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COMMITTEE:	JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	MONDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2022 9.30 AM
VENUE:	KING EDMUND CHAMBER, ENDEAVOUR HOUSE, 8 RUSSELL ROAD, IPSWICH

Members	
<u>Babergh Conservative Group</u> Melanie Barrett Siân Dawson	<u>Mid Suffolk Green and Liberal Democrat Group</u> Terence Carter Keith Scarff Keith Welham (Co-Chair)
<u>Babergh Independent Conservative Group</u> Adrian Osborne	<u>Babergh Green and Labour Group</u> Robert Lindsay
<u>Mid Suffolk Conservative and Independent Group</u> James Caston Paul Ekpenyong Dave Muller	<u>Babergh Independent Group</u> Kathryn Grandon John Hinton (Co-Chair)

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AGENDA

PART 1

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT

Page(s)

- 1 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES**
- 2 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**
- 3 **JOS/22/29 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022** 7 - 14
- 4 **JOS/22/30 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE BABERGH MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022** 15 - 18

5 **JOS/22/31 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MID SUFFOLK MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2022** 19 - 24

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

7 **QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

To consider questions from and provide answers to members of the public on any matter in relation to which the Committee has powers or duties and of which due notice has been given in accordance with the Committee and Sub-Committee Procedures Rules.

8 **QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

To consider questions from and provide answers to Councillors on any matter in relation to which the Committee has powers or duties and of which due notice has been given in accordance with the Committee and Sub-Committee Procedure Rules.

9 **JOS/22/32 REVIEW OF SUFFOLK ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (SALC)** 25 - 36

To receive an update from the CEO of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils on the work undertaken to support Towns and Parish Councils in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

10 **RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC (TERM WHICH INCLUDES THE PRESS)**

To consider, whether, pursuant to Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the business specified below on the grounds that if the public were present during this item, it is likely that there would be the disclosure to them of exempt information as indicated against the item.

The authors of the report propose to be considered in Part 2 of the Agenda are satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

PART 2

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC EXCLUDED

- 11 **JOS/22/33 INFORMATION BULLETIN - PROTECTION AGAINST CYBER-ATTACKS (CONFIDENTIAL PRESENTATION)** 37 - 38

The Information Bulletin is a document that is made available to the public with the published agenda papers. It can include update information requested by the Committee as well as information that a service considers should be made known to the Committee.

This Information Bulletin contains updates on the following subjects:

Is the Organisation protected against cyber-attacks?

- 12 **RE-ADMITTING MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC (TERM WHICH INCLUDES THE PRESS)**

PART 3

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT

- 13 **JOS/22/34 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST**

To review the Council's Forthcoming Decisions List and identify any items to be brought before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Please note the most up to date version can be found via the Website:

[BMSDC Forthcoming Decisions List](#)

- 14 **JOS/22/35 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION TRACKER** 39 - 46

- 15 **JOS/22/36 BABERGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN** 47 - 48

To agree the Work Plan

- 16 **JOS/22/37 MID SUFFOLK OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN** 49 - 50

To agree the Work Plan

Date and Time of next meeting

Please note that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, 23 January 2023 at 9.30 am.

Webcasting/ Live Streaming

The Webcast of the meeting will be available to view on the Councils YouTube page: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSWf_0D13zmegAf5Qv_aZSg

For more information about this meeting, including access arrangements and facilities for people with disabilities, please contact the Committee Officer, A. Norman on: 01473 296384 or Email: Committees@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Introduction to Public Meetings

Babergh/Mid Suffolk District Councils are committed to Open Government. The proceedings of this meeting are open to the public, apart from any confidential or exempt items which may have to be considered in the absence of the press and public.

Domestic Arrangements:

- Toilets are situated opposite the meeting room.
- Cold water is also available outside opposite the room.
- Please switch off all mobile phones or turn them to silent.

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If you hear the alarm:

1. Leave the building immediately via a Fire Exit and make your way to the Assembly Point (Ipswich Town Football Ground).
2. Follow the signs directing you to the Fire Exits at each end of the floor.
3. Do not enter the Atrium (Ground Floor area and walkways). If you are in the Atrium at the time of the Alarm, follow the signs to the nearest Fire Exit.
4. Use the stairs, not the lifts.
5. Do not re-enter the building until told it is safe to do so.

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Agenda Item 3

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS

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

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Melanie Barrett	Terence Carter
	James Caston	Siân Dawson
	Paul Ekpenyong	Kathryn Grandon
	John Hinton (Co-Chair)	Robert Lindsay
	David Muller BA (Open) MCM	Adrian Osborne
	RAFA (Councillor)	
	Keith Scarff	Keith Welham (Co-Chair)

In attendance:

Councillor(s): Mary McLaren – Babergh Cabinet Member for Communities
Julie Flatman – Mid Suffolk Cabinet Member for Communities
Jan Osborne – Babergh Cabinet Member for Housing

Officers: Interim Director for Communities (DR)
Corporate Manager for Communities (VM)
Corporate Manager for Customer Services (SL)
Cost of Living Coordinator (ED)
Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Officer (JR)

Guests: Colleen Sweeney – Chief Officer for Sudbury Citizens Advice
Simon Clifton – Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice

37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

37.1 None received.

38 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

38.1 Councillor Muller declared an Other Registrable Interest in respect of Item Number JOS/22/23 due to being a member of the Trustee Board at Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice. However, the item under discussion did not directly relate to the finances or wellbeing of that interest or affect the finances or wellbeing of that interest to a greater extent than the majority of inhabitants. Therefore, Councillor Muller was not prevented from participating in the debate and vote in respect of this item.

38.2 Councillor Osborne declared that he was Babergh District Council's appointed observer for Sudbury Citizens Advice.

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

39.1 None received.

40 JOS/22/22 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2022

40.1 It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 24th October were confirmed and signed as a true record.

41 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

41.1 None received.

42 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

42.1 None received.

43 JOS/22/23 REVIEW OF LOCAL CITIZENS ADVICE AND THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

43.1 Councillor Mary McLaren - Babergh District Council's Cabinet Member for Communities – introduced the report to the Committee outlining before Members the role of the Communities department, the input from internal stakeholders, and thanked all Officers involved in the response to the Cost of Living Crisis.

43.2 The Interim Director for Communities presented the report to the Committee outlining before Members the progress made on the 5-Point Action Plan, including the employment of a Cost of Living Coordinator, that the 30% uplift to both Citizens Advice had been delivered, and that 66 referrals had been made and received via the Suffolk Warm Handover Scheme, the need for the 5-Point Action Plan to be iterative and flexible for the short-term future, and the future priorities to enhance community resilience.

43.3 The Chief Officers for Sudbury and Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice gave a short presentation to Members detailing the work undertaken by Citizens Advice in response to the Cost of Living Crisis, the overall increase in demand on their services, the types of short term support provided, the differences between the number of unique clients and the issues reported, increase in demand for support on benefits, tax credits, debt, utilities and food, the reduction in volunteer numbers, and the need to progress to a more integrated support system.

