

Thursday, 7 January 2021



BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISIONS NOTICE

DECISIONS BY THE BABERGH CABINET CALL IN DEADLINE 5:00PM ON 15 JANUARY 2021

The following decisions have been taken by the Cabinet and will come into effect on 18 January 2021 unless the call-in procedure is activated. For clarity, where an item is 'to be noted', 'received' or recommended to Council for a decision, this is deemed not to be a formal Executive decision and so the call-in provisions will not apply.

BCa/20/18 INTER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

It was RESOLVED:

That the revised Inter Authority Agreement be approved and that the Leader be authorised to sign the agreement on behalf of the Council.

Reason for Decision: To ensure that appropriate and accurate governance is in place to facilitate the ongoing joint working between Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

- 1.1 Option 1 – do nothing
This option is not appropriate as the Inter Authority Agreement needs to be updated to reflect the changes that have occurred since the first agreement was signed in 2012.
- 1.2 Option 2 – Update the Inter Authority Agreement
This is the preferred option as the current agreement is fit for purpose and has operated effectively but needs some updating to reflect the current situation. This option provides continuity while bringing the agreement up to date.
- 1.3 Option 3 – Implement an alternative form of agreement
The form of Inter Authority Agreement the authorities already have in place, coupled with the s.113 agreement for the sharing of staff is the most appropriate vehicle for their shared working arrangements. An alternative form of agreement is not necessary.

Any Declarations of Interest Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/20/21 FEES AND CHARGES 2021/22

It was RESOLVED:

That the proposed Fees and Charges for 2021/22 as shown in Appendix A of the report and the amendment to Appendix A contained in the tabled papers were approved by Cabinet.

Reason for Decision: To ensure that the Council achieves sufficient income and thereby reduces subsidy on non-essential services which may compromise the Council's ability to fund statutory services.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

- 1.1 To review and approve the proposed changes to the fees and charges for the forthcoming financial year (recommended) or
- 1.2 To leave them at the current year's level.

Any Declarations of Interest Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/20/22 TRANSFER OF THE COUNCIL'S VEHICLE FLEET TO HYDROTREATED VEGETABLE OIL (HVO) DIESEL

It was RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That Cabinet agreed to move to using HVO as a replacement for conventional diesel in the Council vehicle fleet. This is a cleaner, less polluting fuel and results in a significant CO2 emission reduction.
- 1.2 That Cabinet agreed to proceed with the procurement of a supplier for the provision of HVO fuel and the supply and installation of a fuel tank at Chilton Depot, Sudbury.
- 1.3 That Cabinet agreed to secure the capital and revenue budgets funding for the project for a minimum of 3 years as identified in the report.
- 1.4 That Cabinet agreed to proceed with a CIL bid to fund the capital element of the

project.

Reason for Decision: To reduce the councils CO2 emissions by 900 tonnes a year. This represents 26% of total the total emissions. In accordance with its commitment to be zero carbon by 2030.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Other alternatives to de-carbonise the vehicle fleet were researched; electric, biodiesel, and HVO were considered

1.1 Electric

There is one model of electric RCV commercially available, the eCollect manufactured by Dennis Eagle. The costs of the vehicle are 40-80% greater than a conventional diesel engine version. However, electric costs to power the vehicle are about a third of diesel with additional savings in the form of zero vehicle tax and reduced servicing costs. There would be additional costs in the form of suitable electric vehicle charging points and associated infrastructure at depots.

1.2 There are no are no appropriate technical performance details of the electric vehicles available from Dennis Eagle. There are trials occurring across the country, notably the City of London, however, these are predominantly in urban areas. A trial of an electric vehicle has been requested from Dennis Eagle.

1.3 Due to the lack of performance data for the electric RCVs there would be many risks associated with moving over to electric RCVs immediately. A large proportion of the RCV fleet comes to the end of their current lease in 2023. A consideration may be to review this exercise again before that date by which time there should be more data available to make an informed decision.

1.4 Biodiesel

Biodiesel otherwise known as Fatty Acid Methyl Ester (FAME) is a diesel fuel replacement produced from plant and vegetable oils. Such oils cannot be blended directly with conventional diesel and so a chemical reaction using methanol and sodium hydroxide as a catalyst is used to convert vegetable/plant oils into their constituent methyl esters. These can then be blended with diesel at levels of up to 10%. However, the standard norm in the UK is to blend biofuels to a maximum of 7% of the total fuel.

1.5 Plant/vegetable oils may come from a variety of sources, such as oilseed rape, soy, palm, used cooking oils (UCO) and waste oils. Depending on the provenance, the biofuel can save around 50-60% of the emissions resulting from a ULS (ultra-low sulphur) diesel fuel. However, they do have their own unique other issues.

