

## COUNCIL

Contact: Committee Services  
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**DATE** Thursday 22 September 2016

**PLACE** Council Chamber, Council  
Offices, High Street, Needham  
Market

**TIME** 5:30pm

14 September 2016

### NOTES:

- i) Tea /coffee will be available for Members in the Council Chamber at 5:00 pm.
- ii) The Council Chamber is situated on the first floor. There is access via a lift as an alternative to stairs.
- iii) The Council, members of the public and the press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Committee Clerk.

### A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence
2. To receive any declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests by Members
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2016

**Report C/64/16**

**Pages 5 to 13**

4. Chairman's announcements

**Report C/65/16**

**Page 14**

5. Public Participation Session

Members of the public are able to ask a question or make a statement during this item – please refer to the 'Guide to the Procedure' – copy available on request.

Prior written notice of the intention to speak must be given to the Monitoring Officer by no later than 5:00 pm on Monday 19 September 2016 (two clear working days before the meeting).

6. Questions by the Public

The Chairmen of Committees to answer any questions from the public of which notice has been given no later than midday two clear working days before the day of the meeting in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.

7. Questions by Members

The Chairman of the Council, the Chairman of Committees and Subcommittees to answer any questions on any matters in relation to which the Council has powers or duties which affect the District and which fall within the terms of reference of the Committee of which due notice has been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.

8. To receive notification of petitions in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14, to report the receipt of any petitions. There can be no debate or comment upon these matters at the Council meeting.

9. Recommendations from Committee

Changes to Arrangements for Appointment of External Auditors  
(Joint Audit and Standards Committee - 12 September 2016)

**Report JAC85**

**Pages 15 to 20**

Report JAC85 was considered by the Joint Audit and Standards Committee at its meeting on 12 September 2016. Following clarification of various matters by Officers, the recommendations were agreed as set out below:

**RECOMMENDED**

**(1) That the arrangements for appointing External Auditors at the end of the 2017/18 audit be noted.**

**(2) That the Council opts-in to the Local Government Association (LGA) sector led body (Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA)) for the independent appointment of the Councils' External Auditor, beginning with responsibilities for the financial year 2018/19.**

10. Recruitment of the Assistant Director - Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

**Report C/66/16**

**Pages 21 to 23**

11. Extension of the Appointment of Independent Persons

**Report C/67/16**

**Pages 24 to 27**

12. Appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel

**Report C/68/16**

**Pages 28 to 30**

13. Making of an Order to Confer Certain Powers upon Stuston Parish Meeting

**Report C/69/16**

**Pages 31 to 35**

14. To receive reports from the Leader of the Council and appropriate Executive Committee Members with Portfolios on issues arising since the last Council meeting. The Leader and Portfolio Holders will be prepared to answer Members' questions.

Leader (and Assets and Investment Portfolio)

(a) Councillor Nick Gowrley

**Report C/71/16**

**To follow**

(b) Executive Committee Forward Plan

**Report C/72/16**

**Pages 36 to 37**

Business Growth and Increased Productivity Portfolio

(c) Councillor Gerard Brewster

**Report C/73/16**

**Pages 38 to 39**

Environment Portfolio

(d) Councillor David Burn

**Report C/74/16**

**Pages 40 to 41**

Community Capacity Building and Engagement Portfolio

(e) Councillor Julie Flatman

**Report C/75/16**

**Pages 42 to 44**

Enabled and Efficient Organisation Portfolio / Finance Portfolio

(f) Councillor Glen Horn / Councillor John Whitehead

**Report C/76/16**

**Page 45 to 46**

Housing Delivery Portfolio

(g) Councillor John Levantis

**Report C/77/16**

**Page 47 to 48**

Joint Scrutiny Committee

(h) Councillor Rachel Eburne – Joint Chair

**Report C/78/16**

**Page 49 to 50**

Mid Suffolk Scrutiny Committee

(i) Councillor Rachel Eburne – Chair

**Report C/79/16**

**Page 51**

15. Urgent business - such other business that, by reason of special circumstances to be specified, the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency

**(Note:** Any matter to be raised under this item must be notified, in writing, to the Chief Executive or the District Monitoring Officer before the commencement of the meeting who will then take instructions from the Chairman.)

16. Future Model for Public Access Including Accommodation

**Report C/70/16**

**Pages 52 to 97**

17. Resolution to Exclude the Public

Recommended Motion

That under section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for items 18 and 19 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act in the paragraphs registered against the item:

**Note:** Information is exempt only if:

*It falls within one of the 7 categories of exempt information in the Act and; In all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information*

18. Future Model for Public Access Including Accommodation

**Confidential Report C/70/16**

**Pages 98 to 103**

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

19. Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2016

**Report C/80/16**

**Pages 104**

1. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Lindsay Barker  
Deputy Chief Executive

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### MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL** held at the Council Offices, Needham Market on 28 July 2016 at 5:30pm.

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillors:	Gerard Brewster	John Matthissen
	David Burn	Lesley Mayes
	John Field	Suzie Morley
	Julie Flatman	Dave Muller
	Jessica Fleming	Mike Norris
	Elizabeth Gibson-Harries	Derek Osborne
	Nick Gowrley	Penny Otton
	Kathie Guthrie	Jane Storey
	Derrick Haley	Andrew Stringer
	Matthew Hicks	Keith Welham
	Glen Horn	Kevin Welsby
	Diana Kearsley	John Whitehead
	Anne Killett	David Whybrow
	John Levantis	Jill Wilshaw
	Wendy Marchant	

#### **In attendance:**

Chief Executive  
Strategic Director (ME)  
Interim Assistant Director (Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer)  
Interim Head of Democratic Services  
Assistant Director (Corporate Resources)  
Interim Projects (Governance and Electoral)  
Corporate Manager (Open for Business)  
Economic Development Officer  
Governance Support Officer (VL/KD)

#### **Also attending:**

Peter Maddison – Lead Commissioner, Local Government Boundary Commission for England  
Richard Buck – Review Manager, Local Government Boundary Commission for England

**Note:** The Chairman explained the rules and procedures for the Council, members of the public and the press to record/film/photograph or broadcast the meeting when the public and press are not lawfully excluded.

#### **CL62 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Roy Barker, James Caston, Rachel Eburne, Paul Ekpenyong, Charles Flatman, Gary Green, Lavinia

Hadingham, Barry Humphreys MBE, Esther Jewson, Sarah Mansel and Timothy Passmore.

### **CL63 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

### **CL64 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 JUNE 2016**

#### **Report C/52/16**

The minutes of the meeting held 29 June 2016 were confirmed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment to:

- To remove Councillors James Caston and Timothy Passmore from the attendance list.

Councillor Penny Otton enquired to see if there was an answer available for the question she raised at the Council meeting on 29 June (CL47). Councillor Nick Gowrley advised that he had met with the Assistant Chief Executive of Suffolk County Council and a meeting with the relevant officer had been arranged. Once this had taken place he would advise and feedback.

By a unanimous vote.

#### **RESOLUTION**

*That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2016 be confirmed as a correct record*

### **CL65 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **Report C/53/16**

The report was received.

The Chairman also gave an announcement regarding the Mid Suffolk Light Railway and Afternoon Tea fund raiser that was held 23 July. She advised Members that over £2,000 had been raised and she gave thanks to staff who had assisted and helped to organise the day.

Councillor Penny Otton requested that the Council extended their congratulations to Thurston Community College who were the only school in the county to receive one of 18 specially commissioned banners marking 800 years since the creation of Magna Carta. She asked if the Communications team could reach out and remind the college that they were part of the Mid Suffolk district, and not the St Edmundsbury district. Councillor Gibson-Harries advised that she would send a letter of congratulations to Thurston Community College.

### **CL66 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

No requests had been received.



## **CL67 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public.

## **CL68 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

The following question was received from Councillor Anne Killett, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 16 and with prior due notice given:

‘In Report X/36/15 to the Executive Committee and Strategy Committee titled ‘Accommodation Update’, under the heading ‘Consultation’, paragraph 5.2 it was set out that ‘The long term accommodation strategy will be the subject of consultation with the communities directly impacted by the strategy – namely Hadleigh and Needham Market; with service users and local communities using our services; and with all councillors and our workforce.’ What consultation has there been with the communities of Needham Market and Hadleigh and what concerns raised about the potential impact of the in principle preferred strategy for accommodation which was proposed in the message from Councillors Nick Gowrley and Jennie Jenkins 19 July 2016?

Councillor Nick Gowrley provided a response to Councillor Killett’s question, as follows:

‘Thank you very much for your question, which I will address by saying at the outset that no decision to vacate either the Needham Market or Hadleigh sites has been taken. Conservative Group members from both Councils have merely provided a political steer so that officers can begin drafting papers containing full details of all the considered options for Council on 22 September. Details of the work that will be undertaken to assess the socio economic impact, if either of the two sites were vacated, will be included.

If at Council a decision is taken to vacate one or either of the sites we would then undertake consultation with the communities about the redevelopment of the sites. We will also undertake a full equality impact assessment to assess any impact if service delivery does change or if a service does not continue at either of the headquarter sites. We will also formally consult with staff about any changes for them, and we will form and work with a member task and finish group to understand and work through any changes for councillors and the communities they serve.’

## **CL69 TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL’S PETITION PROCEDURE**

None received.

## **CL70 PRESENTATION BY THE LOCAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND**

Peter Maddison, Lead Commissioner for the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), introduced the item and outlined the role of the Commission which was to ensure an electors vote carried similar weight across the district. Richard Buck, Review Manager for the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) gave a short presentation outlining the context

for an Electoral Review along with a detailed explanation of the statutory process and indicative timeline for the review.

He answered Members questions including:

- How parish boundaries would be taken into account.
- If upcoming growth information for the district would be used, or whether the review would be based on current information.
- What data was used to provide the figures in the presentation
- The timeline given in the presentation
- Information that would be taken into account during the review
- Would wards be limited to be single Member wards

Note: Councillor Jane Storey left the meeting prior to the conclusion of the presentation. Councillor Jessica Fleming left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

## **CL71 ELECTORAL REVIEW FOR MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report C/54/16**

**Chief Executive**

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) will be carrying out an electoral review of Mid Suffolk District Council, which will seek to deliver electoral equality for voters in local government elections. The aim of the review will be to recommend ward boundaries which mean that each councillor represents approximately the same number of electors.

At present some councillors represent more electors than other elected members elsewhere in the district; this had triggered an intervention review which would be undertaken by the LGBCE following a statutory procedure with a target date of December 2017 for laying an electoral order.

The report provided a summary of the key stages of the electoral review and an indicative timetable (Appendix A).

At the meeting the LGBCE provided a detailed explanation of the context for an Electoral Review and the statutory process undertaken including the role of Councillors. There was also the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on key aspects of the review.

Babergh District Council on 26 July 2016 considered the rationale for and opportunities offered by carrying out an Electoral Review alongside Mid Suffolk District Council at this time and agreed that this should proceed.

Councillor Nick Gowrley introduced the report and advised Members that recommendation 2.1 should refer to Appendix A and not Appendix 1.

By a unanimous vote.

### **RESOLUTION**

*That Council notes and endorses the content of the report and the indicative timetable for the Electoral Review for Mid Suffolk District Council (Appendix A)*

## **CL72 DESIGNATION OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE ROLE**

**Report C/55/16**

**Assistant Director (Law and Governance)  
Assistant Director (Corporate Resources)**

Members were requested to designate an Officer to be the acting Head of Paid Service for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council for the intervening period before a permanent Joint Chief Executive is appointed.

The Interim Assistant Director (Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer) advised Members that the Chief Executive's leaving date was 3 August 2016 and not 31 July 2016 as detailed in the report.

Councillor Nick Gowrley advised Members that the candidate recommended by the Task and Finish Group was Deborah Cadman, Chief Executive of Suffolk County Council.

By a unanimous vote.

### **RESOLUTION 1**

*That the candidate recommended by the Task and Finish Group for designation as the Acting Head of Paid Service for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils be considered and approved to undertake the statutory role pending the appointment of a permanent Joint Chief Executive*

### **RESOLUTION 2**

*That the Monitoring Officer be given delegated authority to make any required changes to the Council's Constitution resulting from the resolution under recommendation 2.1 above*

### **RESOLUTION 3**

*That any designated Acting Head of Paid Service be approved as Proper Officer under S270(3) of the Local Government Act 1972*

### **RESOLUTION 4**

*That the Deputy Chief Executive be designated as the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer*

## **CL73 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT GROUPS OUTSIDE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**Report C/38/16**

**Interim Head of Democratic Services**

At the meeting on 28 April 2016 the Council appointed Members to serve on the Council's Joint Bodies, which were not subject to Local Government Act 1972 rules.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services advised Members that Appendix 2 contained an error, Councillor Esther Jewson was on the Joint Staff Consultation Committee and not Councillor David Whybrow.

By a unanimous vote.

### **RESOLUTION 1**

*That the political representative calculations for the bodies referred to in Paragraph 9.2 as contained in Appendix 1 be approved*

### **RESOLUTION 2**

*That the membership of the groups as detailed in Appendix 2 be approved and that Councillor Wendy Marchant be appointed to the vacant seat on the Joint Health and Safety Committee*

## **CL74 LEADER (AND ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS PORTFOLIO)**

**Report C/57/16**

**Councillor Nick Gowrley**

The report was received.

Councillor Penny Otton was pleased to see that Film Fix UK had been awarded a contract to promote Suffolk as a film location, by the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group (SPSLG). However she was concerned on how the funding allocated to the Film Fix UK project by the group, was approved as it came from the Suffolk Local Authorities pooled business rates. She enquired if there was a way to scrutinise and make recommendations to them.

Councillor Nick Gowrley advised that the SPSLG had delegated authority to make funding decisions but advised that he would bring a report detailing how the funds were used, to the next Council meeting.

Councillor John Matthissen requested information on where the 17 new homes purchased by the Council were located. Councillor Nick Gowrley advised that he would provide a list, outside the meeting.

## **CL75 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN**

**Report C/58/16**

The report was received.

Councillor Keith Welham asked for information regarding the Passivhaus and Sheltered Housing Review reports and an assurance they would be brought to Executive Committee on the scheduled dates.

Councillor Nick Gowrley advised that work was ongoing to produce the reports and they should be included in the Forward Plan on the dates shown.

## **CL76 BUSINESS GROWTH AND INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY PORTFOLIO**

**Report C/59/16**

**Councillor Gerard Brewster**

The report was received.

Councillor Andrew Stringer requested that when a report detailing the outcome of the call for sites was written, that the sites were indexed in a way that wasn't numerical as this had caused confusion in the past.

Councillor Keith Welham requested that Stowupland was given its own map in relation to the call for sites, as there had been instances when they had been shown as Stowmarket North.

Councillor Gerard Brewster advised both these points would be looked into.

#### **CL77 ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

**Report C/60/16**

**Councillor David Burn**

The report was received.

Councillor Anne Killest requested further information on protection around the development of proposed substations.

Councillor Burn advised he would investigate and reply outside the meeting.

#### **CL78 COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING AND ENGAGEMENT PORTFOLIO**

**Report C/61/16**

**Councillor Julie Flatman**

The report was received.

Councillor Keith Welham asked for an investigation into the problems of leaflet delivering, in relation to the Building a Sustainable Future programme and also requested that in future Parish Councils were considered to make any future deliveries. He also requested an update on which parishes were being worked with on the Dementia action alliances.

Councillor John Matthissen requested to see papers on Community Resilience and the Transformation Challenge Award – Community Resilience as they emerge.

Councillor Julie Flatman advised that she would request Officers to respond to the comments.

#### **CL79 ENABLED AND EFFICIENT ORGANISATION / FINANCE PORTFOLIO**

**Report C/62/16**

**Councillor Glen Horn / Councillor John Whitehead**

The report was received.

Councillor Keith Welham commented that the Public Access Transformation Strategy had proceeded without consultation with either the Green or Liberal Democrat Party. He asked if this had been carried out without breaching the Constitution and if the opposition would be afforded a briefing on this.

The Interim Assistant Director (Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer) advised that there had been no breach of the Constitution as no decision had been

made, instead a political steer had been given. Councillor Nick Gowrley advised that a briefing for the Green and Liberal Democrat Groups would be held.

## **CL80 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO**

**Report C/63/16**

**Councillor John Levantis**

The report was received.

Councillor Otton commented that she was pleased to see that the Passivhaus development in Rattlesden, was almost complete. She requested that a report on this project be brought to Council once the development was complete, and that a visit for Councillors be arranged.

Councillor Andrew Stringer requested clarity on whether the MSDC figure of 53 affordable homes was a net gain. And he also asked if there was any work ongoing with the Private Sector on affordable housing.

Councillor Field requested further information on the Sheltered Housing Review, as he had residents within his ward who were concerned about the future of the scheme.

Councillor Levantis advised he would provide the requested information outside the meeting.

## **CL81 JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

No report was presented as the Joint Scrutiny Committee had not met since the Council meeting held on 29 June 2016.

## **CL82 RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC**

By a unanimous vote

### ***RESOLUTION***

That under section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act in the paragraphs registered against the item:

*Item*  
CL83

*Schedule 12a Reason*  
3

## **CL83 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE**

**Executive Committee – 11 July 2016**

**Report X/46/16**

**Corporate Manager (Open for Business)  
Economic Development Officer (DC)**

The Minute relating to the above mentioned item is excluded from the public record. A summary of the Minute made by the Proper Officer in accordance with

sub-section 2 of Section 100(c) of the Local Government Act 1972 is set out below.

The Corporate Manager (Open for Business) submitted report X/46/16.

The Committee accepted the recommendations contained in the report.

#### **CL84 CHIEF EXECUTIVE – CHARLIE ADAN**

It was noted that this was the final Council meeting to be attended by the Chief Executive, Charlie Adan, who was leaving the Council on 3 August 2016. Councillors Nick Gowrley, Andrew Stringer and Penny Otton expressed their heartfelt thanks and wished her the best for the future.