- 43.4 Councillor Welham questioned what the 30% uplift to both Citizens Advice had been spent on. The Chief Officer for Sudbury Citizens Advice responded that, for both Citizens Advice, the 30% uplift had been used to hire additional paid staff in order to meet increased demand on the service and that all spending is indexed regularly in a monitoring report.
- 43.5 Councillor Welham further questioned what 30% equated to for both Citizens Advice. The Chief Officers responded that for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice this equated to £30,000 and for Sudbury Citizens Advice £20,000.
- 43.6 Councillor Welham queried if the amount of volunteer hours had decreased in line with the reduction in the number of volunteers. The Chief Officer for Sudbury Citizens Advice responded that both staff and volunteers are working increased hours in order to meet current demands and that overall, there has not been a decrease.
- 43.7 Councillor Ekpenyong questioned what the reason was for the decrease in the number of volunteers and what could be done to encourage more people to volunteer. The Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice responded that there was a national reduction in the number of people volunteering due to the need to prioritise paid work and that attempts had been made to advertise volunteering for Citizens Advice.
- 43.8 Councillor Scarff raised whether it would be possible for a select few BMSDC Officers to also work for Citizens Advice to strengthen the integration between the two. The Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice responded that integration is a top priority but that both Citizens Advice are limited financially and would not be able to fund such the concept themselves.
- 43.9 Councillor Muller questioned what support Citizens Advice were receiving from the Department for Work and Pensions. The Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice responded that both Mid Suffolk and Sudbury are receiving very little support and that no statutory organisation has the responsibility to help people navigate the welfare benefits system.
- 43.10 Councillor Caston questioned how Citizens Advice ensured that users of their service are in receipt of all financial benefits they are eligible for. The Chief Officer for Sudbury Citizens Advice responded that a benefits check is offered and provided for every single client that uses Citizens Advice and they are then advised on what support they are potentially eligible for.
- 43.11 Councillor Carter queried what more Councillors and external bodies could do to support Citizens Advice. The Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice responded that integrated working and the sharing of community intelligence would be crucial for the services that Citizens Advice provides to be effective.
- 43.12 Councillor Grandon queried the reasons for the increased number of people under 25 years old contacting Citizens Advice. The Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice responded that post-COVID the demographic of people using the service had dramatically changed which was influenced by

an increase in care leavers, low minimum wages, and more difficulties accessing the benefits system. Single men under 25 years old were more disproportionately affected than any other group.

- 43.13 Councillor Lindsay questioned what “community supermarkets” entailed. The Corporate Manager for Communities responded that community supermarkets act as a stepping stone for users who no longer used food banks but using traditional supermarkets was not financially viable for them. The Councils had applied for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to set up a community supermarket in both Babergh and Mid Suffolk.
- 43.14 Councillor Ekpenyong questioned if Citizens Advice and the Councils could pre-empt issues, identify those at risk and provide them with proactive rather than reactive support. The Interim Director for Communities responded that the communities department analysed trends and worked closely with internal partners, such as housing and customer services, to identify individuals or groups who may potentially be at risk.
- 43.15 Councillor Dawson queried about the access to funding for people on pre-paid meters. The Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice responded that vouchers are provided for people with pre-paid meters but that these cannot be used on non-smart meters or if you were a British Gas customer and that the vouchers can only be redeemed at Co-Op branches.
- 43.16 Councillor Dawson asked a further question concerning how residents accessed the vouchers and the funding they were entitled to. The Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice responded that people could access funding through a local welfare assistance application and that a single person would receive £100 over a 6 month period.
- 43.17 Councillor Carter questioned the possibility of a mobile community supermarket to improve the accessibility of the service. The Corporate Manager from Communities responded that research would be undertaken into what has worked well for other districts and that the needs of residents across both districts would be assessed and taken into account.
- 43.18 Councillor Scarff questioned how much money would be distributed through the third allocation of the Household Support Grant and what this money would be spent on. The Cost of Living Coordinator responded that each district would receive £50,000 through the grant and this would be provided to our Tenant Support Officers who would distribute it on a discretionary basis.
- 43.19 Councillor Welham questioned what support was provided to those struggling with mortgages. The Cost of Living Coordinator responded that those with mortgages cannot be supported through the Household Support Grant but they were encouraged to contact Citizens Advice.
- 43.20 Councillor Carter queried if Ward Members should be contacted by Citizens Advice to facilitate an integrated approach for providing support. The Chief Officer for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice responded that each client is

considered on a case by case basis and that if consent was given information could be provided to the appropriate Ward Member.

43.21 A short break was taken between 11:30am and 11:40am.

43.22 Members debated the item and discussed the following issues:

- The need for a more integrated approach between the Councils and Citizens Advice.
- The 30% uplift to Citizens Advice and the need to continue providing this funding.
- The proposed locations for community supermarkets and the potential lack of access for a majority of residents.
- Concerns for men under 25 who are contacting Citizens Advice.
- The need for more liaison between the Department for Work and Pensions, Job Centre Plus, and Citizens Advice.

43.23 Councillor Caston proposed the following recommendations:

- 1.1. That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report and commends the work being undertaken in response to the Cost of Living crisis.
- 1.2. That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the 30% uplift to Local Citizens Advice and the work being conducted as a result and recommends that this support continues for a further 2 years.
- 1.3. That the Councils facilitate a more collaborative approach between organisations by encouraging the promotion of joint working.
- 1.4. That Officers work with relevant agencies to understand the situation for young people under 25, specifically men, to build a proactive response to support them as an at-risk group.
- 1.5. That Cabinet and Officers explore how we can embed the Cost of Living into the culture of the organisation for all staff when working with residents across all departments as part of a more integrated system of support.
- 1.6. That a Joint All Member Briefing be arranged for all Councillors on the Cost of Living crisis with input from Local Citizens Advice.

43.24 Councillor Welham seconded the recommendations.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:

1.1. That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of

the report and commends the work being undertaken in response to the Cost of Living crisis.

- 1.2. That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the 30% uplift to Local Citizens Advice and the work being conducted as a result and recommends that this support continues for a further 2 years.**
- 1.3. That the Councils facilitate a more collaborative approach between organisations by encouraging the promotion of joint working.**
- 1.4. That Officers work with relevant agencies to understand the situation for young people under 25, specifically men, to build a proactive response to support them as an at-risk group.**
- 1.5. That Cabinet and Officers explore how we can embed the Cost of Living into the culture of the organisation for all staff when working with residents across all departments as part of a more integrated system of support.**
- 1.6. That a Joint All Member Briefing be arranged for all Councillors on the Cost of Living crisis with input from Local Citizens Advice.**

44 JOS/22/24 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND CABINET PROTOCOL

- 44.1 The Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Office introduced the report to the committee outlining that the protocol had been formulated in response to the Corporate Peer Review, that the aim was to promote a culture of accountability, openness, and transparency within the Councils, and that the protocol would also be going to Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team for approval.
- 44.2 Councillor Grandon questioned whether Cabinet would be informed of what is expected of them within the protocol. The Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Office responded that the protocol would be going to Cabinet for formal approval and that the Senior Leadership Team had already endorsed the document.
- 44.3 Councillor Grandon further questioned whether the protocol would require Cabinet to review the recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny. The Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Office responded that Overview and Scrutiny's recommendations would go to Cabinet for review and that the Chairs make frequent updates on the recommendations reached by the Committee at Full Council.
- 44.4 Councillor Barrett raised that the regular training offered to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should also include training on the call-in procedure. The Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Office responded that training on the call-in procedure would be included and that this will also be covered extensively in the upcoming Councillor induction training programme scheduled for May 2023.
- 44.5 Councillor Osborne proposed the recommendation as set out in the report.

