BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS

Minutes of the Meeting of the **JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Britten room - Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Thursday, 15 February 2018.

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Rachel Eburne - Chair	Lavinia Hadingham
	Clive Arthey	Bryn Hurren
	James Caston	Lesley Mayes
	John Field	Alastair McCraw
	Barry Gasper	Derek Osborne
	Elizabeth Gibson-Harries	Kevin Welsby
	Kathryn Grandon*	
	Jennie Jenkins	

* Denotes a substitute

In attendance:

Councillors	Roy Barker
	David Burn
	Nick Gowrley
	John Matthissen
	Keith Welham
	Chief Executive (AC)
	Strategic Director (JS)
	Assistant Director - Planning for Growth (TB)
	Corporate Manager – Law and Governance (JR)
	Corporate Manager – Strategic Waste (RH)
	Corporate Manager – Waste Services (OF)
	Manager – Suffolk Waste Partnership
	Governance Support Officer (HH)

11 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES**

An apology of absence was received from Councillors Peter Burgoyne and Fenella Swan. Councillor Kathryn Grandon was substituting for Councillor Burgoyne.

12 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

13 **JOS/17/7 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2017 were confirmed as a correct record with the following amendment:

Paragraph 4.11 to read: …..*and this was capped at £100 per existing council tax dwelling.*

14 THE SUFFOLK WASTE PARTNERSHIP - BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES PRESENTATION

14.1 Rob Cole, Suffolk Waste Partnership Manager, conducted a presentation of waste recycling in Suffolk. He explained that the Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP) consisted of eight boroughs and districts and that Councillors Clive Arthey and Roy Barker were the Councils' representatives on the SWP.

14.2 During the presentation Members asked questions and the SWP Manager responded to these including:

- An annual report was no longer being forwarded to Members as the report was monolithic;
- Costs incurred by the SWP were split between the eight authorities;
- In the future food waste was going to be the biggest challenge for the Councils;
- Food waste collection was not a viable option in Suffolk as the cost of collecting the waste would be too expensive, countywide it was estimated to cost an extra £3M annually;
- Food waste collections were better suited for city and urban areas because the distance the waste collection lorries had to drive increased the costs;
- SWP was campaigning for households to increase composting, which would include some food waste;
- A central resource fund existed, the Resource Efficiency Fund (REF), and it was the intention that areas with high contamination rate should be target with an information campaign to change behaviour;
- There were no plans to include glass in curb side collections;
- There had been a previous plastic and food waste recycling campaign supported by a video on the website and this had around 100,000 hits and continued to be viewed by residents in Suffolk.

14.3 The SWP Manager informed Members that at the SWP meeting in January 2018, the priorities were set to change recycling behaviour in Suffolk and the main priorities were:

- Continuing to tackle MRF contamination
- Recycle more glass
- Continue the subsidised home composting promotion
- Investigate ways to tackle food waste over longer term
- SWP 'Resource Efficiency Fund (REF)
- Targeted communications

14.4 Members were in a unique position to support waste recycling in the community and to take information to their parishes.

14.5 Some Members hoped that a policy of education and encouragement would

continue for waste recycling.

15 **JOS/17/8 WASTE SERVICES - OPTIONS FOR REVIEW**

15.1 Members had before them the Waste Services Scoping Report JOS/17/8 and the Corporate Manager – Waste Services, advised in response to Members questions that the review currently undertaken by Serco was based on the present number of households and did not include future housing growth.

15.2 The Serco service contract was only for collecting the waste, however the contract represented the largest part of the expenditure for Waste Services. Members requested that a more detailed breakdown of this contract be provided to them.

15.3 It was established that the MRF contact was currently very beneficial to the Councils, but it was likely that the MRF contract cost would increase when a new contract was negotiated in May 2019. It was possible to extend the contract for another two years with Viridor, but the contract would also be put out for tender on the open market.

15.4 Members requested clarification on the long term financial implication of the waste contracts, and if income from waste would increase based on the increasing number of households in Suffolk. Officers responded that the waste market was difficult to predict, and that the international market changed all the time.

15.5 Members continued to discuss the possibilities of the financial impact on the Councils' budgets in relation to waste contracts and asked if financial forecasts for improvement in profits generated from waste were possible and if that the risks involved could be substantiated. This information was deemed necessary to allow the Councils to plan better for the future.

15.6 It was suggested that scrutiny of the Serco contract review and the Officer review of the waste contracts, were to be conducted in October or November 2018, prior to being presented to Cabinet between October and December 2018.

15.7 Officers believed that it was likely that the formal sign off for the Serco Contract would be in April 2019.

15.8 It was clarified that there was more competition in the Babergh District for garden waste disposal sites, which explained the difference between the Councils' Garden waste – gate fees, paragraph 10.2, page 10.

15.9 Members discussed the possibility of increasing waste collection but were informed that in general there were limits on the capacity at the waste processing plants, affecting the amount of waste which could be processed. It was therefore not possible to increase waste collection unless a there was a capacity for processing the waste and it was not possible to move waste around the region.

15.10 It was suggested that the Councils could consider expansion of the Joint Waste Contract in the future but that this depended on a greater understanding of how waste collection and waste disposal was conducted in the Districts. This needed to be explained to Members, who could then take this information to the parish councils.

15.11 Some Members felt that it would be beneficial to conduct a new campaign to make the public aware of what foods could be included in the compost recycling bins and the recycling of plastics. Officers responded that a leaflet campaign would cost approximately £25,000 countywide and it had to be considered carefully to ensure that it would be effective.

