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COMMITTEE:	BABERGH CABINET
DATE:	MONDAY, 7 MARCH 2022 2.00 PM
VENUE:	KING EDMUND CHAMBER, ENDEAVOUR HOUSE, 8 RUSSELL ROAD, IPSWICH

Members	
<u>Conservative</u> Jan Osborne John Ward (Chair) Michael Holt Simon Barrett Siân Dawson	<u>Independent</u> Derek Davis Clive Arthey Elisabeth Malvisi Alastair McCraw <u>Liberal Democrat</u> David Busby

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AGENDA

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- 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
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- 4 **TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME**
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- Call-in of the Accommodation and Agile Strategy - Endeavour House Cabinet Decision
- The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 7 **FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST**
- Please note the most up to date version can be found via the website:
- [Forthcoming Decisions List » Babergh](#)
- 8 **BCa/21/41 GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL MONITORING 2021/22 - QUARTER 3** 21 - 44
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- 10 **BCa/21/43 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE** 53 - 84
- Cabinet Member for Customers, Digital Transformation and Improvement
- A presentation of performance across the whole Council for the period 1 October – 31 December 2021 (Q3). To note the information contained within the presentation, giving the opportunity to reflect and comment on progress made against the key priorities aligned to the Corporate Plan 2019 – 2027.
- 11 **BCa/21/44 CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22** 85 - 126
- Cabinet Member for Environment (Climate Change)
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- Cabinet Member for Planning

Date and Time of next meeting

Please note that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, 4 April 2022 at 2.00 pm.

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Agenda Item 3

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **BABERGH CABINET** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 7 February 2022

PRESENT:

Councillor: John Ward (Chair)

Councillors:	Jan Osborne	Derek Davis
	Clive Arthey	David Busby
	Michael Holt	Elisabeth Malvisi
	Alastair McCraw	Simon Barrett
	Siân Dawson	

In attendance:

Councillor(s): Melanie Barrett
Mary McLaren

Officers: Chief Executive (AC)
Strategic Director (KN)
Assistant Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer (EY)
Assistant Director – Corporate Resources and Section 151 Officers (KS)
Assistant Director – Housing (GF)
Assistant Director – Commercial Partnerships and Regeneration (FD)
Assistant Director – Assets and Investments (EA)
SRP Operations Manager (AW)
Corporate Manager – Finance Operations (RH)
Governance Support Officer (CP)

Apologies:

None.

75 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

There were no declarations of interest made by Councillors.

76 BCA/21/34 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2021

It was **RESOLVED:-**

That with the following amendment the minutes of the meeting held on the 6 December 2021 be confirmed as a correct record:

Page 12, 75.2 to amend *initially* to *initial*

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

None received.

78 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

None received.

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

79.1 The Chair invited the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor McLaren to introduce the item.

79.2 Councillor McLaren detailed the recommendations for the General Fund Budget 2022/23 and Four-year Outlook from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the recommendations for the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23 and Four-year Outlook from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

79.3 In a response to Members queries in relation to recommendation 1.2 in the Overview and Scrutiny report the Monitoring Officers advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was concerned with the effectiveness of the new monitoring framework and whether the newly set-up performance team was delivering and was effective.

79.4 The recommendations were noted.

80 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST

80.1 The Forthcoming Decisions List was noted.

81 BCA/21/35 GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2022/23 AND FOUR-YEAR OUTLOOK

81.1 The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Simon Barrett introduced the report, and drew Members' attention to a Council Tax increase of 2% as included in the recommendations. This would be equivalent to an annual increase of £3.50 or 29 pence per month for Band D Property, providing an annual surplus of £527k for 2022/23, this had to be considered in relation to a forecast deficit of £2.3m for 2025/26.

81.2 Councillor Barrett proposed the recommendations in the report which was seconded by Councillor Busby.

81.3 In response to Councillor Malvisi questions referring to the New Homes Bonus, the Cabinet Member for Finance Councillor Barrett explained that the New Homes Bonus impacted on the Council's deficit.

- 81.4 Councillor Holt was supportive of 2% increase in Council Tax.
- 81.5 Councillor Busby queried the capital expenditure on page 53 and whether the Bell Vue being refurbished for £2m was a set figure for the agreed project. The Cabinet Member for Finance Councillor Barrett explained that funding had been enabled to allow the project to be completed, which was not covered to the sale of the land at Belle Vue. The figure was a combined figure to provide the development costs and which unlikely to go down. The Assistant Director added this was the financial costing for the Belle Vue Entrance.

Note: Councillor Dawson joined the meeting at 2:35pm.

- 81.6 The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Barret confirmed to Councillor Malvisi that planned maintenance for carparks for next year was £7k.
- 81.7 Councillor Arthey questioned if improvement work to car parks was included in the budget for 2022/23 and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Barrett stated that the carparking review was coming forward to Cabinet later in the year and that the once the requirements and costs had been established recommendations would be brought Cabinet for adoption.
- 81.8 Councillor Holt referred to the expenditure for the leisure centres and what the budget ongoing costs were for. The Assistant Director for Corporate Resources clarified that this was for emergency repairs as required for the two leisure centres.
- 81.9 Councillor Busby referred to page 53 target capital expenditure for a total of £22.5m, which was never spend fully at the end of the financial year and asked how the cost of interest was calculated for the £22.5m. The Cabinet Member for Finance responded that interest was not charged for the whole amount.
- 81.10 Members debated the report on the issues including that the long-term regeneration projects and that 12% of the budget were in the General Fund reserve representing £1.2M. It would be prudent to reduce the General Fund Reserve to £1m and release the funds to be spend on communities.
- 81.11 Members continued to debate the issues including the implementation of car parking charges, that the Council tax increase this year was to avoid an accumulative effect in coming years, and the of cost running and improving carparks in the District irrespective of the implementation of car park charges.
- 81.12 Members continued to debate the issues including that that resident was penalised by the 2% increase in Council Tax in times when the cost of living for the resident was going up, whilst the increase of 2% in Council Tax ensured a continued service to residents for next year.

It was RESOLVED:-

- 1.1 That the General Fund Budget proposals for 2022/23 and four-year**

outlook set out in the report be endorsed for recommendation to Council on 21 February 2022.

1.2 That the General Fund Budget for 2022/23 is based on a 2% increase to Band D Council Tax

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 for endorsement and recommendation to Council.

82 BCA/21/36 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2022/23 BUDGET

- 82.1 The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Barrett introduced the report and proposed that the recommendation was voted on block.
- 82.2 Councillor Barrett proposed the recommendation in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Osborne.
- 82.3 Councillor Arthey queried if the cost for the work for garage sites was specified in the report and the Cabinet Member for Housing responded that this was not identified as separate item but covered by existing resources and that a report would come forward shortly.
- 82.4 In response to Members' questions regarding supporting tenants in relation to the increase in rent, the Cabinet Member for Finance detailed the number of tenants receiving financial support and the SRP Operations Manager detailed the level of support some tenants were entitled to receive.
- 82.5 Councillor Ward stated the raised of 4.1% in tenant rents was based on the CPI from a couple of months ago, which was lower than now. A council tax rebate would be proposed by the Government soon.
- 82.6 Councillor Busby referred to the chart for interest payable on page 88 and queried if the interest payment remained the same for the next two years and the Cabinet Member for Finance confirmed that it was a Public Works Loan Board (PWL) fixed term loan interest payments and would remain the same.
- 82.7 The Assistant Director for Housing responded to Members' questions regarding Council's garage sites and potential developments. Work was being undertaken for a garage site review and was not specified as capital expenditure. If a particular garage site required work this would come out the building service budget. A report for the review of garage site would be brought to cabinet in due course.
- 82.8 Councillor Arthey reiterated that the Council continue to look at garage site and the issue of parking on some council estates, he was concerned that nothing would be done to address these issues until the year of 2023/24 and the Assistant Director for Housing responded that it was possible if there was a requirement and if there was sufficient funds in the capital work programme.

- 82.9 The Cabinet Member for Finance stated that if the development of a garage site for housing was identified then the cost would come out of the general HRA budget and would not necessarily require a report to Cabinet and could be taken by delegated officer decision.
- 82.10 Councillor Ward posed several questions including that the Council was still paying for temporary hotel accommodation, if the housing stock was based 38% of the market value and where did the 38% come from and if the Right to Buy receipt would be used to ensure that none of the funding received from the receipts would be returned to Government
- 82.11 The Cabinet Member for Housing stated that the current income from the Right to Buy receipts were at £2.1M and that the Council could receive up to £3.34m before fund had to be paid back to central Government. She added that the cost for temporary accommodation came out of the General Fund Budget.
- 82.12 The Assistant Direct for Corporate Resources advise Members that the guidance was to use the 38% of the market value for the Housing stock.

It was RESOLVED:-

- 1.3 That the HRA Budget proposals for 2022/23 set out in the report be endorsed for recommendation to Council on 21 February 2022.**
- 1.4 That the CPI + 1% increase of 4.1% in Council House rents, equivalent to an average rent increase of £3.72 a week for social rents and £5.23 a week for affordable rents be implemented.**
- 1.5 That garage rents are kept at the same level as 2021/22.**
- 1.6 That Sheltered Housing service charges are kept at the same level as 2021/22.**
- 1.7 That Sheltered Housing utility charges are kept at the same level as 2021/22.**
- 1.8 That the budgeted surplus of £511k be transferred to the Strategic Priorities reserve in 2022/23.**
- 1.9 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 for recommendations to Council.

83 BCA/21/37 BUSINESS RATES RELIEF POLICIES

- 83.1 Councillor Barrett introduced the report and outlined the reason for the

Business Rates Relief Policies for coming to Cabinet.

- 83.2 Councillor Barrett proposed the recommendations in the report which was seconded by Councillor McCraw.
- 83.3 In response to Councillor Dawson's questions for failed business which had received the grant the SRP Operations Manager responded that the retail discount was 50% set by the Government and would be portioned in the relations to a failed business and could be capped.

It was RESOLVED:-

- 1.1 That Cabinet give authority to the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance and Economy to agree the COVID-19 additional relief fund policy.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet agree the retail, hospitality and leisure policy, transitional relief policy and supporting small business relief policy for 2022/23 as set out in Appendices a, b and c.**
- 1.3 That Cabinet give authority to the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance to agree any future changes to the 2022/23 retail, hospitality and leisure discount policy.**
- 1.4 That Cabinet gives authority to the Shared Revenues Partnership Operations Manager to administer the Covid-19 additional relief fund, discretionary retail, hospitality and leisure discount, transitional relief and supporting small business relief policies**

REASON FOR DECISION

To provide discretionary reliefs to support ratepayers in Babergh.

To enable the implementation of the discretionary schemes.

84 BCA/21/38 ACCOMMODATION AND AGILE STRATEGY - ENDEAVOUR HOUSE

- 84.1 Councillor Busby introduced the report and highlighted the benefits of reducing the floor space in Endeavour House and delivering the most suitable workspace for officers to work in.
- 84.2 Councillor Busby proposed the recommendations in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Ward.
- 84.3 In response to a question from Councillor Barrett, the Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments referred to the concept design plan attached in appendix A.
- 84.4 Councillor Holt expressed his concern in relation to the Strategy including that staff had not been involved enough in the preparation of the proposed workspace, that there were not enough desks, the impact on staff wellbeing

when working from home and that he thought this decision should have gone to full Council for debate. In response The Assistant Director for Assets and Investments detailed the result from the staff survey, in which 70% of the response received were in favour of coming into work at Endeavour House for between one to three days per week. The workspace design encouraged officers to come into the office to work both at workstations and in the collaborative workspaces. In addition to the Gold floor plate space, Members and officers would maintain the current access to other spaces in the building.

- 84.5 Councillor Ward stated that the floor plate would be used in a far more efficiently way for officers to work in and that the requirements outlined in the report were evidence based.
- 84.6 Councillor McCraw was concerned with the speed of the decision and the timeline for the implementation of the strategy and that this was caused by the September date for the break clause in the lease. He queried whether it would be possible to take the report to Council for debate. The Assistant Director for Assets and Investments outlined the timings for the Strategy and explained that work for the Strategy had commenced at the beginning of the Covid Pandemic in 2020.
- 84.7 The Monitoring Officer advised Cabinet that this was an executive decision for Cabinet and could not be referred to Council for discussion.
- 84.8 In response to questions relating to working arrangement for officers, the Chief Executive advised Members that officers had always been encouraged to work in the District.
- 84.9 Councillor Osborne asked for clarification on the number of desks allocated for officers working three days in Endeavour House. The Assistant Director responded that the data had been extrapolated from the staff survey, producing the result of 48 fixed desks in addition to the collaboration and meeting spaces as a blended figure of the data.
- 84.10 The Assistant Director continued to respond to questions from Members including the minimum number of working days required by officers to be in Endeavour House, the number of desks required to accommodate this, new ways of working in a collaborative way and how Councillors would use the proposed workspace.

Note: A break was taken between 4:10pm and 4:22pm.

- 84.11 In response to other Members attending the meeting in relation to what arrangements were put in place if the proposed new way of working was not working, the Assistant Director for Assets and Investment responded that the concept design was a response to the way the Council was currently working and that there was a degree of flexibility for the layout of the concept plan and for furniture arrangements.

- 84.12 Members debated the issues and other Members attending the meeting

outlined some of the concerns around working from home and hybrid working and the emotional impact on staff working under these circumstances.

84.13 In response to Members debating the location of Babergh Council offices, the Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments stated that the location of Council offices in Endeavour House enabled the Council to get a better level of staff, this was helped by agile working and the modern workspace and facilities. In addition, Ipswich was easy to access, and the Council needed to move forward with times. Officers might be working in Endeavour House however, the services the Council provided were continued to be delivered in the District.

84.14 Councillor Malvisi stated that she thought that the issues should be debated by all Members, and she was concerned about where officers would be for Members to contact them.

It was RESOLVED:-

1.1 That the Cabinet agrees to reduce and reconfigure the floorspace demised to the Councils within Endeavour House in accordance with this report

1.2 That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Assets & Investments to deliver the reconfiguration of the floorspace including finalising the detailed design, the appointment of contractors and suppliers and completing negotiations with the landlords.

REASON FOR DECISION

To create a fit for purpose workspace at Endeavour House to reinforce our organisational culture, enable collaboration, networking and learning whilst promoting well-being and supporting the delivery of effective and efficient services for residents.

To deliver financial savings over the term of the original lease period.

To enable the timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project.

85 BCA/21/39 HAVEN GATEWAY PARTNERSHIP MEMBERSHIP

85.1 Councillor Holt introduced the report and detailed the reasons and background for the recommendations in the report.

85.2 Councillor Holt proposed recommendation in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Barrett.

85.3 Councillor Holt confirmed that the Council would save £7K per year once the membership of Haven Gateway Partnership was ended.

It was RESOLVED:-

- 1.1 That the key information in this report which outlines the current economic funding and policy landscape and the range of partnerships which now exist across the East of England which support the Babergh/Mid Suffolk economy, be noted.**
- 1.2 That the withdrawal of the Council's membership of the Haven Gateway Partnership from 31 March 2022 be approved.**
- 1.3 That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Economic Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth to finalise any legal documents associated with a withdrawal from the Partnership.**

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure future resources are diverted to areas and partnerships to drive greatest growth and support, especially as part of covid 19 recovery.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 4:37 pm.

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Chair

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Agenda Item 6

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **BABERGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 21 February 2022.

PRESENT:

Councillor: Mary McLaren (Chair)

Councillors: Melanie Barrett Jane Gould
Adrian Osborne

In attendance:

Councillor(s): David Busby – Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments
Simon Barrett – Cabinet Member for Finance

Officers: Chief Executive (AC)
Assistant Director – Assets and Investment (EA)
Assistant Director – Corporate Resources and Section 151 Officer (KS)
Assistant Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer (EY)
Corporate Manager – Governance and Civic Office (JR)
Senior Governance Officer (HH)
Trainee Governance Support Officer (BW)

Apologies:

Kathryn Grandon (Vice-Chair)
John Hinton

26 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received.

27 CALL-IN PROTOCOL FOR THE BABERGH CABINET DECISION 7 FEBRUARY 2022

27.1 Councillor Jane Gould proposed that the protocol for the Call-in Procedure be approved.

27.2 Councillor Adrian Osborne seconded this motion.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED: -

That Members considered and agreed the scope of the Call-in.

28 CALL-IN OF THE BABERGH CABINET DECISION FOR BCA/21/38

ACCOMMODATION AND AGILE STRATEGY - ENDEAVOUR HOUSE

- 28.1 Councillor Melanie Barrett, as Lead Signatory, was unable to vote on this item and was not acting in her role as a Member of the Committee.
- 28.2 The Chair invited the Lead Signatory, Councillor Melanie Barrett, to present her reasons for the Call-in.
- 28.3 The Lead Signatory presented the following reasons:
- 28.4 I called this into the Overview and Scrutiny Committee because I believe that, as the Chair has outlined in my submission to the committee, this is such a significant amount of money that is proposed to be spent. When I first read it, I thought it may have been £50,000, but it was indeed £250,000 to be spent on half of the workspace that we previously occupied. So, the benefits appear to be a net saving of £88,000. However, does this saving come at a cost to service delivery and our residents? That is also a concern.
- Although the majority of my reason for referring is due to the lack of scrutiny on how that money will be allocated. The decision cannot be sensibly made on such a ballpark figure. Previous history of calculations has shown this, and there is no detail. Having looked at papers for the budget I note that in that paper under the General Fund budget they talked about the key elements of the Council's responsibility, and one of those is cost management.
- I understand there may also be a margin of error within these calculations that we cannot assess until we are given more detail. In the floor plan I see that there is a branding graphics wall, a green graphics wall, and a full height green wall. I presume there would be costs available for us to understand how that cost could amount to half a million pounds. That would have helped the Cabinet to make better use of their questions to understand how that figure was arrived at.
- I understand that some of the cost is sound proofing meeting rooms, but that is not clear from the paper whether the landlord has been approached to see if they would shoulder some of those costs. That should be our first option to make sure that the landlord was going to share those costs. It is unbalanced as there were potential costs that were looked at as a ballpark figure. But there has not been an assessment of the impacts on productivity and output. It seems that the primary move is to serve the needs officers, and residents will only benefit indirectly.
- There is a saving, but just because there is saving that does not mean this is free money that can be unaccounted for. There are always costs, there is other options that we could spend the money on.
- To look at this in some context for this expenditure of £250,000, some Councillors spent the last 16 months arguing the case for imposing parking charges where it was estimated that we would raise £212,000, but the same degree of scrutiny has not been shown to this issue. It has just been taken on face value.
- In my view an even greater degree of scrutiny than normal must be applied here as the money will directly benefit the staff, and the staff are making their decision with only minimal input from Councillors. It only indirectly

benefits our residents if at all. Indeed, this move could be detrimental to the residents as they might see reduction in service provision, lengthening service times, or reduced access to officers. I urge you to make recommendations to Cabinet to demand a greater breakdown of cost, and analysis of the impact of the changes that have been approved.

28.5 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments, Councillor David Busby to present the reason why the decision had been taken by Cabinet.

28.6 The Cabinet Member for Assets and Investment, Councillor Busby, provided a summary of the events at Cabinet:

28.7 The Cabinet supported the recommendations within the Accommodation and Agile Strategy for Endeavour House report on 7th February. These recommendations were to reduce and reconfigure the floor plate space within Endeavour House, and to delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Assets and Investments to develop changes. The reasons for these decisions were set out in the report. They need to create fit for purpose accommodation at Endeavour House, to deliver financial savings over the full term of the lease, and to enable timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project. Councillor Barrett has contested that the report presented to Cabinet did not contain sufficient information on the cost of the works proposed Cabinet to make an informed decision. Section 6 of the report sets out the financial implications of this decision resulting the saving of £356,000 for Babergh after estimated costs of £250,000.

The estimated capital costs are based on the concept drawings provided by Concertus and are sufficient for budgeting purposes. Detailed costs will not be available until the full technical design has been completed and the works tendered. But, even with costs rising, we anticipate coming in under budget. Waiting for the detailed costs is not an option as the notice to trigger the break clause must be served before the end of March 2022. Cabinet has to take the decision before then, otherwise the Councils will lose the legal ability to end the lease for one of the floor plates. Councillor Barrett has also contested the Cabinet approved the paper on a reduction to the floor plate but neglected to consider the expenditure. But, whilst there may not have been any questions directly related to the capital cost of this project during the Cabinet meeting, this does not mean that the Cabinet failed to give due consideration. It means that we were content with the information provided. Cabinet Members or other Members, such as Councillor Barrett, who attended the meeting had adequate opportunity to raise any such concerns or questions in this regard. Finally, Councillor Barrett states her concern that key decisions about expenditure should not be delegated. This is a key decision made by the Cabinet and was advertised as such ahead of the Cabinet making decision in accordance with the constitution. The decision to adopt the recommendations was made by Cabinet and implementation delegated to officers. This is normal practice and in line with our constitution.

28.8 Councillor Jane Gould queried how the sum of £250,000 had been calculated, and whether the Cabinet had been aware of how this expenditure was

determined. The Assistant Director - Assets and Investments responded that the budget figures had been based on an estimate by the consultants with the concept plan drawing. In addition to this, until the full technical design was finalised a final costing would be unable to be provided in greater detail. Councillor Gould also highlighted the fact that though the Cabinet may have been familiar with the detail of the costs, certainly members of the public and other councillors watching by live stream would have assumed that the proposed cost was agreed unchallenged by any Cabinet Members.