44.6 Councillor Grandon seconded the proposal.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:

1.1 That Overview and Scrutiny approves the Scrutiny/Cabinet protocol.

45 JOS/22/25 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST

45.1 The Forthcoming Decisions List was noted.

46 JOS/22/26 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION TRACKER

46.1 Councillor Barrett raised that a note of clarity be added to Recommendation 1.2 for Item Ref JOS/22/8 to ensure that Cabinet looks at ways to reduce car parking demands.

46.2 Councillor Welham suggested that, in reference to Recommendations 1.3 and 1.4 for Item Ref JOS/21/25, progress on these recommendations be chased by the Lead Officer for Overview and Scrutiny and implemented by the Key Officer in time to train Councillors after the May 2023 election.

46.3 The Action Tracker was noted.

47 JOS/22/27 BABERGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN

47.1 Councillors from both Councils raised concerns with the number of items due to be considered at the January committee meetings.

47.2 The Lead Officer for Overview and Scrutiny responded that the work programme would be reviewed by the Chairs at the Joint Chairs Briefing on 29th November and that the final work plan would be distributed to Members ahead of the next committee.

47.3 The Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan was noted.

48 JOS/22/28 MID SUFFOLK OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN

48.1 The Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan was noted.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 12:50pm.

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Chair

Agenda Item 4

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 November 2022

PRESENT:

Councillor: John Hinton (Chair)
Adrian Osborne (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Melanie Barrett Siân Dawson
Robert Lindsay

In attendance:

Councillors: David Busby – Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets, and Investments

Officers: Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change (FD)
Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning, and Procurement (RH)
Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Office (JR)
Lead Officer for Overview and Scrutiny (AN)

Apologies:

Councillors: Kathryn Grandon

30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / SUBSTITUTION

30.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Grandon.

31 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

31.1 None declared.

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

32.1 None received.

33 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

33.1 None received.

34 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

34.1 None received.

35 BOS/22/01 DRAFT GENERAL FUND (GF) AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2023/24 AND FOUR-YEAR OUTLOOK

35.1 Councillor Busby – Cabinet Member for Finance – introduced the report to the Committee outlining before Members the current financial situation for Babergh Council and that the Committee would be asked to review the assumptions made for the 2023/24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

35.2 The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement presented the report to the Committee outlining before Members the 2023/24 General Fund Forecast carried out in February 2022, the current financial position of the 2022/23 General Fund, the assumed General Fund 2023/24 costs (including employee costs, contracts, sales, fees and charges, and interest) and funding (including Council Tax, business rates, and Central Government Grants), and the total draft funding gap.

35.3 Councillor Barrett questioned whether the 2022/23 Pay Award was the only employee salary increase actioned this year and the reasons for an assumed 4% Pay Award increase next year. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement confirmed that this was the only salary increase issued this year and that the 4% assumption had been determined through discussions with other Suffolk authorities.

35.4 Councillor Barrett queried the pensions costs rising to 26% and removing the lump sum. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that the current contribution per employee equates to 23% and accumulates a lump sum and that, following discussion with Suffolk County Council, in an aim to decrease budget deficit this had been increased to 26%.

35.5 Councillor Lindsay questioned how the £500,000 for the Pay Review was assumed. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that the £500,000 was a very broad estimate of the potential cost and that this was a “middle of the road” value.

35.6 Councillor Busby questioned what the assumptions were for the cost of gas beyond the fixed term contract ending in September 2023. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that this was continuously being reviewed and that more accurate and detailed assumptions and pressures would be detailed before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2023.

35.7 Councillor Lindsay queried what benefits we received from contributing to the refuse contract and how often this contract is reviewed and renewed. The

Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded that there are benefits from the economies of scale that come from bulk purchasing and that negotiations for the current refuse contract are still yet to be finalised.

- 35.8 Councillor Lindsay questioned if there would be any new borrowing in the 2023/24 financial year. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that this would be looked into further when presenting the pressures and savings for the 2023/24 General Fund for Overview and Scrutiny in January 2023.
- 35.9 Councillor Barrett questioned if we would be able to charge for garden and trade waste in the future. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that the contents of the upcoming Recycling and Waste Strategy did not impact the General Fund for 2023/24.
- 35.10 Councillor Barrett questioned the assumed pressure for planning income in 2023/24 in comparison to the 2022/23 budget. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that there had been a gradual national reduction in the amount of planning applications submitted which would result in this assumed loss of income.
- 35.11 Councillor Lindsay queried what the Government's current position was on the New Homes Bonus. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that it was expected that a full review would have been conducted by now but that in the absence of this it had been assumed that the current scheme would be rolled over.
- 35.12 Councillor Barrett questioned if there had been any work conducted to find efficiency savings. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that there was a separate piece of work being conducted on finding efficiency savings which would be going to SLT and Cabinet before coming back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 35.13 Councillor Hinton questioned how the savings from the reduction in accommodation would impact the General Fund 2023/24 assumptions. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that these reductions in cost were already included in the baseline figures.
- 35.14 The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement then presented the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the Committee outlining before Members the current 2022/23 HRA financial position, the assumed 2023/24 HRA expenditure (including employee costs, contractors, and utilities) and income (including rental income, garage rents, and service charges), and the assumed draft budget deficit.
- 35.15 Councillor Lindsay queried the reasons for the assumed increase in expenditure on contractors. The Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded that these assumptions were based on contractor price and were calculated from the average market conditions.

35.16 Councillor Barrett questioned why there was an assumed 100% increase for gas and electricity expenditure. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that this question would be answered outside of the committee meeting.

35.17 Councillor Lindsay questioned why the assumption was made that there would be no new rental builds in Babergh in 2023/24. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that this was a difficult number to assume and that more details would be presented in the January review.

35.18 Councillor Lindsay further questioned the reasons behind the assumption for a 0% increase in garage rents. The Cabinet Member for Housing responded that there was very little demand for rental garages within Babergh.

35.19 Members debated the item on issues including:

- The timing of the Budget and HRA review
- The potential difference between the proposed assumptions and the final Budget and HRA
- The influence of Central Government and the markets on the financial assumptions made

35.20 Councillor Osborne proposed the recommendation as set out in the Officer's report.

35.21 Councillor Dawson seconded the proposal.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:

2.1 That the draft budget assumptions as set out in the report for the 2023/24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets be noted.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 14:55pm.