- Palm oil-based fuels block the vehicle's filters.
- Biodiesel can also oxidise if left too long in a storage tank and it goes rancid.
- Biodiesel have a corrosive effect on vehicle engine's rubber components.
- Doubt over the traceability of the UCO sourced from outside Europe.
- The main issue is the likelihood that biodiesel contains palm oil, even if from a waste cooking oil source. Whilst it offers a cheap and versatile feedstock the environmental and ecological impact related to its cultivation has increasingly brought the

sustainability and long-term suitability into question.

- 1.6 Therefore for the above reasons, biodiesel in this form has not been considered as a suitable alternative fuel in this report
- 1.7 **Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO)** HVO is an alternative way to produce high-quality biobased diesel fuels without compromising fuel storage, engines, exhaust aftertreatment devices, or exhaust emissions. These fuels are colloquially referred to as “renewable diesel fuels” instead of “biodiesel”. Chemically HVOs are mixtures of fully saturated hydrocarbons and are free of sulphur and aromatics, unlike fossil diesel. Cold properties of HVO can be adjusted to meet the local requirements by adjusting the severity of the process or by additional catalytic processing. This is therefore the recommended option.

Any Declarations of Interest Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/20/19 DRAFT GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2021/22 AND FOUR-YEAR OUTLOOK

It was RESOLVED

- 1.1 That the draft General Fund Budget proposals for 2021/22 and four-year outlook set out in the report be endorsed for recommendation to Council on 23 February 2021, subject to further consideration at the next Cabinet meeting on 4 February 2021 following consideration at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 January 2021.
- 1.2 That the draft General Fund Budget for 2021/22 is based on an increase to Council Tax of £5 per annum (10p per week) for a Band D property, which is equivalent to 2.96%, to support the Council’s overall financial position.

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

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: Setting a balanced budget is a statutory requirement, therefore no other options are appropriate in respect of this.

Any Declarations of Interest Declared: Councillor Osborne declared a local non-pecuniary in her capacity as a trustee of Citizens Advice.

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/20/20 DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2021/22 BUDGET AND FOUR-YEAR OUTLOOK

It was RESOLVED

- 1.1 That the draft HRA Budget proposals for 2021/22 and four-year outlook set out in the report and detailed below be endorsed for recommendation to Council on 23 February 2021, subject to

further consideration at the next Cabinet meeting on 4 February 2021.

- 1.2 That the CPI + 1% increase of 1.5% in Council House rents, equivalent to an average rent increase of £1.35 a week be implemented.
- 1.3 That garage rents are kept at the same level as 2020/21.
- 1.4 That Sheltered Housing Service charges be increased by £0.69 per week to ensure recovery of the actual cost of service.
- 1.5 That Sheltered Housing utility charges are kept at the same level as 2020/21.
- 1.6 That the budgeted surplus of £127k be transferred to the Strategic Priorities reserve in 2021/22.
- 1.7 That in principle, Right to Buy (RTB) receipts should be retained to enable continued development and acquisition of new council dwellings.

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.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: **The Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2021/22 and four-year outlook is an essential element in achieving a balanced budget and sustainable medium-term position, therefore no other options are appropriate in respect of this.**

Any Declarations of Interest Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/20/23 ALLOCATION AND GRANT OF BDC COMMUTED SUMS FOR LAVENHAM COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

It was RESOLVED:

- 1.3 That the contents of this report was noted by Cabinet.
- 1.2 **That the grant of up to £160,000 BDC commuted sums to Lavenham CLT as contribution towards purchase costs of 4 affordable homes from Babergh District Council as discussed within this report was approved by Cabinet.**

Reason for Decision: To give consistent and purposeful support for Community Land Trusts within Babergh District, enabling them to provide housing for local people who are in housing need, that is affordable and remains so in perpetuity for future generations.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

- 1.1 Lavenham CLT CLT applied to many specialist lenders to gain most beneficial loan rate and maximum mortgage loan.
- 1.2 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the very specialist market for loan finance to community led housing projects has contracted significantly with many recognised lenders and grant funders removing their funding or loan schemes from the market. This problem of course was not anticipated when the Trust first considered their purchase of the 4 dwellings on Melford Road, Lavenham and consulted the local community.
- 1.3 If the Council do not sell 4 of the s.106 homes to LCLT, then the Council will retain ownership and liability for repairs and maintenance. The CLT will then seek to purchase homes elsewhere in the village. These could be open market purchases where the CLT will not benefit from the RP 40% discount as on the Melford Road homes. Alternatively, the CLT could talk to landowners/developers regarding new build/other developments schemes that might come forward in the village. Both will delay acquisition of homes that can be safeguarded as affordable housing for future generations. The Councils have also made a commitment in the Homes and Housing Strategy to support CLT's to bring forward community housing, therefore, this option is not recommended.

Any Declarations of Interest Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

BCa/20/25 DISABLED FACILITY GRANT - BDC CONTRIBUTION TO SCC COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT BUDGET

It was RESOLVED: That the recommendations in the report be approved.

Reason for Decision: As detailed in the report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: As detailed in the report.

Any Declarations of Interest Received: Councillor Malvisi declared a pecuniary interest and left the meeting for the duration of the item.

Any Dispensation Granted: None