- 28.9 Cabinet Members answered Committee Members' queries on why questions on the expenditure had not been asked by Members of the Cabinet. The Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments, Councillor Busby, responded that whilst Members of the Cabinet had not asked questions on this issue, other Members present at the meeting had been able to ask questions on this point. In addition to this, there had not been a cost breakdown within the report. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Simon Barrett, added that in the vote during the meeting the costs and the break clause had been within the same vote and that the break clause had a time limit that needed to be recognised.
- 28.10 Councillor McLaren queried what the current costs for the two floor plates was currently. The Assistant Director – Assets and investment responded that it was £464,000 per annum.
- 28.11 Councillor McLaren queried the dilapidations costs and whether they could have been discussed in private session at the Cabinet meeting. The Assistant Director – Assets and Investment responded that they could have, but negotiations had not been completed, so this could not be estimated until the lease had expired.
- 28.12 Councillor McLaren questioned the current spend on the work that had been undertaken by the consultants on the project. The Assistant Director – Assets and Investment responded that there had been a current budget of £15,000, and of that total £6000 had been spent.
- 28.13 Councillor McLaren queried the numbers of staff responding to the internal survey and was fifty percent of the staff responding, reflective of the workforce. Councillor Dave Busby felt the response rate from staff was good as many staff work offsite. The Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments was also asked whether the costs of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments undertaken by the Council for staff working from home had been considered. The Assistant Director - Assets and Investments responded that there had been no additional cost for assessments as it had been managed by the Council's Health and Safety team.
- 28.14 Councillor McLaren questioned where these funds had been located in the budget papers. The Section 151 Officer responded that it had been contained Appendix A of General Fund report under Planned Maintenance / Enhancements - Corporate Buildings with £300,000 allocated for this work. Additionally, the funds would come from borrowing, and that the interest on

this over 5 years would be £7,500.

- 28.15 Councillor McLaren queried the arrangements if the proposed plans to reduce the floor space when implemented fail, to meet the needs of the staff. The Assistant Director of Assets and Investments reassured the Committee that the proposed floor space was flexible to meet that eventuality.
- 28.16 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member – Assets and Investments Councillor Busby to present his summary.
- 28.17 Councillor Busby - Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments summarised that there had been two elements to this issue as there had been the finance side and the information side. He believed that there had been sufficient information as the project had been ongoing for the previous nine months and had received feedback from two working groups. Additionally, the estimated amount was not an unreasonable budget for the scale of the work that would be undertaken. There is a significant need for this work.
- 28.18 The Chair invited the lead signatory Councillor Barrett to present her summary.
- 28.19 Councillor Melanie Barrett summarised that as building costs would have been expensive, she believed that more information should have been provided before the decision was made. The expense should have been known in more detail in the specifications, with estimates broken down for individual features within the design. The specification should also establish what the gain for the work force would be to ensure that the design is suitable.
- 28.20 Councillors David Busby, Melanie Barrett, and Simon Barrett left the meeting at 10:36am.
- 28.21 A short break was taken between 10:36 – 10:45am.
- 28.22 Members debated the lack of questions on finance at the Cabinet Meeting by Members of the Cabinet. However, it was noted that there were opportunities for other Members attending the meeting to ask questions. Additionally, it was observed that although the questions had not been asked it did not mean the Cabinet were not informed on this matter.
- 28.23 Members also raised concern that for decisions that deal with large sums of money there should be more questioning in public session to allow for public transparency. However, it was added that the public did have the opportunity to question this matter, and no responses from the public had been received.
- 28.24 Councillor Jane Gould proposed that the decision be upheld and implemented immediately. Councillor Adrian Osborne seconded this motion.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED: -

That the decision be upheld and implemented immediately.

29 BCA/21/38 ACCOMMODATION AND AGILE STRATEGY - ENDEAVOUR HOUSE

See the previous item.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 11:03am.

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Chair

DRAFT

Agenda Item 8

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: BCa/21/41
FROM: Councillor Simon Barrett, Cabinet Member for Finance	DATE OF MEETING: 7 March 2022
OFFICER: Katherine Steel, Assistant Director, Corporate Resources	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB288

GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL MONITORING 2021/22 – QUARTER 3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report considers the revenue and capital financial performance for the period April to December as well as the impact of COVID19 on the Council's finances and highlights significant variances expected for the financial year 2021/22. As at 31st December a surplus position of £741k is forecast.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 At this stage in the year, the financial position is for noting only.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That, subject to any further budget variations that arise during the rest of the financial year, the surplus position of £741k, referred to in section 6.6 and Appendix A of the report, be noted;
- 3.2 The revised 2021/22 Capital Programme referred to in Appendix E and section 6.15 be noted.
- 3.3 That the approval of carry forwards from 21/22 into 22/23 be delegated to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that Members are kept informed of the current budgetary position for both General Fund Revenue and Capital.

4. KEY INFORMATION

Strategic Context

- 4.1 In February 2021 Babergh District Council approved the General Fund Budget 2021/22 and Four-Year Outlook. The budget was prepared during one of the most challenging and uncertain times due to the impacts of COVID19 on the Council's finances, staff, residents, and local economy. Income streams were reviewed when setting the budget and revised where appropriate and any COVID19 related costs were assumed to be funded from the £1.171m in the COVID19 reserve.

- 4.2 The financial impact of COVID19 for 2021/22 and beyond remains difficult to predict, therefore regular monitoring and reporting to MHCLG of the financial impact continues during this financial year.

Comprehensive Spending Review

- 4.3 The Government's three-year Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) was planned to conclude in July 2020, however, on 24th March 2020 the Chancellor announced that the CSR would be delayed 'to enable the Government to remain focussed on responding to the public health and economic emergency'. On 21st October 2020, the Chancellor announced the decision to provide a one-year Spending Review (SR) to prioritise the response to COVID19 and focus on supporting jobs. Details of this SR20 were published on 25th November 2020.
- 4.4 The spending review for 2022/23 was announced on 27th October 2021 and covers the three years 2022/23 to 2024/25. The Chancellor announced £1.5bn growth in grant funding for 2022/23 with no further increases in 2023/24 or 2024/25. Provisional funding allocations for 2022/23 were announced in December 2021 and were for one year only.

Business rates review and revaluation

- 4.5 The Fair Funding Review, Business Rates Review and business rates reset have been delayed. The Chancellor's Budget on 27th October announced several measures around the business rates system, including reducing the burden for some sectors from April 2022, introducing new reliefs to support property improvements and green investment and de-carbonisation of properties from April 2023 and confirmation that revaluations would take place every 3 years from 2023. To support stability leading up to the next revaluation, it was announced that transitional relief would be extended for a further year,

5. IMPACT OF COVID19

Government support schemes

- 5.1 The Council continues to administer the business restart and back to business grants as well as self-isolation payments in 2021/22.
- 5.2 The table below shows the amount of grants that have been paid out in the first three quarters of the year.

COVID SUPPORT ADMINISTERED BY BABERGH	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	Balance at 1 April 21	Received from Government	Paid out	Balance at 31 Dec 21
Business Grants				
Local Restrictions Support Grant Funding (LRSG)	2,382		(348)	2,035
Additional Restrictions Funding (ARG), Restart and Back to Business Grants	1,232	6,547	(7,406)	373
	3,615	6,547	(7,753)	2,408
Self isolation payments				
MHCLG Self Isolation Funding payments	37	34	(69)	1
	37	34	(69)	1

Financial Impact for the Council

- 5.3 The impacts of COVID19 for 2021/22 continue to remain a risk for the Council's finances as the pandemic continues to have an impact nationally and locally. The long-term effects and speed of recovery is still unknown at this stage.
- 5.4 As the Council did not use all of the £2.5m Government funding during 2020/21 it was able to top up the existing COVID19 reserve by £891k giving a total reserve balance of £1.171m to mitigate the financial impacts and support recovery in 2021/22 along with a further £580k of COVID funding received in 2021/22.
- 5.5 The main areas where support is required during 2021/22 are additional costs for public health, leisure, and business support but this continues to be kept under review.
- 5.6 An element of Local Restrictions Support Grant funding will be repayable as the effects of the pandemic come to a close, this will be calculated in Q4 as further restrictions become less likely.
- 5.7 The full year impact forecast at the third quarter of the year is additional costs relating to COVID19 of £748k and a loss of income of £236k as shown in the table below.

COVID FINANCIAL IMPACT ON BABERGH		£'000
Amounts carried forward as creditors from 2020/21		(107)
COVID Reserve		(1,171)
Total Funding at 1st April 2021		(1,278)
LOSS OF INCOME		
Sales, fees & charges income losses		
Garden waste		80
Trade waste		29
Car Park Income		7
Licensing		22
Total sales, fees & charges loss		138
Other income losses		
Council tax - income from court fees		98
Total loss of Income		236
COVID COSTS		
Housing - rough sleeping accomodation and support		23
Public Health - Testing, contact tracing and outbreak management		115
Compliance and Enforcement		6
Leisure centres - support		324
ICT & remote working		1
Additional external audit costs		40
Additional staff costs - Home But Not Alone and Business grants		83
Cost of hiring venue for council meetings and screens for EH		24
Recovery support for Businesses		50
Elections costs		4
Additional Contractor costs for Capital works		22
Supplies and materials including Personal Protective Equipment		56
Total COVID costs		748
GENERAL FUND IMPACT BEFORE FUNDING		984
NEW FUNDING		
COVID-19 Local Authority Support Grant		(414)
Containment outbreak management fund		(107)
Test & Trace		(59)
TOTAL NEW FUNDING		(580)
Current forecast balance 31st March 2022		(874)
Specific grants to be carried forward		(152)
Balance remaining in COVID Reserve		(721)

6. 2021/22 OUTTURN POSITION

6.1 The report covers:

- The General Fund Revenue Budget
- The General Fund Capital Programme.

6.2 Budget monitoring is a key tool and indicator on the delivery of the Council's plans and priorities for the year. There will, of course, always be reasons why there are variances such as:

- Economic conditions and those services that are affected by demand
- Uncertainties relating to funding or other changes that were not known at the time the budget was approved.

6.3 Taking each area in turn, the position on key aspects of the 2021/22 budget is summarised below:

General Fund Revenue Account

6.4 In relation to funding:

- (a) Council Tax (£5.8m): at the end of December, the collection rate was 84.18%, compared with 84.14% for the same period the previous year.
- (b) Government Grants: baseline business rates of £1.6m and New Homes Bonus (NHB) of £835k were forecast in the 2021/22 budget. NHB is fixed but the actual amount of business rates will vary.
- (c) Business Rates: at the end of December the collection rate was 80.61% compared with 80.68% for the same period the previous year. Collection rates have been impacted by COVID19. This will be reviewed and monitored during the rest of the year. It is anticipated that any financial impact of this will be mitigated by the £133k compensation payments received from Government in 2020/21 for 75% of irrecoverable loss of council tax and business rates, which was put into the Business Rates and Council Tax reserve to be used this year.

6.5 Based upon financial performance and information from April to December (with emerging trends extrapolated to the end of the financial year) and discussions with budget managers and the Senior Leadership Team, key variations on expenditure and income compared to budget have been identified.

6.6 A tolerance level of 10% based on full year actual to budget has been used to identify those variances where further narrative is provided. Appendix A shows the main items that are included in the overall variance of £741k. The forecast variances identified within this report were taken into consideration when setting the budgets for 2022/23.

Staff Vacancies

- 6.7 Staff vacancies are a component of the surplus position at 31st December 2021. The table below shows the vacancies at that point in time compared to the full-time equivalent number of posts included in the 2021/22 budget.

	Budget 2021/22 F.T.E.	Current Vacancies F.T.E.	Vacancy Rate %
Assets & Investments	4.33	0.38	9%
Communities & Wellbeing	9.50	3.00	32%
Corporate Resources	19.11	1.80	9%
Customers, Digital Transformation & Improvement	25.64	4.04	16%
Economic Development & Regeneration	4.90	0.50	10%
Environment & Commercial Partnerships	28.13	2.35	8%
Housing	20.05	5.68	28%
Law & Governance	18.59	4.68	25%
Planning & Building Control	47.09	5.09	11%
Senior Leadership Team	5.00	0.00	0%
Grand Total	182.35	27.53	15%

The average vacancy rate during 2021/22 up to the end of November is 12%.

Business Rates Retention Pilot

- 6.8 Following the successful bid by the 8 local authorities in Suffolk to become a pilot area for the retention of 100% business rates growth in 2018/19, for one year only, Appendix B provides further details of the schemes and spend as at December 2021. A separate report will be prepared for Cabinet setting out proposals for use of the unallocated balance for feasibility work under the three themes of the Economic Strategy and Recovery Plan.

Strategic Priorities Reserve (Previously Transformation Fund)

- 6.9 The table below provides a high-level summary of the anticipated movement in the Strategic Priorities Reserve during 2021/22. It does not include the £741k surplus, as this is likely to change before the year-end and will comprise a number of other transfers to and from reserves. These will be approved as part of the outturn report. A more detailed breakdown of the expenditure from the Reserve is shown in Appendix C.

Strategic Priorities Reserve		£'000
Restated Balance at 31 March 2021*		1,146
Less:		
Actual spend 2021/22 - Appendix C		(60)
Other Commitments - Appendix C		(488)
Total spend & commitments		(548)
Remaining unallocated balance		598

* Reduced by £291k due to an audit adjustment for CIL

- 6.10 Commitments in 2021/22 will continue to be reviewed to ensure the key priorities are supported.

Earmarked Reserves

- 6.11 Earmarked reserve balances forecast to the end of March 2022 are £7.57m as at 31st December 2021 excluding the £4.541m S31 grants received in 2020/21 that will be used to cover the cost of retail, hospitality and leisure reliefs during 2021/22 through the Collection Fund. Appendix D outlines the specific earmarked reserve movements that are included within the full year forecast for Quarter 3.
- 6.12 Earmarked reserves are for a particular purpose or known requirements that affect more than one financial year. The Council can increase its earmarked reserves when underspends occur, income has exceeded costs or where grant monies or other sources of funding are received for specific purposes. For those service areas that are now incurring expenditure in 2021/22 in relation to these grants / funding, it is possible to make a transfer from those reserves. They include Community Housing Fund (£26k), Temporary Accommodation (£14k), and Well-being (£56k). There are also transfers to reserves for Homelessness (£25k), Elections (£20k), and Neighbourhood Planning Grants (£45k).

Capital

- 6.13 Use of capital and one-off funds is critical and needs to be linked into our future delivery plans.
- 6.14 With complex capital schemes it is difficult to accurately assess the level of payments that will be made during the financial year. The Council continues to embark on new projects relating to investments and commercial delivery where it is difficult to accurately predict how payments will fall. Members should therefore focus on whether overall outcomes are being achieved because of the capital investment rather than variances against the plan for a particular year.
- 6.15 Capital expenditure for the period April to December 2021 totals £2.36m, against a revised programme (including carry forwards) of £20.79m, as set out in Appendix E. The profile of the anticipated spend for 2021/22 is difficult to assess and it is likely that there will be slippage in the delivery of some programmes due to the ongoing effects of COVID19, issues with obtaining some supplies and based on previous years outturns.
- 6.16 Some items in the capital programme, such as the Strategic Investment Fund, Regeneration Fund and Belle Vue are unlikely to be fully spent in year, whilst investment and development opportunities are being considered, so the figures in Appendix E anticipate that a request will be made to carry forward any unspent balance at year-end.
- 6.17 There is an anticipated total net overspend of £318k. This includes an overspend of £505k relating to additional items of expenditure that have been approved since the budget was set to be funded from CIL, an additional £362k in S106 monies and grants receivable, and a further £50k overspend on recycling bins due to additional demand through property growth. This is partially mitigated by an underspend of £599k in Hadleigh pool and leisure centre improvements no longer be required following the recent refurbishments.

7. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 Ensuring that the Council makes best use of its resources is what underpins the ability to achieve the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. Specific links are to financially sustainable Councils, managing our corporate and housing assets effectively, and property investment to generate income.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 These are detailed in the report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific legal implications.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Significant Risk No. 13 – We may be unable to respond in a timely and effective way to financial demands and Corporate Risk No. 5E05 – if the Finance Strategy is not in place with a balanced position over the medium term the Councils will not be able to deliver the core objectives and service delivery may be at risk of not being delivered. Other key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
If the forecast savings and efficiencies are not delivered, then it will have a detrimental impact on the resources available to deliver services and the strategic priorities	3 - Probable	2 - Noticeable	Monitored throughout the year by Finance Teams, Corporate Managers, Assistant Directors and the Senior Leadership Team
If economic conditions and other external factors like COVID19 are worse than budgeted for it could have an adverse effect on the Councils 2021/22 and medium-term financial position	3 - Probable	2 - Noticeable	Focus is on monitoring key income and expenditure streams – but Government changes and economic conditions continue to affect costs and income for a number of services. COVID19 reserve used to offset these costs and maintain sufficient minimum reserve level to withstand the impact.

11. CONSULTATIONS

- 11.1 Consultations have taken place with Assistant Directors, Corporate Managers and other Budget Managers as appropriate

12. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

- 12.1 An equality analysis has not been completed because there is no action to be taken on service delivery as a result of this report.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 There are a number of areas that as a result of COVID19 have had a positive effect on the Council's environmental impact as well as the financial position. They include for example, reduced travel, less printing and reduced utility costs.
- 13.2 Assistant Directors, Corporate Managers and other Budget Managers continue to consider the environmental impact of their budgets and take the opportunity to reduce their carbon footprint as opportunities arise.
- 13.3 In subsequent years to support the Council's commitment to be Carbon Neutral by 2030, several initiatives have and are being undertaken from a combination of the Council's own resources and those secured from external sources. Some of these are set out below.
- 13.4 A solar multi-function carport to generate electricity is being installed at Kingfisher Leisure Centre, Sudbury. The CO₂ savings are 4.4 times the volume of the Royal Albert Hall and it will generate enough power to supply 24 average homes in Sudbury.
- 13.5 The Council's leisure centres have been successfully transferred to certified low carbon tariffs for electricity use.
- 13.6 We have also installed a new pool water cleaning system at Kingfisher Leisure Centre which is expected to reduce annual CO₂ emissions by between 6.4 and 8.6 tonnes per annum and reduce combined gas and electricity consumption by 1.1% - 1.5%.
- 13.7 £1.4m of funding has been secured from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund for carbon-saving measures at council leisure centres and other buildings including solar panels and air source heat pumps.

14. APPENDICES

Title	Location
Detailed Variances (Revenue)	APPENDIX A
Business Rates Retention Pilot	APPENDIX B
Strategic Priorities Reserve	APPENDIX C
Earmarked Reserves	APPENDIX D
Detailed Variances (Capital)	APPENDIX E

15. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

23 February 2021 General Fund Budget 2021/22 and Four-Year Outlook – BC/20/24

6 September 2021 General Fund Financial Monitoring 2021/22 - Quarter 1 - BCa/21/18

6 December 2021 General Fund Financial Monitoring 2021/22 - Quarter 2 - BCa/21/29

REVENUE DETAILED VARIANCES

Area	Original Budget £000's	Sum of Carry Forwards / Virements £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Q3 Full Year Forecast £000's	Q3 Forecast Variance (favourable) / adverse £000's	Comment
Assets & Investments	393	(3)	389	386	(3)	
Strategic Property	306	(3)	303	300	(3)	
HQ Energy	0	0	0	14	14	Still incurring utilities costs for old building, but budgets had been stripped out
Chilton Depot	24	(1)	23	36	13	Additional costs for fixing a water leak at the site and higher than budgeted Utility bills.
Asset Utilisation	165	(1)	164	192	28	Various costs for assets that don't have their own dedicated budget and may be managed in cooperation with another service - eg £40k+ on emergency bridge repairs, offset by staff vacancies.
Navigation House	2	0	2	(14)	(16)	Budgeted expenses on repairs & consultancy work not utilised.
Endeavour House - Head Quarters	245	0	245	214	(31)	Reduced Service Charge negotiated along with savings associated with rent reduction on giving up members area.
South Suffolk Buisness Centre	(19)	0	(19)	(28)	(8)	Higher than expected Occupancy with rents tracking above budget
Other Variances		0	0		(3)	
Communities & Wellbeing	584	101	685	558	(127)	
Communities	584	101	685	558	(127)	
Community Development	333	49	382	217	(165)	Staff vacancies resulting from delay in implementation of new structure throughout 21/22.
Community Safety - CCTV	29	1	30	64	33	West Suffolk CCTV contract overspend partially offset by contributions from Sudbury and Hadleigh Town Councils
Other Variances		0	0		4	

REVENUE DETAILED VARIANCES

Area	Original Budget £000's	Sum of Carry Forwards / Virements £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Q3 Full Year Forecast £000's	Q3 Forecast Variance (favourable) / adverse £000's	Comment
Corporate Resources	2,152	101	2,199	2,722	524	
Finance, Comm & Proc	1,743	55	1,743	2,330	588	
Financial Resources	492	55	547	575	28	Net increase in staff and agency costs for Finance transformation project. Consultancy fees overspent by £8k on payment cards and G4S which have been steadily increasing year on year. Further £8k overspend Capita costs covered by carry forward with other overspends also partially covered by £55k carry forward from prior year.
Bank Charges	77	0	77	97	20	Change in platform during Q2, historic costs run rate high as different provider to MSDC
External Audit	80	0	80	120	40	Finalisation of 2019/20 audit fees, which were higher than previously estimated. Shortfall will be funded from COVID19 Reserve.
Pay Inflation and Increment Costs	(414)	(0)	(414)	0	414	Adjustment to reflect centrally budgeted salary savings realised within service areas.
Council Tax Collection	(181)	(0)	(181)	(83)	98	Budget for Recovery of legal costs on collections will not be realised due to change in availability of court time which reduces the amount of costs added to outstanding debts. Shortfall will be funded from COVID19 Reserve.
Commissioning & Procurement	100	0	100	87	(12)	In year Business Partner vacancies offset by Agency costs to temporarily fill for second half of year.
Other Variances		0	0		0	

REVENUE DETAILED VARIANCES

Area	Original Budget £000's	Sum of Carry Forwards / Virements £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Q3 Full Year Forecast £000's	Q3 Forecast Variance (favourable) / adverse £000's	Comment
HR & OD	409	47	456	392	(64)	
Organisational Development	409	47	456	396	(60)	Training costs expected to be £23k underspent; training plans in place and programme of work to support this being used into 22/23 (L&D officer now in place). Underlying underspends £13k in core staff due to in year vacancies being actively recruited for offset by agency staff overspend of £15k to support organisation whilst recruitment taking place. £5k recruitment overspend due to vacancies in SLT team and £7k overspend on Legal fees for hire of specialist skills not held in SLS. £4k additional income from recouping PET fees from leavers.
Other Variances		0	0		(4)	
Customers, Digital Transformation & Improvement	1,720	215	1,935	1,881	(54)	
Communications	175	0	175	159	(16)	
Communications	175	0	175	159	(16)	Underlying £18k underspend on staff costs offset by Social media management costs (addressed in 22/23)
Customer Operations	544	0	544	469	(75)	
Customer Services	544	0	544	469	(75)	Underspend of £40k on staff costs, £36k underspend on exit from Sudbury Town Council touch down point
ICT	867	244	1,111	1,052	(59)	
ICT	867	244	1,111	1,052	(59)	£60k favourable variance from release of historic accrual for MS Office licences due to change in billing by SCC so no longer required.