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Chair

Agenda Item 5

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Tuesday, 22 November 2022

PRESENT:

Councillor: Keith Welham (Chair)
James Caston (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Terence Carter Paul Ekpenyong
David Muller BA (Open) MCM Keith Scarff
RAFA (Councillor)

In attendance:

Councillor(s): John Whitehead – Cabinet Member for Finance
John Field
Rachel Eburne

Officers: Director for Assets and Investments (EA)
Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning & Procurement (RH)
Lead Officer for Overview and Scrutiny (AN)

20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

20.1 None received.

21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

21.1 None declared.

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

22.1 None received.

23 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

23.1 None received.

24 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

24.1 None received.

25 MOS/22/01 DRAFT GENERAL FUND (GF) AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2023/24 AND FOUR-YEAR OUTLOOK

- 25.1 Councillor Whitehead – Cabinet Member for Finance – introduced the report to the Committee outlining before Members the request from Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account be reviewed by the Committee earlier in its development, the unexpected increase in base rates, and that Members would be asked to review the assumptions made for the 2023/24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.
- 25.2 The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement presented the report to the Committee outlining before Members the 2023/24 General Fund Forecast carried out in February 2022, the current financial position of the 2022/23 General Fund, the assumed General Fund 2023/24 costs (including employee costs, contracts, sales, fees and charges, and interest) and funding (including Council Tax, business rates, and Central Government Grants), and the total draft funding surplus.
- 25.3 Councillor Ekpenyong questioned if the Inflationary Reserve could only be used once and whether the same value would be available for use each year. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement confirmed that the reserve could only be used once and that the value would not be the same next year.
- 25.4 Councillor Ekpenyong questioned how the 2022/23 budget was being used to calculate the assumptions for 2023/24. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that the current 2022/23 budget positions were used in conjunction with expected trends to determine the assumptions for the next financial year and the impact that this would have on the finances.
- 25.5 Councillor Field questioned if assumptions had been made strictly for the business already being conducted by the Council or if items on Forward Plans had been taken into account. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that the assumptions had been calculated on current business and that no changes to the service had been projected.
- 25.6 Councillor Scarff questioned whether the contingency budget used to fund the pay review was a budget or a reserve. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that it was a budget not a reserve and had been covered in the assumptions as such.
- 25.7 Councillor Field questioned if different increments in staff pay were considered within the pay review assumptions. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that pay increments were covered in the 4% Pay Award for 2023/24.

- 25.8 Councillor Scarff queried if the 5% assumption for the Vacancy Management Factor was realistic. The Director for Assets and Investments responded that this factor was being constantly monitored, that the figure was dependant on staff choices and recruitment markets, and that the assumption had been carefully considered.
- 25.9 Councillor Eburne queried what the Vacancy Management Factor had been for the first 6 months of 2022/23. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that this figure was not readily available but that it would be provided to Councillors outside of the meeting.
- 25.10 Councillor Caston questioned how Babergh had lower employee costs than Mid Suffolk and whether this was due to Mid Suffolk hiring more staff. The Director for Assets and Investments responded that all employees were hired to work for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk but that due to caseload some employees may carry out more work for one Council which was reflected in the employee costs assumptions.
- 25.11 Councillor Welham questioned how extra project staff were accounted for within the budget and how their salaries would be paid. The Cabinet Member for Finance responded that funds were reserved especially for projects and that extra staff hired to work on these projects would have their salaries funded through these reserves.
- 25.12 Councillor Eburne requested more details concerning the assumption made for the Shared Legal Service. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that this would be provided outside of the meeting.
- 25.13 Councillor Welham questioned whether incomes or savings from the solar panels installed at leisure centres were factored into the assumptions. The Director for Assets and Investments responded that those savings had not been factored into the assumptions but will be incorporated into the final budget due to be presented in January.
- 25.14 Councillor Carter queried if upcoming changes to bin collection services were factored into the assumptions. The Director for Assets and Investments responded that there was still uncertainty regarding what additional services would be required and that these changes had not been factored into the assumptions.
- 25.15 Councillor Eburne questioned if there were plans to receive capital receipts that would reduce our short-term borrowing and if this had been taken into account. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that the assumption was that no new short-term borrowing would occur in 2023/24 however this would be reviewed when the capital programme is considered by Cabinet and Council.
- 25.16 Councillor Ekpenyong questioned the reasons behind the 2.5% assumption for long-term borrowing. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning

and Procurement responded that the figure was based on current long-term borrowing, that this rate was a fixed value, and the assumption that any borrowing in 2023/24 would be short-term borrowing.

- 25.17 Councillor Caston queried if short-term borrowing would be paid off using income from investments. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that this was a process that was followed.
- 25.18 The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement then presented the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the Committee outlining before Members the current 2022/23 HRA financial position, the assumed 2023/24 HRA expenditure (including employee costs, contractors, and utilities) and income (including rental income, garage rents, and service charges), and the assumed draft HRA deficit.
- 25.19 Councillor Scarff questioned if a new supplier for gas and electricity had been considered due to the size of the assumption made. The Director for Assets and Investments responded that there were fixed price contracts for the HRA gas and electricity that would expire next year which had caused the rise in costs for 2023/24 and that a new contract would be heavily negotiated at an appropriate time.
- 25.20 Councillor Scarff questioned if there would be benefits to raising garage rents and whether the lack of interest in garages meant that this land should be redeveloped. The Director for Assets and Investments responded that garage sites were constantly reviewed regarding their use and demand and that the 0% assumption had been calculated due to current low demand.
- 25.21 Councillor Ekpenyong questioned if there were costs from the maintenance of garages. The Director for Assets and Investments responded that there were costs associated with garage maintenance but that those accrued on a case-by-case basis determined by specific tenancy arrangements.
- 25.22 Councillor Eburne questioned whether the rental income assumption would remain at 5% and what the impact on the budget would be if this number changed. The Cabinet Member for Finance responded that the assumptions had been put together before the Autumn Statement (2022) and that 3%, 5% and 7% had all been explored before coming to a decision.
- 25.23 Councillor Scarff questioned if there were any avenues where the General Fund could support the Housing Revenue Account costs. The Corporate Manager for Finance, Commissioning and Procurement responded that the Council was restricted by law and could not subsidise the HRA but that work had been conducted regarding recharges between the General Fund and HRA to ensure that it was fair. The Cabinet Member for Finance further responded that the issue was one that the Cabinet Member for Housing was also exploring.

25.24 Members debated the item on issues including:

- The assumption made for garage rents and the possibility of increasing the rents
- Ways to decrease the deficit for the Housing Revenue Account
- Staffing costs and the impact of inflation on staff wages
- The assumptions made concerning premises costs, contractors, and supplies and equipment and the need for these figures to be broken down into details
- The value of comparing a new budget to an old budget
- The timeliness of Cabinet receiving quarterly performance budget information

25.25 Councillor Welham suggested the following recommendations:

1.1. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes this earlier opportunity to consider the draft budget assumptions and thanks Officers for their presentation and clarification.

1.2. That Cabinet and Officers take account of the comments made at this meeting of the Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.3. That Cabinet explores opportunities to reduce to a minimum the recharges to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from the General Fund (GF).

1.4. That Officers look further at the Vacancy Management Factor assumption of 5%.

1.5. That Officers consider further opportunities to increase garage rents.

1.6. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggests a more prudent assumption in respect of the Pay Award 2023/24.

1.7. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends the cost assumptions for repairs and maintenance be looked at in more detail.

