

Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held at Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft on **Wednesday, 7 December 2016 at 5.30pm**

Members present

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

Also in attendance

Councillors P Ashdown, L Gooch, J Murray and S Woods

Officers present

K Blair (Head of Operations), A Charvonia (Strategic Director), C Henwood (Director for Sentinel Leisure), A Jarvis (Strategic Director), H Javadi (Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer), M Fitzsimmons (Property Services), T Rudd (Property Services), K Staples (Funding Manager), P Wood (Head of Economic Development & Regeneration) and N Wotton (Democratic Services Manager)

The Leader of the Council took the opportunity to advise that this would be Arthur Charvonia's last Cabinet meeting at Waveney District Council. All those present thanked him for his hard work and wished him well for the future.

1 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S Ardley.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Ladd declared a Local Pecuniary Interest in Item 11 – Rent Review of Southwold Beach Hut Sites (an Exempt item) as he owned a beach hut in Southwold. Councillor Ladd advised that he would leave the meeting for that item and would take no part in any discussions or deliberations thereon.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 2 November 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 LOWESTOFT NESS REGENERATION SCHEME (EAST OF ENGLAND PARK PROJECT)

The Cabinet Member for Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Affairs presented the report, which provided information on the second stage bid, which the Council had submitted, for £980,000 from the Coastal Communities Fund. The bid had been submitted on the 5 December 2016 for the Lowestoft Ness Regeneration Scheme (East of England Park project). It was noted that the scheme was a priority in the East Suffolk Business Plan and aimed to regenerate Lowestoft Ness, in order to create a self sustaining visitor attraction, in a semi-derelict space.

Members were advised that the development of the project had involved consultation with the Harbour Ward community. Therefore, as well as providing a visitor destination, involvement in the development, the delivery of the project would help to build resilience and capacity within the Harbour Ward community, which had the potential to provide positive health, social and cultural well being outcomes.

If the bid was successful, the funding would be used in a variety of ways, including:

- Bringing the landscape of the old beach village back to life, with images of archive photos, digitalised documents and footage exploring themes such as the fishing trade and aspects of the sea.
- Entrance points to be installed and way finders to promote and increase public access.
- Net drying racks and other maritime objects to be restored.
- The North Beach Promenade would be improved and the green space would be used for a range of activities and events to attract visitors to the area.
- The heritage and environment of the area would be used to maximise its potential for tourism.
- The project would maximise the potential of the fact that it links to Ness Point, the most easterly point in the UK.

Members commended the bid and it was noted that that particular area was in great need of investment, in order to maximise its potential. It was noted that a decision on the bid was expected in March 2017. Should the bid be successful, the Strategic Director would need the authority to accept the grant and to agree to the terms and conditions of the contract, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

RESOLVED

That Delegated Authority be given to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, in the event of the bid being successful, to accept the grant and agree to the terms and conditions.

6 GREAT PLACES EXTERNAL FUNDING BID

The Cabinet Member for Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Affairs presented a report, which sought approval to proceed with a grant proposal to the 'Great Places' Scheme. The aim of the Great Places Scheme was to put arts, culture and heritage at the heart of the local vision and it would fund new ways of working, to build capacity and assist with research, consultations and the development of partnerships.

It was noted that the bid would be made in partnership with Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the funding received would be split 50:50 between the two Councils. The Project would last for 3 years and during the life of the project, it would build the capacity of local cultural community assets to enable the project outcomes to be sustainable. Some examples of the proposed activities would include:

- Connecting and strengthening cultural community assets through grassroots support to existing and emerging cultural players to grow capacity.
- Embedding high quality participatory cultural events and installations to transform our town centres and seafronts.

- Raising the profile of cultural education and work with young people to drive the vision for the area's future.
- Building cultural enterprises to create training and employment opportunities.
- Developing a more collaborative approach to culture in place-shaping efforts across both towns and share learning between ourselves and with others.