REVENUE DETAILED VARIANCES

Area	Original Budget £000's	Sum of Carry Forwards / Virements £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Q3 Full Year Forecast £000's	Q3 Forecast Variance (favourable) / adverse £000's	Comment
Strategic Policy, Performance & Insight	135	(29)	106	201	96	
Busines Improvement	135	(29)	106	201	96	Core team underlying net £20k salaries underspend offset by £90k pressure on agency staff to be covered by virement of budget with Executive Assistants team moving in.
Economic Development & Regeneration	299	58	357	253	(104)	
Open for Business	299	58	357	253	(104)	
Economy & Business	165	28	193	140	(53)	Staff vacancies
4 Towns Visioning	0	(0)	(0)	(21)	(21)	Staff vacancies
Other Variances		0	0		(30)	
Environmental & Commercial Partnerships	3,897	20	3,917	3,550	(367)	
Leisure Contracts	270	0	270	302	32	
Hadleigh Pool	92	0	92	105	13	Repairs & maintenance running slightly above budget
Kingfisher Leisure Centre	178	0	178	197	19	Repairs ahead of budget due to repairs to roof
Other Variances		0	0		1	
Public Protection	532	51	583	509	(75)	
Food & Safety (General)	251	19	270	232	(38)	Trainee Environmental Health Officer vacancy.
Animal Welfare Licensing	(8)	(0)	(8)	3	11	Agency cost to cover vacant post
Environmental Protection	325	32	358	330	(28)	Part year saving on Apprentice post. Offset by increased mileage costs and one-off legal costs
Licensing Staff Costs	82	0	82	64	(18)	Staff Vacancy & Secondment savings
Other Variances		0	0		(2)	

REVENUE DETAILED VARIANCES

Area	Original Budget £000's	Sum of Carry Forwards / Virements £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Q3 Full Year Forecast £000's	Q3 Forecast Variance (favourable) / adverse £000's	Comment
Public Realm	1,648	0	1,648	1,542	(106)	
Public Conveniences	126	0	126	89	(37)	£17.5k Partial refund on public convenience NNDR. £19.5k saving from end of Grounds Maintenance contract
Street & Major Road Cleansing	481	(0)	481	387	(94)	Net savings £89k from bringing idVerde contract in house, £12k underspend on flytipping offset by various overspends totalling £7k.
Open Spaces	651	0	651	623	(28)	Net Savings from bringing IdVerde contract in house
Public Tree Programme	95	0	95	81	(14)	Underspend in tree felling/maintenance budget
Sudbury Car Parks	184	(29)	155	224	69	Car park income still down on budget with effect of lock downs. Rates on car parks ahead of budget. Will be covered by COVID reserve funding.
Other Variances		0	0		(2)	
Recycling, Waste & Fleet	1,247	(35)	1,212	997	(215)	
Joint Waste Contract	31	103	134	57	(77)	Overspend on equipment and materials offset by vired budget of £100k from Domestic Waste to cover cost of HVO conversion of fleet.
Domestic Waste	1,901	(123)	1,778	1,694	(84)	A favourable variance of £132k on MRF disposal as volumes significantly up on prior year. Further savings against budget of £35k from the sale of Twin Bins largely to new property developments. £18k Saving on Recycling Credits and £15k on bulky waste collections. Staff costs due to maternity leave down by £5k. Savings against budget offset by additional costs of £25k on additional delivery rounds due to year on year property growth and £100k budget vired to Joint Waste Contract to cover HVO fuel conversion.
Garden Waste	(409)	(9)	(418)	(466)	(47)	Garden Waste disposal costs have increased due to increase in subscribers however this is more than offset by the income for Garden Waste. Refuse contract increased costs due to subscriber growth in Brown Bins and indexation and an increase in recycling credit income.
Other Variances		0	0		(7)	

REVENUE DETAILED VARIANCES

Area	Original Budget £000's	Sum of Carry Forwards / Virements £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Q3 Full Year Forecast £000's	Q3 Forecast Variance (favourable) / adverse £000's	Comment
Housing (General Fund Revenue)	477	0	477	508	31	
Building Services	(143)	0	(143)	(129)	14	
PV Panels	(143)	0	(143)	(129)	14	Reduced earnings as income fluctuates with weather
Housing Solutions	620	(0)	620	637	17	
Homelessness Private Sector	63	0	63	104	41	Expected cost increase as furlough scheme ends and Private Rented Sector evictions take place
Rent Deposit Scheme	(4)	0	(4)	(23)	(19)	Lower Rent in Advance Payments than expected
Other Temporary Accommodation	73	0	73	96	23	Increased staff hours (£19k) and Cleaning expenses (£4k)
Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme	0	0	0	(29)	(29)	Funding applied for after budgets set
Other Variances		0	0		1	
Law & Governance	1,012	3	1,015	952	(63)	
Electoral Services & Land Charges	85	(0)	85	(11)	(96)	
Electoral Registration	106	(0)	106	92	(14)	Corporate Manager vacancy now recruited.
Information Management	0	0	0	(75)	(75)	Income from HMLR for transferring LLC1 work to central location (£75k)
Other Variances		0	0		(7)	
Governance & Civic Office	461	3	464	493	28	
Cost of Democracy	127	3	130	144	14	Workshops and online training to support members and hire of venue for Annual General Meeting.
Central Postal Service	43	(0)	43	61	18	Overspend on Vertas contract on volumes will be charged out to services.
Other Variances		0	0		(4)	
Internal Audit, Risk & Data	103	(13)	91	87	(4)	
Shared Legal Service	362	13	375	383	9	
Shared Legal Service	362	13	375	383	9	Virement from Audit for Information Governance £13k. Staff overspend will be recharged to service areas
Planning & Building Control	1,168	77	1,244	812	(433)	
Building Control	78	0	78	18	(60)	
Building Regulations Chargeable Services	(32)	0	(32)	(77)	(46)	Staff vacancies and increased income due to new sites and less competitor pressure
Other Variances		0	0		(14)	

REVENUE DETAILED VARIANCES

Area	Original Budget £000's	Sum of Carry Forwards / Virements £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Q3 Full Year Forecast £000's	Q3 Forecast Variance (favourable) / adverse £000's	Comment
Chief Planning Officer	599	77	676	322	(354)	
Development Management	161	50	211	(105)	(316)	£90k staff vacancies offset by £1.3k agreed overtime overspend. £44k adverse on legal and Professional Consultancy fees. £271k favourable variance on income due to strength in applications - expected to fall back to normal levels in Q4.
Pre-Application Charging	(39)	0	(39)	(58)	(20)	Increase in pre application fees.
Planning Performance Agreement	(10)	0	(10)	16	26	Current activity is not seeing PPAs being concluded in relation to major sites at the current time
Conservation	104	(0)	104	73	(31)	Staff vacancies
Planning Enforcement	167	27	194	179	(14)	Staff Vacancies offset by one-off charge on property relating to 2004/05
Strategic Planning	456	0	456	438	(19)	
Development Policy & Local Plans	328	0	328	317	(11)	Staff Vacancies
Other Variances		0	0		(8)	
Senior Leadership Team	653	0	653	664	11	
Senior Leadership Team	653	0	653	664	11	
Corporate Management	35	(0)	35	49	14	Apprenticeship Levy - change in staff mix and split since budget was set
Other Variances		0	0		(2)	
Grand Total	12,354	572	12,871	12,286	(585)	
Funding	1,530	0	1,530	1,374	(156)	
Business Rates Pooling Benefit	(312)	0	(312)	(556)	(244)	Benefit from changed pooling arrangement for this year agreed by the Public Sector Leaders. One-off as likely to revert to the previous method of allocation for 22/23.
Business Rates Levy	576	0	576	706	131	Increase in levy.
MRP	1,266	0	1,266	1,223	(43)	Lower than budget due to slippage in 2020/21 capital programme.
Grand Total	13,884	572	14,401	13,660	(741)	

APPENDIX B

BABERGH – BUSINESS RATES PILOT

Scheme Description	BRR Funding £'000	Actual Spend 2018/19 £'000	Actual Spend 2019/20 £'000	Actual Spend 2020/21 £'000	Actual Spend 2021/22 £'000	Cumulative Spend to 2021/22 £'000
Hamilton Road Quarter, Borehamgate & Belle Vue Site	500	46	118	131	21	316
Angel Court Housing Development	200	-	123	30	-	153
Workspace & Grow-on Commercial	200	20	65	3	-	87
Inclusive Growth Engagement Officer	60	-	-	-	-	-
Establishment of a Central Suffolk Chamber of Commerce	42	30	-	12	-	42
St Peters Church Regeneration	100	-	-	100	-	100
Business Innovation Grants	158	-	-	-	2	2
Unallocated	159	-	-	-	-	-
BRRP Total	1,419	96	305	275	23	700

Strategic Priorities Reserve

Project	Total Budget £'000	Council's Share of Budget £'000	Cumulative spend to 2019/20 £'000	Spend 2020/21 £'000	Spend 2021/22 £'000	Total Spend £'000	Commitments £'000
Business Growth							
Town Visioning & Investment work - the Economic Development Team will engage with key town stakeholders to create and maintain sustainable partnerships for the delivery of a range of projects and programmes that benefit the town's future development and growth. These vital partnerships in the form of Vision or Invest Boards will promote our places through a single voice to stimulate investment, support our businesses and create jobs, enhance and grow our cultural offer, and create opportunities to raise skills levels and aspiration in our communities, making our 5 key market towns desirable places to live and work in. (BDC - 21%, MSDC - 79%)	209	44	11		16	27	23
Hadleigh A1071 Workspace Scheme - to undertake the necessary site diligence and preliminary marketing work including surveys, costs and ground investigations, detailed design concept work-up and retail agent fees.	100	100				-	100
Community Capacity Building							
Members Locality Budgets 2021/22	128	128		46	5	51	77
Efficient Organisation							
Additional resources to enable Senior Planning Officer level to be released to support delivery of the planning transformation programme (BDC -50%, MSDC - 50%)	205	103	55	1	-	56	47
Public Realm - transition to combined in-house delivery	98	49	-	34	6	40	9
Housing Delivery/Business Growth							
Commissioning of external specialist feasibility / viability work on key sites as required, to be able to move them forward for approval and development to support economic and housing growth	475	259	194	-	2	196	65
Environment							
Solar PV multi-function carport including battery storage & vehicle charging points Funding required for technical feasibility and viability appraisal for installations at two Leisure Centres & Council car parks in Sudbury and Stowmarket. Also, a third flexibly deployable option to be worked up as part of the study. This can support external investment opportunities and delivery against environmental and economic priorities, including transitioning towards carbon neutral districts by 2030.	40	20	-	11	1	12	8
Sustainable travel officer post & licence for commonplace engagement software regarding cycling and walking routes Funding for the above post as approved by Cabinets and matched by the IECCG Wellbeing funding together with software license to enable stakeholder engagement	45	23	-	1	7	8	15
Solar PV multi-function carport including battery storage & vehicle charging points Funding for capital expenditure 2021/22	223	112	-	-	-	-	112
General Transformation - other projects							
Trees for Life (BDC - 40%, MSDC - 60%)	23	9	3	-	-	3	7
Sports strategy refresh	40	20	-	10	7	16	4
HR Business Partner	52	26			16	16	9
CCTV - Mobile Camera	14	14					14
Total	1,651	905	262	103	60	424	488

General Fund Earmarked Reserves

Reserve	31/03/21 £'000	Transfers £'000	Forecast Transfers to £'000	Forecast Transfers From £'000	Forecast Balance 31/03/22
Business Rates & Council Tax Equalisation	6,106	-	77	(4,541)	1,642
Business Rates Retention Pilot	862	-	-	(39)	823
Carry Forwards	571	-	-	(571)	(0)
Climate Change & Biodiversity	200	-	143	-	343
Community Housing Fund	178	-	-	(26)	153
Commuted Maintenance Payments	820	23	-	-	842
Covid-19	1,171	-	414	(865)	721
Elections Equipment	35	-	-	-	35
Elections Fund	40	-	20	-	60
Government Grants	164	-	5	-	169
Homelessness	159	-	60	(33)	186
Joint Local Plan	100	-	-	-	100
Neighbourhood Planning Grants	49	-	68	(23)	94
Planning (Legal)	323	-	-	-	323
Planning Enforcement	93	-	-	-	93
Rough Sleepers	26	-	-	-	26
Strategic Planning	40	-	-	-	40
Strategic Priorities Reserve	1,147	-	-	(549)	598
Temporary Accommodation	145	-	-	-	145
Waste	87	-	-	-	87
Well-being	253	-	-	(46)	207
Total	12,229	23	787	(6,647)	6,392

2021/22 Capital Programme

BABERGH DC CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22	Original Budget	Carry Forwards / Budget Adjustments	Current Budget	Actual Spend to date	Full Year Forecast at Q3	Potential Carry Forward	Full Year Forecast LESS Budget (favourable)/ adverse Variance	Comments
GENERAL FUND	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
General Fund Housing								
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant	760	747	1,507	374	760	747	-	In addition to the expenditure to date, the council has already committed a further £241k to fund works that are in progress.
Renovation/Home Repair Grant (formerly Discretionary Housing Grants)	100	37	137	115	137	0	-	Demand has increased since Q2 and budget now expected to be spent in 2021/22.
Empty Homes Grant	100	142	242	1	15	227	-	An Empty Homes Officer has now started - in the next 3-9 months expect an increase in applications processed. Unspent allocation to be carried forward.
Grants for Affordable Housing	-	400	400	-	-	400	-	A report is to be made to Cabinet in May 2022 with proposals for awarding grants and expect to carry forward unspent allocation.
Total General Fund Housing	960	1,326	2,286	490	912	1,374	-	-
Environment and Projects								
Recycling Bins	65	-	65	108	115	-	50	Increased spend due to housing growth and take up of garden waste collection service (generating additional revenue income)
HVO Storage Tank	50	-	50	33	33	-	(17)	Cost of tanks less than anticipated. To be financed from CIL
Public Sector Decarbonisation	-	-	-	360	398	-	398	It is expected that expenditure will be incurred before the extended cut off date agreed with the grant provider of 31 March 2022.
Total Environment and Projects	115	-	115	500	546	-	431	-

BABERGH DC CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22	Original Budget	Carry Forwards / Budget Adjustments	Current Budget	Actual Spend to date	Full Year Forecast at Q3	Potential Carry Forward	Full Year Forecast LESS Budget (favourable)/ adverse Variance	Comments
GENERAL FUND	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Communities and Public Access								
Planned Maintenance / Enhancements - Car Parks	55	79	134	15	89	45	-	Works that will utilise the budget are required (including replacement parking meters) but spend slowed by supply issues and lack of available engineers' time. Any underspend to be carried forward to 2022/23.
Vehicle and Plant Renewals	715	-	715	316	532	183	(0)	Plant & vehicles are on order but delivery is slow. Some now likely to be after 31 March 2022.
CCTV Cameras Hadleigh and Sudbury	-	-	-	154	154	-	154	To be financed from CIL
Total Community Services	770	79	849	485	775	228	154	-
Economic Development and Regeneration								
Belle Vue	-	2,000	2,000	1	1	1,999	-	Still going through the planning process, so expenditure more likely to be in 2022/23.
Total Economic Development and Regeneration	-	2,000	2,000	1	1	1,999	-	-
Sustainable Communities								
S106/CIL Play Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Play Equipment	129	77	206	-	-	206	-	Schemes to utilise the budget have been drawn up but there are issues around getting quotes from suppliers and delivery of the equipment.
S106 Open Spaces Grants	-	-	-	54	54	-	54	Financed from S106 monies
Community Development Grants	117	79	196	94	196	-	(0)	There is a high demand for grants. Expect to spend the full allocation but some of the projects are being delayed due to supply issues.
Total Sustainable Communities	246	156	402	148	250	206	54	-

2021/22 Capital Programme

BABERGH DC CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22	Original Budget	Carry Forwards / Budget Adjustments	Current Budget	Actual Spend to date	Full Year Forecast at Q3	Potential Carry Forward	Full Year Forecast LESS Budget (favourable)/ adverse Variance	Comments
GENERAL FUND	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Leisure Contracts								
Kingfisher Leisure Centre - Improvements	100	627	727	31	112	615	-	Improvement programme for Kingfisher Leisure Centre is being reviewed and carry forwards will be for clearly identified projects which need to be undertaken. No material improvement works are expected for Hadleigh Pool & Leisure
Hadleigh Pool and Leisure - Improvements	50	353	403	-	-	-	(403)	
Hadleigh Pool and Leisure - New Pool and Refurbishment	-	346	346	88	150	-	(196)	
Battery Storage and Solar Car Ports	600	-	600	124	510	-	(90)	Project likely to cost less than anticipated, but will still fully utilise LEP grant
Total Leisure Contracts	750	1,326	2,076	243	772	615	(689)	-
Assets and Investments								
Planned Maintenance / Enhancements - Corporate Buildings	30	-	30	0	30	-	-	
CIL Funded Infrastructure Grants	-	-	-	368	368	-	368	To be financed from CIL
Strategic Investment Fund	-	3,000	3,000	94	94	2,906	-	Investigating further opportunities for investment.
Regeneration Fund	64	6,411	6,475	0	170	6,305	-	Asset reviews are being undertaken to plan future spend.
Regeneration Fund - Former Council Offices	2,979	181	3,160	-	-	3,160	0	Still going through planning process. Likely to start in 2022/23.
Total assets and Investments	3,073	9,592	12,665	463	662	12,371	368	-
Total Customers, Digital Transformation and Improvement	250	150	400	31	200	200	-	The Laptop refresh programme has begun and will continue into 2022/23.
Total General Fund Capital Spend	6,164	14,628	20,792	2,361	4,118	16,992	318	-

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Agenda Item 9

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: BCa/21/42
FROM: Councillor Simon Barrett, Cabinet Member for Finance	DATE OF MEETING: 7 March 2022
OFFICER: Katherine Steel, Assistant Director, Corporate Resources	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB290

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) FINANCIAL MONITORING 2021/22 – QUARTER 3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report considers the revenue and capital financial performance for the period April to December as well as the impact of COVID19 on the Council's finances and highlights significant variances expected for the financial year 2021/22. The revenue position is forecast to be an adverse variance of £617k.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 At this stage in the year, the financial position is for noting only.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That, subject to any further budget variations that arise during the rest of the financial year, the adverse variance of £617k, referred to in section 6.5 of the report, be noted;
- 3.2 The 2021/22 revised Capital Programme referred to in Appendix A and section 6.13 be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that Members are kept informed of the current budgetary position for both the HRA Revenue and Capital Budgets.

4. KEY INFORMATION

Strategic Context

- 4.1 The financial position of the HRA for 2021/22 should be viewed in the context of the 30-year business plan. The budget set in February 2021 showed a forecast surplus position for 2021/22 of £127k this was achieved by reviewing both capital and revenue budgets.
- 4.2 The Housing Service continuously identifies savings, efficiencies and income generation opportunities that will achieve a sustainable business plan into the future. The business plan sets out the aspiration of the Council to increase the social housing stock by either buying existing dwellings or building new ones.

- 4.3 Following a period of five years that saw annual rent reductions, which ended in March 2020, councils are allowed to increase rents by the maximum of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) +1% for a period of five years from April 2020. Subject to Compliance with the Regulator of Social Housings Rent Standard, this begins to mitigate the impact of the 1% reduction on the 30-year plan.
- 4.4 With the Council's housing stock at 3,443 homes (as at 31 March 2021) there will always be unplanned events that affect the level of income and expenditure in any one financial year. Members should therefore consider annual variances in the context of the medium-term outcomes that the Council wishes to achieve.
- 4.5 As COVID restrictions ease, property repairs and maintenance work are re-commencing within the Government's COVID19 safety guidelines. However, the impact of the backlog of works to be carried out is continuing to incur additional costs during 2021/22.
- 4.6 The new build programme has been impacted as development ground to a halt during lockdown and has been slow to recover, and as it does, now carries additional COVID19 related costs for site works to re-commence safely. A shortage of some construction materials is also causing delays in completion of projects on site.

5. 2021/22 Financial Impact of COVID19

- 5.1 The HRA has continued to be impacted by COVID19 during 2021/22 due to additional costs for sub-contractors to deal with backlogs in maintenance, potential delays in the capital programme and additional costs as described below and in 4.5 above.
- 5.2 In terms of income, there has not been any reduction to income levels during the first 9 months of 2021/22, but there is still the potential with the furlough scheme having ended in September 2021, as tenants who are in employment may be impacted. Housing Benefit and Universal Credit tenants are likely to be unaffected. However, levels of debt to be written off are expected to be very low, if any, as any outstanding rents are likely to be reclaimed, but over a longer period because of secure tenancies. As well as the decision last year not to evict any tenant that has generated arrears as a result of COVID19. The team will continue to monitor the situation closely.

6. Quarter 3 Position

- 6.1 The report covers:
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Revenue Budget
 - The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital programme
- 6.2 Budget monitoring is a key tool and indicator on the delivery of the council's plans and priorities for the year. There will, of course, always be reasons why there are variances such as:
- Economic conditions and those services that are affected by demand.
 - Base budgets being over or understated.
 - Uncertainties relating to funding or other changes that were not known at the time the budget was approved.

- 6.3 Based upon financial performance and information from April to December 2021 (with trends extrapolated to the end of the financial year) and discussions with budget managers and the Senior Leadership Team, key variations on expenditure and income compared to budget have been identified.
- 6.4 Taking each area in turn, the position on key aspects of the 2021/22 budget is summarised below:

Revenue

- 6.5 The original budget set for the HRA for 2021/22 shows a surplus of £127k, which would be transferred to reserves to achieve a balanced budget position. The forecast position for the year as at December is an adverse variance of £617k, as detailed in the table below.