DRAFT

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Chairman

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## CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS - COUNCIL 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

EVENT	LOCATION	DATE	CHAIRMAN	VICE CHAIR
<b>JULY 2016</b>				
Romeo & Juliet Production	Eye Castle	30-Jul	✓	
Service for Re-opening of Redlingfield Church	St Andrew's Church, Redlingfield	31-Jul	✓	
<b>AUGUST 2016</b>				
Lamas Service	St Peter & St Paul's Church, Hoxne	03-Aug	✓	
Private View of Summer Exhibition	Wingfield Barns	11-Aug		✓
Summer Exhibition	Wingfield Barns	Aug	✓	
<b>SEPTEMBER 2016</b>				
East Anglian Traditional Music Day	Museum of East Anglian Life, Stowmarket	03-Sep	✓	
Babergh District Council Chairman's Drinks Reception	The Mansion House, Wherstead Park, Wherstead	07-Sep	✓	✓
Opening of new B&M Store	Stowmarket	08-Sep	✓	
Waveney & Beccles Joint Civic Service	The Church of St Michael the Archangel, Beccles	11-Sep	✓	
Battle of Britain Commemoration & Thanksgiving Service	St Mary's Church, Honey Hill, Bury St Edmunds	18-Sep		✓
Stowmarket Town Civic Service	St Peter & St Mary's, Stowmarket	18-Sep	✓	✓
Suffolk CC & Debenham Library Foundation Official Launch Event	New Library, Debenham	22-Sep	✓	

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## BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>From: Assistant Director – Corporate Resources</b>	<b>Report Number: JAC85</b>
<b>To: Joint Audit and Standards Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 12 September 2016</b>

### CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report summarises the changes to the arrangements for appointing External Auditors, following the closure of the Audit Commission and the end of the transitional arrangements, at the conclusion of the 2017/18 audits.
- 1.2 The Councils' will need to consider the options available and put in place new arrangements in time to make a first appointment by 31 December 2017.

#### 2. Recommendation to Council

- 2.1 That the arrangements for appointing External Auditors at the end of the 2017/18 audit be noted.
- 2.2 That the Council opts-in to the Local Government Association (LGA) sector led body (Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA)) for the independent appointment of the Councils' External Auditor, beginning with responsibilities for the financial year 2018/19.

#### 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 External audit fee levels are likely to increase when the current contracts end in 2018.
- 3.2 There are some costs associated with the procurement, regardless of the route chosen, but it is reasonable to assume that these will be lower under the LGA Sector Led Body (SLB) approach. The cost of establishing a local or joint Auditor Panel will include the cost of recruiting independent appointees (members), servicing the Panel, running a bidding and tender evaluation process, letting a contract and paying members fees and allowances.
- 3.3 Opting-in to a national SLB provides maximum opportunity to limit the extent of any increases in audit fees by entering in to a large scale collective procurement arrangement and would remove the costs of establishing an Auditor Panel.

#### 4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Section 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act) requires a relevant authority to appoint a local auditor to audit its accounts for a financial year not later than 31 December in the preceding year.

- 4.2 Section 8 governs the procedure for appointment including that the authority must consult and take account of the advice of its auditor panel on the selection and appointment of a local auditor. Section 7 and Schedule 3 provides that where a relevant authority is a local authority operating executive arrangements, the function of appointing a local auditor to audit its accounts is not the responsibility of an executive of the authority under those arrangements.
- 4.3 Section 12 makes provision for the failure to appoint a local auditor: the authority must immediately inform the Secretary of State, who may direct the authority to appoint the auditor named in the direction or appoint a local auditor on behalf of the authority.
- 4.4 Section 17 gives the Secretary of State the power to make regulations in relation to an 'appointing person' specified by the Secretary of State. This power has been exercised in the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 (SI 192) and this gives the Secretary of State the ability to enable a Sector Led Body to become the appointing person.

## **5. Risk Management**

- 5.1 There is no immediate risk to the Councils, however, early consideration by the Councils of its preferred approach will enable detailed planning to take place so as to achieve successful transition to the new arrangement in a timely and efficient manner.
- 5.2 Providing the LGA with a decision will enable the LGA to invest, or not, in developing appropriate arrangements to support the Councils.
- 5.3 The disadvantages/risks of each option are described within the report.

## **6. Consultations**

- 6.1 The Section 151 Officers and Heads of Audit across the Suffolk authorities recently met with a representative from the LGA to discuss the three options.

## **7. Equality Analysis**

- 7.1 There are no equality implications associated with this report.

## **8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications**

- 8.1 The Suffolk local authorities collectively expressed the desire to the LGA that the same auditor be appointed across the county under the SLB option to replicate the current position.

## **9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan**

- 9.1 The appointment of an External Auditor is a statutory requirement of the Councils and as such contributes towards the fitness for purpose of each Councils' governance arrangements under the Enabled and Efficient Organisation theme.

## **10. Key Information**

### **Background to the issue**

- 10.1 The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 brought to a close the Audit Commission and established transitional arrangements for the appointment of external auditors and the setting of audit fees for all local government and NHS bodies in England. On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (CLG) determined that the transitional arrangements for local government bodies would be extended by one year to include the audit of the accounts for 2017/18.
- 10.2 The Councils' current external auditor, Ernst & Young LLP was appointed under a contract let by the Audit Commission. Following closure of the Audit Commission the contract is currently managed by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA), the transitional body set up by the LGA with delegated authority from the Secretary of State. Over recent years we have benefited from a reduction in fees in the order of 50% compared with historic levels. This has been the result of a combination of factors including new contracts negotiated nationally with the firms of auditors and savings from closure of the Audit Commission. The Council's current planned external audit fees, excluding claims and returns, for 2015/16 are £48,812 for Babergh and £43,425 for Mid Suffolk.
- 10.3 When the current transitional arrangements come to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 the Councils' will be able to move to local appointment of the auditor. There are a number of routes by which this can be achieved, each with varying risks and opportunities. Current fees are based on discount rates offered by the firms in return for substantial market share. When the contracts were last negotiated nationally by the Audit Commission, they covered NHS and local government bodies and offered significant economies of scale.
- 10.4 The scope of the future audit requirements will be specified nationally. The National Audit Office (NAO) is responsible for writing the Code of Audit Practice which all firms appointed to carry out local government audits must follow. Not all accounting firms will be eligible to compete for the work, they will need to demonstrate that they have the required skills and experience and be registered with a Registered Supervising Body approved by the Financial Reporting Council. The registration process has not yet commenced and so the number of firms is not known but it is reasonable to expect that the list of eligible firms may include the top 10 or 12 firms in the country, including our current auditor. It is unlikely that small local independent firms will meet the eligibility criteria.

### **Options for local appointment of External Auditors**

- 10.5 There are three broad options open to the Councils under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act):

### **Option 1 – To make a stand-alone appointment**

- 10.6 In order to make a stand-alone appointment the Councils would need to set up an Auditor Panel. The members of the panel must be wholly or a majority of independent members as defined by the Act. Independent members for this purpose are independent appointees, this excludes current and former elected members (or officers) and their close families and friends. This means that elected members will not have a majority input to assessing bids and choosing which firm of accountants to award a contract for the Council's external audit. A new independent auditor appointment panel established by the Council will be responsible for selecting the auditor.

#### *Advantages/benefits*

- 10.7 Setting up an auditor panel allows the Councils to take maximum advantage of the new local appointment regime and have local input to the decision.

#### *Disadvantages/risks*

- 10.8 Recruitment and servicing of the Auditor Panel, running the bidding exercise and negotiating the contract is estimated by the LGA to cost in the order £15,000 plus on going expenses and allowances. It is also unclear whether the Councils will be able to attract sufficient individuals with the required skills and experience to undertake the role.
- 10.9 The Councils will not be able to take advantage of reduced fees that may be available through joint or national procurement contracts.
- 10.10 The assessment of bids and decisions on awarding contracts will be taken by independent appointees and not solely by elected members.
- 10.11 Bids may not be received as the value of the contract will be insignificant compared to that of Option 3.

### **Option 2 – Set up a Joint Auditor Panel/local joint procurement arrangements**

- 10.12 The Act enables a Council to join with other authorities to establish a joint auditor panel. Again this will need to be constituted of wholly or a majority of independent appointees (members). Further legal advice will be required on the exact constitution of such a panel having regard to the obligations of each Council under the Act and the Council would need to liaise with other local authorities to assess the appetite for such an arrangement.

#### *Advantages/benefits*

- 10.13 The costs of setting up the panel, running the bidding exercise and negotiating the contract will be shared across a number of authorities.
- 10.14 There is greater opportunity for negotiating some economies of scale by being able to offer a larger combined contract value to the firms.

### *Disadvantages/risks*

- 10.15 The decision making body will be further removed from local input, with potentially no input from elected members, where a wholly independent auditor panel is used or possibly only one elected member representing each Council, depending on the constitution agreed with the other bodies involved.
- 10.16 The choice of auditor could be complicated where individual Councils have independence issues. An independence issue occurs where the auditor has recently or is currently carrying out work such as consultancy or advisory work for the Council. Where this occurs some auditors may be prevented from being appointed by the terms of their professional standards. There is a risk that if the joint auditor panel choose a firm that is conflicted for these Councils then the Councils may still need to make a separate appointment with all the attendant costs and loss of economies possible through joint procurement.
- 10.17 Bids may be limited as the value of the contract will be insignificant compared to that of Option 3.

### **Option 3 – Opt-in to a Sector Led Body**

- 10.18 In response to the consultation on the new arrangement the LGA successfully lobbied for Councils to be able to 'opt-in' to a Sector Led Body (SLB) appointed by the Secretary of State under the Act. An SLB would have the ability to negotiate contracts with the firms nationally, maximising the opportunities for the most economic and efficient approach to procurement of external audit on behalf of the whole sector.

### *Advantages/benefits*

- 10.19 The costs of setting up the appointment arrangements and negotiating fees would be shared across all opt-in authorities.
- 10.20 By offering large contract values the firms would be able to offer better rates and lower fees than are likely to result from local negotiation.
- 10.21 Any conflicts at individual authorities would be managed by the SLB who would have a number of contracted firms to call upon.
- 10.22 The appointment process would not be ceded to locally appointed independent members. Instead a separate body is set up to act in the collective interests of the 'opt-in' authorities. The LGA are considering setting up such a body utilising the knowledge and experience acquired through the setting up of the transitional arrangements. This therefore resolves the point about conflict and governance that arises from local appointment.

### *Disadvantages/risks*

- 10.23 Individual elected members will have less opportunity for direct involvement in the appointment process other than through the LGA and/or stakeholder representative groups.

10.24 In order for the SLB to be viable and to be placed in the strongest possible negotiating position the SLB will need Councils to indicate their intention to opt-in before final contract prices and hence costs are known.

### **The way forward**

10.25 The Councils have until December 2017 to make an appointment. In practical terms this means one of the options outlined in this report will need to be in place by spring 2017 in order that the contract negotiation process can be carried out during 2017.

10.26 The LGA are working on developing a Sector Led Body and DCLG has recently approved the PSAA to become the SLB. In a recent survey, 58% of respondents expressed an interest in this option. Greatest economies of scale will come from the maximum number of councils acting collectively and opting-in to a SLB.

10.27 The Suffolk Councils' Section 151 Officers and Heads of Audit have already met with the LGA to discuss the advantages of the sector led approach. Collectively the officers would recommend this approach.

10.28 Joint Audit and Standards Committee is invited to consider the three options and to recommend to Council the preferred option to opt-in to the SLB (Option 3).

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## BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>From: Assistant Director – Corporate Resources</b>	<b>Report Number: C/66/16</b>
<b>To: Council (Babergh) Council (Mid Suffolk)</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 20 September 2016 22 September 2016</b>

### RECRUITMENT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – LAW AND GOVERNANCE (MONITORING OFFICER)

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval to extend the remit of the cross-party Task and Finish group, that was established to oversee the process to recruit the new Joint Chief Executive, to the recruitment of the permanent Assistant Director – Law and Governance (the Monitoring Officer).

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Joint Task and Finish group, which was formed to oversee and make recommendation to Council on the new Joint Chief Executive, also undertakes the same role for the Assistant Director – Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer).

#### 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There is a financial commitment in respect of the use of an executive recruitment agency, but this has been limited by extending the remit of the agency appointed for the Joint Chief Executive recruitment and can be funded through the staff savings identified in the first quarter budget monitoring report.

#### 4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 provides that it is the duty of every relevant authority to designate one of their officers to be known as the Monitoring Officer as the officer responsible for performing the duties imposed by this section and to provide that officer with such staff, accommodation and other resources as are, in his/her opinion, sufficient to allow those duties to be performed.
- 4.2 Section 7 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 provides that all appointment of officers is made on merit.
- 4.3 The Council can delegate the recruitment exercise of the appointment of the Assistant Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to a Task and Finish group but the designation of the Monitoring Officer will be subject to Council approval.

#### 5. Risk Management

- 5.1 This report is most closely linked to the Council’s Significant Risk No 5c. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Failure to recruit a suitable candidate to the Assistant Director – Law and Governance role means that the clear governance arrangements may not be developed that enable the right decisions to be taken that are appropriate for the environment that we are operating in.	Unlikely	Bad	Use of the same qualified specialist recruitment agency as the Joint Chief Executive role to advertise the benefits of the AD role and to search for suitable candidates.

## 6. Consultations

6.1 None

## 7. Equality Analysis

7.1 This report does not raise any equality issues that would affect those with protected characteristics.

## 8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

8.1 This report covers the process to appoint a permanent Assistant Director – Law and Governance (the Monitoring Officer) across Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils and will involve councillors and staff across the two councils.

## 9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan

9.1 The Assistant Director – Law and Governance role is key to leading the work around strengthening governance within the Enabled and Efficient Organisation theme of the Joint Strategic Plan.

## 10. Key Information

10.1 The Assistant Director – Law and Governance role has been filled on an interim basis since July 2015 by Suki Binjal.

10.2 The role was advertised on a permanent basis earlier in 2016, but it was not possible to make an appointment from the pool of candidates at that point in time. Following the unsuccessful recruitment the interim arrangement with Suki Binjal was extended.

10.3 With the Joint Chief Executive role currently being out to advertisement, the opportunity has been taken to re-advertise the Assistant Director – Law and Governance role at the same time. The specialist recruitment agency, Gatenby Sanderson, is being used to recruit both roles.

10.4 The Assistant Director – Law and Governance will hold the statutory officer role of the Monitoring Officer and hence has to be appointed by Council.

- 10.5 The new Joint Chief Executive will hold the statutory officer role of Head of Paid Service and the recruitment process for this role is being overseen by the Joint Task and Finish group as agreed by Council in June 2016.
- 10.6 Due to the important working relationship between the two statutory officer roles and the fact that they are both Council appointments, it is proposed that the Joint Task and Finish group that is overseeing the recruitment of the Joint Chief Executive role undertakes the same function for the Assistant Director – Law and Governance role.
- 10.7 The membership of the Joint Task and Finish Group is:
- Babergh District Council  
Jennie Jenkins – Leader of the Conservative Group  
Clive Arthey – Leader of the Independent Group  
Sue Carpendale – Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
- Mid Suffolk District Council  
Nick Gowrley – Leader of the Conservative Group  
Andrew Stringer – Leader of the Green Group  
Penny Otton – Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
- 10.8 The Assistant Director – Law and Governance role is currently being advertised, with a closing date of 30<sup>th</sup> September. Longlisting, shortlisting and final interviews will take place during October and early November, with a recommendation for appointment being made to Council in November.

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## BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>From: Interim Assistant Director - Law and Governance</b>	<b>Report Number: C/67/16</b>
<b>To: Council (Babergh) Council (Mid Suffolk)</b>	<b>Date of meetings: 20 September 2016 22 September 2016</b>

### EXTENSION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 places a duty on local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for elected and co-opted members. This includes the requirement to have a Code of Conduct with which members must comply.
- 1.2 The Act also requires that authorities adopt arrangements for dealing with complaints about potential breaches of the Code of Conduct by Members. This must include provision for the appointment of at least one Independent Person per council.
- 1.3 In September 2014, following a recruitment exercise, the Council appointed three Independent Persons for a period of two years with an option to extend for a further two years. This report recommends extending those appointments.

<h4>2. Recommendation</h4>
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- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 That Council agrees to extend the appointment of the individuals listed in Appendix A, as Independent Persons for the Council for a further period of two years.</li> </ul> |
|--|

#### 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 A pool of four independent persons has been established by Suffolk County Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council (although only three persons have been appointed for Babergh and Mid Suffolk). Each Council will pay for one person at a cost of £300 per annum. A Council will additionally pay the independent person at a cost of £50 per complaint which has been the subject of an investigation.

#### 4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Localism Act 2011 places a duty on Councils to appoint “independent persons” pursuant to section 28 (7) of the Act.

#### 5. Risk Management

- 5.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council’s Significant Business Risk No 5c. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Failure to develop clear governance arrangements that enable the right decisions to be taken that are appropriate for the environment that we are operating in	Low	Bad	Transitional arrangements with other Suffolk councils

## 6. Consultations

- 6.1 The arrangements set out in this report have previously been approved by Full Council in 2014.

## 7. Equality Analysis

- 7.1 The recruitment exercise undertaken in 2014 was informed by an equality impact assessment to ensure the advertising channels used and targeted communication was designed to attract candidates from diverse backgrounds.

## 8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

- 8.1 Four of the Suffolk local authorities have agreed to participate in the arrangements for a pool of “Independent Persons”.
- 8.2 Although the other Suffolk Councils have made their own arrangements to appoint, there is in place a programme of joint briefings and training events for all Independent Persons within Suffolk.

## 9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan

- 9.1 This decision underpins the Enabling and Efficient Organisation theme: Strengthened and clear governance to enable delivery.

## 10. KEY INFORMATION

- 10.1 The Localism Act requires Councils to appoint at least one independent person whose views should be obtained and taken into account before a decision is taken on a breach of a Code of Conduct complaint.
- 10.2 The role of Independent Person is defined within the Localism Act 2011. The functions of the Independent Person(s) are -
- a. they must be consulted by the authority before it makes a finding as to whether a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct or decides on action to be taken in respect of that member (this means on a decision to take no action where the investigation finds no evidence of breach or, where the investigation finds evidence that there has been a breach, on any resolution of the complaint, or on any finding of a breach and on any decision on action as a result of that finding);

- b. they may be consulted by the authority in respect of a standards complaint at any other stage; and
- c. they may be consulted by a member or co-opted member of the Council against whom a complaint has been made.

10.3 In summer 2014, Babergh District Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council collaborated on the recruitment of Independent Persons. The other Suffolk councils made their own arrangements to make appointments. Three people were recommended to Council at this time – Hazel Clark; Carey Godfrey and Susannah Westwood. A short paragraph about each person is included in Appendix A.

10.4 All three have performed the role well, and the relevant Monitoring Officers are satisfied with the support that they have received. The three have all indicated that they wish to continue in the role. The independent persons are paid an annual retainer of £300 and then a £50 fee for each case considered. This Council will pay only one annual retainer for access to this pool of Independent Persons.

10.5 The Localism Act requires that the appointment of the independent person(s) must be agreed by Council. The appointment is recommended for a further period of two years.