Members were advised that applications submitted to the Great Places Scheme must include a minimum of 10% match funding, therefore the Council would need to commit approximately £13,750 per year towards the project. Members were reassured that the match funding for this project was available within the Council's budget.

Members were very supportive of the initiative, which they felt was a fantastic opportunity for Lowestoft. In response to a query from a Member, it was confirmed that the bid would try to ensure the best possible outcome for Lowestoft and could be extended in the future to include contemporary art, in order to maximise the culture of the area. It was noted that there was a lot of untapped potential in the area and the Council would be actively trying to engage with the local community to make the most of this opportunity.

In response to a query, clarification was provided that there would be a tendering process for the potential future projects to apply to benefit from the available funding. It was also noted that there was a range of projects already in the pipeline, which were ready to submit tenders, should the bid be successful.

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet supports the submission of a partnership application with Great Yarmouth Borough Council to the Great Places Scheme administered by Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England.
2. That Cabinet agrees to provide 10% match funding towards the overall cost of the project.
3. That Cabinet enter into a partnership agreement with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, support delivery partners and deliver activities subject to the confirmation of Great Places funding.

7 PROPOSED POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

The Cabinet Member for Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Affairs and the Cabinet Member for Resources and Welfare Reforms presented a report that sought approval to extend Waveney District Council's current business rate relief policy to include Local Discretionary Rate Relief (LDRR). The purpose was not to proactively promote this form of business rate relief, however the relevant information would be publicly available via the Council's website. The primary purpose of the LDRR guidance was to assist the Council in determining any such applications for LDRR.

Members noted that the report set out a range of criteria for assessing future applications for LDRR and also a process for determining such applications. The LDRR had the potential to be a powerful tool in achieving the Council's economic growth objectives, as set out within the East Suffolk Business Plan and The East Suffolk Growth Plan, through incentivising potential inward investors to locate within the District. Economic Growth was one of the Council's strategic objectives and formed one of the 3 pillars which underpinned the East Suffolk Business Plan.

Members were advised that it was proposed that an awarding panel would consist of the Cabinet Members for Tourism, Economic Development & Rural Affairs and Resources & Welfare Reforms and the relevant Strategic Director, in consultation with the Head of ED&R and Chief Financial Officer, and they would determine if applications for LDRR were to be awarded.

Members were extremely positive regarding the proposals, which would give the Council an additional tool at its disposal to help encourage economic growth within the District. Members were reassured that there would be robust mechanisms and procedures in place to ensure that any rate relief provided was appropriate and any awards would be closely monitored on an annual basis. It was noted that all businesses had to provide a minimum of two years audited accounts prior to any rate relief being awarded.

RESOLVED

1. That the Council adopts the proposed policy and guidelines to determine applications for LDRR.
2. That the Council approves the establishment of a panel consisting of the relevant Cabinet members and officers to determine applications for LDRR.

8 BUILT FACILITIES – WAVENEY STRATEGY DOCUMENT

The Leader of the Council introduced the report, in the absence of the Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships & Lowestoft Rising. It was noted that the report included the results of the Waveney Built Facilities Assessment, which concerned the indoor sports and recreational facilities within the District.

It was reported that in February 2016, Waveney District Council and Sentinel Leisure Trust commissioned Neil Allen Associates (NAA) to produce a built sports and recreational facilities assessment and strategy for Waveney District Council. The overall objective was to assess the need for indoor sports and recreational facilities and set out the strategic direction for provision up to 2026 and beyond. The strategy work had involved the review of data for the Waveney District, based on the evidence from Sport England. This included their findings on the participation and non-participation in sport and physical activity, as well as a review of headline data on the health and well-being of Waveney residents. It was reported that this formed the ‘people profile’ as a context for the sports facility assessment, which was set out in appendix two of the strategy.