1.8. That more timely quarterly information on the General Fund's and Housing Revenue Account's income and expenditure be used to develop the budget and request that this information be made available to Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

25.26 Councillor Caston proposed the recommendations as read out by Councillor Welham.

25.27 Councillor Ekpenyong seconded the proposal.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:

- 1.1. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes this earlier opportunity to consider the draft budget assumptions and thanks Officers for their presentation and clarification.**
- 1.2. That Cabinet and Officers take account of the comments made at this meeting of the Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 1.3. That Cabinet explores opportunities to reduce to a minimum the recharges to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from the General Fund (GF).**
- 1.4. That Officers look further at the Vacancy Management Factor assumption of 5%.**
- 1.5. That Officers consider further opportunities to increase garage rents.**
- 1.6. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggests a more prudent assumption in respect of the Pay Award 2023/24.**
- 1.7. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends the cost assumptions for repairs and maintenance be looked at in more detail.**
- 1.8. That more timely quarterly information on the General Fund's and Housing Revenue Account's income and expenditure be used to develop the budget and request that this information be made available to Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

The business of the meeting was concluded at 11:50am.

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Chair

Agenda Item 9

BABERGH and MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO:	Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee	REPORT NUMBER: JOS/22/32
FROM:	Di Robinson – Interim Director for Communities	DATE OF MEETING: 19/12/2022
OFFICER:	Di Robinson – Interim Director for Communities	KEY DECISION REF NO. N/A

Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) Update

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Overview & Scrutiny Members regarding the work of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC).

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 N/A

3. RECOMMENDATIONS
3.1 To note the presentation provided by SALC
REASON FOR DECISION
No decision required

4. KEY INFORMATION

- 4.1 There are approximately 10,000 local councils across England. Within Suffolk there are 372 town and parish councils and, together with 56 parish meetings, they form the grass roots tier of local democracy.
- 4.2 SALC operates as a not-for-profit organisation under a formal Constitution. It has a long-standing reputation for providing quality services that support the corporate interests of local councils in Suffolk. It forms part of a national network of 43 county associations and membership includes access to the service of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).
- 4.3 SALC was formed in 1950 to:
- Assist members in the performance of their duties
 - Protect and promote the interests, rights, functions, and privileges of Members
 - Promote good local governance through advice and training
 - Promote and develop the social, cultural, and recreational life of parishes and villages
 - Promote a widespread and well-informed interest in local government

- 4.4 Membership of SALC is more than an insurance policy; it provides local councils with specialist independent support through advice, training, information, and representation. It is a paid service and subscriptions are calculated based broadly on number of electors and supplemented by offering member councils some additional low-cost services alongside a small grant from Suffolk County Council. SALC currently receives a small grant from East Suffolk Council to support their Community Partnerships initiative.
- 4.5 Members access a wide range of services via the online member portal, phone, or email, with the SALC website acting as a marketing tool to showcase the role of Town and Parish Councils play as the tier that is closest to the taxpayer.
- SALC provides a representative role both locally and nationally providing the opportunity to highlight the width and depth of hyper local from the first tier of the public sector alongside challenges and constraints.
- 4.6 At the heart of everything SALC does is the local council. It is a not-for-profit organisation and consists of 3.4 FTE working across Suffolk supporting 375 local councils (97% of Town and Parish councils in Suffolk) with a budget of under £250k
- 4.7 Services continually adapt to meet the needs of members and this often results in enhancements to what is delivered year on year. Examples include topic based webinars working in partnership with sector specific colleagues and stakeholders including District Councils, the Police and Crime Commissioner through to specialist service providers such as Parish Online, insurers etc.
- 4.8 SALC creates forums and networks which occur regularly - monthly and quarterly – allowing for the sharing good practice, problem solving, forming working groups to help lobbying activities where necessary and there is an issue affecting a large number of parishes. The SALC climate forum is a good example of a topic-based forum – called for by councillors and clerks and facilitated by SALC. It shares good practice, has guest speakers and inputs into the Suffolk Climate Partnership with SALC being part of the communities workstream.
- 4.9 SALC delivers weekly e-bulletins to Members through the clerk focussing on technical matters, updates, and changes so they are ahead of the curve as well as training opportunities and vacancies.
- 4.10 SALC has a good range of templates and sector guidance which is currently being reformed to make information easier to access and be utilised for a wider range of uses. SALC invested in a CRM system in 2021 resulting in a new website and a member portal designed to help consolidate information into one place to help Councils find information quickly and independently if they want to. They are also engaging clerks in the further development, content and design utilising the important working relationship SALC has with the network. SALC also run a variety of webinars and record and publish podcasts, using these mechanisms to spotlight topics such as digital champions, speeding, climate solutions, etc..
- 4.11 SALC run core training sessions every week (up to four sessions a week). Councillor and clerk training is broken down into modules and delivered online. SALC are also an accredited trainer for CiLCA, the Certificate in Local Council Administration, a recognised national qualification for clerks.

- 4.12 Training also covers specialist topics which are tailored to the sector - such as being a good employer, planning, communications, and marketing. SALC have also led on developing a regional offer for e-learning which has been adopted nationally.
- 4.13 In October 2022 SALC launched a new website – on the back of the implementation in the autumn 2021 of a new case management system. Member councils now have access to a portal giving them information relevant to the sector at their fingertips to aid efficiency and allowing clerks to raise enquiries with us so that we can monitor trends, issues and feed improvements into the services we offer.
- 4.14 The new website showcases the work of local councils and thereby the support SALC provides. This is a new approach to marketing SALC to ensure there is knowledge amongst stakeholders as well as potential new councillors and clerks about the infrastructure that exists to support local councils. SALC has increased its project work over recent years
- 4.15 SALC is keen to look for opportunities including collaborations and partnerships. They are beginning to see these developing bringing tiers together, reduce duplication and improve engagement. They feel strongly on behalf of towns and parishes that the local voice is heard because they represent a tier of local government that is close to residents.
- 4.16 BMSDC is currently re-looking at the Town and Parish Liaison Meeting structure with a view to developing an approach to reinvigorate this work. There have been some early discussions with SALC to build on our existing relationship to explore potential partnership approaches for some of this work, to align all our efforts to maximise the voices of our local residents through Parish and Town Councils.

5. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

5.1 N/A

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 N/A

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 N/A

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 N/A

10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

10.1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required. This is an external organisation and this is a service update, not a service change which has potential to impact on equalities groups.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 N/A

12. APPENDICES

12.1 See attached SALC Powerpoint Presentation

13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

13.1 N/A

14. REPORT AUTHORS (*Name and title of report authors, such as CM and Professional Leads, who has undertaken work on the report*)

Sally Longmate, CEO Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC)