10.6 In two years' time there will be a full recruitment exercise. The current Independent Persons will be able to reapply if they wish.

## 11. Appendices

Title	Location
(a) Biographies of Recommended Independent Persons	Appendix A

## 12. Background Documents

12.1 Localism Act 2011 Appointment of Independent persons report to Council 25 September 2014 and 26 September 2014.

<http://bdcdocuments.onesuffolk.net/assets/Uploads/Committees/Committee-Reports/Reports-2014-15/P55.pdf>

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**BIOGRAPHIES OF RECOMMENDED INDEPENDENT PERSONS**

**Hazel Clark**

Ms Clark has been an Independent Person for the last two years. Ms Clark is a Fee-paid Employment Judge at the London Central Employment Tribunal, appointed in 2004. Between 2004 and 2014, Ms Clark was also an Independent Member of Police Misconduct Panels, sitting on internal police disciplinary hearings with senior police officers. Ms Clark has recently been appointed as a Legally Qualified Chair of Police Misconduct Panels in the Eastern region. Ms Clark lives in East Suffolk.

**Carey Godfrey**

Mr Godfrey has been an Independent Person for the last four years. He was previously Suffolk County Council's Drug and Alcohol Team Co-ordinator, and is a former Independent Member of Suffolk Police Authority. He is an Independent Member on the County Permanence (Adoption) Panel, and was the Suffolk and Norfolk Local Crime: Community Sentence Co-ordinator for the National Probation Service. Mr Godfrey lives in Otley.

**Susannah Westwood**

Ms Westwood has been an Independent Person for the last two years. Ms Westwood has had a career in the public sector, working within the health sector, housing associations and most recently with Essex County Council as a Senior Commissioning Manager in Social Care. Ms Westwood is currently a Director with Strategic Arc Ltd, providing consultancy in the social care, housing and health sector. Ms Westwood lives in Sudbury.



## MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>From: Interim Assistant Director -Law and Governance</b>	<b>Report Number: C/68/16</b>
<b>To: Council</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 22 September 2016</b>

### APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider a proposal to appoint a new Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Mid Suffolk District Council.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the following persons be appointed to the Councils Independent Remuneration Panel:

- Frances Aspinall
- Sandra Cox
- Karen Forster
- Ivor Holden
- Pamela Linsey

#### 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 It is proposed that panel members are paid a fee for each panel meeting at a rate of £100 per member per meeting and reimbursed any expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their duties. This level of fee and expenses is consistent with the approach taken by other local councils.

#### 4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the Regulations"), the Council is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to it about the allowances to be paid to Members. It is important that the Council appoints an Independent Remuneration Panel, and has regard to the views of the Panel before any decisions are made in respect of changes to the scheme of allowances for members.

#### 5. Risk Management

- 5.1 Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
The Council would not be able to review the Scheme of allowances for councillors	Low	Medium	Working with other local councils to share IRP panel members with subsequent appointment

## 6. Consultations

6.1 None

## 7. Equality Analysis

7.1 The decision recommended in this report does not give rise to any equality or diversity implications.

## 8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

8.1 The opportunity to appoint persons who are also appointed in the same capacity by another council could provide a more informed and rounded view in discharging their duty, as the panel members will be able to bring the experience and perspective they have gained advising another authority.

## 9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan

9.1 This decision underpins the Enabling and Efficient Organisation theme: Strengthened and clear governance to enable delivery.

## 10. Key Information

10.1 The Council is required to establish a Panel, known as the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), to make recommendations on the making and amendment of the Members Allowances Scheme.

10.2 It is proposed that a Panel of 5 members be appointed. This provides the council with a pool of panel members to draw on for individual reviews. Panel members should be experienced in dealing with remuneration issues and at least some members should be knowledgeable of local government affairs and the public sector.

10.3 Councillors (on any principal area authority) and any person disqualified from being a Councillor cannot be Panel members. Employees of this Council and Co-opted members are also not permitted to sit on the Panel.

10.4 The current panel appointed from the Suffolk list of Independent members have now all stepped down, necessitating the appointment of a replacement panel. Suffolk Coastal & Waveney District Council's recently carried out a recruitment exercise for an Independent Remuneration Panel. Details of the recruitment process are included in the additional information section of this report (Suffolk Coastal District Council meeting 25/09/2014).

10.5 This panel is now experienced having carried out a number of reviews; members of the panel have also worked for other partner councils in Suffolk providing an IRP

function. Officers have contacted members of the panel and have established that they are prepared to assist the council and it is therefore proposed that they are appointed.

## **11. Background Documents**

- 11.1 Details of the IRP recruitment process from the Suffolk Coastal District Council meeting on 25 September 2014, Report CL 21/15.
- 11.2 <http://apps.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/committeeminutes/showagenda.asp?id=20219>

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## MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>From: Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer</b>	<b>Report Number: C/69/16</b>
<b>To: Council</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 22 September 2016</b>

### MAKING OF AN ORDER TO CONFER CERTAIN POWERS UPON STUSTON PARISH MEETING

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider an application from Stuston Parish Meeting that the Council makes an Order conferring certain powers on it to enable it to carry out certain functions normally only carried out by a Parish Council.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That in accordance with Section 109 of the Local Government Act 1972, that Stuston Parish Meeting be granted the powers of a Parish Council as listed in Appendix A to this report.

The Council is able to resolve this matter.

#### 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The powers sought by Stuston Parish Meeting will have financial implications for the Parish Meeting themselves but not directly for the Council. There are no financial implications in terms of the Council agreeing to make the Order sought as the costs of making the Order can be met within existing Council resources.

#### 4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Council has the power under Section 109 of the Local Government Act 1972 to confer upon a Parish Meeting all or any of the functions of a Parish Council as the Council thinks fit.
- 4.2 The powers sought by Stuston Parish Meeting as outlined within Appendix A to this report are all powers that this Council may grant to Stuston Parish Meeting if Members so wish.

#### 5. Risk Management

- 5.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Significant Business Risk No 5c. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
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Failure to develop clear governance arrangements that enable the right decisions to be taken that are appropriate for the environment that we are operating in.	Low	Critical	Grant Parish Meetings appropriate powers under Section 109 of the Local Government Act 1972.
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## 6. Consultations

- 6.1 The proposals as set out in this report are supported by the Assistant Director of Communities and Public Access who has met with representatives of the Stuston Parish Meeting.

## 7. Equality Analysis

- 7.1 The powers sought by the Stuston Parish Meeting should assist the Parish Meeting in meeting its duties in relation to equality issues.

## 8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

- 8.1 If granted the proposed powers will benefit the Stuston Parish Meeting and the residents of the Parish of Stuston.

## 9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan

- 9.1 There are no direct implications.

## 10. KEY INFORMATION

- 10.1 In this Council's administrative area there are a number of small Parishes that do not have Parish Councils. In those Parishes, the decisions on what is to be done in relation to Parish matters are taken by the Parish Meeting. This Parish Meeting is open to all electors of that Parish who are entitled to speak and vote on any matter under discussion. Parish Meetings have very limited powers. Whilst they can ask the inhabitants in the Parish to contribute to its expenditure as part of the council tax setting process, it can only do so where it has the power to carry out the function in the first place.
- 10.2 The Stuston Parish Meeting wish to carry out various activities as set out in Appendix A to this report but they do not currently have the power to do this. Mid Suffolk District Council has the legal power to confer on the Stuston Parish Meeting the additional powers sought similar to those which are possessed by a Parish Council.
- 10.3 Members will be aware that Parish Meetings have limited powers compared to Parish Councils but in many cases are very active in acting as the voice and meeting the demands of the local community. They are very limited in what they can do and therefore restricted in what they can raise a precept to do.
- 10.4 Stuston Parish Meeting has requested that the Council grant the Parish Meeting a number of powers (as set out in Appendix A to this report) which would be normally carried out by a Parish Council if one existed for the Parish of Stuston which it does

not. Stuston Parish Meeting has provided your Officers with a justification for each power sought. For Members assistance this wording is included within Appendix A.

- 10.5 On 25 April 2016 Stuston Parish Meeting wrote to the Council formally requesting that the District Council exercise its powers under Section 109 of the 1972 Act to confer on the Parish Meeting the powers of a Parish Council.
- 10.6 As no delegated authority has been given to your Officers to make the necessary Order, the application has to be considered and, if appropriate, approved by the full Council. The Council's Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer is not aware of any similar local applications being made recently but the power exists to enable local communities without Parish Councils to take appropriate action to meet their locally expressed and agreed needs or requirements and as such this request is supported by your Officers.

## 11. Appendices

Title	Location
(a) Powers Sought by the Stuston Parish Council Which This Council is Able to Grant.	Appendix A

## 12. Background Documents

- 12.1 Letter of 25 April 2016 to the Council from the Stuston Parish Meeting.

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**POWERS SOUGHT BY THE STUSTON PARISH COUNCIL WHICH THIS COUNCIL IS ABLE TO GRANT**

**1) Bus Shelters: Powers to provide and maintain a Bus shelter.**

“Justification: We have an increasing number of children that catch a bus from a location on Old Bury road. They currently wait in the open on the side of the road and during bad weather they have no protection. A proposal has been made in the village to erect a shelter to give some protection whilst the children wait for a bus and we would need the powers to be able to fund this if we agree at our meeting that this is something we want to pursue.”

**2) Crime prevention: Powers to spend money on crime detection and prevention measures.**

“Justification: With the push to reduce Police community officers and Police services in general we would like to have this power to enable us to use funds to tackle (at a local level) any issues that may arise in the future.”

**3) Ditches and ponds - Power to drain & maintain ponds and ditches to prevent harm to public health.**

“Justification: In recent weeks we have had some heavy weather that has caused excessive standing water in some areas. As these so called, freak events, are becoming more common it would be good to have the power to evaluate and if required introduce measures to prevent this in the future.”

**4) Environment: Powers to issue fixed penalty notices for litter and offences under the dog control orders.**

“Justification: We have an ongoing issue with litter and going forward we would like to have some powers to enable us to tackle this.”

**5) Highways: Power to provide certain traffic signs and other notices.**

“Justification: We would like to have the ability to erect signs in the village if these were agreed and deemed appropriate.”

**6) Litter: Provision of Bins.**

“Justification: As above we have an issue with litter, provision of a bin will give people the ability to dispose of small rubbish in the correct manner and ideally help reduce the level of litter.”

**7) Nuisances: Powers to deal with offensive ditches.**

“Justification: In recent weeks we have had some heavy weather that has caused excessive standing water in some areas. As these so called, freak events, are becoming more common it would be good to have the power to evaluate and if required introduce measures to prevent this in the future.”



**8) Recreation: Powers to provide a wide range of recreational facilities.**

“Justification: We have an increasing number of children in the village that are coming to an age where they want to be outside. As a community we would like to have the opportunity to provide outdoor play equipment such as climbing facilities etc. There are lots of schemes that can be accessed to assist with funding, however we will need the ability to add funds if required and to support ongoing maintenance.”

**9) Town and country planning: Right to be notified of planning applications if right has been requested.**

“Justification: As a small village we feel that we have the right to be notified of any planning applications that apply to the Parish so that we are able to comment or challenge the planning if deemed inappropriate.”

**10) Traffic calming: Power to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes.**

“Justification: We have a big issue with speeding through the village. We have investigated various schemes and would like to move forward with a Community Speed Watch. We have already been assessed and have a number of suitable sites where we can operate from. The proposal has already been accepted by majority vote at a recent Parish meeting and we need the powers to enable purchase of the equipment. We are in discussions with other Parish Councils to share the cost of the scheme.”

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## C/71/16

### ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS PORTFOLIO REPORT

#### Key Outcomes:



#### **Property investment to generate income and regenerate local areas**

Our Capital Investment Workshops have been well attended, with 43 Members from across all groups attending to hear a presentation by Jones Lang LaSalle which made the case for property investment, the UK property market, Brexit Implications and some interesting examples of current investment opportunities.

Work to design our Capital Investment Strategy is progressing, the project team have met with treasury and legal advisors to inform development of the governance framework and delivery model which will support the new Strategy. An Investment Task & Finish Group has been set up, with cross party representation. The task & finish group will focus on refining a draft Capital Investment Strategy which will support our investment aspirations and provide the parameters, governance framework and delivery model for investment.

The Capital Investment Strategy will be recommended to Full Council for approval in November.

#### **Making best use of land and buildings across the Suffolk Public Sector Estate**

We have recently completed the purchase of Needham Market Middle School site from our Suffolk County Council colleagues. The site will be redeveloped to provide a mixed tenure housing scheme, consisting of market sale homes, shared ownership and affordable rented homes. We will also re-provide library and community use.

### **Manage our corporate assets effectively**

Work to review the Councils General Fund property assets has started. The appraisal will be completed by the end of October. Performance, including costs and benefits will be appraised and recommendations will be made for future options. This work will be part of the Asset and Investment Framework which includes the Capital Investment Strategy and will ensure we make best use of our existing assets.

### **Manage our housing assets effectively**

We are continuing to re-invest receipts from Right to Buy sales. We have purchased 17 new homes for families from our Housing Register. All of the new homes are rented at affordable rent levels.

**Councillor Nick Gowrley**  
**Leader**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
FORWARD PLAN 2016/17**

**7 November 2016**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder / MSR / Lead Officer</b>
General Fund, HRA and Capital Budget Monitoring – Quarter 2 2016/17	To understand whether the resources of the Council are aimed at and delivering the strategic priorities	Finance / Landlord Function / Corporate Manager - Financial Services
Q2 Significant Risk Register	To approve the updated risk register	Enabled and Efficient Organisation / Corporate Manager - Internal Audit
Delegation of Authority to Dispose of Housing Revenue Account Assets	To request that authority to dispose of HRA assets be delegated to Assistant Directors	Assets and Investments / Assistant Director - Investment and Commercial Delivery
Adoption of Capital Investment Strategy	To agree and adopt the Capital Investment Strategy	Assets and Investments / Assistant Director - Investment and Commercial Delivery

**5 December 2016**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder / MSR / Lead Officer</b>
Wingfield Barns CIC	Update report	Finance / Community Activities / Assistant Director - Communities and Public Access
Sheltered Housing Review	To agree the final proposals for the review of the Sheltered Housing Service	Landlord Function / Corporate Manager - Supported Housing
Performance Reporting	Performance reporting of outcomes/impacts of activities in the JSP	Enabled and Efficient Organisation / Corporate Manager – Business Improvement

**9 January 2017**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder / MSR / Lead Officer</b>
Draft Budget 2017/18	To agree the setting and allocation of resources for 2017/18 in order to achieve the Council's strategic priorities	Finance / Corporate Manager - Financial Services

**6 February 2017**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder / MSR / Lead Officer</b>
Budget 2017/18	To agree the setting and allocation of resources for 2017/18 in order to achieve the Council's strategic priorities	Finance / Corporate Manager - Financial Services
Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18	To agree the approach for 2017/18 that will complement the allocation of resources in the budget	Finance / Corporate Manager - Financial Services
General Fund, HRA and Capital Budget Monitoring – Quarter 3 2016/17	To understand whether the resources of the Council are aimed at and delivering the strategic priorities	Finance / Landlord Function / Corporate Manager - Financial Services
Leasehold Management and Service Charge Review	To review the current arrangement and charges	Landlord Function / Assistant Director – Supported Living

**6 March 2017**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder / MSR / Lead Officer</b>

**10 April 2017**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder / MSR / Lead Officer</b>

## C/73/16

### **BUSINESS GROWTH PORTFOLIO REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2016**

#### **Tourism**

The Open for Business Team have visited the Tourism Information Centres in Lavenham, Stowmarket and Sudbury over the past few weeks to gain a greater understanding of the offer, profile (including demand) and value to local tourism and local economy. This work forms a key strand of Tourism project baselines and mapping for reporting to Councillors later in the year, in support of the transition from LA funding to private tourism sector led tourism offer (which is also in line with devolution agreement principles). On Friday November 18<sup>th</sup> there will be a Suffolk DMO (Destination Management Organisation) Workshop to support the next steps at a County and Regional level. Project work will remain ongoing between now and then. Tourism was also on the agenda of the recent meeting of (Suffolk) Growth Portfolio Holders in order to monitor the work currently being undertaken by 'Visit Suffolk' to support and grow this important industry across the County.

We are now at the part of the trial to pause and evaluate success and challenges going forward. Narrative case studies will be collated as part of this work. There have been some good outcomes and several key relationships formed with key sectors and business in the districts. Whilst some of this work is slow burning, we are deploying the right level resource at key points to ensure that elements requiring District support or networking are effective, timely and adding value. Pro-active visits to businesses in the district continue with usually myself and an Officer meeting with Business Management in order to understand the business better and to provide advice and support where possible and appropriate.

#### **Business Survey**

We have now completed the main business survey tranche and received more than 400 responses. The survey will remain active, with information analysed to evidentially influence policy, locality intelligence and service development work.

#### **Enterprise Zones/Food enterprise Zones**

Officers are working with the newly established New Anglia EZ Support Team to finalise site documentation, review investment opportunities and initial infrastructure development. The first phase LDO (Local Development Order) is due to be considered by Planning Referrals Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

#### **Skills**

Mygo Phase 2 is now live as is the IcanBeA website, [www.icanbea.org.uk](http://www.icanbea.org.uk); the platform is still building but is well worth viewing. Discussions have been had with

People Plus and SCC Skills Team to ensure that the Stowmarket Mygo offer at the Mix is maximising its impact up until the end of the contract and have begun the conversation around the data needed to seek further Councillor input into what happens after December 2016.

The launch of the Navigator Schools Project will be held on the 26<sup>th</sup> September at Suffolk Food Hall. Council Leaders have been discussing devolution of skills responsibilities and budgets at regional level, with devolution of the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) in Norfolk and Suffolk having taken place from August 2016.

The Suffolk Skills Show is back for its third year at Trinity Park, Ipswich on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October. Further information on the event is being sent to all schools, colleges and influencers over the coming weeks and BMSDC will be represented on the Board and at the event. This is positively the largest Skills Event in Suffolk with a great number of Employers present showcasing their businesses and speaking with the several thousand students from across Suffolk who will be attending.

**Councillor Gerard Brewster**  
**Business Growth and Increased Productivity Portfolio Holder**



## C/74/16

### ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO REPORT TO COUNCIL – SEPTEMBER 2016

#### Modern Built Environment

**Progress Power** – On 19 August, we were notified of an application by Progress Power Limited (PPL) to make a non-material change to The Progress Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order 2015, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project Development Consent Order (DCO) that authorised the construction of a 299 MW gas-fired power station on Eye Airfield, together with an electricity substation and associated structures in open fields in Yaxley.

