

Minutes of a **Simultaneous Full Council Meeting** held in the **Champion Suite** at **High Lodge Leisure Limited, Haw Wood, Hinton, Near Darsham** on **Monday 30 April 2018** at **6.30pm**

**Suffolk Coastal District Council Members present:**

J Bidwell, S Bird, C Blundell, S Burroughes, P Coleman, A Cooper, P Dunnett, J Fisher, A Fryatt, S Gallant, S Harvey, T-J Haworth-Culf, C Hedgley, R Herring, G Holdcroft, C Hudson, M Jones, J Kelso, R Kerry, S Lawson, G Lynch, D McCallum, S Mower, P Mulcahy, M Newton, C Poulter, A Smith, N Yeo.

**Waveney District Council Members present:**

S Ardley, P Ashdown, E Back, S Barker, M Bee, N Brooks, P Byatt, A Cackett, G Catchpole, J Ceresa, M Cherry, Y Cherry, G Elliott, T Gandy, T Goldson, L Gooch, I Graham, K Grant, A Green, J Groom, P Light, F Mortimer, T Mortimer, J Murray, L Nicholls, K Patience, M Pitchers, B Provan, C Punt, D Ritchie, C Rivett, K Robinson, M Rudd, L Smith, K Springall, C Topping, N Webb, S Webb.

**Officers present:**

K Abbott (Democratic Services Business Manager), S Baker (Chief Executive), K Cook (Democratic Services and Cabinet Business Manager), P Harris (Communications Manager), A Jarvis (Strategic Director), H Javadi (Chief Finance Officer and S151 Officer), N Khan (Strategic Director), K Last (Electoral Services Manager), S Lewis (Business Solutions Manager), S Martin (Head of Internal Audit), C Robinson (Electoral Review Manager), H Slater (Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer), T Willis (Deputy Electoral Services Manager), N Wotton (Democratic Services Manager).

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Prior to the start of the meeting, Councillor Blundell and Councillor Mortimer, the respective Chairmen of Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC) and Waveney District Council (WDC), welcomed all Members, Officers and members of the public to the meeting.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Suffolk Coastal District Council

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Block, Councillor Bond, Councillor Catchpole, Councillor Deacon, Councillor Dean, Councillor Green, Councillor Harding and Councillor Savage.

Waveney District Council

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Allen, Councillor Barnard, Councillor Coulam, Councillor Craig, Councillor Ford, Councillor Ladd, Councillor Reynolds, Councillor J Smith and Councillor Woods.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

### Suffolk Coastal District Council

There were no declarations of interest.

### Waveney District Council

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3. Adoption of Protocol for Simultaneous Full Council Meetings

Members were in receipt of report **REP1875** – Protocol for Simultaneous Full Council Meetings for Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council, which was introduced by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer. The protocol provided background and covered Purpose, Chairmanship, Location of Meetings and Governance Arrangements. Mrs Slater advised Members that the Protocol had been prepared in consultation with the Leaders of SCDC and WDC. Mrs Slater drew Members' attention to a small error on page 2 of the Protocol, stating that for SCDC the quorum was one quarter of the whole number of Members; not three quarters of the Council, as stated.

Councillor Elliott referred to the location of the meeting, stating that there was no reference within the Protocol to public transport; he added that High Lodge was not suitable for public access and that some consideration should be given to transport other than by car.

It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote

### **RESOLVED by Suffolk Coastal District Council**

That the protocol, as set out in the report (REP 1875), be adopted, subject to the reference on page 2, to the SCDC quorum, being amended to one quarter of the whole number of Members.

It was proposed, seconded and by unanimous vote

### **RESOLVED by Waveney District Council**

That the protocol, as set out in the report (REP 1875), be adopted, subject to the reference on page 2, to the SCDC quorum, being amended to one quarter of the whole number of Members.

## 4. Electoral Review East Suffolk – Final Submission

Members were in receipt of report **REP1876** – Electoral Review East Suffolk - Final Submission.

Councillor Holdcroft reported that this day marked another but significant step on the journey to create a new Council for East Suffolk. Councillor Holdcroft stated that at this point he wished to thank all Members including his co-chairman, Councillor Bee, who had served on or who sat in

on the Electoral Review Member Working Group these past three months as well as the Officers who had supported Members.

