

## MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK CABINET** held in the Britten Room - Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 9 April 2018

### PRESENT:

Councillor: Nick Gowrley (Chair)  
John Whitehead (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:	Gerard Brewster	David Burn
	Julie Flatman	Glen Horn
	Penny Otton	Andrew Stringer
	David Whybrow	Jill Wilshaw

### In attendance:

Diana Kearsley  
Suzie Morley

### Apologies:

#### 106 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from Councillor Roy Barker.

#### 107 TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS

None declared.

#### 108 MCA/17/58 - CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2018 were confirmed as a correct record.

#### 109 TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME

None received.

#### 110 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

110.1 Councillor Penny Otton asked the Leader whether there were any discussions taking place with the Public Sector Leaders and / or the Suffolk

District and Borough Councils regarding the Res Publica work commissioned by the Leader of Suffolk County Council, and whether there would be a report in due course.

110.2 Councillor Nick Gowrley responded that he had met in his capacity as Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council with Councillor Colin Noble the previous Thursday and was continuing to look for a way forward to work together. A meeting of the Suffolk PSLG will be considering the matter shortly, and in response to a further question from Councillor Otton, Councillor Gowrley confirmed that the meeting would include Councillor Noble and the Police.

## **111 MATTERS REFERRED BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY OR JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

### **(a) MCa/17/59 – Matter referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Members had before them a copy of Overview and Scrutiny Minute No 26 of the meeting held 15 March 2018, which was circulated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Councillor Eburne, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the Committee's recommendation to Cabinet, arising from its consideration of Paper MOS/17/37 The Five-Year Land Supply, to review the resources required to improve the efficiency of all housing delivery as Members were not convinced that sufficient resources were in place.

Councillor Whybrow, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, responded with reference to his regular discussions with the team responsible for delivery about the robustness and the publication of the Joint Local Plan. Although there had been some slippage due mainly to the high number of responses received to the public consultation, and the Policy Officer post had yet to be filled, a number of appointments which had been made post-Christmas would enable the timetable to be delivered.

Councillor Eburne replied that she had heard similar comments from officers – was this because it was what Members expected to hear, as people do not like to appear to be failing? While understanding that this was a time-consuming exercise, she suggested that staff from areas other than planning could assist in the process.

Councillor Whybrow thanked Councillor Eburne for her work and that of her Committee, which backed up his discussions with the team. Temporary administrative and other support was used on a regular basis and he accepted that although the system might struggle to cope at times, he did not think that it was failing.

Councillor Whybrow went on to refer to the stalling which occurs between planning permission being granted and the completion of development. The post identified in the Budget to work on this aspect is expected to be filled

shortly, but the Councillor agreed with Councillor Eburne that this should be addressed urgently. In the meantime, a member of staff to collate and sift data to help identify and follow up with developers the reason for planning-related blockages is available.

Councillor Stringer asked a question relating to the numbers of houses being built, and Councillor Whybrow referred Members to the statistics which get reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members were aware of the importance of the delivery issue and the potential for reputational risk to the Council, and of similar difficulties being experienced by a number of other Local Planning Authorities. Members accepted the need for the resource implications to be reviewed and an expanded recommendation to continue the current work and report back to Cabinet was proposed by Councillor Gowrley and seconded by Councillor Whybrow.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:-**

That the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 March 2018 to review the resources required to improve the efficiency of all housing delivery be accepted and that the current work being undertaken to review the resources in the planning team be continued, the results of which would be reported to the Cabinet at a future meeting.

**Reason for Decision:**

That the resources should be reviewed in order to improve the efficiency of all housing delivery.

**(b) MCa/17/60 – Matter referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Members had before them a copy of Overview and Scrutiny Minute No 28 of the meeting held 15 March 2018, which was circulated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Councillor Eburne, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the Committee's recommendation to Cabinet, arising from its consideration of Paper MOS/17/39 which had been referred to the Committee from Cabinet to investigate the causes of the variations between Quarters 2 and 3 of the HRA.

Councillor Eburne, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the recommendations as set out in Minute No 28 and referred to the errors in the officer report, and the delay in the review of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Building Services (BMBS) which had been due after the first full year of operation. She referred to Overview and Scrutiny's role in reviewing the Service.

Councillor Wilshaw, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing, reported an improving situation. Members were aware that they would not wish to see the full review put back any later than June so it was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive a report at its May meeting, with its

recommendations being considered by Cabinet in June.

**It was RESOLVED:-**

That the recommendations of the Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 March 2018 be accepted.

**Reason for Decision:** That the points identified by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were accepted and Appendix B relating to the Quarter 3 compared to Quarter 2 outturn for the Housing Revenue Account was endorsed.

**112 MCA/17/61 - FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST**

The Forthcoming Decisions List was noted with an amendment to CAB25 – BMBS Business Plan, which would be considered at the Cabinet meetings in June, after consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Committee as referred to in Minute No ..... above. Dates for CAB11(Proposals for former MSDC Offices) to be confirmed,

**113 MCA/17/62 - FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN**

113.1 Councillor Burn (Cabinet Member for Environment) introduced the report with reference to the single Food and Safety Service Plan 2018/19 (Appendix 1 to Paper MCA/17/62) which replaces the two previous Plans, for Food Safety, and Health and Safety. He emphasised that the aim was to support businesses to be compliant, in the interests of the health and welfare of the public.

113.2 He drew attention to the low number of formal legal actions required, in the context of over 1,000 interactions with businesses during the year, and to the strong and experienced team of Food and Safety Officers. He also referred to the Challenges to Service Delivery and Risk Management as listed in Section 7 of the Plan including the effect of Brexit on the Regulations under which officers currently operate, such as those for Animal Welfare particularly in relation to home dog boarders and performing animals.

113.3 Councillor Burn also referred to the Brief Illustrative Case Studies in Appendix 2 to the report and moved the recommendation in paragraph 2.1, which was seconded by Councillor Brewster.

113.4 John Grayling, Corporate Manager – Health and Safety responded to a question from Councillor Otton about the working relationship of the team with animal welfare organisations having expertise and Trading Standards, bearing in mind its resources issues. The Corporate Manager replied that in the team included officers with animal welfare experience, and that new and improved guidance (referred to in the Plan) would help those operating in this area. He confirmed that although there were resource issues, there was a good working relationship with Trading Standards.

113.5 Councillor Stringer in referring to the accessibility of the information in the report also mentioned agile working, identified in the Plan as one of the challenges to service delivery.

113.6 Councillor Gowrley thanked John Grayling and his team for an excellent report.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:-**

That the Mid Suffolk and Babergh Food and Safety Service Plan for 2018/19, attached as Appendix 1 to Paper MCa/17/62, be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

To fulfil the requirements of the Food Standards Agency framework agreement and the Health and Safety Executive National Local Authority Enforcement Code.

**114 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The business of the meeting was concluded at 3.05 p.m.

.....

Chair (date)

The business of the meeting was concluded at Time Not Specified.

.....

Chairman