Members noted that this report had also been considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at their meeting in 1 December 2016. The Committee had been supportive of work undertaken, however they had been concerned by the over reliance on educational establishments to provide sporting facilities in the District. It was noted that school facilities were not available for public use during the day and although the facilities may be maintained to a high standard, they were not used by the public in significant amounts. Members commended the work undertaken by NAA and Sentinel Leisure Trust in this respect. It was noted that the strategy was a living document which would be continuously revised over time.

A Member queried the type of work that would be required in order to bring the bowling facilities in the District up to the required standard. It was reported that the facilities had issues with the roof, primarily due to the age of the buildings. Other facilities also had issues with their flooring. It was noted that the Council was able to assist some external or charitable organisations in completing their applications for external grants and funding, to help pay for the works.

There followed some discussion regarding the importance of village halls in the District, which relied heavily upon the good will of volunteers to assist with their operation and

maintenance. It was noted that many Parish Councils were able to apply for additional grants and support from a variety of sources.

Members commented that the majority of health and fitness activities were aimed at the young and middle aged people. However, it was important that the older generation were also encouraged to remain fit and healthy into old age. A Member reported that the outdoor fitness equipment at Oulton Green was extremely popular and well used, as it could be used at any time of the day, free of charge and without making an appointment in advance. People could also partake in exercise which suited them, at their own pace and level. It was hoped that this sort of outside fitness equipment could be established at other sites throughout the District over time.

A Member suggested that the Built Facilities work should be linked with the Play Partnership Strategy in order to provide a cohesive assessment which would cover the whole District. It was also suggested that Waveney Youth Council could be consulted in order to provide a viewpoint from the younger generation.

Members remained concerned about the over-reliance on educational facilities and the Director for Sentinel Leisure agreed that this would be taken forward for further consideration and discussion, as appropriate.

A Member commented that the Built Facilities report was a very interesting and informative document, however they felt that the title was misleading and requested that it be changed for future reference. It was confirmed that these comments would be taken forward.

RESOLVED

1. That Waveney District Council adopts the Waveney Built Facilities Strategy Document, subject to the sites within the Strategy being available for public use.
2. That Waveney District Council endorses the Action Plan set out in the Waveney Built Facilities Strategy Document.

9 EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

RESOLVED

That under Section 100(A) 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 Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

10 LOCAL DISCRETIONARY (BUSINESS) RATE RELIEF APPLICATION

The Cabinet Member for Tourism, Economic Development & Rural Affairs presented the report which was to consider the award of Local Discretionary Rate Relief to a company, in order to secure a significant business investment in Lowestoft.

RESOLVED

That the award of Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief to a company, on the terms as discussed at the meeting, be approved.

11 RENT REVIEW OF SOUTHWOLD BEACH HUT SITES

N.B. Councillor M Ladd, having declared a Local Pecuniary Interest, left the meeting during the consideration of this item and took no part in the voting thereon.

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms presented the report which sought confirmation as to how to progress the rent review for Southwold Beach Hut Sites, in relation to rent levels.

RESOLVED

1. That an increase in base rent per annum as discussed at the meeting, including VAT, payable from 01 April 2017, be approved.
2. That rent review memoranda notices are sent to each beach hut tenant identifying the new rent and the date the rent applies as soon as possible.
3. That the Southwold Beach Hut Owners Association is simultaneously advised by letter, with an explanation of the base new rent and the revised payment date.

N.B. Councillor M Ladd returned to the meeting at this point in the proceedings.

12 DIRECT AWARD FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF CAR PARK PAY AND DISPLAY MACHINES

The Leader of the Council presented the report which sought approved for Delegated Authority to be granted to the Strategic Director, acting in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships & Lowestoft Rising, to agree to a Direct Award for the replacement of Waveney District Council's Pay and Display Machines. Members noted that the new £1.00 coins would come into circulation in March 2017, therefore the old car park pay and display machines needed to be replaced before this date, in order to minimise loss of income.