Five months ago Members met separately and agreed that they wished to go ahead with the 'merger' or more correctly the creation of a new authority, East Suffolk Council, comprised of 55 Members. The then Secretary of State of MHCLG agreed that it should happen, and the appropriate Statutory Instruments were laid before Parliament earlier this year. That process was still ongoing, but it was expected the Orders would be 'made' sometime during May 2018. Tonight's business, Councillor Holdcroft stated, was solely concerned with warding arrangements for the new Council and the councils' role was to make recommendations on those matters to the LGBCE. If, Councillor Holdcroft stated, the councils agreed on the warding pattern, the proposal would then go first to the MHCLG and then to the LGBCE so that they could start their work once the Parliamentary Orders had been made.

Councillor Holdcroft stated that over the past three months the Electoral Review Member Working Group had met on a number of occasions and had worked through the matter in three phases. The first phase was to agree what the size of the electorate in East Suffolk would be in 2023 and how they would be divided across nearly 300 polling districts. The second stage was to aggregate those polling districts into Wards taking into account the three rules the LGBCE used that were set out in law - Delivering electoral equality for local voters; reflecting the interests and identities of local communities; and promoting effective and convenient local government. The third stage was to give names to those Wards that were short, distinct and identifiable in encapsulating the Ward area. The first stage was relatively straightforward mainly involving Officers from Electoral Services and Planning, with the numbers being validated by the civil servants from MHCLG. The second stage was not as straightforward, and Members considered five proposals before finally agreeing on the version set out in Appendix A to the report. One guiding principle Members agreed on was that they would try not to refer to existing ward boundaries, they were tasked with creating Wards for a new Council and in large measure they stuck to that.

Referring to the timetable, Councillor Holdcroft stated that following the councils' decisions the proposal would go first to MHCLG and then to LGBCE who would examine the proposal, undertake a review of their own and most importantly visit East Suffolk to see how communities related to each other, before publishing a draft proposal early in July. Most importantly the public would then be given the opportunity to comment on that proposal and make their own proposals before the closing date in late August. The councils had been asked to help advertise that consultation process and to facilitate meetings. LGBCE would then publish their final proposal in late October. Once the LGBCE had made their final proposals they would then be laid before Parliament and if agreed would become the new Wards for East Suffolk Council in time for elections in May 2019.

Councillor Bee commented that he would be brief because Members had already heard a good summary of the process that had been undertaken by Councillor Holdcroft; he thanked Councillor Holdcroft for the work that he had done, with himself, on this important matter.

Councillor Bee commented on the two authorities working closely together for the last 10 years and he stated that it had always been known that at some stage the two authorities would need to become one council. Councillor Bee added that it was now so important that the electoral arrangements were completed properly and he thought that the report could be

taken forward with confidence. Working closely with the Boundary Commission, who had been providing guidance, had helped to ensure that the councils would hand over something that the Boundary Commission could move forward.

Councillor Bee paid tribute to all Members who sat on the Electoral Review Member Working Group, along with all Members who had attended the many meetings and presented their respective cases for their own areas. Councillor Bee thanked all officers who had been involved in the process, particularly the Strategic Director, the Electoral Review Manager and the Electoral Services Team.

In conclusion, Councillor Bee stated that this was something which, when looked back at, would be very much a legacy for East Suffolk that Members would now bring to fruition.

It was reported by Officers that the process had been very focussed and work was undertaken in a short space of time, using Members' local knowledge and expertise. Referring to the next phase, Members were advised that the proposals would go to the Ministry and to the Boundary Commission for them to formally consult on the proposals and that would take place between 3 July 2018 and 27 August 2018. During this period Parish briefings would be held and the district councils would assist in facilitating these.

The Chairmen of both councils invited questions on the report.

A question was posed by Councillor Barker, who asked how the publicity would be undertaken in relation to the public consultation and how it would be communicated to local residents. Councillor Barker mentioned this, she said, as the House of Lords had commented on the level of public consultation taken at earlier stages of the process. In reply, the Strategic Director clarified that the House of Lords' comments were a separate issue, which did not affect the decisions being taken by both councils that evening. In relation to the public consultation period, he said that the councils' Communications Team would work to assist the Boundary Commission, as it was their responsibility to undertake a public consultation. He added that both councils wanted to encourage as many local residents as possible to participate in the consultation, as their views needed to be heard.