Babergh District Council 2021/2022 Quarter 3 Monitoring				
	Budget	Full Year Forecast Quarter 3 2021/22	Variance (favourable) / adverse	% variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Dwelling Rents	(16,454)	(16,551)	(97)	1%
Service Charges	(584)	(574)	11	-2%
Non Dwelling Income	(183)	(196)	(13)	7%
Other Income	(50)	(56)	(6)	13%
Interest Received	(10)	(10)	-	0%
Total Income	(17,281)	(17,386)	(106)	1%
Housing Management	2,959	2,977	18	1%
Building Services	3,681	4,385	704	19%
Depreciation	4,280	4,280	-	0%
Interest payable	3,161	3,161	-	0%
Debt Repayment	150	150	-	0%
Revenue Contribution to Capital	2,901	2,901	-	0%
Bad Debt Provision	139	139	-	0%
Total Expenditure	17,271	17,993	723	4%
2020/21 Carry-forward	(117)	(117)	-	
Deficit / (Surplus) for Year	(127)	490	617	

- 6.6 The forecast variances identified within this report have been taken into consideration when setting the budgets for 2022/23.
- 6.7 The main items that are included in the overall adverse variance of £617k are detailed below:
- 6.8 **Dwelling Rents income – a favourable variance of £97k**
- Favourable variance due to an increase in the total number of properties

6.9 **Housing Management – an adverse variance of £18k**

- A favourable variance of £96k for vacant posts not filled and agency costs. The posts are in the process of being recruited to, but the team has struggled to fill some positions quickly.
- Favourable variance of £31k funding from Suffolk County Council for Housing Programme Manager role.
- Increased rent and service charge income for The Lees and The Firs £10k.
- Adverse variances forecast for Fire Prevention Covid catch up costs of £66k and an increase in demand for repairs work of £21k.
- Adverse variances for Improvements £18k, Utilities £29k and Tree Maintenance £9k.
- £12k other small increases on car mileage allowance etc.

6.10 **Building Services (Responsive Repairs and Maintenance) – an adverse variance of £704k**

- A £729k adverse variance to budget is predicted on the use of suppliers of material and services to support the Trades Team in completing a backlog of void and responsive jobs, built up because of Covid restrictions. This backlog has also led to an increase in spend on materials. Actions have been taken to mitigate against scarcity of supply post COVID19. The HRA had a surplus in 2020/21 resulting in £2.939m being transferred in to the HRA Strategic Priorities Reserve. This could be used to fund this overspend in 2021/22.
- Due to the Trades Team being redirected, an adverse variance of £73k is expected as a result of reduced income recharged for voids work.
- An adverse variance of £41k is forecast for an increase in contracted services to help with the Covid backlog and increased cost of materials.
- Vacant posts currently being recruited to gives a forecast favourable variance of (£91k).
- A favourable variance of (£48k) income is forecast from the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme. There has been a larger than expected uptake of the scheme following identification of more eligible households.
- A previously reported favourable variance, due to the short delay in adoption of HVO for vehicle fuel has now been offset by increased payments from repair claims and compensation to tenants.

6.11 The net £617k adverse position means that the total HRA balances as at 31 March 2022 would be £5.966m. This includes a minimum working balance of £1m, £4.849m in the Strategic Priorities Reserve, assuming capital expenditure is incurred as anticipated and £116k in other earmarked reserves.

Transfers to / from Earmarked Reserves	Balance	Outturn trf to	Budget trf from	Balance 31
	31 March 2021			to
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Working Balance	(1,000)			(1,000)
Big 20	(96)			(96)
Strategic Priorities	(15,778)	490	10,439	(4,849)
Building Council Homes Programme (BCHP)	(20)			(20)
HRA Revenue	(16,895)	490	10,439	(5,966)

Capital

- 6.12 Use of capital and one-off funds is critical and needs to be linked into our future delivery plans. A zero-based approach was adopted for the capital programme for 2021/22 to ensure that resources are aimed at delivering the Council's strategic priorities.
- 6.13 With complex capital schemes it is difficult to accurately assess the level of payments that will be made during a particular financial year. The Council continues to embark on new projects e.g., building new homes, where it is difficult to accurately predict at the planning stage how payments will be scheduled. Members should therefore focus on whether overall outcomes are being achieved as a result of the capital investment rather than variances against the plan for a particular year.
- 6.14 Actual capital expenditure for the period April 2021 to December 2021 totals £12.17m, against the budget (including carry forwards) of £27.51m, as set out in Appendix A.
- 6.15 Some items in the capital programme, such as planned maintenance, new build and acquisitions and neighbourhood improvements are unlikely to be fully spent in the year. The table in Appendix A includes further explanations and anticipates that a request will be made to carry forward any unspent balance at year-end.

7. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 Ensuring that the Council makes best use of its resources is what underpins the ability to achieve the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. Specific links are to a financially sustainable Council, managing our housing assets effectively, and property investment to generate income.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 These are detailed in the report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific legal implications.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Significant Risk No. 13 – We may be unable to respond in a timely and effective way to financial demands and also Corporate Risk No. 5E05 – if the Finance Strategy is not in place with a balanced position over the medium term the Councils will not be able to deliver the core

objectives and service delivery may be at risk of not being delivered. Other key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
If there are increases in inflation and other variables, then Council Housing self-financing could result in a greater risk to investment and service delivery plans.	Unlikely - 2	Noticeable – 2	Inflation and interest rate assumptions have been modelled in the HRA business plan. Capital receipts and capital programme funding have been reviewed.
If we fail to spend retained right-to-buy (RTB) receipts within the 5-year period, then it will lead to a requirement to repay to the Government with interest.	Probable - 3	Bad - 3	Provision has been made in the budget and Investment Strategy to enable match funding and spend of RTB receipts.
If we borrow too much to fund new homes, we will not be able to pay the loan interest.	Unlikely - 2	Bad - 3	Follow the CIPFA Prudential Code which states capital investment plans must be affordable, prudent and sustainable.
If economic conditions and other external factors like Covid19 are worse than budgeted for it could have an adverse effect on the Council's 2021/22 and medium-term financial position.	Probable – 3	Noticeable - 2	Maintain the focus and momentum on reducing the budget deficit throughout the financial year. Use of the Covid19 reserve. Maintain sufficient minimum reserve level to withstand the impact.
If capital data is inaccurate it could lead to problems with treasury management debt and cashflows.	Unlikely - 2	Bad - 3	Work closely with treasury management when setting capital budgets and how this will be financed. Monitor the capital spend quarterly and raise any changes with treasury management.

11. CONSULTATIONS

- 11.1 Consultations have taken place with the Assistant Director, Corporate Managers and other Budget Managers as appropriate.

12. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

- 12.1 An equality analysis has not been completed because there is no action to be taken on service delivery as a result of this report.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 In support of the Council's commitment to be Carbon Neutral by 2030, several initiatives have and are being undertaken in relation to the housing and sheltered accommodation stock. These are set out in more detail below.
- 13.2 Since 2020, Babergh has installed 85 Air Source Heat Pumps in council owned homes.
- 13.3 Working alongside the Energy Savings Trust, every property within our housing stock (via a desktop exercise) has been evaluated, which has provided the council with current energy efficiency levels compared with what could be achieved and the level of investment required to achieve improved energy efficiency. The 'hardest to heat' homes will be targeted first. This now allows us to quantify the cost of capital environmental works to existing homes.
- 13.4 Oil fired / storage communal heating has been replaced with individual heat pumps.
- 13.5 The new homes 'design and technical specification' that incorporates carbon saving solutions will be launched alongside our 30-year Housing Business Plan from in the first half of 2022.
- 13.6 Surveyors have been studying for the Retrofit Co-ordinators Diploma by the Retrofit Academy to better support the Council's ambition to retrofit existing properties.

14. APPENDICES

Title	Location
APPENDIX A – Capital Programme	Attached

15. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

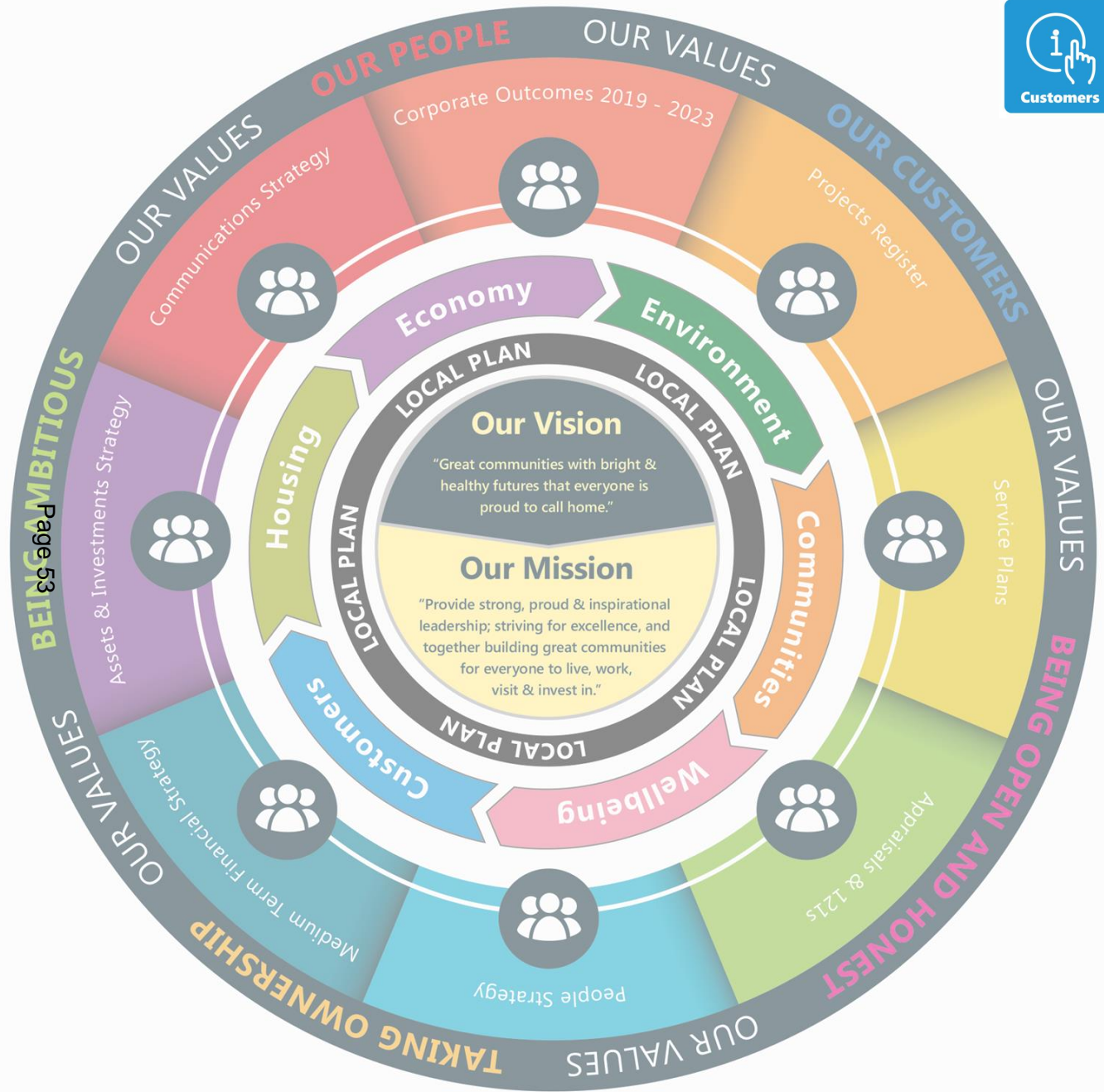
23 February 2021 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Four-Year Outlook Report 2020/21 – BC/20/25

6 September 2021 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Financial Monitoring 2021/22 Quarter 1 - BCa/21/19

6 December 2021 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Financial Monitoring 2021/22 Quarter 2 - BCa/21/29

Capital Programme

BABERGH CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22	Original Budget	Carry Forwards / Budget Adjustments	Current Budget	Actual at end Q3	Full Year Forecast at Q3	Potential Carry Forwards	Variance after Carry Forwards (favourable) / adverse	Comments
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Housing Maintenance								
Planned maintenance	3,351	4,202	7,553	3,125	5,825	1,727		Contractual Commitments likely to be completed, but there may still be some carry forwards due to procurement delays
ICT Projects	200	213	413	-	10	-	(403)	A review of ICT requirements has been undertaken and concluded that there are no further software upgrades or developments planned for 2021/22.
Neighbourhood Improvements	500	991	1,491	615	712	779		
Council House Adaptations	200	174	374	246	292	82		
Horticulture and play equipment	30	30	60	-	30	30		
Total Housing Maintenance	4,281	5,609	9,891	3,987	6,869	2,618	(403)	
New Build and Acquisitions								
New build programme inc acquisitions	7,474	10,141	17,615	8,180	12,654	4,962		Delays have occurred due to supply and procurement issues and arranging legal agreements on the latest developments. Potential underpends in this year are expected to be carried forward into 2022/23. Some projects are scheduled to complete in the next 2-3 years, so there is potential for final delivery to be later than planned.
Total HRA Capital Spend	11,755	15,750	27,506	12,167	19,523	7,580	(403)	



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Quarter 3 Performance

Babergh District Council

March 2022 Cabinet

Agenda Item 10





This performance report has been developed in collaboration with Cabinet members, Senior Leadership Team and corporate managers. It covers the period October – December (Q3).

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Throughout this report there is evidence that work is continuing at pace in line with the Council's strategic priorities. There are also many examples of the collaborative work across the organisation with a wide range of stakeholders, from businesses, schools, communities and other public service partners.

For example, hosting the Local Energy Showcase with over 200 attendees, working with Student Life and Year 10 students to develop a youth steering group. Working with partners to offer a wide range of health and wellbeing activities for both young people and adults across the district. Supporting Community Suffolk Action in the delivery of a revised Suffolk Volunteering Strategy. As well as seeing improvements in our customer response times.

Please note:

- This is a high-level report, highlighting how the council is performing against its six key priority areas from the Corporate Plan (2019-27). It also gives a snapshot of the overall health of the organisation (including headline performance indicators) and looks in brief towards projects commencing in the next quarter.
- The report provides high level assurance that the council is delivering against the Corporate Plan.

Babergh Economy

Headline Performance Indicators



Two in-person events held:
Local Energy Showcase saw ticket sales over the two-day event total **238**.
Careeriosity saw ticket bookings over the four-day event of **194**.



5500+
Virtual High Street Views

*150 Sudbury businesses registered
66 Hadleigh business registered*



13 applications received to the Business Innovation Support Scheme. **4** grant offers made.

Economy

Objectives and progress



Objective 1 – Connected and Sustainable :To be one of the best-connected places in the East of England and be a testbed for new innovation in clean growth industries

Progress:

- Solar carport main construction begins January 2022 for delivery by end of March 2022. First tranche of LEP capital grant funding now received.
- Belle Vue park improvement public engagement feedback published and the planning application is being prepared for submission in January 2022 covering new café, entrance, improvements to the heritage wall and other park side improvements.
- Hadleigh employment site (roadside on A1071 adjacent Persimmon housing development) concept plans which include a retail unit plus employment workspaces. Retail marketing agent and architect practice appointed for next phase of preliminary site works, design and investigations/planning to RIBA 3 from the Council approved forward funding. The updated scheme will return to Cabinet in late spring/early summer 2022 for next step.
- Hamilton Road Quarter Regeneration and Bus Improvements - next step viability and phasing are being considered in absence of a Round 1 Levelling Up Fund (LUF) award. Further master-planning and design works, including by County Council Highways for junction improvements, are progressing towards further public engagement in spring/summer 2022. We will likely re-bid for future LUF and Shared Prosperity rounds of central government funding, after receiving Round 1 feedback from UK Government.
- Work progressing on development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) following public consultation. Prioritisation framework developed for projects. Draft strategy to be circulated in Jan 22.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- Develop specific sector intelligence for key sectors to inform investment and business support in Clean Growth.
- Develop costed pipeline of projects in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- Sign documentation for the delivery of Sproughton Enterprise Zone.
- Work with Suffolk County Council to develop projects linked to Active Travel phase 2 funding.
- Secure funding for Sudbury bus and junctions through the newly launched Levelling Up Fund or look at alternatives if unsuccessful.
- Progress to next stage all capital projects/pipeline.
- Complete LCWIP strategy.
- Work with SCC on Bus Back Better initiatives.

Economy

Objectives and progress



Objective 2 – Innovative and Creative :We will become a growing area for Innovation, Enterprise and Creativity in the East

Progress:

- Hosted Local Energy Showcase Event – Over 220 attendees and excellent feedback received.
- Evidence based refreshed to incorporate Covid related impacts on businesses – will be used to draft new Economic strategy.
- Delivery of digital skills programme – 9 businesses participating in the training offers to date.
- Draft Recovery Plan updated following partners/stakeholder consultation – will be launched later in New Year.
- Work ongoing on Brantham screen cluster commission. First stage report due in Q4.
- 14 applications received for Business Innovation Support Scheme grants and 4 grant offers made.
- Christmas campaign launched to promote VHS – over 1621 vouchers downloaded for 33 offers, bollard covers installed in key locations.

What we plan to do next quarter:

- Publication of refreshed Evidence Base and launch Recovery Strategy.
- Draft new Economic Strategy.
- Development and launch of an Inward Investment website to ensure the Districts are promoted to investors as a place to locate.
- Progress plans for a Centre of Excellence linked to Innovation Labs to showcase innovation in the region.
- Support plans for redevelopment of key employment/development sites including Brantham and Delphi.
- Develop and launch a grant programme to support businesses impacted by the Omicron variant as part of an extension to the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding.

Economy

Objectives and progress



Objective 3 – Successful and Skilled :We will raise levels of aspiration and ambition in our districts and recognise and celebrate our success

Progress:

- Innovate Local programme is continuing to prove successful with great feedback from businesses who have been part of the trial. The pilot finished with Christmas markets.
- Careeriosity event held in Stowmarket which attracted a significant number of young people who were invited from Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts and showcased careers across a range of sectors including film & TV, gaming, science, sports and finance.
- Q2 claim submitted for Welcome Back fund in line with Government deadlines.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- Launch a “trade local” scheme to celebrate the innovation from our businesses during Covid-19 and maintain ongoing local business to business trade.
- Scope an innovation futures pilot with a local school.
- Development of workspace strategy and delivery plan across the District to ensure we have sufficient workspace.
- Commence delivery of Innovate Local programme through opening of Innovation Hub in Sudbury.
- Careeriosity programme to showcase career opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM) and creative subjects will be delivered in Sudbury in Easter school holidays.
- Scope expansion of Innovate Local programme for market stalls and launch of Innovation Labs at Borehamgate.

Babergh Environment

Headline Performance Indicators



16,570

Garden waste subscribers

The total number of subscriptions remains consistently high although numbers have levelled off slightly this quarter. However, there continues to be a year on year increase from 14,578 in Q3 2019/20 and from 15,535 for the same period last year



57

Trees

2,045

Hedgerow plants

Have been delivered to parishes through our Tree and Hedgerow planting scheme



67

Incidents of fly tipping

This is a further reduction which keeps the number of tips in line with pre-pandemic totals, 63 incidents in Q3 2019/20, and is compared to 144 in Q3 2020/21



18.41%

of recycling collected was identified as contaminated or too small to process (under 45mm)

This is an increase of 4.85% on Q2, and compared to Q3 2020/21 is a reduction from 1.14%. Items included mainly bags or bagged waste, glass, food waste or dirty containers and wood.
(Data from Materials Recovery Facility input sample)



88%

of fly tips cleared in 48 hours

8 of the 67 incidents could not be cleared within 48 hours. Some of these were reported over the Christmas period and during staff training where limited staff were available.

Fly tipping data relates to tips on public land only

Environment

Objectives and progress



Objective 1 – To achieve the Councils’ ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030, following the adoption of the Carbon Reduction Management Plan.

Progress:

- The installation of solar panels was completed at the Hadleigh and Sudbury leisure centres (a total of 674 panels, generating 259.9kW). 56 panels (21.8kW) were also installed at Wenham Depot, although UK Power Networks are unable to commission the array until mid-February due to Covid and staffing issues.
- Work commenced on installing the new water filtration system at Kingfisher Leisure Centre, with completion scheduled for January 2022.

A bid to the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles has been prepared for 75% of the capital funding for electric vehicle charging points in 7 Babergh carparks. Negotiations are underway with Network Chargepoint Operators to match-fund the remaining 25% and all future operating costs. The bid is scheduled to be submitted in January 2022.

- The webpage publicising the solar car ports project at the Kingfisher, Sudbury is live, and hoardings and information erected on site, with construction due to start in January 2022. A slight redesign of the anchor-piling and baseplate system is required due to unfavourable sub-surface ground conditions.

What we plan to do next quarter:

- Commission solar panel array at Wenham Depot.
- Commission new water filtration system at Kingfisher leisure centre.
- Commence scoping/feasibility work for further potential decarbonisation works at leisure centres.
- Progress towards completion of solar car ports project.

Environment

Objectives and progress



Objective 2 – Improve the biodiversity of the district, consistent with the biodiversity pledge adopted by the Council

Progress:

- Completed insourcing Babergh public realm team from Idverde to create fully in-house service.
- Delivery of 57 trees and 2,045 hedgerow plants to parishes who applied through our Tree and Hedgerow planting scheme.
- Surveying of BDC owned local nature reserves, county wildlife sites and large public realm sites with high biodiversity value completed by Suffolk Wildlife Trust.
- Tree canopy survey underway carried out by consultants Treeconomics Ltd.
- Biodiversity project manager role developed to assist Public Realm team with delivery of parish tree and hedgerow scheme. This role will provide a member of staff to focus on engagement with parishes and wildlife enhancement across the district.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- Recruitment of new Biodiversity Project Manager to provide full time resource for biodiversity improvements across the district.
- Finalise Tree Canopy Report and Tree Inventory Report.
- Planning tree planting for Queens Green Canopy at Broom Hill.
- Working with Public Realm Operations team to map sites for changes in mowing regimes to enhance wildflower potential.

Environment

Objectives and progress

Sustainable environment for all



Objective 3 – To promote a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment for our districts.