15.12 The Mid Suffolk Lead Member for Waste informed Members that the joint waste budget was £1.4M covering 84,000 households, which in reality was an annual cost of £15.48 per household. Members agreed that this was a reasonable cost, however it was important to ensure that the Councils received value for money, when negotiating the new waste contracts.

15.13 It was requested by the Committee that all Members be informed about any future waste campaigns.

15.14 Three further recommendations were proposed by Councillor Eburne and seconded by Councillor Osborne.

1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committees receive a report from SWP for food waste after April 2018.
2. That the cost and income information be supplied to Members for the Waste Services for the next five years.
3. That information for the Waste Services be supplied on a regular basis to all Members and to be included at Member briefings.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED: -

1.1 Officers to report to Joint Overview and Scrutiny in October, prior to the Cabinet report, on the outcomes of the review and possible extension of the Joint Waste Contract.

1.2 Officers to report to Joint Overview and Scrutiny in December on the outcome of the MRF procurement process.

1.3 That the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committees to receive a report from Suffolk Waste Partnership for food waste after April 2018.

1.4 That the cost and income information be supplied to Members for the Waste Services for the next five years.

1.5 That information for the Waste Services be supplied on a regular basis to all Members and to be included at Member briefings.

16 **JOS/17/9 SCOPING OF THE FIVE-YEAR LAND SUPPLY**

16.1 The Assistant Director – Planning for Growth, began by explaining how the Five-year Land Supply was calculated annually and how the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 47, explained the practice for the Five-year Land supply.

16.2 Members asked questions in relation to the scoping document and if it was possible to receive a regular update for the existing land supply, as this could be recorded on a spreadsheet or database. It was felt that information about commencements and completions of developments were data which was possible to collect and to audit. The officer responded that once a planning permission had been granted the developer had up to three years to commence building. Commencement dates were recorded, but completions dates were to be supplied by the developer but were not always made available to the Councils. Completion dates were also more difficult to predict due to circumstances and it should be taken into consideration that even if planning permissions were granted they were not always commenced.

16.3 There had been attempts from the Local Government Association (LGA) to get the Government to provide regulation for the supply of completion dates by developers.

16.4 Members referred to the White Paper in 2017 – Fixing our Housing Market and asked if it was possible to take an objective approach and conduct a site by site analysis of completed developments and include this estimate in the annual Monitoring Report. Officers responded that it would be a risk to the Councils, if this estimate was incorrect and could damage the reputation of the Councils.

16.5 Members continued to raise questions including:

- Would it be possible to control the selling on of land with planning permission, which were making the planning permission a commodity;
- When would the Councils be able to have a Five-year Land Supply;
- Would it be possible to get better information of completed developments from housing developers;
- If a proper risk assessment of calculating the lack of a Five-year Land supply for each Councils could be included in the report;
- Would it be possible to get parish councils to supply information about completed developments to the Councils;
- Would it be possible to supply a good estimate of deliverable future allocation of developments;
- Could the difficulties of gathering the information for completed developments be addressed;
- Were Council Tax reports part of the current Five-year Land supply

calculation;

- That the cost of officer time to complete the Five-year Land Supply calculation be included in the report;
- That the issues regarding resource shortages in both the Planning and Development departments be included in the report;
- What was the national constraints compared with local restraints;
- When could Members lobby the LGA;
- How could Members impact on any of the resources;
- Members requested that a timeframe be included for when the Council would be able to have a Five-year Land Supply.

16.1 Some Members felt that because sustainability had been part of the Councils development policies, this had hindered the Five-year Land Supply

16.2 Others felt that the lack of planning permissions for certain kinds of applications due to policy constrains and NPPF regulations had impacted the Five-year Land Supply. Officers responded that the Councils had to consider the quality of the decision-making processes and reminded Members that the number of appeals overturned could pose a risk to the Councils.

16.3 Members were reminded that the rate of new homes built for 2017/18 in the Districts were as follows:

- Mid Suffolk District – 125 new homes
- Babergh District - 95 new homes.

16.4 Members were informed that the position of the Five-year Land Supply would be calculated by 31 March 2018 and published in June 2018.

It was RESOLVED: -

That a report based on the scoping document be presented to Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 March 2018 and to Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 March 2018.

17 **JOS/17/10 INFORMATION BULLETIN**

It was RESOLVED: -

That the Information Bulletin be noted.

18 **JOS/17/11 FORTHCOMING DECISION LIST**

It was RESOLVED: -

That the Forthcoming Decisions List be noted.

19 **JOS/17/12 BABERGH FORWARD PLAN**

19.1 Members discussed the forward plan and agreed the following:

- That the Suffolk Waste Partnership report on Food Waste be added to the Work Plan for after April.
- The scrutiny of Waste Services to be added to October 2018.
- The Chairs to contact Suffolk County Council to set up a joint scrutiny for Community Transport.
- The Investment Strategy report to be confirmed.

It was RESOLVED: -

That the above changes be made to the Babergh Forward Plan

20 **JOS/17/13 MID SUFFOLK FORWARD PLAN**

20.1 Members discussed the forward plan and agreed the following:

- That the Suffolk Waste Partnership report on Food Waste be added to the Work Plan for after April.
- The scrutiny of Waste Services to be added to October 2018.
- The Chairs to contact Suffolk County Council to set up a joint scrutiny for Community Transport.
- The Investment Strategy report to be confirmed

It was RESOLVED: -

That the above changes be made to the Mid Suffolk Forward Plan

The business of the meeting was concluded at 11.35 am.

…….
The Chair (& Date)