The original DCO gave details of the maximum dimensions of the various pieces of plant, including the gas turbines themselves. PPL has always kept its options open regarding the number of turbines, which it has said could be one or more, up to a maximum of five. It now realises that if the single turbine option is taken up the size of the unit will have a slightly larger footprint than the one specified in the existing order; it would also require more than the presently specified number of supporting pieces of plant – for example, three black start generators instead of one. The changes are considered non-material presumably because any impact will not change significantly. This council, along with other consultees such as Suffolk County Council and Historic England, are currently considering these details and have until 25 September to respond to the Planning Inspectorate. Details of the proposed amendment can be found at

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/progress-power-station/>

PPL will be bidding again in the Capacity Auction in December. The Eye project will go ahead only if the price at the Dutch auction doesn't fall below the level that meets PPL's viability requirements.

**East Anglia One** – The EA One project is currently at the stage where the requirements of the DCO (which are tantamount to planning conditions) have begun to be received by both the Council and other required consultees and the discharge of these requirements is now underway. Work is due to begin in early 2017 on the construction works for East Anglia One which, in the early stages, is likely to consist of road improvement works necessary to facilitate the future construction phases of the project.

**East Anglia Three** – Examinations into the EA Three project are also underway. The Examining Authority (Planning Inspectorate) has set out its timetable for the examination process and for hosting Issue Specific Hearings in early September. The Examining Authority's site visit took place on 7 September, taking in key points along the onshore cable route as well as the Construction Consolidation Site at Paper Mill Lane, Claydon and the proposed Substation site in Bramford. It is

intended that Officers will keep Members updated with progress on this project as it moves forward.

## **The Consumer Environment**

***Food and Safety tablets trial*** – The trial use of a tablet computer by the Food and Safety team for food safety inspections has proved very successful. We are currently putting further forms on it and ensuring it can fully replace laptops before committing the service to the switch.

***Commercial Waste Service*** – In May 2016 Waste Services launched a glass recycling service primarily aimed at the hospitality sector to supplement our existing commercial refuse and recycling collection services. The service currently has over 80 business customers, recycling over 5 tonnes of glass a week.

This supports our drive to grow our commercial waste services and increase income from business customers. Using the transformation fund to finance a short term appointment of a field sales role we were able to establish the glass service and promote our existing services. In the first 3 months of operation we have secured 42 new customers across the service (23 in MSDC) generating an additional annual income of £44,000.

***Brome Community Recycling Centre*** – Following a period of closure of this well used facility, MSDC working with Suffolk County Council, the Environment Agency and local businesses were able to reopen the site in May this year. The site is open 5 days a week, giving residents a recycling facility in an area where other local options are not readily accessible. During the first 2 months the site received over 31 tonnes of waste, of which 88% was able to be recycled. The site is operated on a cost neutral basis to MSDC; users pay fees to the operator for certain types of waste.

**Councillor David Burn**  
**Environment Portfolio Holder**

## C/75/16

### COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING AND ENGAGEMENT PORTFOLIO REPORT

#### 1. **Suffolk Volunteering Strategy**

The Council have been, and are continuing to be, proactively involved in the Strategy, agreed by the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board, and are currently planning a range of activities to raise awareness of and highlight volunteering across our Teams for both Councillors and Staff. This has included features in the Working Together Newsletter and the Staff & Councillor Survey being launched in the Autumn.

#### 2. **Connect update**

The Connect model which brings together primary care, social care and community healthcare practitioners supported by the wider public sector in a locality to provide more integrated services and support is now being rolled out across the Mid Suffolk area. A bid for Transformation Challenge Award funding for 2.7 FTE temporary Connect Programme Implementation Managers has been successful and at the time of writing recruitment for these posts is ongoing.

There will be a total of 13 Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) established across Suffolk to provide co-ordinated care for people in their locality. The Mid Suffolk area is covered by the following INTs: Eye and North West, Stowmarket (which includes Needham Market) and Bury Rural (this includes Thurston and Woolpit).

Stowmarket INT is up and running and the potential for colocation opportunities is currently being explored. Bury Rural INT is progressing well with Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings established in all GP surgeries including Botesdale Health Centre. Bury Rural INT operates from 3 main bases in Woolpit, Botesdale and Derbyshire House in Bury. There are no plans to co-locate at present although this may be revisited.

#### 3. **Transformation Challenge Award – Community Resilience**

This element of the TCA programme is continuing to work towards the pooling of locality engagement resources across the Suffolk System. Planning and development of this work has commenced on how this may be introduced in the Mid Suffolk and Babergh areas. Officers appointed through the Suffolk County Council Team led by Sara Blake are taking the opportunity to work alongside the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Communities Team at our Offices to develop shared agendas, shape the delivery of activity and plan future practices.

#### **4. Dementia update**

As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to support those living with dementia and their families, officers are working with partners and communities to enable a network of Dementia Action Alliances across both districts. Current position and highlights as follows:

- Stowmarket is now registered as a DAA alliance with the Alzheimer's Society.
- Eye and Needham Market also have constituted groups and are working towards registration.
- We are also working with a number of parishes to help them take forward their own DAA or link into one of the existing alliances in the market towns.
- We have held Dementia Friends Awareness raising sessions for Town and Parish Councils, Elected members and staff.
- We have worked with the Suffolk Cinema Network, Suffolk Community Foundation and The Regal in Stowmarket to present a series of relaxed Dementia friendly film screenings during this autumn. These are open to everyone and anyone. For those without their own transport, Community Transport is available.
- As part of our commitment to Dementia Carers, we have partnered with our leisure operator, Everyone Active, to provide new opportunities for both carers and the cared for to participate in structured leisure and other positive activities. These Living Well classes take place every Monday afternoon at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre.

#### **5. Great Run Local – Needham Lake**

Sport England's Active People Survey suggests that participation levels in sport and physical activity have been improving in Mid Suffolk. Locally we are seeing increasing levels of participation particularly in walking and running. This is being helped by a number of walking and running initiatives in the area for people to take part in from beginner level up to elite athletes.

One example supported by the Council is the Great Run Local held at Needham Lake. This weekly event has attracted increasing numbers of runners with as many as 800 participants completing 2km and 5km runs each month. Open to people of all abilities, this community event prides itself on getting new-starters into running by walking or jogging the 2km course, and gradually moving up to a 5km. Runners are offered a free wristband which logs their progress, and helps them improve each week. This is a great example of how we can encourage people to be more active, more often and in doing so to improve a key health and wellbeing outcome.

## **6. Suffolk Community Foundation Event**

On Wednesday 19 October 2016 the Council are hosting an Event at Lavenham Village Hall to promote the external funding opportunities through the Suffolk Community Foundation. The Event will include a formal presentation with the opportunity for Workshop Learning Sessions and Networking. Bookings are currently underway through the Team. This will help attract more external funding into our district and build further community capacity.

**Councillor Julie Flatman**  
**Community Capacity Building and Engagement Portfolio Holder**

**Councillor Diana Kearsley**  
**Community Activities Member with Special Responsibilities**

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## C/76/16

### ENABLED AND EFFICIENT ORGANISATION PORTFOLIO REPORT

#### 1. Public Access Transformation

Since the last Council meeting in July, a number of briefings have taken place across the political groups to prepare for the reports that are on today's agenda. They consider the public access strategy, the accommodation review and the options for the current sites at both Needham Market and Hadleigh. Once decisions have been made detailed timetables and implementation plans will be developed.

#### 2. 2017/18 Budget and Financial Sustainability

Discussions have begun with the Operational Delivery Teams to generate further ideas to either reduce costs or generate income in 2017/18 and beyond, that are not contained within the Joint Strategic Plan. These ideas, along with how the activities within the Joint Strategic Plan will contribute to the Council's financial sustainability, will be discussed at the Theme Boards and then will feed into the 2017/18 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy model.

#### 3. Outcome-Based Performance Management

A new performance framework was approved by Executive Committee in December 2015 which focuses on measuring the results and outcomes of our key projects, activities and services, as outlined in the Joint Strategic Plan rather than inputs and outputs. The framework contains four elements all of which are available through the Delivery Programme portal in 'Connect'.

The first element, an '**Executive Summary**', was presented to the Executive in September 2016. It notes the Council's key achievements for the period April to August 2016 and is a useful tool for Councillors to use in discussions with communities. The second element, a more detailed '**Performance Outcome Report**' for the period April 2015 to March 2016, contains a range of measures contributing to our performance outcomes and impact. It provides a holistic view of:

- what we are doing,
- why we are doing it,
- how well we are performing and
- what difference we are making.

To complement both of these framework elements, '**Facts and Stats**' are available offering self-service to a range of traditional performance input and output measures; and '**Socio-Economic Profiles**' offer information at a more local 'Parish' level. The framework will continue to be developed, with Officers, Councillors and Communities working together to ensure it is sustainable and fit for purpose.

#### **4. Strengthening Governance**

The Task and Finish Group met again on 24<sup>th</sup> August and discussed the timetable and implications of the electoral review, being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, as presented to Council in July.

The Group also considered the roles and functions of committees and meeting procedure rules. Recommendations for further changes to the Constitution will be presented at future Council meetings, along with proposed changes to the scheme of management and officer delegations, the planning protocol and financial procedure rules.

Other work, running in parallel to that outlined above, is considering contract procedure rules, the risk framework, business intelligence and data, the introduction of Modern.gov and devolution.

**Councillor Glen Horn – Enabled and Efficient Portfolio Holder**

**Councillor John Whitehead – Finance Portfolio Holder**

**Councillor Suzie Morley – Public Access Member with Special Responsibility**



## C/77/16

### **HOUSING DELIVERY PORTFOLIO REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2016**

#### **Sheltered Housing Review**

The proposals for the changes to the sheltered housing service were distributed to residents and members in July. We have subsequently held 28 events at schemes across the two Districts, which has given residents an opportunity to speak to staff on a one to one basis about any comments or concerns they have on the proposals. We have also received a number of written responses. The total response rate has been 50%. We are now considering all the feedback we have received and will be making changes to the proposals where necessary. The final proposals will be presented to the administrations in October, Joint Housing Board in November and Strategy and Executive in December.

#### **Council Housing Utilisation**

To speed up the disposal process Housing Asset Management Group has asked for a report recommending that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Supported Living to dispose of Council houses which have been identified as unviable, up to a value of £250k. The report is expected to be presented to the Joint Housing Board in October and Executive Committee in November. It will also propose that authority is delegated to lease suitable properties to third party landlords (invariably housing associations) for use as shared housing for single people under 35 who can only claim housing benefit for shared accommodation.

#### **Council House Building Programme – Barking and Bramford**

The Council's house building programme includes a scheme at Bramford for 2 x 2 bedroom 4 person houses and a scheme in Barking for 2x 2 bedroom 4 person houses and 1 x 2 bedroom 3 person bungalow. These two schemes are due to practically complete on the 14 September 2016. All the units have been advertised on the Gateway to Homechoice and viewings took place the week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> September with a view to renting these out the Monday following practical completion.

#### **Neighbourhood Planning Bill - Consultation**

The Neighbourhood Planning Bill was introduced to Parliament on the 7<sup>th</sup> September. The Neighbourhood Planning Bill contains measures relating to planning and compulsory purchase and will contribute to the Government's aim of making sure the housing market works for everyone. All the measures, apart from the planning register measure, were announced in the Queen's Speech 2016. The Bill has two key aims. Firstly, to help identify and free up more land to build homes on to give communities as much certainty as possible about where and when development will take place. Secondly, to speed up the delivery of new homes, in particular by

reducing the time it takes to get from planning permission being granted to building work happening on site and new homes being delivered. A technical consultation has been launched on implementation of neighbourhood planning provisions in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill. This consultation closes on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and officers will work on a response with lead members through the Theme Board.

### **Joint Working-Private Sector Empty Properties**

The Private Sector Housing and Homelessness teams have worked with the Shared Revenues Partnership to bring an empty property back into use and prevent homelessness. The property owner was prompted to apply for a grant for a new central heating system with a view to letting the property out. Private sector housing then referred the landlord to housing options to find a suitable tenant. The tenant qualified for the Rent Deposit Scheme and the property was deemed to be suitable and affordable for them. The landlord was pleased with the outcome and the tenant equally pleased to not be facing homelessness. The ripple effect of this outcome also extends much further, for example the neighbours have expressed their happiness at seeing the home back in use and bringing the property back into use will attract New Homes Bonus.

This is a good example of what can be achieved through joint working and utilising the skills and expertise that are available within the Local Authority.

### **Deposit protection and dispute resolution workshop**

On 4 October Mid Suffolk and Babergh Councils will host the first deposit protection and dispute resolution workshop in conjunction with the Deposit Protection Service (DPS) – one of a handful of companies accredited to hold deposits on behalf of landlords. This is the first time DPS has participated in such an event and it will give landlords the opportunity for any landlords to; get an overview of tenancy deposit protection and their obligations; learn about the requirements of inventory and photographic evidence; and ask questions to a senior adjudicator for the DPS.

**Councillor John Levantis**  
**Housing Delivery Portfolio Holder**

## C/78/16

### JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT FOR COUNCIL – 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

#### 1. **Joint Scrutiny Committee Meeting of 17 August 2016 (Chaired by Mark Newman – Babergh District Council)**

A summary of key items follows - for full details of all the discussions please see the reports and the minutes.

- 1.1 **Pre-Scrutiny of Sheltered Housing Review:** A review is underway across the two districts and the outcome is due to be reported to Executive and Strategy Committees in the next two months.
- 1.2 The Committee heard from the Corporate Managers with regards to how the review is progressing and specific issues that had arisen. Members were also updated on the scoping of a Community Visiting Service.
- 1.3 Questions were asked relating to support from Suffolk County Council, social services interventions, voids, very sheltered housing (Babergh only), appropriate locations, decommissioning and future investment, dementia care and costs.
- 1.4 Discussion was more detailed around how this fits with the older persons housing strategy and issues relating to the integration with social care regarding people being able to stay in their own homes and/or in the area they have always lived in.
- 1.5 **Planning appeals:** Following recent briefings on planning performance, there was much discussion on this item on the agenda, led by the Professional Lead.
- 1.6 Members asked why applications went to appeal, the management of appeals, costs involved, resourcing needed (both external and internal), how to improve on non-determination; and the role of members - both on the relevant Committees and in bringing items to the Committees, and in the appeal process.
- 1.7 Discussion focussed on underlying factors (such as the absence of a five year land supply for Mid Suffolk) but also the growth agenda and the balance between meeting this and effective use of resources.
- 1.8 Members asked that consideration be given to resourcing of appeals, and the associated training requirements; learnings from other councils; and engagement with stakeholders and communities to make the planning process more effective.

**1.9 Next meeting:** The meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016 will be held at Needham and chaired by Councillor Rachel Eburne. The agenda includes a scoping review on Assets and Public Realm and a report on how we learn from the Complaints system.

**Councillor Rachel Eburne  
Joint Chair (Mid Suffolk)**

## C/79/16

### MID SUFFOLK SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT FOR COUNCIL – 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

#### 1. Scrutiny Committee Meeting of 1 September 2016

A summary of key items follows - for full details of all the discussions please see the report and the minutes.

- 1.1 **Museum of East Anglian Life (MEAL) – Review of Impact:** Following a referral from the Executive Committee, a Task & Finish Group was set up by Mid Suffolk Scrutiny Committee to review the impact of MEAL.
- 1.2 The review was to explore the economic, social and environmental impact of MEAL on Stowmarket and wider Suffolk and a specialist consultancy, Change Consultancy, was commissioned to undertake the impact research using a Social Return on Investment methodology.
- 1.3 The Committee found that the impact of MEAL was significant in all areas researched – health and wellbeing, society and community, education, economy and environment. A key finding was that for every £1 spent by local public sector organisations on funding MEAL, value of £12.33 is created.
- 1.4 This research enabled the Council to measure the impact of MEAL in a variety of different ways and also to prove the overall value to other funders and potential funders.
- 1.5 Members were unanimous in their view that such research was of great value to the District and the learning of it should not only be applied to (and taken on board by) MEAL but also to other external organisations that work with the Council and potentially some of the Council's own work..
- 1.6 Four recommendations have been made to Executive Committee including providing further support to staff to enable them to confidently apply the methodology in other areas of work.

**Councillor Rachel Eburne**  
**Chair of Mid Suffolk Scrutiny Committee**

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## MID SUFFOK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>From: Communities and Public Access</b>	<b>Report Number: C/70/16</b>
<b>To: Council</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 22<sup>nd</sup> September</b>

### **FUTURE MODEL FOR PUBLIC ACCESS INCLUDING ACCOMMODATION**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to set out options and a strategy to deliver a future Public Access operating model for the councils. This encompasses a new Public Access Strategy and options for future accommodation for the councils and outlines options for the existing office sites in Hadleigh and Needham Market, should either or both be vacated.

The Public Access Strategy takes a whole system approach and supports collaborative work with partners in order to enable communities to do more for themselves, where they can or as they may do already, generating less demand on public services. Together with developing self-service options, this will mean we can focus more attention on those that really need our help.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To agree the principles of the emerging Public Access Strategy as set out in Section One page 8 to 18.
- 2.2 To agree one of the four accommodation options available as set out below for the co-location of the Councils headquarters. The options and the detailed business case of each are set out in Section Two page 19 to 28
  - (a) Option 1 – Locate to Hadleigh offices, or
  - (b) Option 2 – Locate to Needham Market offices, or
  - (c) Option 3 – Share accommodation in Endeavour House with Suffolk County Council and other public sector partners, or
  - (d) Option 4 – Build a new building for the councils.
- 2.3 To consider and note the key information available including the indicative timetable relating to the development of the Needham Market site, contained in Part II of Paper C/70/16.
- 2.4 That the Strategic Director, in conjunction with the Leaders of the councils, be authorised to make any minor changes to the recommendations as set out above as may be necessary.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The overall aims of the Public Access Strategy are to transform our services to be more efficient and reduce cost to both councils and the public, through delivering effective self-service options. Where up-front investment is needed this will be on an invest-to-save basis as identified in our Medium Term Financial Strategy. The costs and savings associated with the Public Access Strategy (both revenue and capital) will be refined over the coming weeks and included in the proposed budgets for 2017/18 and beyond. However, the largest spend associated with the delivery of the strategy is likely to be ICT, of which a substantial proportion has already been incorporated and approved in the Capital Programme.
- 3.2 The full financial implications in relation to the accommodation options are explained in detail in Section Two of this report.
- 3.3 The financial implications in relation to the site options are explained, partly in Section Three of this report and partly in the Part II confidential paper, where commercially sensitive information is contained.