Councillor Kelso stated that, in some instances, in respect of the elector to councillor ratios, there were in excess of 10% differentials; he asked how this would be "sold" to the Boundary Commission. The Electoral Review Manager responded that, when bordering on 10%, it was felt that the evidence put forward dealt with and supported this.

Concerns were raised by Councillor Graham in regard to one of the recommendations within the report, which asked both councils to grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to make minor amendments to the Final Warding Patterns Submission. Councillor Graham sought reassurance that any proposed changes would be shared with all Councillors so that they remained informed. The Strategic Director confirmed that this recommendation was a measure to make the process more straightforward, as there was an obligation for both councils to respond to the public consultation directly. He explained it was a significant task to arrange for all Councillors from both councils to be at one meeting and that the granting of delegated authority would be beneficial. Public consultation responses would be considered by the Electoral Review Member Working Group and all Councillors had an open invitation to attend those meetings, to hear about what had been submitted.

Councillor A Smith stated that he was concerned regarding the phraseology relating to the boundaries between the proposed Felixstowe North and South Wards; he referred to pages 55 and 56 of the report and said that there was a common phrase relating to the boundary between the proposed wards of Felixstowe North and Felixstowe South which stated that the High Road and the High Street formed a natural break point. Councillor Smith pointed out that both roads were wholly contained within the proposed Felixstowe North Ward and formed a continuous link as the spine of that ward, as opposed to being a natural boundary between the ward and Felixstowe South as suggested within the report. He suggested that the proposal should be amended on page 55 of the report to reflect that the railway and the town centre acted as a natural break point between the proposed Wards and that on page 56 of the report, the proposal be amended to consider that the High Road and the High Street acted as a natural linkage throughout the proposed Felixstowe North Ward. In reply, the Chief Executive suggested that the proposed delegation of authority, as set out in the report's recommendation, could be used to finesse that issue. The Electoral Review Manager confirmed that the minor corrections, as outlined by Councillor Smith, would be accommodated.

The proposal for the new East Suffolk Council to have 55 Councillors, plus one or two more if required, was highlighted by Councillor Byatt; he considered that in Worlingham, there was potential for 1,200 new properties to be developed, which would equate to 2,400 new residents. He added that similar developments were planned in areas across Suffolk Coastal and Waveney, including Felixstowe, and asked if there was enough flexibility in the warding proposals for the future, given that 9,000 new homes in total were planned in Waveney. Future developments were confirmed to have been taken into account when considering the warding options. The Strategic Director advised that the forecasted electorate, up to 2023, had been included within the figures and calculations. He said that the future population had to be divided by the number of Councillors, to ensure that there was a fair distribution of constituents for each Councillor and to ensure that some Wards were not too large. He considered that although planning permission may have been granted for developments, it did not necessarily mean that the development would take place, as there were often a number of other factors involved in development proceeding. He urged caution when estimating the population forecast, as over estimation could cause long term problems. He was of the view that a prudent and robust approach had been taken and he was confident with the information that had been produced.

Councillor Fryatt referred Members to page 45 of the report and in referring to the villages of Charsfield, Debach and Dallinghoo, stated that they were not linked parishes in any shape or form. This was noted by officers.

At this point the recommendations, as set out on pages 8 and 9 of the report, were proposed by Councillor Holdcroft, and seconded by Councillor Herring, who reserved the right to speak at the end of debate.

At this point the recommendations, as set out on pages 8 and 9 of the report, were proposed by Councillor Bee, and seconded by Councillor Ardley, who reserved the right to speak at the end of debate.

At the invitation of the Chairmen, Members moved into debate.

At this point, Councillor Fisher, on behalf of Councillor Deacon, proposed an amendment to the recommendations in that Councillor Deacon's proposals, as set out on pages 53 and 54 of Appendix B to the report, be put forward as an alternative solution for Felixstowe.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Cooper.

At the request of the SCDC Chairman, Councillor Fisher provided more detail; he firstly, on behalf of Councillor Deacon, thanked officers for working up the figures for his proposal. Councillor Fisher referred to a small error on page 53 of Appendix B, but said that this was not a material error. The proposal was, Councillor Fisher stated, to divide Felixstowe into the industrial area and the more tourist area. Councillor Fisher stated that both he and Councillor Deacon felt that this would make a better division.