Di Robinson, Interim Director for Communities

About SALC

www.salc.org.uk

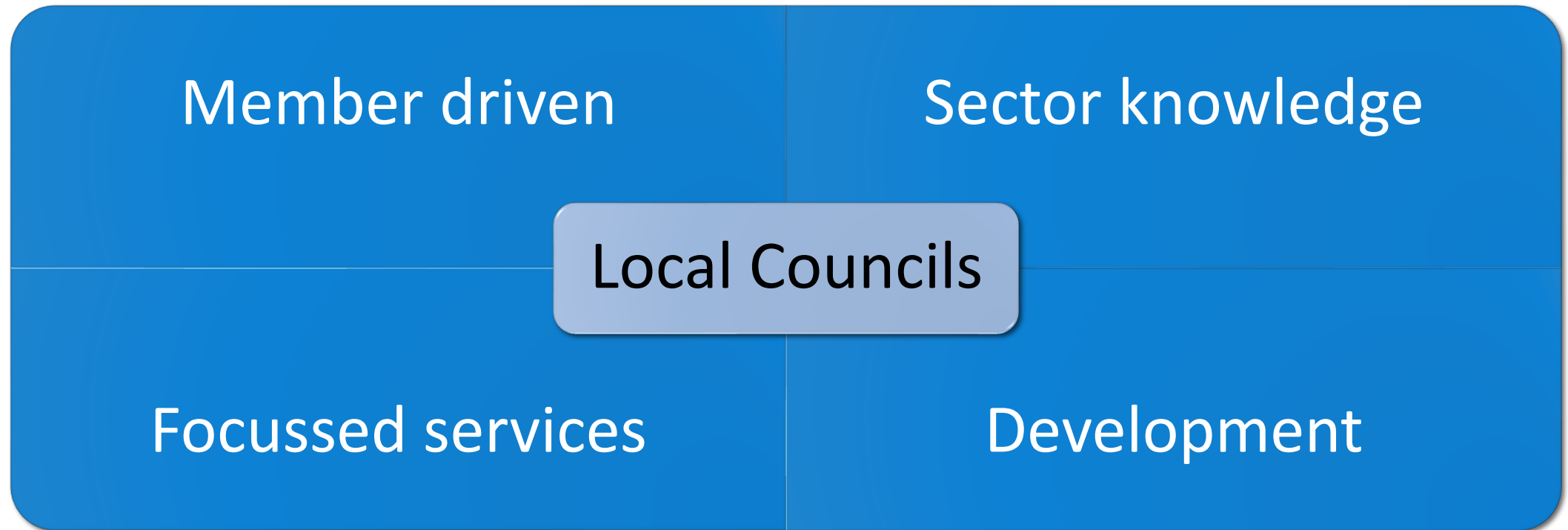


Suffolk
**Association of
Local Councils**
stronger together



Operating model

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SALC Business Plan

Objectives:

1. to deliver high quality specialist support
2. to engage and represent
3. improvement and development

Our Annual Report:

Financial summary

Review of our activities

Structure and governance

Moving forward

What benefits does membership offer?



Enquiry helpline



Forums and networks



Webinars and podcasts



E-bulletins



Guidance and templates



Lobbying and representation

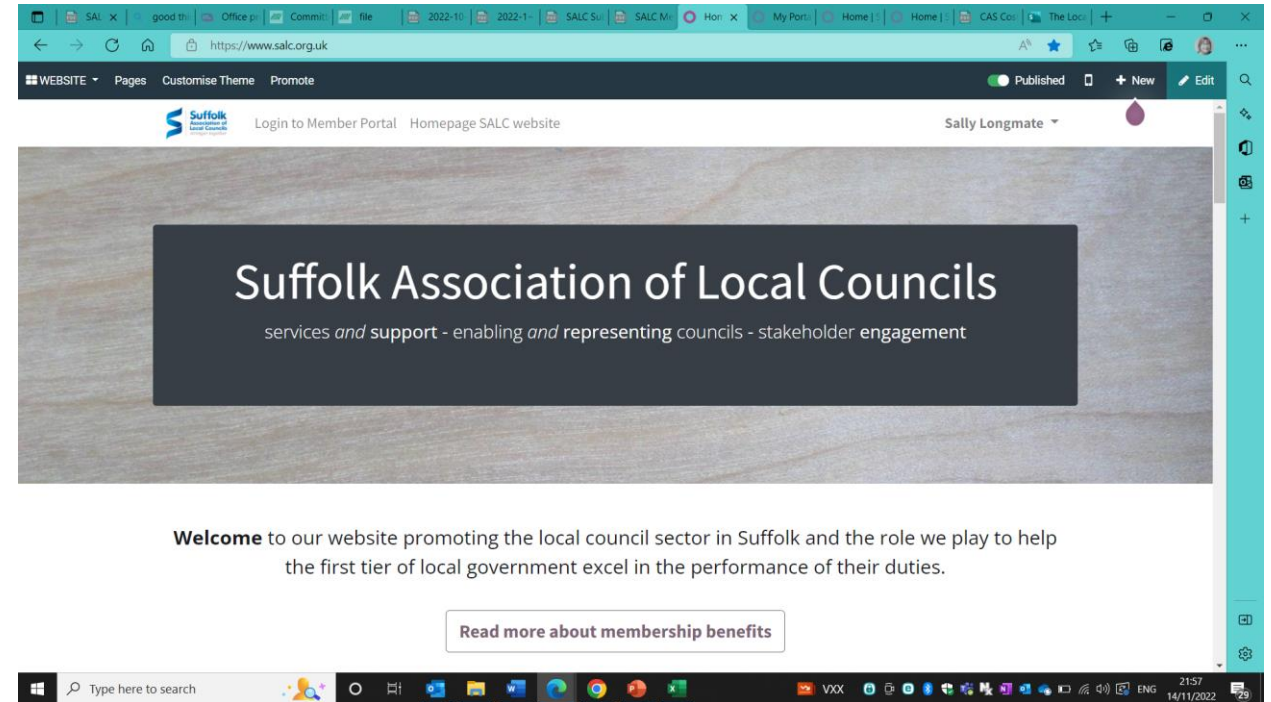
Sector knowledge development

CORE TRAINING – COUNCILLORS, CLERKS, RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICERS (RFO), CHAIRS, WHOLE COUNCIL

FIND OUT MORE

www.salc.org.uk

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The Local Councillor

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Why not sign up to our quarterly e-magazine?



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INFORMATION BULLETIN



Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 19th December 2022

Our Approach to Cyber Security

1. This information bulletin is to provide awareness and assurance to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny that Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have the appropriate approach to Cyber Security to help us mitigate any risk associated with a Cyber Attack.
2. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils take a Defence in Depth approach in regards Cyber Security.
 - 2.1. This is a series of defensive mechanisms that are layered together to protect us. If one mechanism fails another will step in in its place.
 - 2.2. This multi-layered approach with intentional redundancies increases security as a whole and addresses many different attack vectors.
 - 2.3. This layered approach is applied at all levels of our IT system, from the lone laptop accessing the internet from a non-work location to the security of 6000+ user Wide Area Network.
3. Babergh and Mid Suffolk, in conjunction with Suffolk County Council test these layers regularly.
 - 3.1. A quarterly, full network scan, looking for vulnerabilities.
 - 3.2. An annual IT Health Check.
 - 3.2.1. This Annual IT Health Check is run by a third party who tests from both off-network (externally) and on-network (internally as a user) perspectives.
 - 3.2.2. This internal/external test provides us with a holistic view of the rigour of our security controls.
4. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are compliant with both Public Sector Network¹ and the NHS Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSP)².
 - 4.1. Public Sector Network Compliance is a security accreditation required by UK Government so that we can attach to and send data across the Public Sector Network, thus enabling us to work closely with Central Government Bodies, including but not limited to DWP. The PSN compliance process exists to provide all members with the assurance that data is properly protected and that if things go wrong, they will be put right quickly.
 - 4.2. All organisations that have access to NHS patient data and systems must use NHS Data Security and Protection toolkit to provide assurance that they are practising good data security and that personal information is handled correctly. The Data Security and Protection allows organisations to measure their performance against the National Data Guardian's 10 data security standards.
 - 4.3. The Annual IT Health Check supports the determination of Compliance in regards both the above Accreditations.