### **4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 The Council has the legal powers to carry out and give effect to the recommendations as set out in this report.
- 4.2 The General Power of Competence (GPC) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 (the Act), and took effect in February 2012. In simple terms, it gives Councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation.
- 4.3 The scope and some limitations of the General Power are set out in sections 1 to 6 of the Localism Act 2011. In summary, the GPC enables Councils to do things -
  - (a) an individual may generally do
  - (b) anywhere in the UK or elsewhere
  - (c) for a commercial purpose or otherwise, for a charge or without a charge
  - (d) without the need to demonstrate that it will benefit the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area (although in practice councils will want to realise such benefits)

But there are some limitations on the General Power, either because they are not things which an individual can do or because they are excluded by the Act.

The GPC will not:

- (a) provide councils with new powers to raise tax or precepts or to borrow
- (b) enable councils to set charges for mandatory services, impose fines or create offences or byelaws, over and above existing powers to do so and
- (c) override existing legislation in place before the Localism act 2011.



- 4.4 Where using the GPC for charging or trading purposes, the recipient should agree to the service being provided, the income from charges should not exceed the cost of provision and, where things are done for commercial purposes, this must be done through a specified type of company.
- 4.5 Notwithstanding the limitations outlined above, the GPC remains a broad power.
- 4.6 The Local Government Act 1972 (the Act), allows Councils to dispose (or acquire land if necessary) of land held by them in any manner they wish.
- 4.7 However, subject to section 123 of the Act states that except with the consent of the Secretary of State, a Council shall not dispose of land under this section, otherwise than by way of a short tenancy, for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained.
- 4.8 Accordingly, it is considered best practice not to dispose of land without an independent valuation.

## 5. The Decision

- 5.1 Work has been ongoing since 2013 on the Public Access and Accommodation Strategies. As part of this activity seven options have been rationalised to four and a full options appraisal for those four options have been worked up and are presented in this report.
- 5.2 Members should be mindful of the aims and objectives of the Joint Strategic Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the future sustainability of both councils in taking their decision today.
- 5.3 Therefore in taking its decision on the matters in this report there will be an opportunity for all members to debate the principles of the emerging Public Access Strategy and the options available for the headquarters Accommodation. However, there will not be an opportunity to move amendments (other than minor typographical or corrective changes) to the options available for the Headquarters Accommodation for the reasons said above.

## 6. Risk Management

- 6.1 This report is most closely linked with the following Councils' Corporate / Significant Business Risks as detailed below from the Corporate Risk register.

Risk details	Mitigation	Likelihood	Impact	Score
<b>Public Access Strategy: Section One</b>				
2a: Failure to understand our local businesses and their needs and failure to engage and support them to thrive	Open for Business approach/programme; Networking with Chambers of Commerce and Local Enterprise Partnership; Research into local businesses; Connect businesses to Growth Hub	2	3	6

Risk details	Mitigation	Likelihood	Impact	Score
5a: Failure to develop our use of technology to enable us to be efficient and cost effective in everything we do.	Strategic ICT resource from SCC now part of Senior Leadership Team / Consolidating mobile and telephone technology to enable staff to work more flexibly / Continuing to integrate applications to allow systems and procedures to be consolidated to make joint teams more efficient and resilient / Alignment of strategy with SCC to make investment under 4 key themes of the cloud, mobile working, big data and social and collaboration tools.	2	3	6
5b: Failure to convert our data into accurate, up to date and easy to interrogate insights, evidence and intelligence that supports delivery of the strategic priorities and failure to adequately protect the data that we hold	Data mapping exercise to provide a register of information and their attributes / Internal Audit to undertake periodical Information Assurance Audit compliance / New information sharing intranet launched / Work with Suffolk partners to join up information held	3	3	9
5g: Failure to implement more efficient and effective public access arrangements	MITIGATION: Development of a new public access model / Maximising use of digital technology / Self-service capabilities supplemented with supported assistance / Understand customer base / Introduction of customer relationship officers / Complement "open for business" approach / Involvement of customers in design	2	3	6
<b>Accommodation and Site Options</b>				
4c: Failure to make best use of land	Map public sector estate and share with partners; Take	3	3	9

<b>Risk details</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Score</b>
and buildings across Suffolk System	opportunities to co-locate with others; Develop for delivery of homes and jobs			
5f: Failure of the Councils to become financially sustainable in response to funding changes	MITIGATION: Continued development of the strands within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) / Alignment of resources to priorities / Use of one-off funding to change the business model and support functions during change / Early identification of initiatives for the 2017/18 budget / Engagement of councillors to understand options / Modelling and analysis to understand impact	2	4	8

6.2 Other key risks associated with accommodation options are set out below in Section Two at page 19.

## **7. Consultations**

7.1 Our consultation and communications plan is detailed below. It includes all service users and local communities using our services; all councillors; communities in Hadleigh and Needham Market through their respective town councils, and our workforce.

7.2 The plan in place supports the delivery of the Public Access and Accommodation Strategy by providing appropriate messages to those impacted or that need to be involved in the decisions about future delivery. This plan covers all stakeholders; residents, businesses, staff and communities. A summary of the plan is given below and covers ways in which we have and will continue to communicate our Public Access and Accommodation Strategy and its developments. It covers activities leading up to the decisions contained in this paper and the subsequent activities including developing and designing new digital services for, and with the public.

### **7.3 Objectives of communications and consultations**

- (a) To support the Public Access Programme through timely, interactive, internal and external communications.
- (b) Ensure consistency by establishing the key messages and ensuring all information is the same throughout each communication.
- (c) Ensure all communications are jargon-free and in plain English.

- (d) Stakeholder mapping to identify key stakeholders, both internal and external.
- (e) Set principal channels of communications for each audience.
- (f) Highlight elements of the Public Access Programme that will impact specific stakeholder groups.
- (g) Provide opportunities for two-way communications – where necessary to give key stakeholders and audiences the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers.
- (h) Identify key milestones for communications activities.

#### **7.4 Components of the Communications Strategy and Plan**

- (a) Key audiences and stakeholder groups
- (b) Key messages
- (c) Internal and external channels
- (d) Approach and timescales
- (e) Governance
- (f) Monitoring, measurement and feedback mechanisms

#### **7.5 Communications Activity**

Communication and consultation has been ongoing throughout the life of the development of the Public Access Strategy and the accommodation review, for approximately the past three years.

Recently there have been a number of communications via face-to-face meetings including the monthly Employee Forums, joint Union and HR meetings, staff briefings by the Leaders of the Councils on 24 July and 3 August, and presentations to all Members through their political groups. Public Access and Accommodation items have been added as ‘standing items’ to the agenda for every meeting of the Senior Leadership Team, Extended Leadership Team and Corporate Managers’ Network.

Updates have also been provided regularly through our established internal communications channels of the ‘Working Together’ fortnightly email update and the CONNECT intranet site. Information also featured in the August edition of the ‘Town and Parish Council Newsletter’.

A “post-decision” timetable of activity has been drawn up to support the second phase of the programme from 26 September until the end of October, again to ensure all stakeholders are kept informed through all available channels. During this period, a detailed programme of communications for the subsequent phases will be produced, focusing on continued information-sharing, greater engagement and wider involvement.

### **8. Equality Analysis**

- 8.1 The initial Equality Impact Assessment that has been carried out is at Appendix A. It examines which protected classes might be affected by the implementation of the Public Access Strategy and decisions about future headquarters accommodation.
- 8.2 The initial assessment highlights that all protected classes may be affected and recommends that a further assessment is carried out alongside future work on the Public Access Strategy implementation plan, and to support any accommodation moves, to make sure any negative impacts are identified and sufficiently mitigated.

## **9. Shared Service / Partnership Implications**

- 9.1 This strategy is supporting the ambitions and objectives of the Transformation Challenge Award (TCA), developing collaborative working with partners across the whole Suffolk System on new Public Access arrangements and reducing the public sector estate across the county.

## **10. Links to Joint Strategic Plan**

- 10.1 The Public Access vision is to create cohesive, sustainable and empowered communities that can thrive and become more resilient. It therefore encompasses, how we work with our communities, the tools we need to support us, the changes we need to make to services to enable this and where we will locate our services.
- 10.2 The aim of the Public Access Strategy is to support us to deliver the outcomes in the Joint Strategic Plan and support us to be enabled, efficient, flexible, agile, innovative, collaborative and accessible. It takes a whole system approach and supports collaborative work with partners in order to enable communities to do more for themselves, generating less demand on public services. Together with developing self-service options, this will mean we can focus more attention on those that really need our help.
- 10.3 This report supports the delivery of the following specific Joint Strategic Plan aims:
- (a) More efficient public access arrangements
  - (b) Digital by design
  - (c) Making best use of land and buildings across the Suffolk system
  - (d) Community led solutions to deliver services and manage assets

This Public Access Strategy and the accommodation options are fundamental to supporting the delivery of the Joint Strategic Plan. Both will support the creation of an enabled and efficient, customer focused organisation that works in and with its communities.

## **11. Section One: Public Access Strategy**

### **11.1 Part 1: Vision for Public Access and the case for change**

The world of government and the public service sector is being transformed by technology, new ways of working, a severely constricting financial environment and public expectations.

We cannot stand still. We have to enable our communities to become more resilient and to rely less heavily on public sector services and resources. To do this we must develop our communities and use new technologies, such as SMS text messaging and new call centre technology, to establish improved ways of working that are better for our residents, simpler for our staff and cheaper for the councils.

Our vision is for the councils to have much improved public access arrangements, making it easy for anyone to do business with the Councils through channels that:

- (a) Are effortless to navigate
- (b) Promote individual and community self service
- (c) Are available when the customer requires them
- (d) Make work more straightforward and enjoyable for our staff
- (e) Reduce confusion for the public about who does what across the Suffolk System

This new Public Access Strategy devolves control and responsibility. It fosters community resilience and will enable us to learn from each interaction. It is customer focused, and promotes an evidenced understanding of the bespoke requirements of individuals, a culture of collaboration and continuous refinement of the way we do business.

### **11.2 Part 2: Current Position**

The current ways the public access the councils' services are antiquated, confusing, difficult and bureaucratic. To achieve the Councils' Joint Strategic Plan ambitions, these must be transformed and resources refocused in line with public demand, need and vulnerability.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils currently have many different ways for the public to make contact. There are face to face service points in the council buildings at Needham Market and Hadleigh and in Sudbury at the Sudbury Advice Centre. These deal with the very low volumes of unannounced walk-in demands to make payments, or with enquires about any council services. This is supplemented by individual services who may visit residents or businesses, have duty rotas or make appointments for customers to come and see them, for example, to seek planning advice.

Alongside this face to face provision the public can make contact via telephone, although we know that often it can be difficult to get an answer and / or to get to the right person to answer an inquiry. There are many numbers publicised and some arrangements that appear confusing from the outside. There are two switchboards,

as well as call centre at Hadleigh that takes calls for services including benefits, council tax and housing repairs for Babergh. Calls about housing repairs for Mid Suffolk are taken elsewhere. For waste collection questions a customer needs to call the depot in Stowmarket. For planning, building control and other services separate numbers are published for the individual departments. This arrangement is inefficient, unproductive and presents a muddled picture from a customer perspective. Public enquires are often misdirected creating dissatisfaction, for customers, frustration for staff and additional call volumes.

There are generic email boxes that are managed by some service teams to answer electronic enquires. Some services have developed online electronic services, for example, an online benefits application. However, there is not a consistent approach. Additionally, online services are not integrated with the back office and are difficult to locate on the current websites. The websites do not support access via mobile technology despite approximately 40% of users accessing our sites in this way.

As we have no Customer Relationship Management (CRM), system we cannot be insight and intelligence led because we do not currently have data to help us fully understand the customer contact landscape. However, the current levels of contact that are measured across various channels are as follows:

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Total contacts / users</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> June – 31 <sup>st</sup> July)	<b>Average contacts per day</b> (in line with opening hours)
Face to Face (at Needham and Hadleigh receptions)	1,206	28
Telephone Calls (to Call Centre)	22,263	518
Website Sessions	155,456	2,548

Our current operating model relies heavily on customers contacting us. This can create inequality as arrangements are not tailored or designed around those in need who may struggle to make contact or come to us.

In summary, current arrangements for public access are expensive, confusing, complex and frustrating for residents, businesses, staff and councillors. We do not systematically collect or collate detailed customer based information nor do we have data and insight about how often individuals contact us, or what they contact us for. Neither do we have data that supports understanding and designing services around individual residents' needs.

### 11.3 Part 3: Future Arrangements

The traditional model of public sector service delivery is obsolete. The Joint Strategic Plan recognises this and contains a commitment to deliver more efficient Public Access arrangements. The aim of the Public Access Strategy is to support

us to deliver these outcomes in the Joint Strategic Plan and to become enabled, efficient, flexible, agile, innovative, collaborative and accessible. It takes a whole system approach and supports collaborative work with partners in order to enable communities to do more for themselves, generating less demand on public services. Together with developing self-service options this will mean we can focus more attention on those that really need our help.

The Joint Strategic Plan sets out a new understanding of our purpose in the community, of how and where we can add most value. It states that:

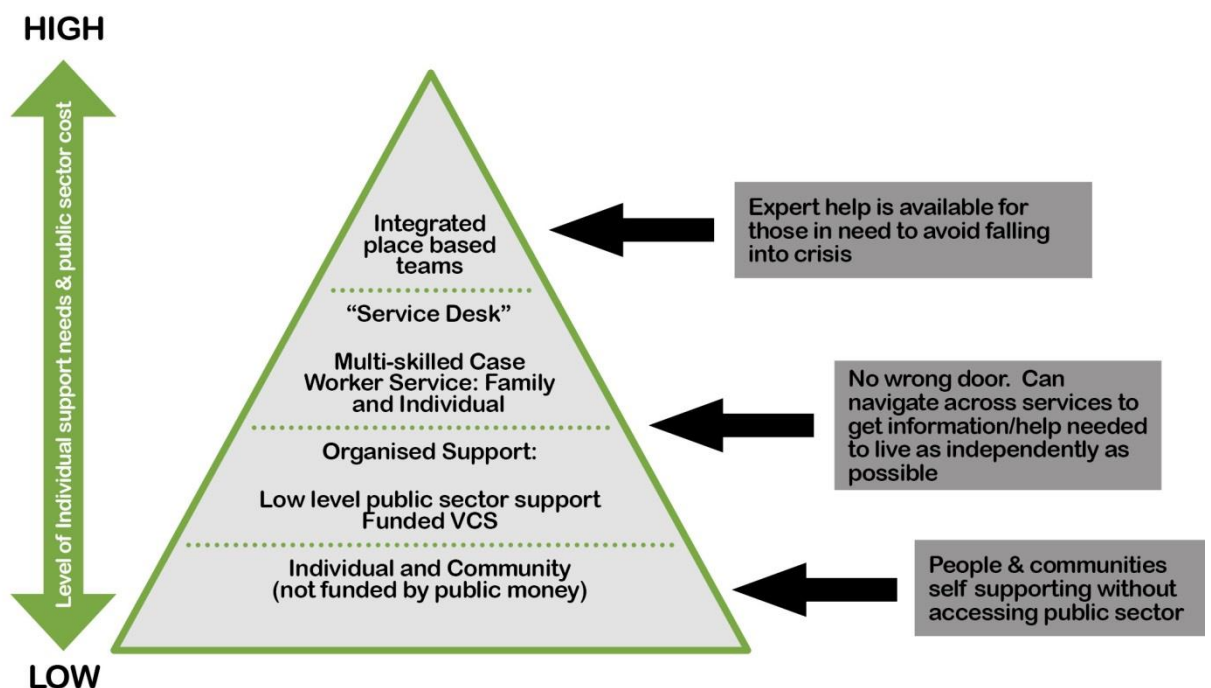
- (a) We will introduce customer relationship officers who will ensure our customers and residents receive the appropriate support for their needs.
- (b) We will undertake work to understand our customer base to maximise lower-cost digital access and to make sure that the ways our customers can access us are the most efficient and effective from both perspectives.
- (c) We are providing an ‘Open for Business’ approach to our business customers to make sure they get the right support.

Our proposed Public Access Strategy builds from this and from an understanding that our purpose is to:

- (a) Support individuals and communities to become self-serving wherever possible
- (b) Better target our resources by providing tailored support to people that need it and not to those that don't
- (c) Be consistently easy to do business with looking to make it easier still.

The diagram below illustrates the proposed operating model.

**Public Access – What it will look like**



(Joint Strategic Plan, page 23)



Successful operation of this model will require us to get better at understanding:

- (a) Our different customer segments and how we can tailor our offer to give people what they value (which will vary according to segment) and how we focus resources towards those in need and the vulnerable.
- (b) What we mean by a customer focussed culture and how we use this to drive efficiency and productivity.
- (c) How we make things easy for our customers and staff. Easier is cheaper and better.
- (d) What the public value from us and what is not important.
- (e) The power of data, technology and insight through closer collaboration with our ICT partners at Suffolk County Council.
- (f) The importance of driving compliance and consistency in the way we work, requiring a move away from old ways of working to a new operating model.
- (g) Identifying efficiencies and improvements by developing and using a consistent change methodology that supports agile.
- (h) How we can eliminate avoidable contact, failure demand and change customer behaviour to reduce contact and costs.
- (i) How system wide interventions across the public sector can reduce costs.

## **12. Our Five Key Access Channels**

Our strategy is based around five main access channels. Each of these will remain available for the full term of this strategy. However, through deepening our insight into customer capability and behaviour, and supporting communities to support themselves we will promote a shift towards more productive channels by stimulating customer interest in easier ways of doing business with us. All channels will be developed based on the whole Suffolk System so that over time complexity about 'who does what' for the customer is reduced.

### **12.1 Face to Face**

Our current offices aren't easily accessible to those people located some distance from the offices or in locations not well connected to either Hadleigh or Needham Market. However, the Councils must maintain a face to face service option. It is recommended that we provide one access point in each district and that opportunities to share this with other public sector partners, for example the Job Centre and town councils are identified to maximise the use of the public sector estate and minimise the Councils' costs. These access points are separate from locations in the districts where place based teams described below might be located.

The service points should provide facilities for staff or members to meet the public by appointment and have the facilities to use Skype and other technology to connect to officers at the Headquarters building to improve access and reduce

travel costs and time. We might need to supplement this with a mobile visiting offer for those people that need it. Our profiling work would help us identify these residents initially and over time as individual requirements change.