RESOLVED

That Delegated Authority be granted to the Strategic Director, acting in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships & Lowestoft Rising, to agree a Direct Award to Parkeon for the replacement of Waveney District Council's Pay and Display Machines.

13 REDEVELOPMENT OF 18 FERRY ROAD, SOUTHWOLD

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms presented the report which sought approval for the development of a vacant building plot at 18 Ferry Road, Southwold.

RESOLVED

1. That the commitment of financial and staff resource to complete the development of the site as proposed in this report to create a single structure divided into two flats to be let as holiday accommodation, commencing with a planning application for the design shown in Appendix II and make recommendation to Full Council for

the sum, as discussed at the meeting, to be included in the Capital Programme for immediate spend be approved.

2. That the award of a contract to develop an under-used site and complete the development of a row of timber framed properties that will enhance the area and deliver a design sympathetic to the locality and neighbouring properties and further support Southwold's tourism and local business sector on terms that best protect the Council's interest be approved.

14 DEMOLITION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF CHALETs 1 – 58, JUBILEE PARADE, SOUTH LOWESTOFT

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms presented the report which sought approval to award a contract for the demolition and redevelopment of Chalets 1 – 58, Jubilee Parade, South Lowestoft, on terms that protect the Council's interests.

RESOLVED

1. That the commitment of the sum, as discussed at the meeting, and to make a recommendation to Full Council for the sum, as discussed at the meeting, to be included in the Capital Programme for immediate spend, to complete the stabilisation of the retaining wall at Jubilee Parade, Lowestoft and the demolition of the remaining adjacent structures on terms that best protect the Council's interests be approved.
2. That the immediate commencement of the reinstatement works including procuring, awarding contracts, allowing a margin of plus or minus ten percent, and undertaking all other related works relating to the reinstatement of the wall and subsequent demolition of the remaining structures during 2016/17 financial year with the procurement of the works through a competitive process or through a single supplier route tested under the SCAPE Agreement allowing a margin of plus or minus ten percent and approval to award be delegated to Strategic Director and Chief Finance Officer in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Resource and Welfare Reform be approved.
3. That all works are to be preceded by a local communications and engagement process.

N.B. Councillor M Rudd left the meeting at this point in the proceedings.

15 REDEVELOPMENT OF BATTERY GREEN CAR PARK, LOWESTOFT

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms presented the report which sought approval for the redevelopment of Battery Green Car Park, Lowestoft.

N.B. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED FROM 6.55PM TO 7.00PM FOR A COMFORT BREAK DURING THE CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM.

RESOLVED

1. That the closure of the Battery Green Car Park with effect from 6 January 2017 be approved.

2. That, subject to obtaining the necessary planning consent for demolition, Delegated Authority be granted to the Strategic Director and Chief Finance Officer, acting in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resource and Welfare Reform, to let a contract up to an estimated value as discussed at the meeting, for the demolition of the Battery Green Car Park and make recommendation to Full Council for the sum, as discussed at the meeting, to be included in the Capital Programme for immediate spend.
3. That the commitment of financial and staff resource to complete a detailed options appraisal, feasibility assessment and business case for the redevelopment of the Battery Green Car Park to the value, as discussed at the meeting, be approved.
4. That agreement is given for the temporary use of the cleared site for car parking during the options appraisal and feasibility assessment period, prior to practical redevelopment of the site, subject to the obtaining of all appropriate consents.
5. That the completed business case exploring redevelopment options for the Battery Green Car Park site be the subject of a further report to Cabinet in 2017.

16 MARINA THEATRE PROPOSALS

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms presented the report which was to consider a business case for the Marina Theatre proposals.

RESOLVED

1. That officers continue discussions, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members, with the Marina Theatre Trust on the purchase of the Zenith building.
2. That negotiations would be carried out within the financial parameters set out in this paper. Any final decision would be subject to Cabinet approval and a final business case.

17 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm

Chairman