

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK COUNCIL** held at the Council Chamber, Mid Suffolk District Council Offices, High Street, Needham Market on Tuesday, 8 August 2017

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Roy Barker	Gerard Brewster
	Michael Burke	David Burn
	James Caston	John Field
	Julie Flatman	Nick Gowrley
	Kathie Guthrie	Lavinia Hadingham
	Derrick Haley (Chairman)	Matthew Hicks
	Glen Horn	Barry Humphreys MBE
	Diana Kearsley	Anne Killett
	Sarah Mansel	Wendy Marchant
	John Matthissen	Lesley Mayes
	Suzie Morley	Dave Muller
	Mike Norris	Derek Osborne
	Penny Otton	Timothy Passmore
	Jane Storey	Andrew Stringer
	Keith Welham	Kevin Welsby
	John Whitehead	David Whybrow
	Jill Wilshaw	

In attendance:

Chief Executive – Arthur Charvonia
Strategic Director – Mike Evans
Assistant Director of Law and Governance - Emily Yule
Governance Support Officers – (RC/HH)

66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Rachel Eburne, Paul Ekpenyong, Jessica Fleming, Gary Green, Elizabeth Gibson – Harries, Esther Jewson and John Levantis.

67 TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

There were no declarations of interest.

68 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS - VERBAL UPDATE

Councillor Derrick Haley, Chairman of the Council attended the Watthisham Flying Station Annual Cocktail Party few weeks ago and said a good relationship existed between the Wattisham military base, Stowmarket and surrounding areas.

Councillor Haley reminded Members of his Civic Service Ceremony in Thurston on 24 September 2017.

On 13 October 2017, there would be an Auction of Promises at the Museum of East Anglian Life. The Museum is one of the Chairman's chosen charities.

69 **LEADERS REPORT - VERBAL UPDATE**

Councillor Nick Gowrley, Leader of the Council, informed Members that the customers' portfolio had been renamed as 'organisational delivery'.

70 **TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PROCEDURE RULE**

None received.

71 **QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

None received.

72 **QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

None received.

73 **MC/17/14 BOUNDARY REVIEW- RESPONSE TO STAGE ONE CONSULTATION ON WARDING PATTERNS**

Councillor Gowrley, Leader of Council introduced report MC/17/14 and informed Members of an amendment to recommendation 2.1, that the tabled Proposal B replaced the Appendix.

Councillor Gowrley explained that the proposal had been developed after workshops and drop-in sessions for all Councillors and a cross-party task and finish group. Mid Suffolk District Council was a consultee at this stage of the process and the Council's submission would be considered by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England alongside all other consultation responses. A further period of consultation would follow after the Boundary Commission had published its draft proposals. He commended all who had worked on this challenging project, which had resulted in Proposal B.

Councillor Gowrley moved the recommendations in 2.1 and 2.2. and was seconded by Councillor John Whitehead.

Councillor Whitehead described to Members how the process of creating viable ward patterns had been developed. Councillor Whitehead felt Proposal B had achieved the best ward pattern possible but recognised that this was only the beginning of the boundary review and that the proposal would be developed further once the Boundary Commission had considered all the submitted proposals.

Councillor Andrew Stringer proposed an amendment to the recommendations to include a warding pattern developed by his group which was tabled at the meeting.

The motion was seconded by Councillor John Matthissen.

Councillor Stringer considered the possibility of submitting the four proposals currently suggested to the Council as they all carried some merits, and reminded Members that the administration could submit more than one proposal.

Councillor Matthew Hicks made a point of order with regards to the title of the Green Boundary Proposal version 2 as it contained the word 'administration'. He asked this to be removed from the title of the proposal, on the grounds that the Green Boundary Proposal did not represent the administration's proposal for the ward pattern.

Councillor Penny Otton informed Members that the Liberal Democrat group would submit their own Boundary Review proposal as Members had not had enough time to consider their proposal.

Members then debated the amended recommendation and some Members felt that the representation to the Boundary Review Commission from the District Council should be decisive and therefore only one proposal should be submitted. Others felt that the proposed warding pattern had observed the historical collaboration between parishes.

Councillor Andrew Stringer said since that Proposal B was a tabled proposal Members had not had the opportunity to consider this proposal properly.

The Chairman announced an adjournment of fifteen minutes for Members to consider the proposals before them.

The Meeting adjourned at 6.00pm and reconvened at 6.15pm.

The Chairman reiterated the proposed amended recommendation:

That the Green Boundary Proposal be added to the proposal 'B' and submitted to the Boundary Review Commission for consideration.

The amendment was lost by 9 votes to 24.

Members then debated the recommendations proposed by Councillor Gowrley and made various comments including:

- That rural parishes often shared facilities such as schools, village halls, shops, sports facilities, and other amenities and that the warding pattern did not always reflect this.
- Some parishes had natural boundaries which some Members felt had not been taken into consideration.
- The division to the North of the District was considered acceptable.

- The division of Parish Councils sharing facilities, which had been divided by the new warding pattern, were not considered practical.
- Concerns regarding future population growth in wards, which had large developments planned.
- That Members had already decided to reduce the total numbers of councillors to 34.
- Parish Councils sharing facilities and working together would not be influenced by the warding pattern.
- Three Member wards did not work in rural areas.
- Because of the strength of identity large villages should have an allocation of one ward member each.
- The allocations of wards patterns were based on a percentage range of +/- 10% of the total population.
- Some Members felt that including rural parishes in wards with larger villages or towns was not a satisfactory combination as they did not share the same issues.
- The existing parish boundaries would be preserved so parishes would not be merged together within the new wards.

In response to Members' questions The Assistant Director for Law and Governance explained how the estimated population growth for 2022 had been calculated in accordance with the criteria defined by the Boundary Review Commission. The electoral roll for 2015 was used as the baseline and had therefore not been affected by the General Election or European Election. Only built out and occupied properties would be included in the calculation by the Boundary Commission.

Councillor John Whitehead asked Members to vote on the ward boundaries outlined in the tabled Proposal B map.

By 22 votes to 9

RESOLUTION 1

That the tabled proposal 'B' be submitted as Mid Suffolk District Council's formal response to the consultation

RESOLUTION 2

That the Chief Executive be authorised to submit the consultation response on behalf of the Council, and to include any relevant information arising from the Council's debate which provides further context and rationale behind the proposal

The business of the meeting concluded at 6.55pm.