The advantages of developing digital services as detailed below, will reduce reliance on face to face access points as anyone should be able to access services from anywhere. The face to face points will play an important role in supporting people to get online and use digital services. Although in low bandwidth areas this is not always possible, and not everyone has access to a computer, it does mean that residents can use libraries or be supported by their friends and family to use online services. At the moment between 10% to 15% of all online benefits and council tax reduction applications are completed on the claimants, friends or family member's computer.

## 12.2 Telephone

In the short to medium term, the most common access channel will continue to be the phone. In order to reduce the confusion created by the plethora of current numbers and to make sure the cost of calling the council is only charged at local call rate it is recommended that the Councils move to one phone number which is an '03' number and channelled exclusively through our customer contact centre, which will probably be located at one of our satellite offices.

The contact centre will be supported by new telephone technology and MS Dynamics CRM that will enable us to create and build a single view of each customer making each interaction an opportunity to learn more about that customer.

The councils' main number will be supported by IVR (interactive voice response) technology that will give options to connect directly to teams or people with the expertise to answer the enquiry. Over time, we can develop the skills and knowledge base of our customer services team in order to deal with a broader range of transactions and in more depth, potentially removing the need for the IVR options.

Centralising telephone contact in one call centre will give us an understanding of call handling times, abandonment rates, types of enquiry and the effectiveness of transfers to other parts of the business. It will also enable us to develop a suite of management reports that illustrate the overall contact landscape.

Directing telephone contact through one number opens up our ability to provide flexible working options for all staff.

## 12.3 Email

We will create and promote a single email address for the councils. Emails to this address will be received in our contact centre and blended into all the transactions to be handled by our contact centre agents through our CRM system. Handling all email contact in this way will enable us to improve the service we offer by enabling us to produce management information on contact received and response times and quality.

Again, by managing emails through one address we can consider increasing our hours of operation to offer and enhance our ability to provide flexible options for staff.

## 12.4 Online - Digital Services

A large proportion of residents will already be conducting much of their household business online, for example, banking, paying bills or shopping. People prefer to do business this way because organisations have made it the easiest, most effortless option. It can also deliver significant savings as illustrated below freeing up resources to devote to those with complex needs.

*Socitm (Society of IT Managers) Insight March 2012 Cost per contact channel for enquiry*

Access Channel	Average Cost per enquiry
Face to Face	£8.62
Telephone	£2.83
Self Service – Website	£0.15

We know that our digital services will need to be developed to take account of the low broadband speed in some parts of the districts. We can do this, for example, by having a low bandwidth website without pictures or functions that would require faster broadband speeds to work effectively.

We will develop the use of CRM to support the development of tailored digital services. This will enable residents or businesses to log into our website and see only the information they have selected is relevant to them.

In summary we will evolve our two current websites firstly into one clearer, simpler site that improves access from mobile and tablets to the existing online services and information that the Councils' have. This site will then continue to evolve as other supporting IT projects reach completion, for example new arrangements to view and comment on planning applications will be available when that project is completed. Development will then continue with the use of CRM to allow people to log in and see their information and only what they want to view. We will always be working with our public to develop services, and be open to new advances in technology and trends, for example developing a Babergh and Mid Suffolk app if needed.

## 12.5 Webchat and SMS

Webchat is a system that allows organisations to chat to web users, whilst they are using digital services in order to support them to complete their transaction digitally, rather than give up and use the telephone. It therefore provides a rich source of information about how people interact with our digital services, for example, what they are finding difficult to locate which can be used to redesign services to make them more user friendly.

We will make webchat available via our website during normal office hours. Webchat contacts will again be blended into all other transactions handled by our

contact centre. Over time we could seek to develop our capacity to offer webchat 24/7 by utilising artificial intelligence to understand common enquiries and responses.

SMS text messaging is almost universally used to remind people that they have appointments or keep them informed if something goes wrong, like a power cut. Through our CRM system we will develop the capability to use text messaging to support service delivery in ways that are now expected of modern services.

## 12.6 **Integrated Place based teams**

Our objective is to become digital by design not digital only. Our plan is to complement the five main access channels with services that are designed for those who are the most in need or vulnerable supported by integrated place based teams. For example, the Sudbury Connect Project which focuses on keeping people healthy, independent and safe in their own homes through improved access to local support networks and integrated solutions to health, care and wellbeing issues.

Our approach mirrors the integrated neighbourhood health, social care, community healthcare and mental health teams where practitioners are co-located in order to provide better support for patients. These arrangements promote stronger local neighbourhood networks improving community resilience. They make it easier to support the wider public and voluntary sector network and enable people who do not meet the thresholds for formal interventions to access support (from family, friends or within the community) reducing demand on public services.

## 12.7 **Delivering the Public Access Strategy**

12.8 The section below details connections and elements that underpin the delivery of the Public Access Strategy.

12.9 Organisational culture drives behaviours, decisions and choices about where people place effort. It determines what people pay attention to (and what to ignore) in powerful ways that affect qualitative and quantitative performance.

12.10 There is strong evidenced correlation between culture and performance. The Councils' focus on developing a modern, networked organisation over the past 5 years echoes the research that InLoGov has done on 21<sup>st</sup> century public organisations. The approach of using Organisational Development has already involved analysing, understanding and using a mixture of 'levers' to shift the organisation. Areas such as developing leadership, organisational design, ICT infrastructure, networked projects and working, agile project management are already becoming well established within the organisation

12.11 Developing a high performing customer focussed culture will be key to delivering the public access strategy. Developing and designing digital services means we need to focus more on what our residents and communities need and ask for, not less. We will support and develop our staff as part of our organisational development plan to put residents, businesses and community needs at the centre of everything that the Councils' do.

## 12.12 **Service redesign using Insight**

12.13 Technology provides us with real opportunities to transform the way we work. By harnessing the power of technology and data we can gain a much better understanding of our public demand and where our resources should be targeted. It will open up opportunities to create improved ways of working moving away from a one size fits all approach to a model that responds to the actual requirements of individual residents, businesses and communities.

12.14 The key aims of all service redesign work will be to have services that:

- (a) Are better for residents, businesses and communities and simpler for staff and cheaper for the Councils.
- (b) Focus on people and their communities.
- (c) Modernise how we work using technology.
- (d) Enable digital services.
- (e) Reduce unnecessary contact and demand caused by service failures.
- (f) Take advantage of improving superfast Broadband access.
- (g) Reduce reliance on paper documents and records.
- (h) Supports channel shift and demand reduction to reduce our costs.
- (i) Use insight to understand our communities and segment service provision based on need.

Over time, we will continue to identify ongoing improvement in our ways of working using research, data management and analysis.

## 12.15 **Digital by Design**

12.16 Digital by default is a national government programme which is underpinned by the digital service standard. Its aims are to develop digital government services and support citizens to use them, as default. For example the only way of applying for Universal Credit is online.

12.17 However our joint strategic plan sets out that we will be digital by design, not digital by default, recognising the difficulties we currently have in Suffolk with broadband coverage. It states that we will develop our use of technology to enable us to be efficient and cost-effective in everything we do.

12.18 We are developing and implementing the countywide Digital Suffolk initiative, to improve access to information and the ability to make transactions digitally. This includes:

12.19 The Cloud – providing secure, resilient, and agile data infrastructure. This means that staff can access what they need to work, from anywhere at anytime and similarly for public facing digital services.

- 12.20 Mobile ways of working technologies – supporting new ways of working from anywhere and role-based workstyles for example we are currently piloting tablets for environmental health rather than laptops.
- 12.21 Big data – enabling service modelling and analysis by turning data into intelligence in order to understand and segment customers based on need and vulnerability. This element of the strategy is central to providing services with the knowledge they need in order to target services to those that need them.
- 12.22 Social and collaboration tools – driving business and social productivity. This element of the strategy is to provide the council with many new technologies such as Webchat, SMS and tools to support the use of Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter to support different ways of working. This includes telephony technology in order to improve call centre management and resourcing and customer relationship management in order to manage all customer transactions through one technological platform.
- 12.23 Our IT strategy provided by Suffolk County Council will underpin all our efforts to transform services delivering key enablers. These include the computers staff need to do their job, Customer relationship management (CRM) to gain understanding and knowledge about why the public contact us, new call centre technology enabling a more targeted and efficient service, and mobile telephones and technology so that where ever staff are they can be contacted and connected to a resident.

#### 12.24 **Public Access: Summary**

- 12.25 The public access vision is to create cohesive, sustainable and empowered communities that can thrive and become more resilient. It therefore encompasses, how we work with our communities, the tools we need to support us, the changes we need to make to services to enable this and where we will locate our services. It will require the councils to change the way things work now for the benefit of the public. The following examples illustrate where we are now and where we will be in one year's time.

##### ***Phone Enquiries:***

*Now* – If you call us now for an enquiry the first challenge is knowing which number to use. We have many published external telephone numbers. As a consequence many of the current enquiries go through to the wrong area causing delays and frustration.

If you call the contact centre and all of our lines are busy, your call keeps ringing and our system doesn't inform us that you are waiting. So at peak times several of our calls go unanswered.

*The future* – we will publish a single contact number for the two councils. This will lead to an automated answering system which will allow you to choose the service you require. For those things which can be self-served, such as ordering a brown bin or paying for a service, these will be handled automatically.

Other enquiries will go to a new call centre with a modern phone system to allow us to answer your call quickly and efficiently.

### **Website Enquiry:**

*Now* - Currently if you have a general enquiry and try to find an answer on our websites it is not easy to find what you are looking for. We have too many pages, much of the information is out of date and the search facility is poor.

*The Future* – We will have a single shared website for the two councils. The website will be designed to make it much easier for you to carry out your transactions with us. Clear up to date information, with easy to access transactions for paying or requesting services. To account for the variable internet speeds across the two districts the website will have simple icons which use very little band width and we will make the site as easy as possible to navigate and access even in slow broadband speed areas.

### **Benefits Claimants:**

*Now* - As a benefits claimant living in Claydon or Freston and working part-time in Ipswich – if you visit the Shared Revenues Partnership office in the centre of Ipswich to provide evidence or ask a question – you are currently asked to travel out to Needham Market or Hadleigh to handle your enquiry.

*The Future* – You can submit your evidence online and most issues will be resolved on a self-serve basis via the web or an automated phone system. If you do need to see an advisor you will be able to in Ipswich, or our customer access points in the districts. For some complex cases we will provide extensive support via telephone, video link or a personal visit.

### **Planning Enquiry:**

*Now* – Most planning applications are completed online via the planning portal. If necessary, you can have an appointment with a duty planner in Needham Market or Hadleigh and you have to travel to us.

*The Future* – We will have a single joint website, which will be kept fully up to date and easier to navigate so that more people will be able to self-serve and complete their planning enquiries online. At the customer access points in the districts appointments can be made to meet or video conference a planning officer. If you are based away from these – there will be the potential (if needed) for the planning officer to arrange to meet you at the site as they can work flexibly from one of our locally shared offices across the Public Sector.

### **Building Control:**

*Now* - You can call in for an inspection and you can visit the office to talk with a Building Control Officer.

*The Future* – We will continue to maintain our commercial viability and competitive edge by being flexible and sensitive to all our customers. You will be able to book an inspection appointment by phone, online and if you need to see an officer, you can also do this at our customer access points. Alternatively, you could make an arrangement for them to see you nearer to home, or on-site. If you have a general enquiry you will be able to access the latest guidance and information on our new website.

### ***Housing Repairs:***

*Now* – housing repairs are currently handled by a contractor in Babergh and an in-house repairs team in Mid Suffolk. Contacts are mainly by phone and in Babergh these go via the call centre. In Mid Suffolk some pass through the switch board, some via the call centre, some direct to the administrators in the team and others to the work supervisors. This confusion can cause delay and frustration. Jobs are then booked with either the contractor or the repairs team.

*The future* – both councils have already decided to bring responsive repairs in-house through a new In-house Repairs and Maintenance service we aim to review what we repair and the service standards for this to have a common, decent homes approach in both councils. Requests will be either on-line or via a single contact number routed through the call centre. We aim to reduce the number and length of calls taken by the team freeing up resource to be able to book jobs in a more efficient manner with the most efficient routes and to monitor delivery performance to help improve productivity.

### ***Meeting Expectations:***

*Now* – many of our customers expect to be able to do what they want to do with us at the times that work for them. They are familiar with the service other organisations provide which enables them to order products and pay bills online or on the phone at any time of the day or night.. We only offer this facility for some services such as making planning applications.

*The future* - To meet the expectations of most of our residents we will provide the same simple, self-service 24hr facility.

## **12.26 Public Access Strategy Key next steps**

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| (a) Begin service transformation with services  | Aug – Oct 2016    |
| (b) Development and delivery of a detailed Public Access Implementation plan including EQIA | end Sept onwards  |
| (c) Develop detailed plan for new face to face arrangements                                 | Oct – Dec 2016    |
| (d) Develop customer insight needed to create call centre                                   | Oct – Dec 2016    |
| (e) Launch new joint website  | Oct – Dec 2016    |
| (f) New tablets, laptops and mobile phones for staff  | Oct – March 2017  |
| (g) New call centre technology  | Jan – March 2017  |
| (h) New paperless ways of working   | Jan – March 2017  |
| (i) Develop CRM and start implementation  | April – June 2017 |
| (j) New face to face arrangements in place  | April - June 2017 |
| (k) Next iteration of joint website   | Oct – Dec 2017    |



### 13. Section Two: Headquarter Accommodation Options Appraisal

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have been considering their headquarters accommodation options since the integration of the Councils two staff teams into one fully integrated workforce in 2013.

As a result of our emerging Public Access Strategy work, and as recognised by Strategy and Executive Committees in 2014, we now have an opportunity to reconsider the location for the headquarters as discussed in the accommodation review. In reports to Executive (X/51/14) and Strategy (P63), it was recognised and recommended that:

- (a) The integration process was well advanced, but that there was a need to deal with a number of practical issues such as ICT and organisational development, and that an Accommodation Strategy was essential in dealing with these issues
- (b) The status quo was not an option for accommodation and that the occupation of both buildings resulted in inefficiencies and costs; and was a block to full integration, and collaboration
- (c) Future savings and costs were important factors, but more important was the quality of the arrangements for the public, staff, Members and partners.
- (d) Future accommodation must be able to support agile working, team working and collaborative working – in essence the fourth priority of *Smaller, Smarter, Swifter*. There was a strong desire to move on from a traditional local government management style.

There are now four options which this report will consider. They are:

Option 1: Locate to Hadleigh Offices or

Option 2: Locate to Needham Market Offices or

Option 3: Share accommodation in Endeavour House with Suffolk County Council  
and other public sector partners or

Option 4: Build a new building for the Councils

### 14. **Strategic Context**

The historic headquarters of the Councils, in Hadleigh and Needham Market, both continue to be used to provide accommodation for staff and deliver services to communities. The two buildings offer traditional, inflexible, segmented working space and the Councils are incurring avoidable revenue and capital costs as a result of maintaining two separate office headquarters. With the likelihood of reduced traditional funding arrangements continuing and the Councils finances being stretched for the foreseeable future, it is essential that we develop an accommodation strategy and use our existing property assets to contribute towards our aim to be financially sustainable Councils.

Our current traditional approach to office accommodation provision does not support the Councils with their aims and objectives around collaboration, rationalising the public sector estate and integration of the two councils. It should be noted that Public Sector Hubs have been created in the West at West Suffolk House and in the East at Riverside to support collaboration.

## 15. Options Appraisal

An options appraisal has been undertaken for each of the four options. The appraisal includes; the financial viability, benefits, disadvantages and risks. Each appraisal should be compared against the baseline case below which sets out the current shared running costs under the existing accommodation arrangements.

Description	Costs
Annual cost of current provision at Needham Market and Hadleigh combined	£1,083,885

In a table for each option presented below, information is provided about costs, where costs are estimated they are shown marked (E).

In addition there is a narrative which sets out; benefits and disadvantages. The narrative also provides additional qualitative information where it is appropriate to the options appraisal.

### 15.1 Costs and Risks applicable to all options

There will be a range of costs which apply to all options. These have not been included in the tables but are outlined below.

- (a) Removal costs
- (b) Costs associated with transitional arrangements, i.e. overlap of lease costs and existing arrangements or costs associated with decanting whilst building maintenance occurs.
- (c) Increase in staff journey times. We will be working with staff to look at how flexible working arrangements can be used to support working from home and across the districts to mitigate the impact of additional travel to work.
- (d) Provision of Green Travel plan

Risk Description	Mitigation Measures
The cost of upgrading ICT Infrastructure where not already provided for, will significantly impact on capital borrowing.	To make financial provision for these costs if Options 1 or 4
Opportunities to work with Public Sector colleagues collaboratively and in a whole system way will be more difficult	Make provision for the additional travel and resources required to work collaboratively.
If current buildings are retained, the Councils have a liable for current catch-up repairs and the ongoing repairs and improvements to any buildings in their ownership.	To make financial provision in revenue and capital programme.

The cost of re-modelling the existing building will require capital investment.	Provision will have to be made in the capital programme for the remodelling
The Councils are unable to maintain their identities if they share accommodation in a public service village.	Branding and identity will be prioritised as part of negotiations with Suffolk County Council
A suitable site may not be available immediately, applicable to option 4	Make additional financial provision and return to the options appraisal
Construction could be delayed or costs could increase, applicable to option 4	Make additional financial provision
Vacating either or both existing Headquarter sites has a socio-economic impact in Needham Market and Hadleigh	Awareness and understanding of likely impact (see section 18 below) and ensure sites are redeveloped

## 16. Socio and Economic Impact

- 16.1 It is difficult to ascertain the exact social and economic impact on Hadleigh and Needham Market in the event that a decision is made to vacate one or both the current office sites. There are many variable factors to consider and we do not have access to how much the workforce spends in the local high streets. However, we should assume that there will be an impact through any decision that removes the HQs and the workforce from either or both locations. There has been a gradual reduction in impact on both Hadleigh and Needham Market over the last three years as both offices are not fully occupied.
- 16.2 There are mitigation measures that will come through from the redevelopment of either or both sites. Carter Jonas were asked to provide an overview of the social and economic impact of redevelopment of the current sites which is summarised in Appendix B.

## 17. Option 1 – Locate to Hadleigh Offices

### 17.1 Description of the Hadleigh Offices

The Hadleigh property comprises a number of inter-linked (and listed) buildings. The accommodation is inefficient in planning terms with a significant amount of irregularly shaped space, poor circulation routes and cellularisation caused by structural walls. The specification is low, with single-glazed windows and perimeter trunking. The building was refurbished in the 1980s and has been well-maintained since. However, the inefficiency of the internal layout, combined with the Listing of the space, makes the building unsuitable in many ways for meeting key organisational objectives. Circulation throughout the buildings is poor with many restricted corridors, pinch points and changes in level.