Councillor Gallant stated that this issue had been debated thoroughly at Member Working Group meetings; he added that the recommendations as proposed fell in line with the ward boundaries for Felixstowe Town Council. If amended, as suggested, Councillor Gallant stated that this would result in a convoluting line. In conclusion Councillor Gallant stated that there was no sensible reason as to why the Council should accept the amendment proposed. Councillor Smith stated that he agreed with Councillor Gallant and he added that, through his ward knowledge, this would result in a split down the centre of a road; this he said was wholly wrong and unnatural and he added that the Boundary Commission liked to have roads identified. Councillor Holdcroft repeated that this issue had been debated long and hard at Member Working Group meetings and he added that Felixstowe Ward Members had been canvassed and all, except Councillor Deacon, were in favour of the recommendation within the report.

The SCDC Chairman moved to the amended motion, which was lost by a majority vote.

Councillor Elliott acknowledged the hard work and debate about the matter and, expressing his own personal enthusiasm, suggested he could talk about the subject all evening. He considered, however, that the councils should not lose sight of the fact that the recommendation was to submit the warding proposals to the Boundary Commission for their approval. Further changes could be recommended and he was mindful that the warding proposals were not necessarily in their final state. He stated that the warding proposals had been a significant piece of work undertaken and that Members should be proud of them. He was of the view that Councillors were viewing the proposals from a point of view how they would be impacted and should instead be looking at them from the point of view of their constituents, to see what was best for them and how they could be supported.

Councillor Kelso stated that he was at the meeting to represent the people who had elected him; he stated that he could not support the proposals for linking Martlesham with Purdis Farm. Purdis Farm abutted the Ipswich borough and Martlesham was far from the Ipswich Borough. Councillor Kelso stated that Martlesham had nothing in common with Purdis Farm and there was no community connection between the two; the only link would appear to be Foxhall, which consisted of 71 electors. Councillor Kelso stated that Martlesham Parish Council was the only parish council in the old Suffolk Coastal District being split into four; Martlesham Parish Council would have six or seven County Councillors, and eight District Councillors in attendance at their meetings. Councillor Kelso commented on future development within

Martlesham, over the next 10 years, and stated that the village would be under-represented; this was he stated unfair and undemocratic.

Councillor Fryatt stated that, since medieval times, the village of Debach had been inextricably linked with the village of Boulge; he felt that this should remain so.

Councillor Smith referred to the points made by Councillor Kelso, and stated that he had some sympathy with the points that had been made. Councillor Smith added that Martlesham was in the unfortunate position whereby it would be too big for one Councillor, but too small for two. In conclusion Councillor Smith felt that the compromise that had been found was the best solution.

Councillor Blundell, speaking as Ward Member for Martlesham, stated that Martlesham, over recent years, had developed as a retail, sport and industrial area, with many large stores. Councillor Blundell stated that, to some extent, he agreed with Councillor Kelso, but he concluded that the warding arrangements had to be determined as a whole.

Councillor Murray queried the proposed Wards of Lothingland and Gunton and St Margarets; she noted that the forecasted electorate of the former was over 8,000, whilst the latter had a forecast of 7,491. Corton, which had formerly been within Gunton and St Margarets, had been transferred to Lothingland. Councillor Murry also questioned why Corton had been transferred, as this had led to an imbalance and had resulted in a higher forecasted electorate for Lothingland. She suggested it would be better for Corton to remain within Gunton and St Margarets, as opposed to its proposed transfer to Lothingland. In reply, the Electoral Review Manager explained that at the current stage in proceedings, any change would cause a ripple effect on adjacent proposed electoral wards. He said that all options available had been considered and that the proposals set out in the report were the most appropriate way forward.

Councillor Bee considered the proposed boundaries to be the result of lots of thought and hard work. Corton was noted as having been within the Lothingland Ward prior to the last electoral boundary review; he was of the view that there was ebb and flow over time and things that had changed, would change back again and said that there would no doubt be further reviews in the future.

The accuracy of the map, contained on page 20 of the report, was queried by Councillor Byatt as it appeared to cover part of the sea. The Electoral Review Manager stated that the map should cover the area up to the coastline and suggested that it had included coastal elements, such as beach huts.

Councillor Burroughes commended the work undertaken by Officers; he also acknowledged that all Members had had many opportunities to comment on the warding proposals.