Progress:

- To date this year 45 fly tipping investigations have been undertaken, resulting in the issue of two fixed penalty notices, 10 warning letters and one caution.
- For 2021/22 we are focusing on reducing the amount of glass in recycling bins and encouraging them to be recycled through the bottle bank scheme.
- Solar Smart Bins have been ordered, delivery early 2022. This continues our Design Council project work to trial the use of smart bins and novel signage to identify their impact on littering.
- A waste management officer has been appointed to review the recycle waste contamination and develop an action plan to address this issue.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- Installation of Solar Smart Bins in 4 locations.
- The second phase of consultation for development of the councils first parking strategy will commence, through the strategy's development we are reviewing existing parking policies to encourage a modal shift in transport from cars to other sustainable transport options.
- Publication of the councils first climate change and biodiversity annual report is expected.
- Develop a workplan and start an educational and promotional campaign to reduce contamination in recycling and increase recycling performance.
- Develop a new model for the Waste Service to implement the requirements of the Resource and Waste Strategy.
- Clean Air Day is taking place in June, when we will be working in partnership with the CCG to focus on the problem of motorists idling their car engines outside GP surgeries.
- To give councillors an insight into the teams' achievements, we will commence reporting of quarterly figures for work undertaken by the Food and Safety and Licensing Teams.

Customers

Headline Performance Indicators

Combined data for both councils



2,532
daily
web visits (av.)

Page 63
This has decreased from last quarter due to the impact stricter cookies controls has had on our website analytics. We have seen 23,000 online forms submitted during Q3 also.



520/272
calls per day (av.) total
visits to the CAP

8% decrease from Q2 21 but a 15% increase from 2020.
Total of 264 visitors at Sudbury Access Point during Q3, 1 in Shotley and 7 in Hadleigh



71
email responded to
per day (av.)

28% decrease from last quarter.



512
Social media responses
issued

decrease of 67% from Q2



52
compliments

Decrease of 2%



4.56
out of 5

77% of customers rated 5/5 for our online form process (up 2% from Q2)



14%
abandon rate

8% decrease from Q2
1



2 min & 22 sec
wait time (av.)

Wait time has reduced from 3 mins 30 in Q2.



1,684/1457
chatbot and automated
telephone sessions

Chatbot activity increased by 49% from Q2 and automated telephony up 13% from Q2.



172
stage 1 complaints

Decrease of 25% from Q2.

Customers

Objectives and progress



Objective 1: We will implement the technology capabilities that support and enhance customer and employee experience, invest in our people to give them confidence to use and promote digital services and tools, and underpin this with an ethos and culture of listening and engagement.

Progress:

- We have now completed the draft complaints policy and feedback is being gathered via internal teams at present and will be shared more widely over Q4.
 - A short satisfaction survey for our customer services team has now been built and tested and will be going live in January 2022 so we can monitor customer feedback from our telephone lines.
- We commenced the delivery of our pop-up services in Shotley and Hadleigh from October 2021 and we have seen 8 customers (from attending once a week in Hadleigh and once a month in Shotley).

What we plan to do next quarter:

- We will continue to deliver our pop-up services and review the demand as well as increase promotion of these services to ensure residents who wish to see us face to face can access this support.
- We will monitor the satisfaction levels from our newly created customer survey to ensure that we understand more about areas for improvement and unnecessary contact (where we may be creating avoidable contact).
- The complaints policy will be submitted to the relevant governance structures over Q4 and we can then commence customer review panels to help ensure that customers are helping to codesign improvements to our services through the feedback we capture from our compliments, comments and complaints.

Customers

Objectives and progress



Objective 2: We will develop and deliver a phased approach to supporting customers with digital inclusion and digital upskilling by working with like-minded community partners and using insight and intelligence to baseline our approach and measure our success.

Progress:

- We delivered get online week from libraries in Sudbury and Hadleigh these sessions were publicised via social media and within the libraries. Whilst we did not see customers take advantage of these drop-in sessions, we were able to work with the libraries to identify where digital skills groups existed or need some support, so we will be looking to help deliver sessions from Q4.
- We have presented the tenants digital skills survey to the housing team and have commenced planning a sheltered scheme approach, partnering with a local charity BSEVC to help us to deliver digital skills support for our tenants as part of a range of support to help reduce digital exclusion.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- We have been working with iDEA [iDEA: Develop digital, enterprise and employability skills for free. Win career-enhancing badges and gain internationally recognised awards.](#) to create a specific Babergh online badge to support customers accessing free digital skills courses to gain, for us to be able to see the success rates from this and for customers to be able to display badges on their CV. These should be available from February 2022.
- Our tenant's digital skills delivery plan will be presented back to the housing management team for us to commence delivery in late Q4/early Q1 with a focus on sheltered scheme tenants initially.

Customers

Objectives and progress



Objective 3 – We are committed to putting our customers first by reviewing our current processes and re-designing them to ensure that they are simple, intuitive and maximise the use of technology.

Progress:

- Our next NVQ cohort has now reached the mid-point review and they are progressing their improvement projects, which we can share the outcome at the end of the course in Q4.
- Our engagement project has been working through some of the ways to ensure we achieve a representative sample of the district and will look to formalise this approach early 2022.

We have been working with Citizens Advice and will be writing a joint bid for national lottery funding to join and expand the digital hubs approach.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- We will be completing the NVQ cohort and explore additional projects for the officers to complete to help improve our processes from a customer perspective (using the feedback and trends predominately from customer feedback).
- We will create the joint bid for the national lottery funding for digital hubs and look to expand this into Babergh, following a successful pilot by citizens advice in Mid Suffolk.
- We will finalise our engagement project work to ensure we can understand the satisfaction levels across our districts.



Babergh Communities

Headline Performance Indicators



Community Grants



£18,475.64
Capital Grant Spend

£11,053.86
Community Restart Spend

£602.45
Minor Grant Spend

£212,518.96
Total amount of funding offered
through Capital, Minor and
Community Restart

£8,393.05
S106 funds allocated

17
Voluntary, Community &
Social Enterprise (VCSE)
supported

3 projects have also been supported and granted awards for the Hadleigh Foodbank, Glemsford Angels and GOstart Community Transport

(cumulative Q1 - Q3)

Detailed information on allocations on page 20

Communities

Objectives and progress



Objective 1: To create great places to live and to empower local people and communities to shape what happens in their area

Progress:

- Virtual “Connect & Catch up” sessions are being delivered across the Babergh area for the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INT) and Connect groups, to broaden the knowledge and understanding of specific topics and organisations. This is being delivered in partnership with East Suffolk & Ipswich Borough Council.
- Womens Tour the Suffolk leg of the Womens Cycle Tour took place on the 9th October 2021, the tour passed through Glemsford, Long Melford, Sudbury, Gt & Lt Waldingfield, Monks Eleigh, Chelsworth, Bildeston and Wattisham Airbase. (see following infographic sheet for statistics).
- Development of a Communities Events Programme for 2022, including the Queens Jubilee and Festival of Suffolk, The Armed Forces Day, Suffolk Commonwealth Games, Community Awards and the Womens Tour.
- Supporting four task and finish groups with Community Action Suffolk to ensure delivery on a new Suffolk Volunteering Strategy. The purpose of the task and finish groups is to move the strategy forward and ensure effective engagement by all partners with the strategy.

Communities

Objectives and progress



What we plan to do next quarter:

- Continue to develop and deliver virtual "Connect and Catch up" session across the INT areas.
- To continue to develop the Community Events Programme and develop Project Plans and establish a project lead for each.
- Planning for the Womens Tour 2022 is now under-way and meeting scheduled with SCC looking at opportunities for Babergh to be involved. The 2022 Stage will take place early June and will provide a fantastic opportunity to create an exciting finale to the weekends Queens Jubilee festivities and activities.
- Project Planning for the Armed Forces Event has commenced, with Hadleigh hosting for the third year running. Project Team established to progress activities and plans for the Queens Jubilee / Festival of Suffolk.

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The 2022 Commonwealth Games takes place in Birmingham between the 28th July and 8th August. There will be extensive live TV coverage and we know that watching elite sport inspires people to want to take part. As such, in line with our Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategies we will be highlighting the opportunities available for people to take part in sport and physical activity locally, below are a few examples:

- Encourage our local sports clubs (as they recover from Covid) to use the Games as an opportunity for recruitment to their clubs. We will be promoting the countywide Sports Covid Recovery Funds as well as our own Locality Awards to seed fund projects and initiatives.
- Encourage our leisure providers to use the opportunity to promote activities in our leisure sites.
- Work with Active Suffolk who we have commissioned to work in Primary Schools to encourage good quality sport and physical education opportunities.



Wattisham Airfield



The podium in Felixstowe

Postponed in 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the 2021 AJ Bell Women's Tour was rescheduled from its usual slot in June to October. Part of the UCI Women's WorldTour calendar, the 6 stage race started on the 4th October in Bicester Oxfordshire and finished along the seafront in Felixstowe on Saturday October 9th. The final stage in Suffolk saw the teams and riders leave Haverhill and race through 155km of Suffolk's countryside and communities to finish in front of thousands of spectators on the seafront in Felixstowe.

Demi Vollering (SD Worx) clinched overall victory in the AJ Bell Women's Tour, Britain's biggest professional women's race, as world road race champion Elisa Balsamo (Valcar - Travel & Service) clinched the final stage in her rainbow jersey.

AJ BELL

STAGE

6

WOMEN'S TOUR

Haverhill-Felixstowe
SATURDAY 9 OCTOBER 2021

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Elisa Balsamo

Helping make Suffolk ENGLAND'S

MOST ACTIVE COUNTY

STAGE PARTNERS

Suffolk County Council

EASTSUFFOLK COUNCIL

West Suffolk Council

Working Together

FELIXSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL

PALMER GROUP

vertas

89 riders

including European, World and Olympic medallists

16 teams

including twelve of the world's top 15 teams



Suffolk stage

155KM



Total race distance 635KM

THE RACE

101,000 Spectators
57% Female
43% Male

57% of spectators attended with their family

54% of spectators inspired to cycle more often

90% of spectators described the race as very enjoyable

35% of spectators came from outside Suffolk with 6% staying overnight

45% of spectators non-cyclists

17 British Cycling Ride Leaders trained

SPECTATORS

Over £1/2m

estimated economic impact for Suffolk



£15,000 of commercial sector support secured

ECONOMIC

ONE HOUR TV highlights programme on ITV4 and Eurosport

TV and radio coverage by regional media channels

Over 35 pages of coverage in Archant and iiffe publications

60,898 Website views on Stage 6

695,000 viewing figures

4 media events gaining regional coverage



42,635 unique page views

PR & MEDIA

Communities

Objectives and progress



Objective 2 – To effectively deliver our Community Safety Statutory responsibilities deliver on the priorities agreed within the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) Action Plan.

Progress:

- Communities Officers attended 'Disrupting Exploitation' training sessions. Worked alongside newly appointed school liaison officer across both districts on a delivery plan to include knife crime / gangs, Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) personal and online safety.
- Continued to develop planning around Crucial Crew and Crucial Crew Plus (which is for children aged 11 plus). Part of the plans is to run a Knife Crime event and in addition planning a separate ASB session.
- A Draft Strategy on Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is now complete. Once agreed by all partners an action plan for its delivery will be developed. Working with Student Life and Year 10 students in secondary schools to develop a youth steering group to be led by young people and linked in with local activities.
- Early work commenced on the development of a Modern Slavery Strategy. This will be led by SCC with contributions from Districts and boroughs.
- The Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership voted Cllr Derek Davis as Chair and Cllr Sarah Mansel as Vice Chair.
- Continued to support three supported living schemes with targeted community engagement work in the local area.
- CCTV – all cameras are now installed and further work with the police commenced to ensure CCTV operatives are aware to monitor areas within the towns to identify possible vulnerable women and girls being followed or approached.

What we plan to do next quarter:

- Continue to support the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership, Chair and Vice Chair.
- Progress work on the VAWG County-wide Strategy and action plan and incorporate into the Communities Delivery Plan.
- Complete the Section 11 Safeguarding Audit and associated Action Plan and update Safeguarding activity, including an update the current Safeguarding Policy.
- Support the work to develop a Modern Slavery Strategy.
- Regular meetings with West Suffolk Council to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of CCTV cameras.
- Progress a new Domestic Abuse 'Champions' group to develop activity and initiatives to roll out throughout the year.

Communities

Objectives and progress



Objective 3 – To deliver a Community Grants Services that is inclusive and transparent, supports community participation & activity and works with Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to develop thriving communities

Progress:

- S106 Projects: S106 project being developed in Great Cornard for new play equipment.
- Capital Projects: No Grants awarded in Q3. Projects being developed for Q4, still expecting full allocation of budget by end of the financial year.
- Minor Grants: Projects supported in Q3 include support for a 'Glemsford with Gratitude' community event and the refurbishment of GoStart Community Transport's car park.
- Revenue Grants: Funding Officer in regular communication with all organisations and in process of receiving applications for 2022/23
- Locality Awards: 18 Awards were processed in Q3 totalling £11,225.00.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- Capital/Minor: Intention is to fully allocate Capital Grants budget for 2021/22.
- Pipeline projects include a new community café for the Bridge Project at AFC Sudbury, and the renovation of Long Melford's Cordell Place play area.
- Revenue Grants: Applications assessed and offers made for 2022/23.
- S106: Site visit and allocation made towards Glemsford Play Area project, as well as at Bentley towards improvements to play area surfacing.



Babergh Wellbeing

Headline Performance Indicators



27

Children attended Family Park Cooking as well as Adventure Days during October Half Term



9

Free activities provided throughout Christmas Break for children and young people eligible for free school meals as part of the HAF programme.



105

People took part in Our Parks, free outdoor fitness session aimed at those who are physically inactive.

59% of attendees considered themselves inactive upon sign up.

8

Primary schools have taken part in the Active Schools programme.



Wellbeing

Objectives and progress



Objective 1 – To develop the Councils first Wellbeing Strategy to ensure that we put the wellbeing of our communities at the heart of everything we do.

Progress:

- October Half Term Activities: 27 children took part in both a Family Park Cooking Session as well as an Adventure Day during Half Term funded by Babergh District Council and delivered by Abbeycroft Leisure in Sudbury. One parent commented that *'The day out was really enjoyable. The food pack was amazing and saved a lot of money for the week'*.
- Christmas Holiday Activities: 9 free activity sessions were provided throughout the Christmas Break for children and young people eligible for free school meals as part of the national Holiday and Food (HAF) Programme. Sessions included free swimming, arts and crafts, football and more, all of which included a free meal for each participant. An evaluation is currently underway and will help shape future provision. Due to Covid-19 we are expecting numbers to be low, but the data will provide us with a platform to build on the programme moving forward.
- Our Parks: Our Parks is a free outdoor fitness session in Great Cornard aimed at those who are physically inactive. The sessions have been running from April to October 2021 and has seen 105 attendees taking part across sessions, 59% of whom considered themselves inactive upon sign-up. We are still awaiting the final evaluation which will help inform the next steps for the sessions.
- Active Schools: 8 Primary Schools have taken part in the programme which has now come to an end. We are awaiting an evaluation from Active Suffolk but initial data is extremely positive. The most significant improvement across the project has been the improvement of active travel percentages across a number of schools, where scooting, walking, or cycling to school has improved from baseline to follow-up surveys. This in part can be attributed to our work with schools on the promotion of bike/walk to school weeks and the provision of resources to promote safe, active travel to and from school. The evaluation will help us consider the next steps for the programme.



Wellbeing

Objectives and progress



Objective 1 – To develop the Councils first Wellbeing Strategy to ensure that we put the wellbeing of our communities at the heart of everything we do.

Progress cont:

- Health and wellbeing event for residents aged 50+ was held in partnership with Active Wellbeing service at Hadleigh Pool and Leisure. 14 attendees enjoyed the session and learnt about lifestyle changes that can improve their health and wellbeing.

What we plan to do next quarter:

- Holiday and Food (HAF) Activities – We will be planning the February Half Term and Easter Activities Programme.
- Active Schools – Once the evaluation has been received, we will agree the next steps for the programme.
- Our Parks – Once the evaluation has been received, we will consider future options.
- Summer Events – We will be planning our summer events so that we are able to take advantage of events such as the Commonwealth Games being hosted in Birmingham
- **ICOPE Project** - Led by the Anglia Care Trust (ACT), and supported by the Integration and Partnerships manager with logistics and trying to recruit volunteers for the project. The project will commence in February if we can recruit.
- Dementia Orientation Boards pilot project being delivered in Hadleigh, with a vision to rollout in 2022/23.

Babergh Housing

Headline Performance Indicators



20

Households placed into temporary accommodation



29

New Affordable Homes Built or Acquired



47

cases where homelessness has successfully been prevented or relieved



78

Properties relet (not temporary accommodation)



81%

of disabled facilities grants spent and committed



32

average number of days for standard VOID re-lets

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The demand for Temporary Accommodation has increased during the last quarter, particularly during December. However, the team continue to be incredibly busy and dealing with lots of new cases.

There continue to be issues with the availability of materials and social distancing requirements for the construction industry which is causing some delays.

The team are continuing to work diligently to prevent and relieve homelessness wherever possible.

There has been an increase in the number of homes available to let, which is really positive for those needing somewhere safe to call home.

There have been 49 minor adaptation grants, and 6 disabled facilities grants approved to date.

Void times have increased for a variety of reasons, including hard to let properties, properties held to meet hospital discharge and delays in Building Services. Building Services & their contractors have experienced increased sickness absence, including Omicron, increased demand and operational demands

Housing

Objectives and progress



Objective 1 – Enabling delivery and provision of homes within the Districts.

Progress:

New Council Homes Completions for Quarter 3:

- 11 properties off Bantocks Road, Great Waldingfield (S106 acquired from Landex)
- 7 properties at phase 1 of Wolsey Grange, Sproughton (S106 acquired from Taylor Wimpey Homes). Phase 1 of affordable housing delivery on this site is now complete.
- 11 properties at Chilton, Sudbury (S106 acquired from Anderson)

Total number of homes:- 29 (21 for Affordable Rent Tenure and 8 for shared ownership)

- There were 26 housing specific planning applications granted, which will deliver 293 homes.
- Completed 10 shared ownership sales on three sites.

What we plan to do next quarter:

- 9 affordable homes in Brantham due for completion.
- Babergh Growth will finalise listed building applications and appoint a contractor to deliver phase one of new homes at Corks Lane.
- Complete the purchase of land in Sudbury from SCC to enable the delivery of new affordable homes.

Housing

Objectives and progress



Objective 2 – Digital transformation to improve services to our residents

Progress:

- Launched our Scheduler within our Repairs Service – this will massively improve our service by making it easier for our tenants to schedule repair jobs when they first make contact.
- Will have launched the ability for tenants to access the My Home Tenant Portal via social media - making it easier for them to register and login and hopefully continue to drive up usage and reduce the need for tenants to contact us (as they can self-serve more). We have issued targeted communication to tenants who haven't yet got a Portal Account and will continue campaigns throughout the year to drive up account users.

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We are trialling the use of a welcome video for tenants. The video is emailed to tenants the day before they move into their home and provides them with useful information for their first few weeks. We hope this will reduce the number of issues that are then reported at the first tenant visit (around 6-8 weeks after they move in).

What we plan to do next quarter:

- The launch of Workflow and VOIDS module has been delayed from this quarter to next. The system will see benefits to staff, as well as bring data into our Housing System rather than being kept separately.
- Start using our Bulletin communication in a more targeted approach in co-ordination with Neighbourhood and Rents Team.
- Launch our new and improved Sheltered Housing web pages with better use of video, images and maps.

Case Study – Choice Based Lettings waiting times fall following trial of new working ways

Back in Quarter 2, we set out a business case for some temporary additional resources to help clear a backlog of Gateway applications and post that built up during Covid with an increase in applications / enquiries. The table below shows the difference between Q2 and Q3 performance:

Backlog Item	June 2021	December 2021	Reduction
Backlog new Applications requiring verification letter to be sent	271	99	172
Applications awaiting documents & full assessment	1473	528	945
Items of post	1802	894	945
Average time to Process Complete Application	2 – 3 Months	2 – 3 Weeks	6 – 9 Weeks

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We have work in progress to reduce the numbers further, this is set to be achieved quickly as we are progressing applications in 2-3 weeks now, compared to 2-3 months. This is helping to further reduce complaints, Councillor enquiries and customers sending chasing follow up enquiries.

The Lettings Team have worked collectively to trial and explore different ways of working and the allocation of tasks to improve efficiency alongside the additional resources. With some trial and error, a new processes was agreed in the team and seen huge success.

In the longer term, with the help of the staff who have completed the Business Improvement Techniques qualification, we hope to further examine more CBL processes to see if we can drive out more new efficient processes and make better use of technology / online access.

Babergh Health of the Organisation

Headline Performance Indicators

Combined data for both Councils if not specified



5.36

average no. of days
sickness per FTE

*This compares to 4.63 days at
West Suffolk and 4.52 days at
East Suffolk for the year to date
(Apr – Dec 2021).*



1195

Total number of days lost
to sickness

*Top 2 reasons for absence:
25.75% Mental Health
10.13% Coronavirus*



89,400

Babergh Twitter
impressions

*'impressions' are the number of
times a Twitter
user sees our Tweets*



193,636

Babergh Reach for
Facebook

*'reach' is the number of unique users
who had any content from our Facebook
page or about the page enter their screen*



1038

Babergh Committee /
Council meeting views

*There were 13 meetings in Q3, with 29
members of the public attending, as well as
2 joint meetings with 71 YouTube Views*

Health of the Organisation

Objectives and progress



Objective 1 – Develop and implement a comprehensive 'People' Strategy that ensures we are a great organisation to work for, that our people are supported to learn and grow, energised and enabled to deliver our ambitions

Progress:

- Commenced the tendering process for our Occupational Health Contract.
- Continued the development of our agile / hybrid way of working guidance to support future ways of working.
- Surveyed leaders, managers and staff to gain feedback on support required to lead and work more efficiently in a hybrid environment.
- Commenced programme for onboarding graduates 2022.
- Commenced work on our resourcing strategy.
- Continued our work on our staff wellbeing programme - finalised the production of our mental health and stress management sessions for line managers and staff.
- Developed future survey plan with short surveys to go out quarterly rather than a large overall survey, and commissioned an expert Insight Company to work with us for the next 12 months and beyond.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- The first short all employee survey goes live in January and closes at the end of the month. In February we will analyse feedback and develop action plans based on key themes.
- Develop an action plan based on the feedback from our equality, diversity and inclusion sessions and agree our future strategy.
- Go live with line manager Wellbeing modules.
- Commence programme of intern recruitment.
- Onboard 3 new apprentices into the workforce and our final 3 kickstart placements.
- Analyse feedback from Hybrid working survey and develop the upskilling requirement plan.