A scheme to extend and connect the listed properties including the construction of a central, showcase, tiered council chamber was recognised with an architectural award in the 1980's for the intuitive and sympathetic manner in which the listed buildings were incorporated into a holistic scheme.

The listed building elements generally comprise a solid masonry structure with timber floors and tile covered pitched roofs. Windows throughout comprise single glazed, timber framed units.

The accommodation is heavily cellularised which is influenced by the configuration of the listed buildings. In addition, where the buildings have been extended, the structure of the extension, via a timber frame with supplemental steel tensioning, significantly constrains the internal layout which is uneconomic.

Power and data distribution is generally by perimeter trunking; air conditioning is provided to a number of isolated rooms by local units with remote external condensers.

*Source LSH Report*

The Hadleigh building will require substantial alteration to provide modern open plan working space, which supports an agile, networked culture. ICT infrastructure will require significant upgrade to meet the Councils IT Strategy requirements. The building will accommodate approximately 295 desks but this will mean utilising all of the available floor space, leaving very little capacity for meeting rooms and breakout space.

## 17.2 Financial Viability

Description	Costs (Revenue)	Costs (Capital)
Annual Running Costs	£470,608	
Catch- Up repairs		£365,000
ICT upgrade Costs		£500,000 (E)
Re-modelling existing building to modern standards		£1,700,000 (E)
Capital Cost of 1 Satellite Office		£100,751
Annual Running Cost of Satellite Office	£87,642	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£588,250</b>	<b>£2,663,751</b>
Source LSH and Carter Jonas Reports		

## 17.3 Benefits

- (a) The Hadleigh office has a fully functioning Council Chamber.
- (b) Annual revenue running costs are low.
- (c) Costs for one satellite office only will be required to support this option.
- (d) The Councils will have a workforce in the Babergh District.

## 17.4 Disadvantages

- (a) The ICT infrastructure requires significant upgrade to support the requirements of the whole workforce. The cost of upgrade has been estimated at £500,000.
- (b) Changes to the way the workplace is used, headcount numbers and service delivery mean that the buildings are no longer fit for purpose. This building is inefficient, oversized, costly and in the wrong locations for service delivery.
- (c) There is insufficient car parking on site for the full integrated staff team.
- (d) There will be significant capital costs to re-model the existing building to a standard which supports delivery of services in an agile, networked organisation. Detailed costs are not available. However a broad estimate has been provided using an industry standard office fit out methodology.
- (e) The Councils would have an ongoing financial liability for repairs and improvements to the buildings and site, to ensure they are maintained in good condition. There will also be cost implications to ensure that the working environment remains in-line and up-to-date with standards expected of office buildings as these evolve.
- (f) Capital value to be achieved from the redevelopment of the site will be lost.
- (g) Efficiencies, whole system working and collaborative opportunities across Suffolk would be more difficult.
- (h) Public transport services to Hadleigh are limited.
- (i) There will be an impact on the local economy in Needham Market through staff moving to Hadleigh.

## **18. Option 2 – Locate to Needham Market**

### **18.1 Description of the Needham Market Office**

The property comprises a four storey listed building, (Hurstlea House) which dates from the mid 1800's and has been extended to the rear over two storeys; the Mid Suffolk Council Chamber is located within the first floor of the 1960's extension. Annexed to the listed building is a substantial, two storey office building of steel framed construction which dates from the early 1980's.

The listed building element forms office accommodation which is heavily cellularised reflecting the layout of the original dwelling house – it is therefore inefficient in terms of use and occupation. Circulation is via principal and secondary staircases and that building has no lift. The building is constructed of solid masonry, with single glazed, timber sash windows, timber doors and a slate covered pitched roof. Internally, the building is provided with carpet tile floor finishes to timber floors and surface mounted light fittings to plastered ceilings. Power and data installations are accommodated within perimeter trunking. The incoming gas supply for the whole building is located within the basement. There is no air conditioning within the building.

The 1980's element of the building is constructed via a steel frame with cavity masonry cladding; windows comprise single glazed, aluminum framed units with a

tile covered pitched roof. Internally, the building is provided with carpet tile floor finishes to concrete floors. Ceilings comprise suspended ceilings with recessed modular light units, the majority of the lighting was changed in 2012 to LED fittings. Power and data installations are accommodated within perimeter trunking and power poles. There is a central lift within the building. The incoming water and electrical supplies are located within the ground floor. There are a number of wall mounted air conditioning units located within isolated cellular rooms.

The site sprawls over a large site incorporating many separate external areas. The main entrance to the site is via the High Street and the reception is suited to this function. Visitors arriving by car use a further entrance to the rear of the property. There are substantial grounds which incorporate sections of the original, stone boundary to the settlement which falls within the listing.

There are two further, single storey, timber framed outbuildings which comprise a generator housing and external sports store.

*Source LSH Report*

The Needham Market building will require substantial alteration to provide modern open plan working space, which supports an agile, networked culture. The building has a significant backlog of catch up repairs. The building will accommodate approximately 295 desks but this will require utilisation of all the available floor space with limited capacity remaining for meeting rooms and breakout space.

## 18.2 Financial Viability

Description	Costs (Revenue)	Costs (Capital)
Annual Running Costs	£613,277	
Catch- Up repairs		£1,778,000
Re-modelling existing building to modern standards		£1,700,000 (E)
Capital Cost of 1 Satellite Office		£100,751
Annual Running Cost of Satellite Office	£87,642	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£700,919</b>	<b>£3,578,751</b>
Source LSH and Carter Jonas Reports		

## 18.3 Benefits

- (a) ICT infrastructure is in place.
- (b) The site is geographically central for both Council districts and would minimise travel costs for visiting officers.
- (c) Needham Market has rail and bus links.

- (d) Costs for one satellite office only will be required to support this option.
- (e) The Councils will maintain a workforce in the Mid Suffolk District.

#### **18.4 Disadvantages**

- (a) Changes to the way the workplace is used, headcount numbers and service delivery mean that the buildings are no longer fit for purpose. This building is inefficient, oversized, costly and in the wrong locations for service delivery.
- (b) There is insufficient car parking on site for the full integrated staff team.
- (c) There will be significant capital costs to re-model the existing building to a standard which supports delivery of services in an agile, networked organisation. Detailed costs are not available. However a broad estimate has been provided using an industry standard office fit out methodology.
- (d) The Councils would have an ongoing financial liability for repairs and improvements to the buildings and site, to ensure they are maintained in good condition. There will also be cost implications to ensure that the working environment remains in-line and up-to-date with standards expected of office buildings as these evolve.
- (e) Capital value to be achieved from the redevelopment of the site will be lost.
- (f) Efficiencies, whole system working and collaborative opportunities across Suffolk would be more difficult.
- (g) There will be an impact on the local economy in Hadleigh through staff moving to Needham Market.
- (h) A high level of costs relating to catch up repairs to achieve a thermal insulation standard which is acceptable is required.

### **19. Option 3 – Share accommodation in Endeavour House with SCC and other public sector partners**

#### **19.1 Description of the Endeavour House Option**

The property consists of five floors and was built in 2003 it is located in central Ipswich alongside Ipswich Borough Council. The accommodation provides a modern open space working environment which is occupied by a range of Suffolk County Council services and other Public Sector Partners. The building has a fully functioning Council Chamber.

The Councils could lease office space in Endeavour House. The proposed lease provides for 295 desks on one floor, use of meeting rooms and facilities. In addition the Councils will have use of SCC buildings throughout the County for meetings and touch down points for officers to meet and work.

#### **19.2 Financial Viability**

Description	Revenue Costs	Capital Costs
Annual Running Costs inc. Lease Costs (295 desks)	£633,000	
Fit out costs		£50,000 (E)
Capital Cost of 2 Satellite Offices		£201,502
Annual Running Cost of Satellite Offices	£175,284	
Totals	£808,284	£251,502
Source LSH and Carter Jonas Reports		

### 19.3 Benefits

- (a) The proposed lease agreement will enable the Councils to be flexible about the space, number of desks and facilities required over time.
- (b) There will not be any financial liability for repairs and improvements to buildings or upgrade of environment to meet changing working environments.
- (c) The ICT services and infrastructure are in place through existing working arrangements with Suffolk County Council.
- (d) Capital value from the redevelopment of both sites can be achieved.
- (e) Provides 'turn-key' access to office environment for new ways of agile 21<sup>st</sup> Century working – open plan, quiet office space with breakout areas, on site facilities
- (f) The Councils will be able to access all SCC Buildings across Suffolk for workspace and meetings. This will enable staff to work across a range of places, in a flexible way.
- (g) Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils will be located within a 'Public Sector Village' enabling a collaborative approach to service delivery
- (h) Endeavour House has very good public transport links for visitors.

### 19.4 Disadvantages

- (a) The Councils headquarters will not be located in their districts.
- (b) Revenue costs are higher than Options 1 & 2 in terms of running costs, but the capital financing costs associated with having to refurbish the Hadleigh or Needham Market offices would not be incurred.
- (c) There are costs of setting up and running two satellite offices.

## 20. Option 4 – Build a new building for the Councils



## 20.1 Description of the new build Option

This option describes the costs associated with building a new headquarters for the councils. It is assumed that the site would be on the Ipswich fringe, as recommended by Lambert Smith Hampton and therefore includes the cost of setting up and running two satellite offices. The costs given below are estimated as clearly it would not be until further work commenced that a more accurate cost estimate could be provided. The costs also do not include the purchase of a site or second phase fit out.

## 20.2 Financial Viability

Description	Revenue Costs	Capital Costs
Construction Build Costs (not including land or fit out)		£7,300,000
Annual Running Costs	£500,000	
Capital Cost of 2 Satellite Office		£201,502
Annual Running Cost of Satellite Office	£175,284	
Totals	£675,284	£7,501,502
Source LSH and Carter Jonas Reports		

## 20.3 Benefits

- (a) The Councils could build in any chosen location subject to land availability.
- (b) The design of any new building can be tailored to aspirations to provide an environment for new ways of working – open plan, quiet office space with breakout areas, on site facilities subject to viability.
- (c) Revenue running costs and repair costs will be lower.
- (d) Capital value from the redevelopment of both existing sites will be achieved.

## 20.4 Disadvantages

- (a) The building could take several years to complete. A site will be required, planning approval and construction could lead to a timeframe which is two to four years from point of decision.
- (b) A broad estimate of costs using an industry standard office fit out methodology, which assumes a cost of approximately £4,000.00 per person. Using the benchmark of 295 desks this could be in the region of £1,7M should be added to the build costs.

(c) The capital costs for a new build will be high. Borrowing will be required to fund the capital costs. Interest and minimum revenue provision (MRP) charges have not been included in the revenue costs.

(d) The £7.5M is an estimate for build costs only and does not include the cost of land and associated development costs e.g. surveys, planning permission etc.

**21. Summary table of Options 1 – 4**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Revenue Costs</b>	<b>Capital Costs</b>
1 Locate to Hadleigh Offices	£588,250	£2,663,751
2 Locate to Needham Market Offices	£700,919	£3,578,751
3 Share accommodation with Suffolk County Council in Endeavour House	£808,284	£251,502
4 Build a new building	£675,284	£7,501,502

## 22. SECTION THREE: SITE OPTIONS

22.1 The attached Part II confidential report outlines the site assessment of the options for each of the current office sites at Corks Lane, Hadleigh and High Street, Needham Market, should either or both be vacated. It outlines current thinking, makes recommendations on how to take proposals forward if required, and starts to consider the potential of each site. This work will be developed fully as part of the Assets and Investments framework. Due to the commercially sensitive nature of the information this is a Part II report.

## 23. CONCLUSIONS

23.1 This report has presented the Public Access Strategy for the councils and four options for re-location of the Councils' headquarters building. Council is asked to:

- (a) approve the emerging Public Access Strategy
- (b) Choose one of the four accommodation options
- (c) Note the information relating to site options contained above and in the Part II confidential report.

## 24. Appendices

Title	Location
(a) Equality Impact Assessment	Attached as Appendix A
(b) Socio and Economic Impact	Attached as Appendix B

## 25. Background Documents

Executive October 2014 X/51/14 and Strategy P63

Executive September 2015 X/36/15 and Strategy R44

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Deborah Smart  
Public Access Transformation

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**Mid Suffolk District Council  
Babergh District Council  
Joint Equality Impact Assessment  
Template**

Summary of activity (to keep a record of the stages of the assessment already completed)		
Assessment section(s)	Date completed	By who
	24 <sup>th</sup> August 2016	Kate Parnum

1) General information			
1a) Please state if you are assessing a strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function	Emerging Public Access Strategy and Accommodation Options appraisal		
1b) What is the name of the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function being assessed?	Future Model for Public Access including Accommodation		
1c) Who are you targeting with the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function? (Please tick any that are applicable)	Residents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specific protected characteristics <input type="checkbox"/>
If specific 'protected characteristics' please state ...	<p>This is an initial assessment based on the emerging Public Access Strategy and accommodation options therefore a summary of the impact on residents and staff has been done for this report.</p> <p>The Public Access Strategy and all options could potential affect both residents and staff therefore, all protected characteristics could be impacted.</p> <p>The report presents several options therefore; a further detailed assessment will need to happen once an option has been decided upon to understand the impact in detail.</p> <p>The next stage will be to work through the implications of the option chosen including detailed assessment on residents, staff and protected characteristics.</p>		
1d) Are there any other individuals,	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

<p>departments or partners involved in the delivery of the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function?</p> <p>If yes please state who ...</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council (SCC) is a main partner, because we currently have a shared ICT service with SCC and Option 3 is to share workspace within Endeavour House, a SCC building.</p>	
<p>1e) Is this a new or existing strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function?</p>	<p>New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Existing <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>1f) What is the main purpose of the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function?</p>	<p>The future of the public access and accommodation arrangements for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils.</p>	
<p>1g) In your opinion, does the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function need to be equality impact assessed?</p> <p>If no, please fully explain your reasons and describe the evidence you used to come to this decision. Then go to <b>Q17</b></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Go to <b>Q2</b>)</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>This is an initial, overview assessment of the principles of changes to public access and accommodation this will be a summary for this decision paper. A further detailed assessment will be undertaken on the accommodation option that is chosen, and as a detailed implementation plan for the Public Access Strategy is developed. These detailed assessments will look into specific impacts for the staff and residents and each of the protective characteristics.</p>		

2) Gathering information to help the assessment		
<p>2a) What information will you use to assess the impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function? (Please tick any that are applicable)</p>	<p>Performance indicators/targets</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Benchmarking with other organisations</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Complaints information</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Consultation results</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>External verification, i.e. expert views of stakeholders/employers organisations representing people with protected characteristics</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Service uptake data</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Staff monitoring data</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Staff survey results</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>User satisfaction survey results</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>Risk assessment</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Other, please state...</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	

<p>2b) Please provide a list of all evidence gathered i.e. document titles, sources etc</p>	<p>As this decision is from an options paper there has been an assessment on generic information about the residents and staff. The above information will be used for the detailed equality impact assessment once a decision has been made so the decision can be assessed in detail.</p> <p>It will use census data (Census 2011) to understand the diversity of the districts to understand the residents. There was a discussion with human resources about the potential numbers of staff affected and the percentage of staff for each of the protected characteristics.</p> <p>There is limited information held by human resources for two reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is up to staff to complete the fields</li> <li>2. We do not ask staff if they identify with the protected characteristics</li> </ol> <p>Therefore, it has been identified that for the next EQIA further information about the staff and protected characteristics will be needed.</p>
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<b>3) Type of impact</b>				
3a) Using your evidence in Q2a, you now need to make an initial assessment of the type of impact you might expect to find with this strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function for:	<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>No negative impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>	<b>Insufficient evidence</b>
1) People with protected characteristics 2) Mid Suffolk District Council staff 3) Residents  (Please tick a box for each protected	Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Carers <sup>1</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	<sup>2</sup> Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Socio economic (income, rural isolation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>
	Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>x</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes people who have caring responsibility for children or for sick/disabled adults

<sup>2</sup> Includes Gypsies, Travellers and Non UK Nationals



characteristic)  The reason for all of the protective characteristics being insufficiently evidenced is due to not the emergent nature of the Public Access Strategy and not knowing which accommodation option will be decided.	Other, please state...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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#### 4) Identifying potential negative impacts

4a) You now need to list and explain each negative impact identified in Q3a, providing details of the protected characteristics affected, and what the negative impacts are	<b>Protected characteristic</b>	<b>What the potential negative impact is</b>	<b>Evidence of potential negative impact (if any i.e. document titles / names / dates )</b>
Note: When providing the evidence for potential negative impacts, use the information you gathered in Q2a. If you have no evidence of the negative impact, please say so...			

#### 5) Uptake of services impact

5a) Do you think people with protected characteristics will take up services associated with the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function equal to Mid Suffolk District Council staff or residents?  If no, please provide details...	Yes *	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient evidence <input type="checkbox"/>
5b) Do you think the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function likely to exclude or disadvantage people with protected characteristics in the longer term? Please provide details...	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient evidence*  (please see below for why)  <b>Age</b> - The age breakdown for Babergh is as follows: 16 years or under: 18.14%; 16 to 64 years: 60.48%;65 years and over: 21.38% The age breakdown for Mid Suffolk is as follows:

	<p>16 years or under: 18.43%; 16 to 64 years: 61.44%; 65 years and over: 20.13%</p> <p>There is insufficient evidence; however, there needs to be consideration that over one fifth of the districts that are over 65 years in age and this is increasing with any decision.</p> <p><b>Carers</b> - There is only a limited amount of information on carers available both about the number of residents that are and staff. Further evidence will need to be looked into to understand the impact.</p> <p><b>Disability</b> - In Babergh there is a total of 17.38% of the population are limited with day to day activities.          Limited a lot – 7.22%; Limited a little – 10.16%          In Mid Suffolk there is a total of 16.55% of the population are limited with day to day activities.          Limited a lot – 6.67%; Limited a little – 9.88%</p> <p>There needs to be further assessment on the type of disability and how people may be impacted by the option chosen and how residents interact with our services. Regarding staff there needs to be more understanding and assessment of their disability and how this would be impacted if there was a location change.</p> <p><b>Gender Assignment</b> - Overall not much is known about gender reassignment groups in the areas. Further assessment needs to look into the impact on this protective characteristic.</p>
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**Marriage and civil partnership** - There is limited amount of information on marriage and civil partnerships within the two districts and how this protective characteristic would be impacted by the decision paper. Further evidence will need to be looked into to understand the impact.