¹ [Public Services Network \(PSN\) compliance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-services-network-psn-compliance)

² [Data Security and Protection Toolkit \(dsptoolkit.nhs.uk\)](https://dsptoolkit.nhs.uk)

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JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION TRACKER

The purpose of this action tracker is to document and track the progress of all recommendations made by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This tracker seeks to inform committee members on the implementation of their recommendations and the subsequent decisions reached by Cabinet. This tracker is updated ahead of and following each meeting of the Committee.

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
22.11.22 (MSDC Only)	MOS/22/01	Draft General Fund and Housing Revenue Account 2023/24 and Four Year Outlook	1.1. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes this earlier opportunity to consider the draft budget assumptions and thanks Officers for their presentation and clarification.	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.2. That Cabinet and Officers take account of the comments made at this meeting of the Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	ME	05.12.22: Draft minutes provided to key officers and the Cabinet Member for Finance.	Completed
			1.3. That Cabinet explores opportunities to reduce to a minimum the recharges to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from the General Fund (GF).	N/A	Awaiting update	Ongoing
			1.4. That Officers look further at the Vacancy Management Factor assumption of 5%.	ME	Awaiting update	Ongoing
			1.5. That Officers consider further opportunities to increase garage rents.	ME	Awaiting update	Ongoing
			1.6. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggests a more prudent assumption in respect of the Pay Award 2023/24.	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.7. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends the cost assumptions for repairs and maintenance be looked at in more detail.	ME	Awaiting update	Ongoing
			1.8. That more timely quarterly information on the General Fund's and Housing Revenue Account's income and expenditure be used to develop the budget and request that this information be made available to Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	ME	Awaiting update	Ongoing
Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
21.11.22 (BDC Only)	BOS/22/01	Draft General Fund and Housing Revenue Account 2023/24 and Four Year Outlook	2.1 That the draft budget assumptions as set out in the report for the 2023/24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets be noted.	N/A	N/A	Completed

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
21.11.22	JOS/22/23	Review of Local Citizens Advice and the Cost of Living Crisis	1.1 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report and commends the work being undertaken in response to the Cost of Living crisis.	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.2 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the 30% uplift to Local Citizens Advice and the work being conducted as a result and recommends that this support continues for a further 2 years.	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.3 That the Councils facilitate a more collaborative approach between organisations by encouraging the promotion of joint working.	DR	05.12.22: Officers are currently exploring a single multi-disciplinary team, including BMSDC and Citizens Advice officers, to lead on the implementation of the action plan.	Ongoing
			1.4 That Officers work with relevant agencies to understand the situation for young people under 25, specifically men, to build a proactive response to support them as an at-risk group.	DR	Awaiting update.	Ongoing
			1.5 That Cabinet and Officers explore how we can embed the cost of living into the culture of the organisation for all staff when working with residents across all departments as part of a more integrated system of support.	DR	05.12.22: The Refreshed 5-Point Action Plan for the Cost of Living Crisis, which touched upon improving support on the cost of living, went before both Cabinets for noting.	Ongoing
			1.6 That a Joint All Member Briefing be arranged for all Councillors on the Cost of Living crisis with input from Local Citizens Advice.	DR	Awaiting update.	Ongoing
	JOS/22/24	Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet Protocol	1.1 That Overview and Scrutiny approves the Scrutiny/Cabinet protocol.	N/A	N/A	Completed

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
24.10.22	JOS/22/17	Joint Homes and Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019 - 2024)	3.1 That Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Members have reviewed the contents of report JOS/22/17, including the appendices, and requests that the Portfolio Holders and Officers take account of verbal comments made by members of the committee. Also, that Cabinet bears these comments in mind when debating the refocussed delivery plan, the refreshed Joint Homes and Housing Strategy, and the Joint Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.	N/A	07.11.22: Draft minutes with a record of the verbal comments and recommendations made by Members of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee were provided to the Cabinet Members for Housing for their further consideration.	Completed
			3.2 That the committee members support the strategic aims of the Joint Homes and Housing Strategy and agreed that the newly refocussed plan is reflective of the current challenges facing the housing sector whilst continuing to deliver the aims set out in the strategy.	N/A	N/A	Completed

			3.3 To ask Portfolio Holders and Officers to consider further provision of financial and physical support to all residents wishing to downsize.	AN	07.11.22: Draft minutes with a record of the verbal comments and recommendations made by Members of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee were provided to the Cabinet Members for Housing for their further consideration.	Completed
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Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
30.09.22	JOS/22/8	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' Parking Strategy	1.1 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report and that a verbal presentation of the comments made at this meeting be provided to Cabinet	N/A	03.10.22: Councillor Hinton made a verbal representation at Babergh Cabinet. 03.10.22: Councillor Welham made a verbal representation at Mid Suffolk Cabinet.	Completed
			1.2 That Cabinet is requested to carry out further work to replace (<i>reduce</i>) carparking demands with alternatives by looking at other areas that have done so successfully.	FD		
			1.3 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee asks that a report be provided to the Committee in due course to review the progress on the Parking strategy implementation plan.	FD	30.09.22: Confirmed that progress reports will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny once implementation had begun.	Ongoing
30.09.22	JOS/22/9	Shared Revenues Partnership - Council Tax Reduction Scheme	1.1 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet Option 3 as the preferred option for the Consultation for the Council Tax Reduction (Working Age) Scheme.	N/A	03.10.22: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Cabinet voted unanimously to consult on Option 3 as set out in Appendix B of this report as the basis for a revised (Working Age) Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24	Completed
30.09.22	JOS/22/11	Recommendations from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group for Rural Transport	1.1 That Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Babergh Cabinet that an analysis of the unmet demand for community transport in the district be carried out.	AN	01.11.22: Will be timetabled to go to Cabinet at the next Overview and Scrutiny Strategy meeting between the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs and the Leaders. 01.12.22: Timetabled to go to the March Cabinet meetings.	Ongoing
			1.2 That the Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet that Suffolk County Council be informed of the apparent lack of publicity of community transport across the district, and to encourage joint working between Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils and Suffolk County Council to promote community transport services.	AN		
			1.3 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet that the feasibility of providing an electric bus project throughout the district, similar to that being implemented by Mid Suffolk be investigated.	AN		
			1.1 That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Mid Suffolk Cabinet that, as part of the development of the electric bus project, local consultations to elicit unmet transport needs should be carried out – one covering an urban area and one covering a rural area.	AN		

