

## MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK CABINET** held in the Frink Room (Elisabeth)  
- Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 13 January 2020 at 2:30pm

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor: Suzie Morley (Chair)  
Gerard Brewster (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: David Burn Julie Flatman  
Peter Gould John Whitehead

### **In attendance:**

Councillor(s): Rachel Eburne  
Keith Welham

Officers: Chief Executive Officer (AC)  
Assistant Director – Housing (GF)  
Deputy Monitoring Officer (JS)  
Neighbourhood Planning Officer (PB)  
Governance Officer (CP)

### **74 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jessica Fleming.

### **75 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **76 MCA/19/36 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 06 JANUARY 2020**

The Chair noted that due to the short time frame between meetings a draft of the minutes could not be completed before the meeting. As such the minutes were deferred to the next available meeting.

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

None received.

### **78 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

There were no questions received from Councillors.

**79 MATTERS REFERRED BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY OR JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEES**

There were no matters referred.

**80 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST**

The Forthcoming Decisions List was noted.

**81 MCA/19/37 DRAFT GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2020/21**

The Draft General Fund Budget 2020/21 was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Finance who provided Members with an overview of the budget. This included details of the continued investment in CIFCO, proposed increases in council tax charges and the draft Capital Programme. Councillor Whitehead praised the work undertaken by the finance team in producing the budget and ensuring the narrative within in the report provided a full explanation of the figures.

Councillor Whitehead moved the recommendations in the report, which would be further considered by Cabinet at the meeting in February 2020 before being presented to Full Council. The recommendations were seconded by Councillor Morley.

Councillor Whitehead responded to questions from Councillor Eburne including New Homes Bonus underspend and plans in place for this money, the provision of electric vehicle charging units, and the additional spend on ICT equipment. The Chief Executive provided information regarding the work which the Commissioning and Procurement, and Communities Teams have undertaken regarding the Authorities' statutory responsibilities with regard to social value, and how this was measured.

Councillor Welham enquired if Cabinet Members had seen the full list of budget proposals produced by the Green and Liberal Democrat Groups, and what would happen to those proposals which were not being taken forward to the Environmental strategy group. Councillor Welham gave examples of the work required in promoting Stowmarket Town Centre and the provision of electric vehicle charging points. In response Councillor Whitehead confirmed that the full list of proposals had been shared and considered. Councillor Whitehead agreed that action was needed to provide a boost to Stowmarket, and also that initiatives could be brought forward with regard to electric vehicle charging points. Councillor Morley confirmed that all items on the list of proposals have been passed to Officers to carry out scoping exercises and would be returning to Cabinet for Cabinet Members to make a decision. Councillor Gould commented on the importance of Officers appraisal of proposals before they are presented to Cabinet.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:-**

**1.1 That the draft General Fund Budget proposals for 2020/21 and four-year**

outlook set out in the report be endorsed for recommendation to Council on 27 February 2020, subject to further consideration at the next Cabinet meeting on 10 February 2020.

- 1.2 That the draft General Fund Budget for 2020/21 is based on an increase to Council Tax of 1.66%, which equates to £2.76 per annum (5p per week) for a Band D property, to support the Council's overall financial position, which will be considered further at the February Cabinet meeting.
- 1.3 That from 1 April 2020 properties that are unoccupied and unfurnished (Class C discount) receive a 25% reduction for the first 28 days as set out in section 11 of the report.

**Reason for Decision:** To bring together all the relevant information to enable Cabinet Members to review, consider and comment upon the Council's General Fund budget before the February Cabinet and recommendations to Council.

## 82 MCA/19/38 DRAFT HRA BUDGET 2020/21

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and provided Members with details of the budget proposals laid out in the report. The recommendations were moved by Councillor Whitehead and seconded by Councillor Flatman.

Councillor Eburne raised the issue of plans for the site at Elmswell, and expressed concerns over the increases in charges for Sheltered Housing and enquired if these increases could be spread over a longer period of time. In response the Assistant Director for Housing confirmed that the site at Elmswell would be developed in the long-term and officers would start to consider options, however a decision had not yet been made. With regard to the increased charges for Sheltered Housing it was confirmed that a review of service charges would be undertaken to ensure all tenants receive value for money. The increased utility charges reflect increased costs and is the first increase for 2 years. It was confirmed that the possibility of these increases being spread over the next 2 years could be looked into if Cabinet requested.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:**

- 1.1 That the draft HRA Budget proposals for 2020/21 and four-year outlook set out in the report and detailed below be endorsed for recommendation to Council on 27 February 2020, subject to further consideration at the next Cabinet meeting on 10 February 2020.
- 1.2 That the CPI + 1% increase of 2.7% in Council House rents, equivalent to an average rent increase of £2.19 a week be implemented.
- 1.3 That garage rents are kept at the same level as 2019/20.
- 1.4 That Sheltered Housing Service charges be increased by £2 per week to

**ensure recovery of the actual cost of service.**

- 1.5 That Sheltered Housing utility charges be increased by 5% (average £0.62 increase per week).**
- 1.6 That the budgeted deficit of £612k be transferred from the HRA Reserves in 2020/21.**
- 1.7 That in principle, Right to Buy (RTB) receipts should be retained to enable continued development and acquisition of new council dwellings.**
- 1.8 That the revised HRA Business Plan in Appendix B of the report be noted.**

**Reason for Decision:** To bring together all the relevant information to enable Cabinet Members to review, consider and comment upon the Councils Housing Revenue Account budget before the February Cabinet and recommendations to Council.

### **83 MCA/19/39 EYE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

The Cabinet Member for Planning introduced report MCA/19/39 which provided Cabinet Members with an update on the Eye Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that in Paragraph 4.2, the dates detailed in the second bullet point should read 8 Nov – 20 Dec 2018. Councillor Burn expressed thanks to the Town Council and Officers who worked closely together to respond to questions raised during this process.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Burn. Councillor Gould seconded the recommendations and thanked officers for their hard work in the progression of the Plan, in particular Paul Bryant, Neighbourhood Planning Officer.

A discussion took place regarding the use of the words 'made' and 'adopted' within the report. The Neighbourhood Planning Officer advised that the regulations require use of the word 'made', however it was agreed that for the benefit of members of the public who may not be familiar with the reports, the word 'adopted' was more appropriate.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:-**

- 1.1 That Eye Town Council be requested to make the necessary modifications to their Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations.**
- 1.2 That, subject to the satisfactory completion of the above (to be agreed by the Corporate Manager for Strategic Planning), this Neighbourhood Plan be advanced to a local referendum covering the parish of Eye.**

**Reason for Decision:** To enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations under Section 17a of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and to allow the Eye Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to a local referendum

**84 MCA/19/40 FRESSINGFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

The Cabinet Member for Planning introduced the report and advised that the report had been prepared on the assumption that the plan would be modified. These modifications have now been completed and so therefore recommendation 3.1 was now obsolete. Councillor Burn moved recommendation 3.2 and this was seconded by Councillor Flatman.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:-**

**That this Neighbourhood Plan be advanced to a local referendum covering the parish of Fressingfield.**

**Reason for Decision:** To enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations under Section 17A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and to allow the Fressingfield Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to a local referendum.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 3.22 pm.

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Chair (and date)