Health of the Organisation

Objectives and progress



Objective 2 – Provide robust effective management of the Councils finances, including our capital projects and contracts. We will use our resources in a sustainable way and prioritise based upon our Corporate Plan.

Progress:

- Treasury Management 2021/22 half year report presented to Joint Audit and Standards Committee.
- General Fund and HRA 2021/22 Quarter 2 reports presented to Cabinet.
- Work on the 2022/23 Budgets, Treasury Management, Investment and Capital Strategies.
- Actions and priorities agreed from the EELGA Commissioning & Procurement diagnostics.
- Communications/workshops to Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on the Finance Transformation Plan.
- Outcomes and plan of action from the Budgetary Control Audit.
- Project team in place for the replacement Financial Management system, Project Initiation Document (PID) and Business Case drafted, work commenced on drawing up the specification.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- Communications/workshops to Extended Leadership Team (ELT) on the Finance Transformation Plan.
- Business Partner training to take place.
- Contract management training programme to commence.
- Replacement Financial Management System PID and Business Case to Customer Transformation Board, specification completed and procurement commences.
- 2022/23 Budgets to be presented to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Council.
- Treasury Management, Investment & Capital Strategies to be presented to Joint Audit & Standards Committee and Council.
- General Fund and HRA 2021/22 Quarter 3 reports to be presented to Cabinet.
- External audit of the 2020/21 accounts to commence.

Health of the Organisation

Objectives and progress



Objective 3 – Effective and efficient management of our property portfolio to make the best use of our assets.

Progress:

- Work progressing on developing long-term letting options for two sheltered housing schemes in Sudbury and Hadleigh
 - Developed Concept Plan with Staff and Member Working Groups ahead of the next stage of our proposals for our office space at Endeavour House.
 - Commenced programme of asset reviews, including a compliance review and compiling an asset inventory ahead of exploring a new land and property database.
- CIFCO Q3 rent collected at 99.06% and continued to make full debt repayments to the Councils.

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What we plan to do next quarter:

- Continue to develop the proposals and design to deliver the Accommodation and Agile Strategy concentrating on delivering our proposals for Endeavour House and developing plans for touchdown facilities in district and a new joint depot for BMSDC.
- Continue to deliver the Strategic Asset Management Action Plan Priorities.
- Council Owned Companies to continue to monitor against agreed Business Plans and begin to plan for next business plan periods.

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Agenda Item 11

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: Babergh Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: BCa/2144
FROM: Cabinet Member for Environment (Climate Change) – Elisabeth Malvisi (Babergh)	DATE OF MEETING: 7 March 2022
OFFICER: Cassandra Clements, Assistant Director – Environment and Commercial Partnerships	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB333

CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 In July 2019, Babergh District Council declared a climate emergency and committed to investigating ways in which the council could reduce its own emissions and support the Suffolk-wide ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.2 The climate change and biodiversity annual report is the first of its kind for the council and presents an opportunity to showcase the progress and achievements made so far.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 To not provide an annual report on climate change and biodiversity for Members and the public – this option was not taken up, due to the clear need for keeping members and the public informed.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the contents of the report be noted
- 3.2 That a climate change and biodiversity report be produced annually each year going forward.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that members and the public are kept informed of progress and achievements with regards to the councils' climate change and biodiversity ambitions.

4. KEY INFORMATION

- 4.1 Since the council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 much progress has been made including the development of both a carbon reduction management plan and biodiversity action plan.
- 4.2 It is important to note that the carbon reduction management plan and biodiversity action plans are the starting point of a much longer journey. The council has adapted and will continue to update these plans regularly as research, technology and carbon reduction solutions develop.
- 4.3 The first climate change and biodiversity annual report sets out the significant progress and achievements being made across the district to reduce carbon emissions and ensure that Babergh is prepared for the impacts of climate change. A copy of the draft report can be located at Appendix A.
- 4.4 The councils work has a number of different strands and includes key areas such as reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, making homes more energy efficient, generating local renewable energy and protecting and enhancing our habitats and environment. The annual report highlights how the council is working with partners to support residents and communities to take action and make their contribution to tackling climate change.
- 4.5 Elements of the annual report were recently used to inform members as part of an all-member climate change briefing held on 20 January 2022. Feedback on the report was encouraged and relevant amendments have been reflected in this final version of the annual report before it is more widely publicised.
- 4.6 A further aspect of the annual report is the Greenhouse Gases (GHG) report 2020/21 which can be located at Appendix B of this report.
- 4.7 The GHG report provides a comprehensive carbon footprint for the councils' operations in 2020/21 and provides detail of the trajectory of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions since the establishment of a baseline in 2018/19.
- 4.8 The GHG report also provides supporting information for policy making and action planning to enable the councils to respond to the declaration of a climate emergency and the commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.

5. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 5.1 The Joint Corporate Plan is designed to address the challenges and seize the opportunities facing the districts and their organisations for the foreseeable future. The Councils' vision is to have 'great communities with bright & healthy futures that everyone is proud to call home.'
- 5.2 The Joint Corporate Plan identifies six strategic priorities as set out in the visual below. Environment is one of those six, and the success of the councils' ambition on climate change is intrinsically interlinked with the strategies that underpin the other five priority areas of Housing, Communities, Well-Being, Economy and Customers.
- 5.3 The response to climate change is not just the business of Environment but of every part of the Councils' strategic framework. Conversely, Environment plays a key part in every priority within the Corporate Plan.



6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial implications as this report is intended to provide information only

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific legal implications.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Corporate / Significant Business Risk No. 18 - the councils will not be carbon neutral by 2030. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
The Councils do not meet their aspiration to become carbon neutral by 2030	Unlikely (2)	Disaster (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaches are evidence based. The impact of initiatives is monitored closely.
The Councils do not meet their aspiration to enable net biodiversity gain, habitat and species decline continues unchecked.	Unlikely (2)	Bad (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The release of finance is based on business cases. Continue to work alongside our peers both in Suffolk and nationally, collaborating where appropriate and sharing best practice and lessons learned. An internal audit assessment on climate

			change was undertaken in the autumn and the councils have received 'reasonable reassurance'.
The effects of habitat loss results in irreversible damage to numbers of native species and loss of biodiversity.	Unlikely (2)	Disaster (4)	

- 8.2 **Risks related to the transition to a lower-carbon economy** – this transition may entail extensive policy, legal, technology and market changes to address mitigation and adaptation requirements related to climate change. Depending on the nature, speed, and focus of these changes, transition risks may pose varying levels of financial and reputational risk to the Councils.
- 8.3 **Policy and Legal Risks** - policy actions on climate change continue to evolve. Their objectives generally fall into two categories - policy actions that attempt to constrain actions that contribute to the adverse effects of climate change or policy actions that seek to promote adaptation to climate change. The risk associated with the financial impact of policy changes depends on the nature and timing of the policy change. Another important risk is litigation or legal risk. Recent years have seen an increase in climate related litigation claims being brought before the courts by property owners and public interest organisations. Reasons for such litigation include the failure of organisations to mitigate impacts of climate change, failure to adapt to climate change and the insufficiency of disclosure around material financial risks. As the value of loss and damage arising from climate change grows, litigation risk is also likely to increase.
- 8.4 **Technology Risk** - technological improvements or innovations that support the transition to a lower-carbon, energy efficient economic system could have a significant impact on the Councils. For example, the development and use of emerging technologies such as renewable energy, battery storage or energy efficiency. New technology will replace old systems and may disrupt some parts of the Councils' business.
- 8.5 **Market Risk** - there may be shifts in supply and demand for certain services and products currently provided by the Councils.
- 8.6 **Reputation Risk** - climate change has been identified as a potential source of reputational risk tied to changing customer or community perceptions of an organisation's level of contribution to the transition to a lower-carbon economy.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken, however, discussions with the councils two Portfolio Holders for climate change, the senior leadership team and members, has taken place.

10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required.as there are no direct equalities implications from this report and this report is for noting only.

10.2 For individual project proposals that have the potential to impact any of the protected characteristics, the Assistant Director and Corporate Managers will undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific environmental implications.

12. APPENDICES

Title	Location
Climate change and biodiversity annual report - Babergh	Appendix A
Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions report April 2020 – March 2021	Appendix B

13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

BCa/19/57 Environment and Climate Change Task Force - proposals to Cabinet

BCa/20/06 Biodiversity Task Force - proposals to Cabinet

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Babergh District Council

Climate Change and Biodiversity

- our journey so far



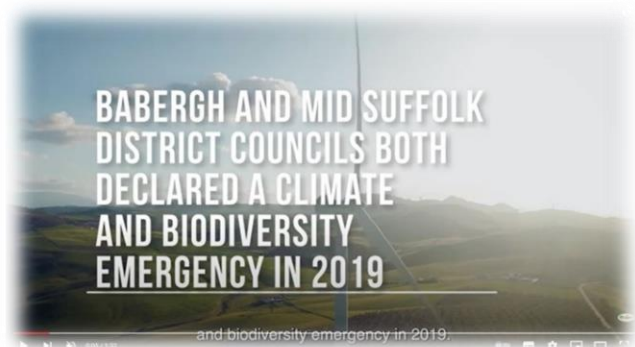
Introduction

In July 2019, Babergh District Council declared a climate emergency and committed to investigating ways to reduce its emissions and contribute toward the Suffolk-wide ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030. Shortly afterwards we declared a biodiversity emergency and made similar commitments to species and habitat conservation.

This report is the first of its kind for Babergh and presents the progress and achievements we have made with regards to climate change and biodiversity.

Recently published research by [Council Climate Scorecards](#) gave Babergh District Council a rating of 58% based on a number of factors.

The score is based on an "expert-approved checklist" and included rating the council's commitment, community engagement, mitigation and adaption measures as well as the education, skills and training it provides.



To find a short video which summarises our work to tackle climate change to date, [visit the councils YouTube channel](#)

The following pages reflect actions identified in support of biodiversity and topic headings as outlined in the carbon reduction management plan.



Biodiversity



Low carbon



Housing



Planning



Waste and fleet



Travel and transport



Council and commercial estate



Customer transformation and ICT



Business and communities



Culture change and governance

Our Commitment

Since we declared climate and biodiversity emergencies in 2019, Mid Suffolk District Council has taken the additional following steps to further strengthen our actions and plans:

- In July 2020, councillors approved proposals to create a joint [Sustainable Travel Action Plan](#) with Mid Suffolk District Council.

The aim being, to encourage a permanent shift towards sustainable transport such as cycling, walking and public transport throughout the district.

- [Street lighting](#) – a motion was passed in September 2021 to reduce the intensity and extent of outdoor lighting within our own public realm and housing assets and elsewhere where possible. The council will also include guidance in its Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document to protect and enhance dark skies for the benefit of wildlife and human health and wellbeing.

- [Biodiversity](#) - in September 2019, councillors approved commitments to enhance and protect biodiversity across our district.

The actions included preparing a Wildlife Network Map, a Tree Canopy Survey and initiatives to enhance wildflower verges and meadows to encourage bees and insects.

Our Commitment

- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** – in 2015, [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), was adopted by all United Nations Member States to provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and for the future.

At its heart are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. For the purpose of this report, the Council has linked its own actions and commitments to the most relevant of the 17 SDGs.



Biodiversity

Streetlighting

- We have committed to reducing artificial lighting across our public realm and housing assets by including additional lighting control guidance within a planned Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- We will work with our partners to help reduce wider light pollution across the district.
- This provides us with the opportunity to:
 - Reduce energy consumption,
 - Reduce any negative impacts on human health and wellbeing, and wildlife, caused by intense blue-white light.



Strategic Property

- The council's strategic property team actively look for opportunities to acquire sites to support district-wide biodiversity.



Mapping Exercise

- We have commissioned Suffolk Wildlife Trust to undertake a mapping exercise which covers wildlife corridors, council-owned public realm sites, as well as county wildlife sites and local nature reserves. This is now complete.
- The survey will not only enable us to hold a more accurate record of our own tree stock and wildlife corridors but will help us target where additional planting is required and which planting areas need to be protected.
- The survey's findings will be made available publicly via an interactive database in due course

Parish wildflower planting

- Increased interest from residents to leave more of our green spaces unmown has enabled us to change our mowing regimes to allow for longer grass and wildflowers.
- Working alongside a local supplier, we have developed a Suffolk grasses and wildflower mix.
- Our public realm team have been mapping locations and assessing suitability as well as planning areas to sow from Spring 2022.

Biodiversity

Tree Canopy Survey

- By using field surveying and satellite data, the council can create an accurate inventory of its tree stock. It can also provide the following:
 - identify the % canopy cover in each ward.
 - quantify ecosystem services in each ward – carbon storage, carbon sequestration etc.
 - assess the resilience and composition of the current tree population in each ward,
 - make planting projections necessary to compensate for the loss of trees due to disease e.g ash dieback and chronic oak decline.
 - produce a tree planting strategy which categorises the areas where tree planting will benefit the existing tree stock or improve habitat networks.
- The completed project will include publicly accessible web maps which show tree canopy and ecosystem services data.

Tree and Hedgerow planting

- In March 2019, the Committee on Climate Change announced, the need



to plant 30,000 hectares of trees each year and increase our hedgerows by 40% as part of measures to dramatically reduce UK carbon emissions.

- This year, Babergh and Mid Suffolk have planted 281 trees and 4,690 hedgerow plants have been distributed to town and parish councils for planting and care. At 10 years old, the carbon sequestered from the 281 trees planted will equate to 7,025 kg a year
- increasing annually as the trees grow larger. The average family car emits 4,500kg per year.
- To promote the benefits which planting trees brings to our communities, we offer all families a tree to mark the arrival of every new child through the [Tree for Life scheme](#) Since its launch, we have given away over 1,000 trees in Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Biodiversity



Marine Pollution

- The council plays an active role to ensure that alongside its partners who include other Local Authorities in Suffolk, the Environment Agency, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, the [Suffolk Marine Pollution Emergency Response Plan](#) is kept relevant and up to date.
- A marine pollution incident affecting the Suffolk coast could have considerable and long-lasting impacts on the environment and local communities and economy.
- Specific areas of interest in Babergh include:
 - Cattawade to Seafeld Bay
 - Shotley Marina to Crane's Creek
 - Orwell Cottages to Cliff Plantation, Chelmondiston
 - Holbrook Bay

Low Carbon

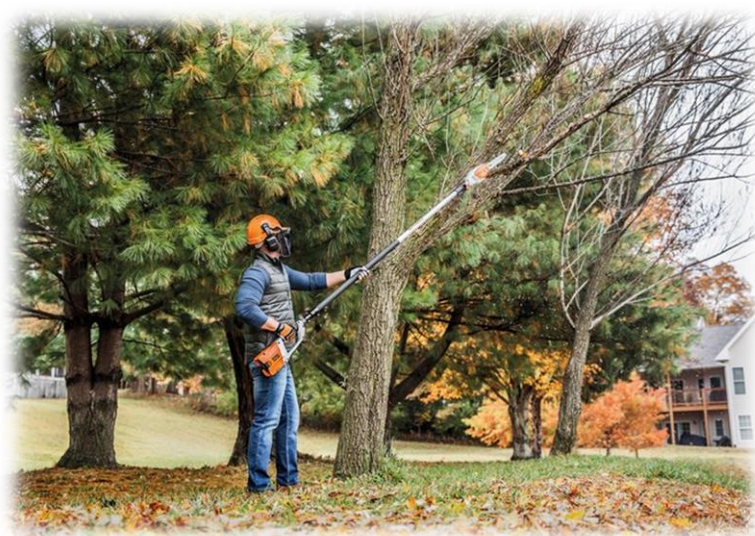


In developing the carbon reduction management plan, the climate change taskforce took expert advice on which areas to target first for the greatest impact.

The council contracted Groundwork Suffolk to prepare a baseline of emissions and to develop recommendations. Initial results show, that the council's two largest emitters were our leisure centres and our waste vehicles.

- Alongside Mid Suffolk, we are the first rural UK council to switch its fleet to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). A 90% reduction in emissions is expected from the switch.
- The councils' two leisure centres have successfully transferred to certified low carbon tariffs for electricity use.
- We have installed a new pool water cleaning system at Kingfisher leisure centre (Sudbury) which is expected to reduce annual CO₂ emissions by between 6.4 and 8.6 tonnes per annum and reduce combined gas and electricity consumption by 1.1% - 1.5%. During 2020/21, Kingfisher leisure centre produced 530 tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

- The councils' grounds maintenance team is using electric trimmers and bushcutters as opposed to diesel powered equipment.



Low Carbon

Solar carports

- Following a successful bid, the council secured funding for the installation of a solar multi-function carport at Kingfisher leisure centre.
- Babergh alongside Mid Suffolk is one of the first councils to install these in public surface carparks.
- The scheme is a learning pilot for the council and has the potential to be rolled out elsewhere and links to the wider regional strategy regarding cumulative localised energy microgeneration
- The benefits of ‘multi-function’ include:
 - generating power on site to offset leisure centre costs - public swimming pools are under pressure from rising energy costs, with a recent [Sport England report](#) finding that 40 per cent of public pools could be lost by the end of the decade.
 - power electric vehicle charging points and battery storage to help manage demand during peaks and troughs
 - Carbon savings expected from the installation are:
 - Lifetime (25 years) CO₂ savings – 4.4 times the volume of the Royal Albert Hall
 - Generate enough power to supply 24 average homes in Sudbury each year



Low Carbon

Public sector decarbonisation fund

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are installing a number of green energy measures at their leisure centres – providing the centres with renewable energy and reducing CO2 emissions.
- Work is now complete to install solar PV panels, at the councils' leisure centres and depot in Wenham, in line with their climate change ambitions.
- The council-owned sites and measures include:
 - Hadleigh Pool and Leisure (380 solar panels generating 148.2 kW)
 - Kingfisher Leisure Centre, Sudbury (294 solar panels generating 111.7 kW)
 - Wenham Depot (56 solar panels generating 21.8kW)
- The changes, carried out by [CorEnergy](#), enable the centres to reduce their demand on the energy grid and begin to transition away from fossil-fuelled heating systems, by powering them with renewables.
- They are expected to save 47.4 tonnes of CO2e per year - a 1% reduction in the councils' annual carbon emissions – as well as reduce the total amount of energy needed to run the leisure centres.
- These works have been made possible thanks to £1.4m in funding from the Government's [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#), which supports capital energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects within public sector non-domestic buildings.



Housing



A significant amount of work has already been undertaken to improve energy efficiency in our own housing stock. This includes:

- 1,100 Babergh owned council homes have had solar panels installed to generate electricity.
- Authorities through the [Suffolk Solar Together scheme](#) offer residents discounted rates for the installation of solar panels for their homes.



- Between April 2019 and November 2021, Babergh installed 135 Air Source Heat Pumps in council owned homes. A number of these have been funded through the Warm Homes Fund. The fund was set up to support the council in addressing some of the issues affecting fuel poor households.
- Oil fired / storage communal heating has been replaced with individual heat pumps at Samford Close, Holbrook with surveys to be undertaken at Hill House, Bildeston and Ash Street, Boxford.
- We have and continue to install external insulation on solid wall properties whilst replacing cladding systems with materials which offer better insulation whenever viable.
- Work has commenced in Springlands, Sudbury to improve both the appearance and efficiency of our residents homes over the next three years.
- We have received funding through the Green Homes Grant to help improve the energy efficiency of low-income households across the district.
- Working alongside the Energy Savings Trust, we have evaluated every property within our housing stock (via a desktop exercise). This has provided the council with a current efficiency level compared to what it could be and the level of investment required to achieve improved energy efficiency.
- We are targeting the 'hardest to heat' homes first i.e. properties where the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is rated D – G.
- All properties to be rated C on the EPC scale by 2030.
- We have trained our surveyors in Retrofit training which has been extended to a Retrofit Co-ordinators Diploma by the Retrofit Academy.

Housing

- Our stock condition surveyors are qualified to undertake EPCs.
- All new homes delivered for council housing in 2021 were built to an EPC rating of B.
- Our new homes 'design guide and technical specification' that incorporates carbon saving solutions will be launched alongside the 30-year Housing Business Plan in April 2022 and seeks to improve energy efficient standards further for all new homes built by the Councils and their Growth Companies.
- The councils have appointed 2 Energy Performance Surveyors that are currently working with Private Landlords to target the worst performing homes within the Private Rented Sector. This is a Countywide initiative and follows a successful bid to Government.

Planning



- Our [Joint Local Plan](#) was formally submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination on 31 March 2021 and includes policies that require new developments to achieve high levels of energy efficiency and minimise carbon emissions.
- The council continues to play an active role working alongside other local authorities on the [Suffolk Design Charter](#). The project aims to embed high quality, sustainable and functional design for new homes across Suffolk.
- Preliminary work has begun on a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) including:
 - biodiversity
 - open space

Other SPDs are planned for Climate Change and Heritage. Before the SPDs can be formally adopted, they will be subject to public consultation following adoption of the Joint Local Plan.

Waste and Fleet



- Our waste fleet is one of the largest carbon emitters in the council and in September 2021 switched its fleet from diesel to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). The switch from diesel, will result in up to a 90% reduction in CO2 and elimination of diesel fumes.
- All kerbside waste, when it cannot be recycled goes to the Suffolk Energy from Waste plant which powers more than 30,000 homes.
- Our recycling rate (reduction in waste sent to the energy from waste plant) for 2020/21 was 38.49%. Our aim is to increase this to 65%.
- Our garden waste scheme continues to grow with a total 16,581 customers at the end of December 2021 compared with 15,535 at the end of December 2020
- This year, we have given away 480 bags of compost generated by Material Change in Creting St. Mary through our community 'giveaway' event in Hadleigh.
- Through our membership of the Suffolk Waste Partnership, we continue to support the countywide [Food Savvy](#) project. In Suffolk, over 52,000 tonnes of food waste is thrown away by residents each year costing the local taxpayer approximately £4.75 million.
- Work has begun on developing a litter and fly tipping strategy with our colleagues at the Suffolk Waste Partnership. The strategy will be key to managing the problem of fly tipping for the next 5 years and we are aiming to publish this in the winter of 2022/23.
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have appointed a Waste Management Officer to support the service and to work collaboratively with Suffolk Waste Partnership, residents and businesses to promote waste reduction initiatives and support the implementation of the Resources and waste Strategy (RAWs).

