additional projects did not impact on the resources available to deliver the Team's statutory role. However, the Eat Out Eat Well award was to be reviewed, and there may be scope to develop that area, and this would be raised with the organising group.

- The requirement for skin piercing premises to register with the Council enabled applications to carry out these activities to be assessed and monitored. Both the premises and the person carrying out the piercing needed to be registered, and this was regulated by both national guidelines and local byelaws.

- The support a Better Business for All (BBfA) programme was a government supported partnership approach to creating the conditions to support growth. Discussions were taking place at County level with business stakeholders and wider with regard to where to take the initiative. Sometimes regulatory services could be seen as barriers to business, but the Team wanted to work with businesses to encourage and help them, and to shift this view of regulatory services.

- The number of health and safety related complaints about work activities and workplaces estimated for 2016/17 on Page 47 of the report were based on historic figures.

- A staff satisfaction survey mentioned on Page 66 of the report had identified an issue within the organisation with performance management. This concerned the Felixstowe operation, where a staff engagement survey had identified that, whilst the technical expertise of the team was second to none, there were lessons to be learnt in the area of people management. However, progress was being made in this area.

- Retail food premises included supermarkets, and these varied in their risk rating. If the supermarket included a café facility, if run by the supermarket it would be rated alongside the main premises, but if outsourced it would be rated separately. The Primary Authority partnership was a system whereby the policies and procedures that applied to the whole of that chain could be assessed by the local authority in the area where the headquarters was located. This meant that any consideration of local enforcement would need to be addressed through that Primary Authority.
• Use of cleaning materials and chemicals should be risk assessed and safer alternatives suggested or required if necessary.

• There had been a decline in new food business registrations received between 2014/15 and 2015/16. This was not simple to explain, as the registration process had actually been simplified and legislation had not changed, but could in part be due to an earlier peak in the start-up of small scale home businesses, which had now passed.

The Cabinet Member for Community Health & Safety thanked the Food Safety Team for its excellent work in keeping the food outlets of East Suffolk safe. The Chairman asked that her thanks on behalf of the Committee also be taken back to the Team.

RESOLVED

1. That the Food Safety and Health and Safety performance against the Service Plan for 2015/16 be noted.

2. That the Food Safety and Health and Safety Service Plan for 2016/17 be noted.

NB: The Cabinet Member for Community Health & Safety left the meeting at this point in the proceedings, at 7.30pm.

7 CURRENT POSITION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

This report reminded Members that at the Committee’s meeting on 10 September 2015 Members had expressed concern at the length of recent Committee agendas, and since then the current position of the Committee’s work programme had been provided at each meeting, in order for it to be continually reviewed by the Committee.

At the June 2016 meeting, the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2016/17 and beyond had been approved, and the Suggestions for Scrutiny discussed at the Work Programme Setting Workshop held on 25 May 2016 taken forward as detailed in Section 3.4 of Report REP1388. These would be considered alongside annual items, reports from partner organisations, finance scrutiny and urgent issues which arose due to changing priorities. Agendas would be set only 2-3 months in advance, rather than annually, in order to make the Committee more responsive.

The current position of the work programme was set out at Appendix A of the report for Members’ review. The report also asked Members to appoint a substitute Member to the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee for 2016/17, and to consider a request from the Audit & Governance Committee to carry out the Overview & Scrutiny Committee’s planned scrutiny of Waveney Norse and Sentinel Leisure Trust jointly with that Committee.

The Committee had no problem with the Audit & Governance Committee joining it for those two pieces of scrutiny, and also asked that Members of that Committee be invited to join the question setting meeting which had been arranged in October 2016.

The Chairman suggested that the one item planned for the 4 August 2016 meeting of the Committee, Year End Community Safety Update, be moved to the 8 September 2016 meeting, and that the August meeting be cancelled, unless an urgent piece of work arose. The Chairman also advised that she and the Vice Chairman had agreed that an additional piece of work would be added to the September meeting of the Committee, following the completion of a Suggestion for Scrutiny form by the Cabinet Member for Customers & Communities, on the New Play Partnership Strategy. Whilst this would mean there would be three substantive items on that agenda, it was not anticipated that the Waveney Built Facilities Review would attract significant questioning, as the detailed work would have been carried out by the Task and Finish Group appointed to work with officers on the review.

Finally, concerning appointment of a substitute Member to the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee, the Democratic Services Officer was asked to
circulate details of the number and times of meetings to Committee Members, who should then advise whether they were interested in being considered for the role, following which the Chairman and Vice Chairman would make the appointment from those who put themselves forward.

RESOLVED

1. That the current position of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee’s work programme, as set out in Appendix A to Report REP1444 and as amended at the meeting, be noted.

2. That information be circulated to Members of the Committee on the timings and number of meetings of the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee, that Members be requested to put themselves forward for consideration as substitute Member of that Sub-Committee, and that the Chairman and Vice Chairman be given delegated authority to appoint a substitute Member to the Sub-Committee for the 2016/17 municipal year.

3. That the Audit & Governance Committee be invited to join the Overview & Scrutiny Committee when it carries out its planned scrutiny of Waveney Norse and Sentinel Leisure Trust during 2016/17, including the planned question setting meeting.

**8 WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL CIVIC MEMORABILIA**

The Strategic Director advised Members that this report concerned the various items of WDC civic memorabilia currently in store following the Council’s move out of the old Town Hall, and proposed a way forward. The report also referred to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee a Notice of Motion proposed at Full Council on 23 March 2016 by Councillor S Barker, stating:

“This Council believes that it is the role of the Full Council to make any decision on the disposal of any of the historic items and gifts in the care of Waveney District Council. Further, that no disposal either by gift, sale or long-term or permanent loan shall take place without the express permission of the Full Council.”

Appended to the report was a discussion paper which proposed the setting up of a cross-party Board with delegated authority to decide the future of the various civic items in the care of the Council, and a cross-party Membership was suggested. The Board would be supported by a member of the Senior Management Team, and officers from the Democratic Services and Legal Teams would provide advice as required. Decisions would be recorded.

It was proposed that the Board would have delegated authority to agree the future of the various items of memorabilia, however it was also suggested that in the interests of complete openness the outcome of the Board’s work would be reported back to Full Council.

Consideration of the various civic items in the care of the Council also had connections to the ongoing Community Governance Review in relation to the unparished areas of Lowestoft. It was suggested that the cross-party Board proposed would be well placed to recognise any relevance the individual items of WDC civic memorabilia might have for any Town or Parish Council that were to emerge from the Community Governance Review.

In the past, many of the civic items were not readily on show to the public, and the Council’s new and refurbished buildings also did not readily lend themselves to displaying such items. A decision was now required as to what was the best and most appropriate way forward for them, and also to minimise the costs of ongoing storage and to avoid any deterioration of objects in storage.

A Member asked whether other Members would have an input into the decisions on the items, and it was clarified that it was proposed that decision-making power would be delegated to the cross-party Board. Full Council would then be presented with a list of decisions on each item, as a formal record of those decisions.
The Committee was minded to agree the recommendation on the report, however Members felt that the Membership of the Board should not be politically balanced as proposed (ie with 4 x Conservative Members, 2 x Labour Members and 1 x Green Member), but that membership should be reduced by one Conservative Member.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

1. That a cross-party Board be set up with delegated authority to decide the future of the various civic items in the care of Waveney District Council.

2. That Membership of the Board comprise the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms, one further Conservative Group Member, the Leader of the Labour Group, one further Labour Group Member, and the Member from the Green Party.

The meeting was concluded at 7.57pm

Chairman