**Pregnancy and maternity** - There is limited amount of information on pregnancy and maternity mainly down to when information is recorded as well as how this protective characteristic would be impacted by the decision paper. Further evidence will need to be looked into to understand the impact.

**Race** - Babergh has a population which is 95.36% which is White British. Mid Suffolk has a population which is 95.88% which is White British. Further evidence will need to be looked into to understand the impact on how racial protective characteristics would be impacted by the decision paper.

**Religion or belief** - In terms of religion, 63.2% of Babergh residents identify themselves as Christian and 28.4% say they do not religion with 7.3% not stating. 63.8% of Mid Suffolk residents identify themselves as Christian and 27.6% say they do not have a religion with 7.8% not stating.

There is insufficient evidence on how this would be impacted by this decision. Therefore, further evidence will need to be looked into to understand the impact.

**Sex** - The gender split in Babergh is (49% males and 51% females) and Mid Suffolk is (49.5% males and 50.5% females) which is similar to the Suffolk and England ratio, which are both around 50-50.

There is insufficient evidence on how this would be impacted by this decision. Therefore, further evidence will need to be looked into to understand the impact.

**Sexual Orientation**  
There is only a limited amount of information on sexual orientation available. Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission states to collect it where relevant.

	<p><b>Socio economic factors</b> - This is wide characteristic and has several factors, there is information contained in the report about this specific area.</p> <p><b>Transgender</b> - There is only a limited amount of information on transgender available. Further assessment needs to look into the impact on this protective characteristic.</p>
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### 6) Delivery impacts

<p>6a) Please check the delivery arrangements for the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function against the criteria (please tick appropriate boxes)</p>	Are the premises accessible for all?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A ✘
	Is the computer software and infrastructure accessible for all?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A ✘
	Is the consultation and participation inclusive of all?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A ✘
	Are public events and meetings accessible for all?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A ✘
6b) If you answered 'no' to any of the above, please explain how and why, giving details of any legal justification if you can...	<p>The reason why N/A was crossed for these questions is because all of these questions will need to be assessed in detail and answered if the Public Access Strategy is adopted and an accommodation option chosen. Therefore, these questions will be answered in the next detailed EQIA.</p>			

### 7) Communication impacts

<p>7a) Please check the accessibility of your information and communication arrangements for the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function against the criteria (please tick appropriate boxes)</p>	Are customer contact methods accessible for all?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A ✘
	Is electronic, web based and paper information accessible for all?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A ✘
	Are publicity campaigns inclusive of all?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A ✘
	Are images and text in documents representative of all?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A ✘
7b) If you answered 'no' to any of the above, please explain how and why, giving details of any legal justification if you can...	<p>The reason why N/A was crossed for these questions is because all of these questions will need to be assessed in detail and answered if the Public Access Strategy is adopted and an accommodation option chosen. Therefore, these questions will be answered in the next detailed EQIA.</p>			

### 8) Making improvements

8a) If you have identified any potential negative impacts in Q3-7, can they be easily addressed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
8b) If yes, please list negative impact(s) and state how they will be addressed	<b>Negative Impact</b>		<b>How it will be addressed</b>
8c) If negative impact (s) cannot be addressed for legal reasons, please explain, giving details of your justification i.e. including details of any legislation if you can...			

### 9) Making a decision

<b>Decision (please tick one box)</b>	<b>Action to take</b>
9a) The evidence has identified no negative impacts <input type="checkbox"/>	Go to <b>Q17</b>
9b) The evidence indicates that there are negative impacts but they can be easily addressed <input type="checkbox"/>	Go to <b>Q17</b> and implement any actions you have identified in <b>Q8b</b>
9c) The evidence indicates potential negative impacts that cannot be easily addressed <input type="checkbox"/>	Action planning required. <b>Go to Action planning Q15</b>
9d) A negative impact was identified but it can be legally justified <input type="checkbox"/>	Go to <b>Q17</b>
9e) There is not enough evidence to say whether or not there is a negative impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Additional evidence needed. <b>Go to Additional evidence gathering Q10</b>  Additional information will be gathered in order to complete a detailed EQIA if the Public Access Strategy is adopted and an accommodation option is chosen. Therefore, these questions will be answered in the next detailed EQIA which will be supported by full and detailed information gathered specifically once the detail of these outcomes are known.

### 10) Additional evidence gathering

#### General information

Names of other people involved in additional evidence gathering	
Responsible Department	
Responsible Manager	

**Notes:**

Your assessment so far has identified insufficient evidence to make a judgement about whether your policy, project, contract, decision or function potentially negatively impacts on people with protected characteristics. You will therefore need to undertake some additional evidence gathering before making a final decision.

**a) For advice on where to gather information please contact:**

- Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment Sub Group
- Lead Officer for Equality and Diversity
- Lead Officer for Equality Mapping Sub Group
- Lead Officer for Access

**b) Contact details for the above Officers can be found on InfoWeb:**

<http://pan/C16/Equality%20Impact%20Assessments/default.aspx>

**c) Available information already gathered can be found on InfoWeb:**

<http://pan/C10/C5/Mid%20Suffolk%20District%20datainfor/default.aspx>

**d) To discuss any proposed consultation please contact:**

The Lead Officer for the Community Engagement Strategic Priority Group 6 (SPG6)

**e) Contact details for the SPG6 Lead Officer can be found on InfoWeb:**

<http://infoweb.mid-suffolk.local/C4/C1/Community%20Engagement/default.aspx>

11) Gathering additional information		
Gather and analyse relevant additional information to address the gaps in your knowledge, enhance your understanding of the issues and inform options for addressing these.		
11a) What additional evidence are you going to gather? (Please tick any that are applicable)	Advice from experts	
	Data about the physical environment, i.e. housing market or workforce	
	Demographic profile, i.e. Census	
	Existing consultation results	
	External verification i.e. expert views of stakeholders organisations representing people with protected characteristics	
	Local needs analysis	
	National best practice information i.e. Audit Commission reports	
	New consultation with a specific group(s)	
	Research reports on experiences of diverse group(s)	
	Specialist staff expertise	
	Other, please state...	
11b) Please give a summary of additional evidence you have gathered	<b>Document details (title / name / date)</b>	<b>Brief summary</b>

<b>12) Uptake of services impact</b>
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**Having now gathered additional evidence, please answer the questions below again...**

12a) Do you think people with protected characteristics will take up services associated with the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function equal to Mid Suffolk District Council staff or residents?  If no, please provide details...	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
13b) Is the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function likely to exclude or disadvantage people with protected characteristics in the longer term?  Please provide details...	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

**13) Making improvements**

13a) Having gathered additional evidence, have you now identified any potential negative impacts for anyone with a protected characteristic?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
13b) Can the negative impact(s) be easily addressed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
13c) If yes, please list the negative impacts and state how they can be addressed	<b>Negative Impact</b>		<b>How it will be addressed</b>

**14) Making a decision**

<b>Decision (please tick one box)</b>	<b>Action to take</b>
14a) The evidence has identified no negative impacts <input type="checkbox"/>	Go to <b>Q17</b>
14b) The evidence indicates that there are negative impacts but they can be easily addressed <input type="checkbox"/>	Go to <b>Q17</b> and implement any actions you have identified in <b>Q13c</b>
14c) The evidence indicates potential negative impacts that can not be easily addressed <input type="checkbox"/>	Go to <b>Action planning Q15</b>
14d) A negative impact was identified but it can be legally justified <input type="checkbox"/>	Go to <b>Q17</b>

**15) Action planning**

**General information**

Names of other people involved in action planning	
Responsible Department	
Responsible Manager	

**Notes:**

a) You need to draw up an action plan to address the negative impact(s) you have found:

Identify clearly in your action plan the following:

- Protected characteristics affected
- Potential negative impact(s)
- Action(s) to be taken to address negative impact(s)
- Named person responsible for action(s)
- Time by which action(s) will be achieved
- Resources required to achieve action(s)
- Progress report section

b) Use your additional evidence gathering to develop actions for addressing any negative impacts identified that have not been addressed.

c) Please attach a copy of your action plan to this form ensuring it is updated at intervals specified in Q16a.

<b>16) Monitoring arrangements for action plan to address negative impact/s</b>	
16a) When will you monitor, review and update the action plan to address identified negative impact/s? (if at intervals please state)	
16b) Who will be responsible for monitoring the action plan?	
16c) What is the final date all actions are to be implemented by?	
16d) Will actions be implemented immediately?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
16e) If no, please give details of the strategy or service plan the action(s) will be integrated into if known	
16f) How will the continuing impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision be monitored?	
16g) Any other comments	

<b>17) Monitoring arrangements for the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision</b>	
17a) When will you monitor the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision (if at intervals please state)	Monitoring will take place to ensure that the detailed EQIA's take place within the next 3 months.
17b) Who will be responsible for monitoring the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	Senior Leadership Team



17c) How do you intend to monitor the impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function? (Please tick any that are applicable)	Performance indicators/targets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Benchmarking with other organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Complaints information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Consultation results	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	External verification, i.e. expert views of stakeholders/employers organisations representing people with protected characteristics	
	Service uptake data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Staff monitoring data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Staff survey results	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	User satisfaction survey results	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Risk assessment	
	Other, please state...	
17d) Please details of all monitoring methods i.e. National Indicator 187 or name of consultation	These will be detailed within the next detailed EQIA	
<b>Please move on to Q18 for 'Completion'</b>		

<b>18) Completion</b>	
Name	
Job title	
Service Area	
Date of completion	
Date of next equality impact assessment, if relevant (This should be in line with next review date of strategy, policy, project, contract, decision or function).	
Management Sign Off (Please print name in block capitals)	

**Notes:**

When completed, an electronic copy of this assessment (with the action plan attached if appropriate) should be saved with the policy, strategy, project, contract or decision. A hard copy should be printed and signed by management and then kept in a safe place. The details of this assessment should be recorded in your service area's policy register and should be published on the Council's website if the policy, strategy, project, contract or decision is for external publication.

**-END-**

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**Socio and Economic Impact**

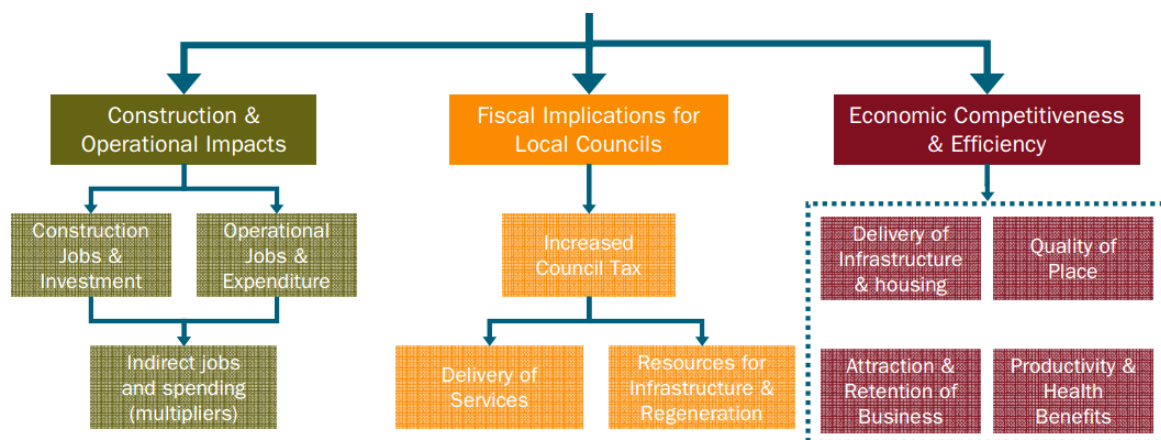
It is difficult to ascertain the exact social and economic impact on Hadleigh and Needham Market in the event that a decision is made to vacate one or both the current office sites. There are many variable factors to consider and we do not have access to how much the workforce spends in the local high streets. However, we should assume that there will be an impact through any decision that removes the HQs and the workforce from either or both locations. There has been a gradual reduction in impact on both Hadleigh and Needham Market over the last three years as both offices are not fully occupied.

There are mitigation measures that will come through from the redevelopment of either or both sites. Carter Jonas were asked to provide an overview of the social and economic impact of redevelopment of the current sites which is summarised below.

**Economic benefits from redevelopment of the HQ sites**

The analytical framework below highlights the spread of potential economic benefits of any proposed development.

**Economic Benefits Framework**



**Construction and operational Impacts**

Any proposed redevelopment options will generate construction jobs throughout the course of the development.

New development will have a positive impact on the supply chain with the initial direct spending acting as a catalyst to create wider economic benefits as this expenditure is transmitted along the supply chain and through the economy. Some businesses in the local area and the wider region would therefore benefit from trade linkages established during the construction of the proposed development.

There is likely to be a temporary increase in expenditure linked to the direct and indirect employment effects of the construction phase i.e. wage spending by workers in local shops, bars and restaurants and other facilities. Research by the Scottish Government indicates that the construction industry has an indirect and induced

employment multiplier of 2.19, meaning that 10 jobs created on the construction site could result in the creation of an additional 12 in the wider economy (i.e. a total of 22 jobs).

Planning contributions associated with the proposed development could make a specific local investment in relation to affordable housing / educational facilities / off site playing pitches and the provision of maintenance of public open space which would have a positive socio economic impact on the local area.

### **Fiscal Implications for the Councils**

There will be a loss of Business Rates income for the Councils, however there will be similar benefits arising from redevelopment of the sites through additional Council Tax income and New Homes Bonus.

### **Economic Competitiveness and Efficiency**

The delivery of homes links to the Councils Joint Strategic Plan ambitions around delivery of growth and economic prosperity.

- Short Term: Macro-economic boost from new house building
- Medium Term: Labour market and spatial flexibility from housing choice
- Medium Term: Impact on economic competitiveness (e.g. quality of place, access to services, improved affordability)
- Long Term: Replacement of poor quality stock, impacting on health, income and life chances
- Long Term: Increased energy efficiency of new housing reducing on carbon emissions (and saving mitigation costs).

### **Economic Benefits of market housing, older persons housing and affordable housing**

Any redevelopment of the HQ sites to provide new housing will deliver positive socio economic impacts through meeting local housing need, especially an ageing population with a bespoke housing offer.

With respect to how older persons housing can contribute to the vitality of the local economy in terms of expenditure on, and support of, local shops, services and facilities, a report produced for Age UK in 2013 which examined the size and growth of the older consumer market shows that the power of this market is large and growing.

The 65 and over age group accounts for 20% of the UK consumer population, a figure which is set to rise to over 25% by 2030. In a study carried out by Henley Business School, University of Reading in 2011 showed that over 80% of residents of care home/older persons residential facilities regularly utilise the local shops almost daily and over 90% used local shops/services more than once a month.

For the wider community, Retirement Living and Assisted Living Extra Care schemes make the most significant contributions to the local economy both during the construction stage and the operational stage, providing capital investment and

employment in local communities. An average Retirement Living scheme generates £3.60 million of expenditure (including labour, materials, fixtures and fittings) through its development and construction stage.

Local services aside from shops were also used regularly by occupants, including local taxis, hairdressers, pubs, cafes and restaurants more than once a week. In a typical retirement living scheme, residents generate annual local spending of over £670k.

Additional economic and social benefits accrued from visiting friends and relatives who make use of local shops and services including the local visitor economy.

In terms of general residential housing, new homes will make a contribution to economic growth and to reducing unemployment, particularly for the young and unskilled workforce.

For every additional job created in the construction industry a further 1.53 jobs are created in the wider economy. House building is also a key source of funding for Central Government and Local Authorities. Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) generates over £6bn a year and Council Tax is estimated to generate £23bn.

It is possible to estimate the total expenditure associated with the proposed development. The ONS Family Expenditure Survey provides summary data on typical household spending by household socio-economic classification. The average weekly expenditure levels for the UK was around £391.90 at the last survey taken in 2011 with average figures for the East of England at £408.00 per week. Information obtained from CoStar indicates that the total weekly consumer spending within 5 miles of Needham Market is £504 per week (£452 per week within 1 mile and £507 per week within 3 miles). Not only do these figures indicate that the area has higher average weekly spending rates by comparison to the UK / East of England it also highlights the amounts typically spent on non-essential items such as recreation and culture / restaurants and hotels indicating that the area has a relatively good amount of disposal income.

The provision of housing has the additional effect of enabling labour mobility and leads to better matching of workers with employment opportunities, thereby increasing the overall efficiency of the economy. Tackling the shortage of housing or lack of affordability can help breakdown the barrier which prevents people from accessing employment opportunities and reduces the need for long-distance commuting which has adverse transport and environmental impacts. As a result, the increased housing supply generated by the Proposed Development could allow for a better match of labour and employment, thus improving economic competitiveness and performance.

The inclusion of affordable housing on any proposed development will be important for socio economic reasons, enabling access to quality housing for those whose needs cannot be met within the private market.

There is considerable evidence that there is a social cost to poor housing and that a lack of affordable supply increases the costs to the public purse. The evidence shows that investment in affordable housing supports multiple social objectives. This

includes improvements to individual outcomes such as employability, crime, health and wellbeing, and community cohesion. It is particularly important to assess the socio-economic impact of building affordable homes in light of the large set of households where demand for affordable homes cannot currently be met.

### **The potential benefits of affordable housing - *Illustrative examples***

- **Health:** an elderly couple moving from a cold, poorly insulated private sector home to a good quality, insulated affordable home would be less at risk of suffering from excess cold. This could **save the NHS** an estimated **£8,000 per patient per year**.
- **Employment:** housing association employment programmes help on average, one in five participants find a job. A tenant in work for one year would earn **£11,100 in income** and save the government **£8,000 in benefit payments per year**.
- **Homelessness:** housing a previously homeless individual in affordable housing could result in **NHS savings of £3,000 per year**. This is through less time spent in hospital and reduced demand for mental health services.

Source: Frontier Economics - Assessing the social and economic impact of affordable housing investment Sept 2014.

### **Retail**

The inclusion of additional retail space in Needham Market, could help boost the amount of retail expenditure that is retained within the town and could also help to attract spending from further afield if the goods sold by the occupier are sought-after with people making a conscious effort to travel to it in order to purchase goods. This could potentially have the knock on effect of additional expenditure in other retail shops / restaurants in the area as people visit more than one store.

Moreover, the proposed retail space would boost the number of retail jobs in the area although the exact number of jobs that will be created is hard to know as it will depend on the nature of the occupier.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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