Waste and Fleet

- Back in December 2018, the government published their [Resource and Waste Strategy \(RAWS\)](#). Babergh welcomed this publication and supports its overarching aims to reduce waste, improve recycling and support the development of a circular economy.
 - The government launched a public consultation with stakeholders in Spring 2021, the purpose of which was to establish how any new waste system can effectively work in practice for householders, local authorities, waste management companies, businesses and product producers
 - Both councils responded to the consultation in conjunction with our partners at the Suffolk Waste Partnership.
 - Consultation responses are now being analysed by the government and guidance expected in March 2022.
 - Once the process has concluded, the councils and the Suffolk Waste Partnership will be in a position to consider the implications for the districts and agree how to implement any required changes to our current services.



Travel and Transport



Electric vehicle charging

- As part of the drive towards our low carbon future, people need to feel confident to make the switch to electrifying their transport. Where appropriate Babergh is working with [Plug in Suffolk](#) - a project run by Suffolk County Council to simplify the procedure of charging an electric car and make Suffolk Zero Emission Vehicle ready.
- We have installed a small number of electric vehicle charge points at 3 car parks in the district, all of which are fast chargers. Work is currently underway to seek funding for an additional 26 charge points (all fast chargers) with installation expected over a rolling programme of 1-2 years.
- The solar carport at Kingfisher leisure centre incorporates 8 charge points of which 6 are fast chargers and 2 are rapid chargers.



Parking Strategy

- Development of our first parking strategy is underway, with the initial round of public consultation complete.
- The strategy will incorporate both on-street and off-street parking.
- Through both development of the parking strategy and the carbon reduction management plan we are reviewing our existing parking policies to encourage a modal shift in transport from cars to other sustainable transport options including cycling.



Travel and Transport

Active Travel

- In developing the councils Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils received over 1,880 contributions to the active travel consultation.
- Alongside the LCWIP, which includes network zone mapping for active travel infrastructure investment and a prioritised list of 195 schemes across both districts, the councils will publish a ‘sustainable travel vision’ which outlines key values and ambitions and how we plan to achieve them, within the coming months.
- In partnership with Suffolk County Council, we have facilitated cycle parking installations in Sudbury and Hadleigh.

Buses and Community Transport

- We are a key stakeholder and active partner in the Enhanced Bus Partnership for Suffolk, and advocate for our communities needs with regards to improving bus connectivity and services across the district.
- We are proactively advocating for Demand Responsive Transport pilot schemes in our districts to provide better rural connectivity via more sustainable means.

Other

- We have fed into and are now reviewing Transport East’s ‘Transport Strategy’ (currently at consultation stage), which has decarbonisation at its heart.



Travel and Transport

Behaviour Change Initiatives

- We actively spread messages to encourage behaviour change including:
 - [Love to Ride initiative](#) - an online platform that gets more people cycling
 - Funding for Bike Doctor Sessions enables an experienced cycle mechanic to carry out a thorough check on your bike
 - [Clean Air Day](#) - is the UK's largest air pollution campaign, engaging thousands of people at hundreds of events, and reaching millions more through the media. This year it took place on 17 June 2021.
- We are looking to deliver courses and events to make people feel more confident in travelling more regularly by bike or on foot, such as Bikeability courses, more leader-led Health Walks, and activities around Cycling UK's Big Bike Revival.
- We are exploring new initiatives, such as incentive schemes for active travel participation, cargo e-bikes for businesses, and 'zero carbon commuting' initiatives.

Council and Commercial Estate

- The councils [Strategic Asset Management Plan 2020-2025](#) was approved in January 2021 and supports the move to reduce our carbon footprint.
- Energy audits that focus on our depots and touch-down points have been carried out. Further audits are planned for the council's income-producing assets, with a view that Energy Performance Certificates will be obtained for all council assets.
- As existing lease arrangements expire both for council assets and CIFCO assets, new leases reflecting modern practices such as sustainability will be adopted. New lease arrangements for



CIFCO include specific green clauses as outlined in CIFCOs sustainability action plan which was adopted in 2021.

- CIFCO has incorporated within its key performance indicators a target to reduce the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of its portfolio by 10% by 31 March 2022.

Customer, Transformation and ICT



- We are, in conjunction with our IT partners in Suffolk County Council, moving to new technologies that enable us to utilise less hardware to run the same workloads.
 - We are working with colleagues from our Communities team and external partners including foodbanks and befriending schemes on community device recycling schemes where members of the public can donate unused devices which are then recycled to those in need.
- To maximise the opportunity for digital engagement with our residents, enable greater efficiency and reduce our carbon footprint the councils have:
 - launched a one-year pilot scheme working alongside Suffolk Libraries, to lend iPads to those residents who need help to get online.
 - through the online tenant portal [‘My Home’](#) supported the reduction of paper wherever possible.
 - implemented a remote access solution for our Housing service called Open Access which is a self-service portal available to all our tenants providing a range of services - available on smartphone, tablet, or computer.
 - through the Shared Revenues Partnership (SRP) offered residents and businesses the ability to go [paperless](#) with their council tax and business rates bills.



Business and Communities



- We are working collaboratively with local authorities in Suffolk to develop the Suffolk Energy Prospectus - setting out the challenges and opportunities for Suffolk to contribute to becoming carbon neutral in the UK by 2050.
- We hosted the councils first ever energy focused event - the Local Energy Showcase in October 2021. The aim of which was to inspire and inform local businesses, community organisations and interested individuals - 238 tickets sold over 2 days.
- We are also working actively to:
 - on building better relationships with large energy infrastructure providers,
 - carry out an assessment of community energy projects in the district
 - develop a Local Energy Asset Representation Model (LEAR) for Suffolk, to help inform future asset decisions.

Culture Change and Governance

- Agile working allows staff to work from home or from a location that is convenient to them, in order to minimise unnecessary travel.
- Any supplier submitting a tender is requested to provide information in respect of their plans to reduce carbon emissions and single use plastic during the life of the contract, this will be strengthened as part of the procurement policy review.
- Through the 2022/23 budget setting process we are aiming to secure funding for a Climate Change Officer role.

Next steps

To ensure we keep everyone informed, the council will continue to produce the climate change and biodiversity report each year. Alongside this report you can also access the councils Greenhouses Gases (GHG) report [here](#). The GHG report provides a comprehensive carbon footprint for the council.

How can I help?

Making simple changes to the food you eat, how you reduce your waste, and the way you travel can reduce your carbon footprint.

- [Get involved with FoodSavvy Suffolk](#)
- [Use Suffolk's Carbon Footprint calculator](#)
- [Plan your journeys](#)
- [Help Suffolk's Wildlife](#)
- [Find your nearest reusable water bottle refill station](#)
- [Discover volunteering opportunities in your area](#)
- [Find out more about green communities already in Suffolk](#)

How can I share my ideas or get support for my community to tackle the climate change challenge?

We are keen to hear your ideas, suggestions and offers of help.

Please [email our climate change team](#)



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Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Report April 2020 to March 2021



Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report – April 2020 to March 2021

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Introduction

This report provides a comprehensive carbon footprint for Babergh and Mid Suffok District Councils' operations in 2020/21. It provides detail on the trajectory of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions since the establishment of a baseline in 2018/19 and provides supporting information for policy making and action planning to enable the Councils to respond to the declaration of a Climate Emergency and the commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.

This report uses as its baseline the 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report – 2018/19 Financial Year' as this was the first comprehensive GHG report the Councils prepared. The report measures progress in terms of carbon emissions against the baseline and provides a trajectory which will need to be met to achieve the Councils' aim of being carbon neutral by 2030.

Methodology

The methodology in this report follows:

- HM Government, Environmental Reporting Guidelines: Including streamlined energy and carbon reporting guidance, March 2019 (Updated Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2).
- WRI / WBSCD - The Greenhouse Gas Protocol: A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard (Revised Edition), March 2004.
- WRI / WBSCD - The Greenhouse Gas Protocol: Scope 2 Guidance, An amendment to the GHG Protocol Corporate Standard, 2015.
- UK Government Conversion Factors for Company Reporting (2021) - DBEIS / DEFRA

Each activity that the Councils operate has been assessed for its direct and indirect energy use. The electricity and gas use of buildings, direct fuel use in Council-owned vehicles and mileage in private vehicles whilst undertaking Council operations have been assessed. Standard



conversion factors have been used to assess the carbon footprint of each activity and building. The conversion factors are published by DEFRA on an annual basis and reflect the carbon intensity of a range of carbon sources.

The report is based on emissions of the 'basket of six' GHGs as defined by the Kyoto Protocol and include: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), F-gases (hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆). All values are given as CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e), which is a measure of the range of GHG as measured against the warming potential of CO₂. This is standard practice and better reflects the climate impact of the Councils' emissions. Electricity procured on behalf of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils is on the EDF 'Blue tariff', which is regarded as a low carbon nuclear energy source. However, it is not permitted to report this energy source as low carbon as the generation certificates associated with the source of electricity are held by the generator and therefore the standard conversion factor of UK Grid Electricity has been used in the calculation of GHG emissions.

The electricity supplies for the four leisure centres were moved to an EDF Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) backed electricity supply in March 2021, however it remains contentious whether this consumption is allowed to be reported as zero carbon under the 'market based' approach. The 'grid average' emissions factor, which is applied to all electricity the Councils use, incorporates emissions derived from low carbon energy generation across the UK, therefore by reporting REGO-backed electricity, potentially from the same renewable sources, may lead to double counting. This is currently under review by the UK Government and therefore for the purposes of this report, a record of the REGO-backed CO₂e emissions will be included in the footprint under the title 'green tariffs', however this total will not be deducted from the overall footprint.

Organisational Boundary and Scopes

The GHG Protocol advises that in setting organisational boundaries, an organisation should select an approach for consolidating GHG emissions and then consistently apply the selected approach to define those business activities and operations that constitute the organisation for the purpose of accounting and reporting GHG emissions. A 'control approach' has been used to consolidate the Councils' GHG emissions i.e., all GHG emissions from operations over which the Councils have control. GHG emissions from operations in which the Councils have an interest but have no control have not been included. Control can be defined in either financial or operational terms.

The organisational boundary has been taken to be those emissions from the Councils' headquarters, touchdown points, leisure centres, streetlighting operated by the Councils, vehicles owned by the Councils, third parties delivering Council services, and internal Council policies that result in emissions of GHG.

An example of what has not been included in the organisational boundary would be emissions related to the disposal, treatment or sorting of waste from the point of transfer from the refuse collection vehicles to the waste handler.

The personal commuting miles of staff to Endeavour House or other offices have been excluded as these are not within the organisational boundary. Mileage incurred by councillors attending Endeavour House on Council business may be claimed as expenses under standard HMRC rules and so the resulting emissions are within the organisational boundary.

To help delineate direct and indirect emission sources, improve transparency, and provide utility for different types of organisations, three "scopes" (Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3) are defined by the GHG Protocol for accounting and reporting purposes:



Scope	
1	These are emissions from fuels that the Councils directly consume e.g., gas, diesel, and petrol in the direct delivery of Council business by Council employees.
2	These are indirect emissions such as electricity use in Council premises.
3	These are emissions derived from third party contractors providing services on behalf of the Councils.

Table 1.1 – Definitions of scopes included within the organisational boundary

There is some discretion within the Protocol on what to include in each scope, for example where information is not recorded, where third party data is unavailable, or where the accuracy of data cannot be relied upon. The following have not been included for such reasons:

- The impact of the Councils' supply chains. Only those services that are delivered directly by the Councils or through third party suppliers on the Councils' behalf have been assessed.
- Contracts where the impact would be regarded as minimal e.g., the collection of a small number of abandoned vehicles by third party service providers.
- Non-carbon GHG emissions associated with the air conditioning within Endeavour House.
- The energy use of staff working in their own homes as this would add a degree of uncertainty and imprecision that would be unhelpful.
- Embedded carbon resulting from water use.

Scope Change

In March 2021, the responsibility for payment of electricity and gas invoices was transferred from the two leisure centre contractors (Everyone Active and Abbeycroft Leisure) to the Councils. As the Councils are now directly responsible for paying the energy invoices at these sites the associated emissions have been transferred from Scope 3 to Scope 2. It should be noted that this will not affect the overall carbon emissions figures.

Data Gaps

Scope 3 emissions from the contractors and the supply chain have not been included in this report, however the Councils are looking into the possibility of developing a standard reporting mechanism for all the Councils' suppliers/contractors to provide a more comprehensive report in the future.

Reliability of Data

Data has been verified as far as possible, but the reliability is nevertheless dependent on the data collection practices of third-party providers. It would therefore seem reasonable to assume an error margin of +/- 5% on all values within this report.

Re-basing of Reports

It was identified that the GHG Reports for 2018/19 and 2019/20 did not fully include the carbon emissions derived from electricity used by the leisure centres. The emissions factor for 'grid average' electricity was used to calculate the Scope 3 emissions, however there were no emission factors applied for the 'transmission of electricity'. This has been corrected and the revised figures are used in this report.



Results

To help provide context and scale when reading the results, it may be useful to understand that an average resident of our district is responsible for the emission of 6 tCO₂e per annum.

The total emissions attributable to the Councils' operations were 4,821.9 tCO₂e for the 2020/21 financial year.

The breakdown of emissions by scope are shown in Chart 1.1. Scope 1 emissions, arising from the use of gas in our buildings, heating oil in sheltered housing schemes and fuel used in Council-owned vehicles, accounted for 27.7% of overall emissions. Scope 2 emissions accounted for 10.7% of overall emissions and were largely derived from electricity use in buildings and sheltered housing schemes. 61.6% of emissions were derived from contracted services – the Serco waste contract and the two leisure centre contracts.

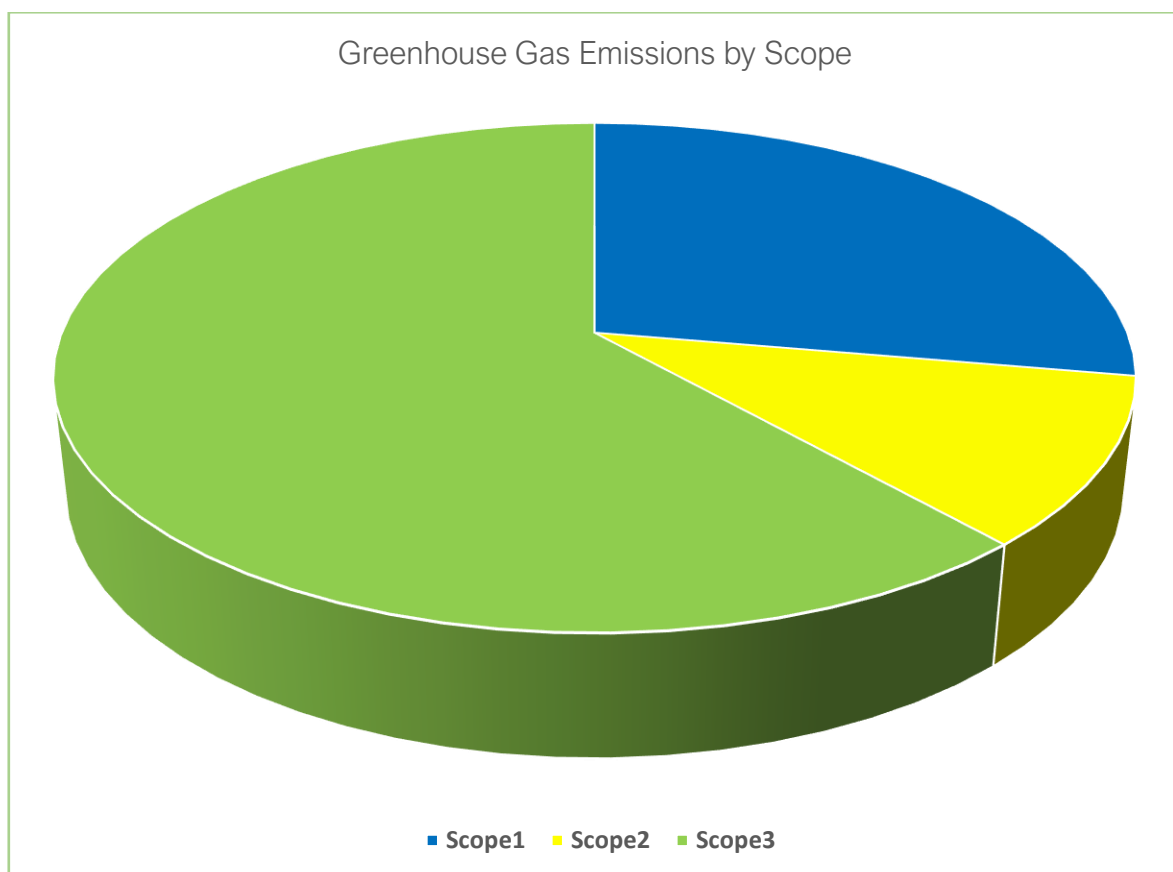


Chart 1.1 –Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council GHG emissions by scope

Table 1.2 (overleaf) provides a summary of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' GHG emissions by scope and includes the provision for reporting on carbon offsets and dual reporting on green (low carbon) tariffs.



Reporting period 2020/2021	Units	Consumption	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (tonnes CO ₂ e)
Scope 1			
Oil boilers ¹	Litres	141,475	40.4
Gas boilers	kWh	4,628,937	939.5
Diesel	Litres	136,672	343.4
Petrol	Litres	518	1.1
Gas Oil	Litres	4,373	12.1
Scope 2			
Premises electricity	kWh	2,212,485	469.8
Street/highways lighting	kWh	176,315	37.4
Leisure Centre Electricity	kWh	32,380	6.9
Scope 3			
Staff and member business travel ³	Miles	267,116	73.7
3rd Part Contracted Diesel	Litres	645,035	1620.5
3rd Party Contracted Petrol	Litres	0	0.0
T and D premises electricity ⁴	kWh	2,218,183	41.7
T and D Street/highways lighting electricity ⁴	kWh	176,315	3.5
3rd Party Contracted Gas	kWh	4,090,853	830.3
3rd Party Contracted Electricity	kWh	1,735,120	401.6
Total Gross Emissions			4,821.9
Carbon offsets ⁵			0.0
Green tariffs ⁶		32,380	6.9
Total Net Emissions			4,821.9
Intensity measurements⁷			
Tonnes of CO ₂ e per resident			0.025

Table 1.2 – Summary of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council GHG emissions

Data explanations (footnote references):

1. Oil and Gas: Not weather corrected compared to 2018/19 baseline year.
2. Fugitive Emissions: Emissions resulting for greenhouse gas emissions from air conditioning units are calculated on basis of an average 3% leakage rate.
3. Business travel: Staff and members' car and motorcycle journeys including staff owned and car club vehicles. Train and bus travel not included.
4. Transmission & Distribution of electricity: the carbon footprint of electricity consumption is split between Scope 2 and Scope 3, with the proportion of energy losses that occur in delivering the electricity from power plant to the organisations that purchase it being reported as Scope 3 rather than Scope 2.
5. Carbon offsets: We have reported on the contribution of on-site renewable energy generation that we consider as carbon offsets through our export of renewable energy to the national grid.
6. Green tariff: This includes carbon emissions which can be reported on as the Councils hold the generation certificates.
7. Intensity measurement: We are required to define a result using an 'intensity measurement', which is a ratio of GHG impact per unit of activity or other business metric. We have selected CO₂e emissions per resident.

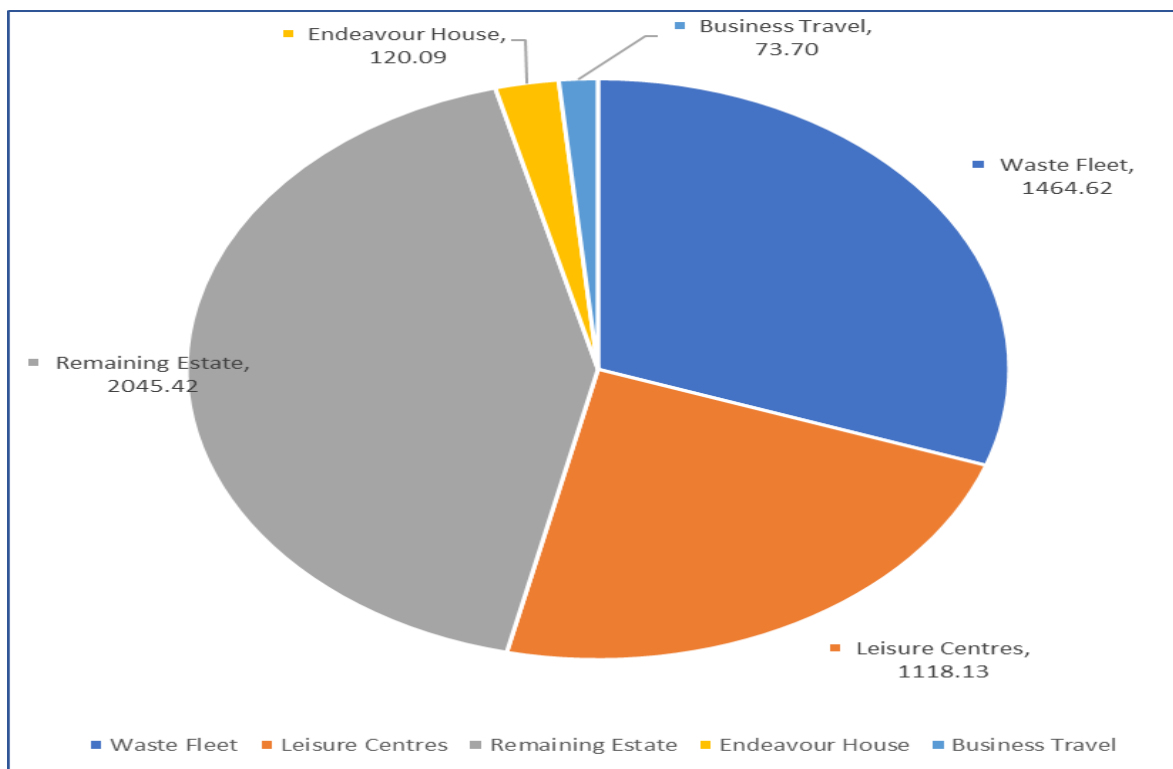


Chart 1.2 –Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council GHG emissions by sector

Waste and Refuse Collection

The largest source of emissions within the Council portfolio was the waste refuse collection service (including recycling) at 1,464.6 tCO₂e per annum, accounting for 30.3% of the total emissions.