It was acknowledged by Councillor Graham that it would be difficult to gain unanimous support for any proposal. He considered it important that a public consultation was undertaken, so that the councils could get the public's feedback and views. He commended the hard work that had been undertaken and considered the proposal to be a detailed one. He advised against Members becoming too "parochial" about the matter.

Councillor Herring commented on the smooth process that had led to the report before Members and he stated that this had resulted in a good working solution. Councillor Herring paid tribute to all Members who had worked closely together during the process. Councillor Herring commented on the community and economic aspects of the warding proposals and how the Alde and Blyth estuaries had been used to link communities together.

It was noted by Councillor Ardley that the proposals were the final submission of both councils, which needed to go out to public consultation in a fair and democratic way. He wished to reiterate what others had said by thanking Members and Officers for their hard work on the warding changes. He was pleased that the word ‘merger’ was no longer being used and that instead discussions were now about ‘the creation of a new Council’, which was more positive. He acknowledged the recent departure of Sajid Javid as the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, but was certain that there would be ongoing support from his replacement, James Brokenshire.

Councillor Holdcroft commented on the good working solution before Members who, with Officers, had worked hard and diligently in producing this well evidenced solution. Councillor Holdcroft commented on the Martlesham proposals, and said that he had some sympathy with these and, if he could, he would find a solution.

Councillor Holdcroft called for a recorded vote, which was supported by SCDC.

Councillor Bee called for a recorded vote, which was supported by WDC.

It was reiterated by Councillor Bee that the report before the councils was the culmination of a significant piece of work, which everyone would have the opportunity to comment on and have their say on the proposed wards.

There being no further matters raised for debate, the Chairman moved to a recorded vote of those present on all the recommendations.

Suffolk Coastal District Council

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Councillor Bidwell	Councillor Kelso	
Councillor Bird		
Councillor Blundell		
Councillor Burroughes		
Councillor Coleman		
Councillor Cooper		
Councillor Dunnett		
Councillor Fisher		
Councillor Fryatt		
Councillor Gallant		



Councillor Harvey		
Councillor Haworth-Culf		
Councillor Hedgley		
Councillor Herring		
Councillor Holdcroft		
Councillor Hudson		
Councillor Jones		
Councillor Kerry		
Councillor Lawson		
Councillor Lynch		
Councillor McCallum		
Councillor Mower		
Councillor Mulcahy		
Councillor Newton		
Councillor Poulter		
Councillor Smith		
Councillor Yeo		
	<b>28</b>	<b>1</b>
		<b>0</b>

Waveney District Council

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Councillor Ardley		
Councillor Ashdown		
Councillor Back		
Councillor Barker		
Councillor Bee		
Councillor Brooks		
Councillor Byatt		
Councillor Cackett		
Councillor Catchpole		
Councillor Ceresa		
Councillor M. Cherry		
Councillor Y. Cherry		
Councillor Elliott		

Councillor Gandy		
Councillor Goldson		
Councillor Gooch		
Councillor Graham		
Councillor Grant		
Councillor Green		
Councillor Groom		
Councillor Light		
Councillor F. Mortimer		
Councillor T. Mortimer		
Councillor Murray		
Councillor Nicholls		
Councillor Patience		
Councillor Pitchers		
Councillor Provan		
Councillor Punt		
Councillor Ritchie		
Councillor Rivett		
Councillor Robinson		
Councillor Rudd		
Councillor L. Smith		
Councillor Springall		
Councillor Topping		
Councillor N. Webb		
Councillor S. Webb		
<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**RESOLVED:**

1. That approval be given to submit to the MHCLG, by 4 May 2018
  - (a) the Warding Submission Volume 1, set out as Appendix A to the report (REP 1876), being the warding proposals for the East Suffolk Council and the proposed ward names;
  - (b) the Warding Submission Volume 2, set out as Appendix B to the report (REP 1876), being the background information and evidence.

2. That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council and the Leader of Waveney District Council be given delegated authority to:-
  - (a) make any necessary minor typographical amendments to the content of the Final Warding Patterns Submission to ensure that the deadline for the submission to the MHCLG of 4 May 2018, is met.
  - (b) submit comments and observations (as required) in response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England draft warding proposals, once these are published, on or around 3 July 2018, on behalf of each Council.

The Chairmen of both councils, in acknowledging the work undertaken, gave their thanks to all Members and Officers.

The Meeting concluded at 8.40 pm.