The existing refuse vehicle fleet is due to be replaced in 2023 and an appraisal will be required to assess options for a low emission refuse vehicle fleet. It is likely that this will require a larger capital investment than a direct like-for-like replacement of the existing diesel vehicle fleet, although there would be significant savings on fuel costs. The necessary vehicle charging infrastructure would also require significant capital expenditure, which will need to be considered in an options appraisal.

The Councils have undertaken a review of the fuels used by the waste fleet for the purpose of finding alternative low carbon fuel source. As a result of the review the waste fleet started using Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) from August 2021. This will result in a 90% reduction in associated carbon emissions and will be able to be reported on in next year's GHG report.

Leisure Centres

The second largest source of emissions was the four Council-owned leisure centres, which are operated by Abbeycroft Leisure and Everyone Active. Collectively these contributed 1,118.1 tCO₂e to the Councils' carbon footprint, or 23.2% of the total carbon emissions from Council activities, as shown in table 1.3 (below). In the previous two years the carbon emissions from the leisure centres accounted for over 30% of total emissions and were the single greatest source of emissions, however the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic with the associated lockdowns and closure of buildings, has seen the emissions from the leisure centres fall below that of the waste services which weren't significantly affected by the pandemic.



Source	Operator	GHG Emissions (tonnes CO ₂ e)
Kingfisher Leisure Centre, Sudbury	Abbeycroft Leisure	530.4
Hadleigh Leisure Centre	Abbeycroft Leisure	107.5
Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre, Stowmarket	Everyone Active	381.4
Stradbroke Leisure Centre	Everyone Active	98.8
Total		1,118.1

Table 1.3 – Summary of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council Leisure Centre Emissions

Electricity and gas use in the Councils' leisure centres accounted for 327.6 tCO₂e and 790.6 tCO₂e, respectively. There is no gas grid supply for Stradbroke Leisure Centre and so the facility relies on the electricity supply. Electricity consumption in this building was higher than would be expected as all water heating is undertaken using electric immersion heaters.

Despite one of the Councils' leisure centres being off the gas network, 71% of the emissions from the leisure centres were derived from the use of gas. Most energy suppliers that offer it, guarantee to cover only 6-25% of their gas supplies from renewable sources, and so a simple switch to a green energy supplier to reduce the carbon footprint is unlikely to be feasible at this stage.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils actively procure energy for the leisure centres and have entered REGO-backed electricity contracts with EDF. These contracts will also be available to the Councils for all Council-owned property from April 2022. The Councils are also exploring their options with regards to procuring 'green tariffs' for the gas supplies.

Any further upgrade plans will be required to fully address and minimise energy use if the Councils are to achieve their ambitions of being carbon neutral by 2030. The current buildings, either in use or under construction, have a lifespan beyond 2030 and so will require significant investment in either upgrades and/or replacement plant, or offsetting elsewhere within the Council estate to account for these emissions.

Other Emissions

The remainder of the Councils' emissions (2,045.4 tCO₂e) were derived from all other activities and premises, with no other single source or activity contributing more than 3% to the total emissions – this will provide a challenge in the development of the carbon reduction plan owing to the relative lack of significant 'easy wins'.

The Council offices at Endeavour House accounted for 120.1 tCO₂e which equates to 2.5% of the Councils' total carbon emissions (this is based on the Councils' floorspace occupancy as a proportion of the whole building). It should be noted that this is an actual increase on the previous year despite the Council-occupied part of the building being unused for much of the assessment period due to the pandemic. It has been suggested that a reason for the increase in gas consumption during this period was due to an increase in the amount of required air changes by the air handling unit as a requirement under new Covid-19 estates regulations for air circulation.

The office at Endeavour House currently has a Display Energy Certificate rating of E, which is below the standard expected of a building of its size, age, and nature of occupation. As tenants, the Councils have no control over the heating, air conditioning and lighting of the space within the building beyond the decision to base the Councils within the building. The Councils also



currently have no say over which supplier to use with respect to low carbon energy suppliers – this is undertaken by Vertas on behalf of Suffolk County Council. As such, these emissions are reportable but outside of the Councils' direct control.

Council staff claimed travelling expenses for 265,750 miles in the 2020/21 financial year using private vehicles for undertaking council business. This accounted for 73.3 tCO₂e. Staff mileage has decreased by just under 50% since the previous year because of lockdown and the pandemic.

Councillors claimed travelling expenses for 1,030 miles in the 2020/21 financial year using private vehicles undertaking council business, which accounted for 0.3 tCO₂e of GHG emissions. Councillor mileage has decreased by 95% since the previous year because of lockdown and the pandemic.

Pool car use by Council staff and councillors during 2020/21 totalled 336 miles, which resulted in 0.1 tCO₂e. Pool vehicles, whilst currently underused, have a marginally lower carbon footprint per mile than the private "grey" fleet owing to the size of vehicle, the provision of electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles. The shift in the pool car fleet towards electric is likely to track ahead of the general fleet and as such the gap between the grey fleet and the pool cars is likely to grow – for example an electric vehicle has a 68% lower carbon footprint than the grey fleet. Pool cars are currently only accessible to those not in receipt of Essential Car User Allowance. Encouraging a shift to the use of pool cars should be considered with the acknowledgement that the use of private vehicles whilst undertaking tasks on behalf of the Councils is only a minor component of its carbon footprint. A shift to pool car use may also increase carbon emissions overall if staff are required to drive from the districts to Endeavour House to collect and return a pool vehicle.

Investment in a publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure is currently contributing to the Councils' carbon emissions either through direct electricity procurement or from host suppliers (e.g., Kingfisher Leisure Centre). The carbon emissions from the electric vehicle charging infrastructure are minimal, however it is expected to rise as the adoption of electric vehicles increases. The Councils are in the process of preparing a bid for partial grant funding of £400,000 from the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles to increase the provision of electric vehicle charging points at Council car parks.

The transition to carbon neutrality

Chart 1.3 depicts the trajectory from a 2018/19 baseline of 5,800 tCO₂e to a carbon neutral target in 2030 and compares actual emissions against the trajectory. In 2019/20 carbon emissions rose to 5,820 tCO₂e before falling 2020/21 to 4,821.9 tCO₂e. This decline in emissions was significant enough to get the Councils back on track to meet the carbon neutral target and only narrowly missed the 2020/21 target of 4,749 tCO₂e. However, the rate in decline is predominantly due to the Covid pandemic, which has resulted in a significant reduction in carbon emissions from the leisure centres and staff travel.

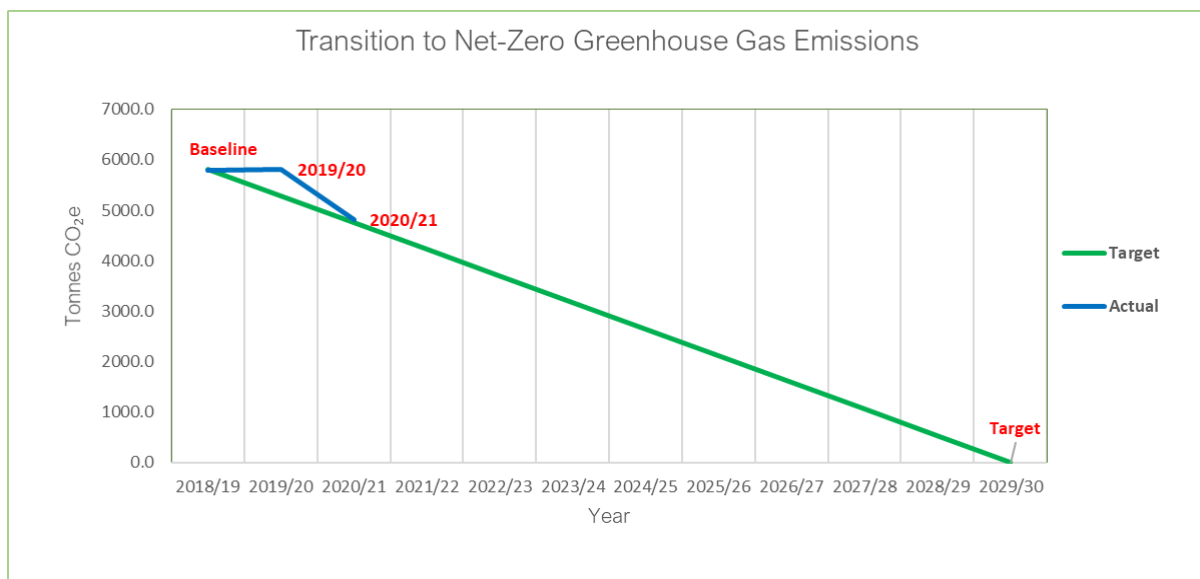


Chart 1.3 – Transition to carbon neutral GHG emissions

It will now prove to be very challenging to maintain this level of reduction as the economy begins to open up and activities return to a pre-pandemic level. Meeting the carbon neutral target by 2030 will rely on the successful implementation of the Councils’ ‘Carbon Reduction Management Plan’.

Renewable Technology

The Councils have invested significant sums of money installing approximately 5MWp of solar photovoltaic panels on around 2,000 Council-owned properties. Under the Government’s standard reporting guidelines, the emissions saved are not reportable as an offset against wider Council emissions because they are claimed by the electricity companies as part of the purchase transaction.

Table 1.4 provides a summary of the electricity generated by the Councils’ solar PV systems over the past three years and identifies the carbon emissions that have been saved during this period. Since 2018/19 the Councils have saved 3,040 tCO₂e, an average of 1,013 tCO₂e per year.

Solar PV Energy Generation						
Year	Authority	Fuel Type	Units	Generation	Conversion Factor	CO ₂ e (T)
2018/19	BDC	Electricity	kWh	2,404,821	0.25560	614.7
2018/19	MSDC	Electricity	kWh	2,091,746	0.25560	534.7
2019/20	BDC	Electricity	kWh	2,331,689	0.23314	543.6
2019/20	MSDC	Electricity	kWh	2,009,840	0.23314	468.6
2020/21	BDC	Electricity	kWh	2,242,679	0.21233	476.2
2020/21	MSDC	Electricity	kWh	1,893,176	0.21233	402.0

Table 1.4 – Summary of electricity generation and carbon emissions reductions from installed Solar PV

In February 2021 the Councils were awarded a £1.39 million grant from Phase 1 of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) which provided £1 billion in grants as part of the Government’s ‘Plan for Jobs 2020’ commitment to support the UK’s economic recovery from Covid-19, supporting the low carbon and energy efficiency sector. The original bid was to install



solar PV on the four leisure centres and Wenham depot as well as install low carbon heating in the Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre. A design and feasibility study was carried out and identified the following projects would go ahead:

- 148.2 kW roof-mounted solar PV array at Hadleigh Leisure Centre.
- 40.6 kW roof-mounted solar PV array at Stradbroke Leisure Centre.
- 111.7 kW roof-mounted solar PV array at Kingfisher Leisure Centre.
- 195 kW roof-mounted solar PV array at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre.
- 21.8 kW roof-mounted solar PV array at Wenham depot.
- Installation of an Air Source Heat Pump and Air Handling Unit at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre.

The projects are all underway and are due to be completed in November 2021. The solar projects will generate an estimated 406,910 kWh/annum, saving 86.3 tCO₂e.

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Agenda Item 12

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: BCa/21/45
FROM: Cabinet Member for Planning	DATE OF MEETING: 7 March 2022
OFFICER: Assistant Director for Planning and Building Control	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB338

RESPONSE TO NATIONAL GRID STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON THE BRAMFORD TO TWINSTEAD OVERHEAD LINE PROJECT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To allow Cabinet to debate the matter formally as the project is perceived as controversial, to seek comments on the proposed joint response of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils and request delegation to the Assistant Director for Planning and Building control to send the response.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 To respond to the consultation with the response as set out in appendix a.
- 2.2 To respond to the consultation with proposed amendments to the responses set out in appendix a.
- 2.3 To not respond to the consultation.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 **To respond to the consultation.**
- 3.2 **That the Assistant Director for Planning and Building Control, in collaboration with the Cabinet Members for Planning, consider any proposed amendments to the suggested response and be authorised to make amendments before submitting a response to the Government.**

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure the comments of the Councils are set out for consideration by National Grid in the further stages of the project.

4. KEY INFORMATION

The Bramford to Twinstead Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project is a development scheme of overhead electricity lines proposed by National Grid.

The development is required to reinforce the electricity transmission network between the existing National Grid Substation at Bramford in Mid Suffolk, and Twinstead Tee in Braintree District, Essex.

The proposed reinforcement is around 29 km and includes:

- Around 19 km of new 400 kV overhead lines
- Around 10 km of new 400 kV underground cables (through AONB areas)
- Four cable sealing end compounds to connect overhead line and underground cable sections together
- Removal of around 25 km of existing 132 kV pylons between Burstall Bridge and Twinstead Tee
- Removal of around 2.5 km of existing 400 kV pylons south of Twinstead Tee
- A new grid supply point substation at Butler's Wood, to connect the local distribution network into the National Grid

5. LINKS TO JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN

The Corporate Plan identifies strategic priorities, which include the environment, economy, housing, wellbeing, our customers and our communities. The project affects strategic priorities through its proposals.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications to responding to the consultation.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Planning Act 2008 sets out provisions for the NSIP pre-application process including a duty for the proposer to consult parties including the local authorities and local communities affected.

The comments submitted by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils respond to the statutory consultation being carried out.

There is no legal requirement to respond to this consultation.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

This report is linked with item 14 of the Councils' Significant Risks, The Councils may be perceived to be untrustworthy and have a poor reputation. This may prevent it from entering into positive partnerships, secure funding and ultimately may affect our ability to work with partners, businesses and key stakeholders in achieving our strategic priorities. The key risk is set out below: -

Risk Description	Likelihood	Seriousness of impact	Mitigation measures
Failure to engage with communities and provide	Highly unlikely	Bad / serious	Ensure local representation is

community leadership at a local level			summarised within the consultation
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9. CONSULTATIONS

As part of the handling of the statutory consultation Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have consulted technical advisers including:

- BMSDC Environmental Health Officer
- BMSDC Economic Development Officer
- BMSDC Planning Policy Officer
- Place Services – Heritage
- Place Services – Ecology
- Place Services – Landscape

10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required as this is a response to a consultation.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Through responding to the consultation, the impact on the environment might be mitigated if the proposals responds to the issues highlighted by technical advisers as set out in the proposed joint response from Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils.

12. APPENDICES

A. Draft joint response attached.

13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Consultation documents available here: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/bramford-twinstead/our-proposals>

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Date: March 2022

National Grid Electricity Transmission by email

Planning Act 2008: Bramford to Twinstead NSIP

This is the response of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to the informal public consultation between 25 January and 21 March 2022 to the statutory pre-application consultation undertaken by National Grid Electricity Transmission for the proposed National Grid Bramford to Twinstead NSIP.

Although they remain two separate sovereign councils, since 2013 Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have been working together to deliver services and they share a Chief Executive, management team and joint workforce who work across both authorities. The comments below are submitted on behalf of both councils except where they are specifically attributed to a single council.

Introduction

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils work collaboratively with other local organisations as part of the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership to support Suffolk's communities, businesses and residents to reduce carbon emissions.

In 2019, both authorities declared a 'climate emergency' alongside the other SCCP members. They are committed to working together and aim to make Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030.

The authorities recognise the challenge of net zero and their roles in contributing to the government's climate change objectives.

Cumulative impact

The councils have concerns about the timing and consideration of the project and its impact on and interaction with other large scale energy projects in the region, particularly having regard to the need for adequate assessment of potential cumulative impacts.

Undergrounding

The issue of undergrounding is recognised as a significant issue of concern to the affected communities. Babergh District Council has concerns regarding the potential impact of locating the sealing end compounds on the margins of the AONB and adverse visual impacts associated with their construction. Babergh is concerned to ensure the intrinsic cultural and visual value of the Stour Valley is adequately protected and feel strongly that this includes



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undergrounding of at least the entire section that passes through the whole of the the designated Dedham Vale AONB, the proposed Dedham Vale AONB extension area and the Stour Valley project area including a reasonable buffer and consideration of appropriate siting of sealing end compounds.

Particular consideration should be given to the following documents:

- Valued Landscape Assessment - Stour Valley Project Area
- Dedham Vale AONB Natural Beauty and Special Qualities and Perceived and Anticipated Risks
- Special Qualities of the Dedham Vale AONB Evaluation of Area Between Bures and Sudbury

These documents and further details about the AONB, proposed extension and project area can be found here: <https://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/>

Babergh and Mid Suffolk's joint landscape guidance is available here:

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/DM-Planning-Uploads/Joint-Landscape-Guidance-Aug-2015.pdf>

The Council welcomes the opportunity to discuss the importance of this matter and how the development can be delivered with the minimum impact possible further as the pre-application engagement progresses.

Opportunities

The councils recognise the recent growth of large-scale energy developments within the region and invite National Grid to enter into a dialogue with the councils and relevant parties to discuss coordination of project delivery as well as the exploration of opportunities for the sharing of assets / infrastructure so as to minimise the physical impacts of growth on the communities.

The councils expect the project to progress having regard to, and in alignment with where appropriate, the corporate priorities of the councils in respect of job creation and investment.

The councils have previously suggested that National Grid should set up and financially support an Environmental Improvement Fund to be used on local initiatives, such as the provision of community woodlands, tree and hedgerow planting, the establishment of traditional orchards and the enhancement of wildlife habitats. Community groups, parish councils and voluntary sector organisations would be encouraged to make applications to this fund. The Councils welcome further discussions to explore opportunities to secure benefits for the host communities arising from the development.

Key technical issues

The development will have a range of impacts, some of which involve technical matters that fall within the responsibility of either the district or county councils. The following are some of the main issues that the councils wish to highlight in this response and full details of the technical officer's advice are appended.



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This list is not exhaustive and does not prejudice the consideration of any other issue at this time or in the future.

Biodiversity:

- There is insufficient ecological information relating to the options for Hintlesham woods.
- It will be important to agree how the proposal impacts the SSSI habitats and functionality.
- There are potential impacts on protected species not linked to the SSSI and we welcome discussions with National Grid and other parties, particularly in relation to bats.
- All non-significant impacts will also be required.
- We would like to be involved in discussions on HRA.
- Please refer to specific comments on individual documents and sections.

Heritage:

- We largely agree with the statements in the PEIR in relation to built heritage impacts.
- Consideration should also be given to indirect effects on heritage assets.
- The potential for non-designated heritage assets to be affected remains high.
- A survey of non-designated assets that may be impacted must be carried out.
- Clarification regarding any demolition should be provided.
- Specific concerns relate to disruption to land use, removal of vegetation, potential to encounter archaeology or historic features, transport and noise.
- Concern the ES will be too reliant on geophysics. Trial trenching should occur on the underground sections.
- Good practice measures should extend to protecting known archaeological sites.
- It is unclear if works to highways are still required as previously discussed.
- A great deal of further information is required.
- Please refer to specific comments on individual documents and sections.

Landscape:

- We accept the categories of landscape and visual receptors to be included in the assessment as set out in the methodology section of the PEIR.
- We accept the categories of landscape and visual receptors to be included in the assessment.
- Consideration of combined and sequential effects as part of the landscape and visual assessment has not been reflected in the PEIR.
- Night-time effects (construction and operation) should be scoped in due to lack of information relating to size, location and the operating hours of construction laydown/compound areas.
- The Stour Valley Project Area (AONB extension area) has been identified as having a particular value and important role in the setting of the Dedham Vale AONB that is distinct from its Special Landscape Area (SLA) designation. As such, the ES should



include sensitivity testing against the Stour Valley Project Area as a landscape designation, separate to that of the Stour Valley SLA.

- Further reference/guidance documents need to be considered and used as part of the assessment. This includes:
 - Dedham Vale AONB Natural Beauty and Special Qualities and Perceived and Anticipated Risks (July 2016)
 - Managing a Masterpiece Evaluation Report (Dec 2013)
 - Valued Landscape Assessment Stour Valley Project Area (March 2020)
- We agree that the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would directly and beneficially affect the special qualities and setting of the Dedham Vale AONB Stour Valley Project Area would also arise due to the removal of several spans of the existing 400kV overhead line from Twinstead Tee southwards.
- We do not contest the judgements made on visual effects from CSE compounds such and welcome the opportunity to explore the potential for additional off-site planting.
- We are yet to receive information regarding the impacts on hedgerows and trees, the alignment of the cables in relation to hedgerows and the required easement areas and species restrictions. We don't have confidence that a 'not significant' effect can be determined at this stage, especially in regard to effects on landscape character and designations.
- We welcome the mitigation planting concepts for Hintlesham Hall and would also advise that grassland habitat opportunities are also explored.
- We are still awaiting details in regard to impacts on hedgerows, particular those that could be deemed 'important hedgerows' under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (both in terms of wildlife and landscape, as well as archaeology and history) and how this would impact effects on landscape character and designations.

Public health :

- We are satisfied that the methodology considers the correct guidance (such as BS5228, the DMRB) and has scoped in the appropriate matters into the assessment.
- Core working hours as stated in paragraph 14.4.19 are deemed acceptable in general however, where works are to occur close to noise sensitive receptors (NSR) and adverse impacts are likely to be observed noisy plant and works should not start before 08:00 hours. It is recognised that the nature of the works may lead to the need for noisy works to occur outside of core hours. Where this is anticipated the local authority should be notified. If works are likely to be of long duration, and/or continue into the late evening or night time hours (23:00 to 07:00) an application for a Control of Pollution Act 1961 – Section 61 prior consent for noisy works should be made. This can be discussed with the BMSDC Environmental protection team during the construction phase if such an occurrence is identified as necessary.
- Having reviewed the methodologies for the assessment and the results we are satisfied with the conclusions of the preliminary assessment that no significant impacts are likely when considering duration of exposure.

Socio-economic:



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National Grid should assess the impact of the proposals upon people and provide a comprehensive assessment of the socio-economic impacts upon the local economy, ensuring that communities and individuals are properly compensated.

Tourism:

the rural landscape has significant value to the local economy as a tourist attraction. The development has the potential to have a negative impact on the attractiveness of the area for both visitors and investors which must be considered.

Other:

The councils refer to the comments of Suffolk County Council in respect of technical matters that fall within their function.

Kind regards,

Tom Barker
Assistant Director Planning and Building Control
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