30.09.22			1.2 That the Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committees recommend to Cabinet that Suffolk County Council be informed of the apparent lack of publicity of community transport across the district, and to encourage joint working between Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils and Suffolk County Council to promote community transport services.	AN		Ongoing
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Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status	
27.06.22	JOS/22/2	Capital Investment Fund Company (CIFCO CAPITAL LTD) Business Trading and Performance Report	1.1 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny committee notes the CIFCO Business Plan and Business Trading and Performance and ask that the minutes of this meeting be taken into account at Full Council.	N/A	25.10.22 and 27.10.22: Minutes were attached as Appendix E as part of the CIFCO item that went to both Babergh and Mid Suffolk Full Councils for consideration.	Completed	
			1.2 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee is satisfied that the CIFCO Business Plan and Business Trading and Performance is robust for 2022 – 2023	N/A		N/A	Completed
			1.3 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Full Council that future CIFCO business plans continue to be scrutinised by the Councils' Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee and then reported to Council.	N/A		25.10.22 and 27.10.22: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Full Councils voted in favour of Recommendation 3.3 "That future CIFCO Business Plans continue to be scrutinised by the Councils' Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee and then reported to Council."	Completed

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
25.04.22	JOS/21/30	Draft Empty Homes Policy	1.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee compliments the officers on the report and presentation and recommend to Cabinet that the policy be adopted taking in to account the following recommendations:	N/A	04.07.22 and 05.07.22: Babergh and Mid Suffolk Cabinets voted in favour of Recommendation 1.1 "That Option 1 - the new Empty Homes Policy, as set out in Appendix A of this report and considering the recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 25th April 2022 be approved".	Completed
			1.2 That Overview and Scrutiny considers that the maxim loan of £20k is insufficient and asked that Cabinet raise the level of loans and consider if a nominal rate of interest should be applied.	N/A		
			1.3 That loans for works to improve for energy efficiency of homes should also be available.	N/A		
			1.4 That the information in the communication plan is strengthened including publicity via Parish Council and local community groups and that a briefing note be circulated to Councillors when the policy is adopted.	N/A		
			1.5 That Cabinet be asked to monitor the budget for empty homes this year and consider whether an increase is required for 2023/24.	N/A		

25.04.22			1.6 That further quantitative information is provided to members of the committee on the empty homes' loans and the financial implications for the Councils.	N/A		Completed
			1.7 That close working is encouraged with the Homelessness Outreach officers.	N/A		

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
21.03.22	JOS/21/25	Review of Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP)	1.1 That the Committee note the contents of this report	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.2 That the comments made by the Committee regarding the name of the partnership and the format of the action plan be reported back to the WSCSP.	N/A	21.03.22: Passed on to representatives from BDC and MSDC to feedback to the WSCSP.	Completed
			1.3 That the reporting toolkit for all Members be updated and circulated	VM		Not Started
			1.4 That a training session be held for all Members to ensure that all Councillors have knowledge and awareness of their role in respect of identifying and reporting crime and safety issues in their area and are able to support their town and parish councils when discussing crime and safety.	VM		Not Started
			1.5 That a simplified version of the action plan is circulated to all councillors with the O&S chair's report to full council on this item.	VM	21.06.22 and 23.06.22: The Chairs reported on the recommendations from JOS/21/25 as part of their annual Overview and Scrutiny update to Full Council.	Completed
			1.6 Review the timing of the WSCSP report based on the meeting cycle of the partnership and ensuring that the most up to date position is reported and to review the format of the report to ensure that the information is clear, concise and has a strategic focus.	VM	04.10.22: Decided by Chairs at Joint Overview and Scrutiny Briefing that the next WSCSP review would take place in June 2023 to allow for a review of the entire year. This review will then come back to committee on an annual basis.	Completed
			1.7 To explore whether the strategic assessment is available from the County	VM		Not Started

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
17.01.22 (BDC Only)	BOS/21/1	Draft General Fund (GF) 2021/22 and Four Year Outlook	1.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the General Fund budget 2022/23 and Four-year Outlook.	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.2 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives a report from Cabinet on the outcomes of the performance framework on a six-month basis.	KS		Not Started
	BOS/21/2	Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Four Year Outlook	1.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 and Four-year Outlook.	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.2 That the Overview and Scrutiny recommends that the information about the use of sub-contractors be included in the quarterly performance monitoring report.	KS	07.03.22: Incorporated into the quarterly monitoring report and will become a statutory part.	Completed

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
13.01.22 (MSDC Only)	MOS/21/1	Draft General Fund (GF) 2022/23 and Four Year Outlook	1.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the General Fund budget 2022/23 and Four-year Outlook and asks that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Officers take into consideration the comments made at the meeting.	KS	N/A	Completed
			1.2 That the budget preparation process is reviewed by the S.151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to ensure that the O&S Committee can be involved earlier in the development of the budget, enabling a more strategic approach to scrutinising the budget. Further that the Monitoring Officer and Constitution Working Group reviews the terms of reference for the O&S Committee and the JAS Committee to ensure that financial scrutiny is being undertaken in the most appropriate way.	EY	21.11.22: General Fund Budget and Housing Revenue Accounts now go to Overview and Scrutiny Committees in November to allow for a more strategic and beneficial approach where O&S's recommendations have enough time to be implemented.	Completed
	MOS/21/2	Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Four Year Outlook	1.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 and Four-year Outlook	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.2 That information is provided for the level of council rent compared with other authorities for benchmarking for the current year and the number of tenants receiving rent rebate in the current financial year be provided to Council in February and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their review of the Budget in the next municipal year.	KS	24.02.22: Figures provided in the February Council papers as requested	Completed
	Mca/21/32	Call In of the Decision from Mid Suffolk Cabinet (06.12.21)	1.1 Refer the matter back to the Cabinet for reconsideration, together with the observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Cabinet will then take a final decision and that decision cannot be called in.	N/A	07.03.2022: Mid Suffolk Cabinet voted in favour "4.1 That the Cabinet decision on 6 December 2021, to adopt the new Hackney Carriage and Private hire Vehicle Licensing Policy, be confirmed and that the matters raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, particularly in relation to electric vehicles, be referred to officers and the Licensing and Regulatory Committee for further work before being presented back to Cabinet."	Completed

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
20.12.21	JOS/21/20	Review of Local Citizens Advice	1.1 To thank the LCA Chief officers and their respective staff for the work that they have carried out in the last year. Particularly during the pandemic.	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.2 The Committee are reassured that both LCAs are operating effectively and efficiently and responded well to all questioning from Members.	N/A	N/A	Completed

20.12.21	JOS/21/20	Review of Local Citizens Advice	1.3 That the Councils take a single view of debt and implement an integrated system for dealing with housing rent, and council tax debt.	VM	06.06.22 and 05.09.22: Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk Cabinet resolved "3.1 That Cabinet considers the report from Joint Overview and Scrutiny and agrees its response to the recommendations in the report as detailed in paragraph 4, and in line with the Council's response to the Cost of Living Crisis and the five point plan that will look at a better system of connectivity between partners, including the CAB, the Council and system wide partners".	Completed
			1.4 That contact be made to foodbanks with a request that their clients are referred to the LCA for advice on nutrition and budgeting and cookery skills classes.	VM		
			1.5 Remote virtual operation capability for LCA and other bodies should be provided on an accelerated programme as a matter of urgency defining locations, IT equipment and applications, training and connectivity.	VM		
			1.6 That Cabinets be asked to consider the previous resolution of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the 3 year rolling funding arrangements review be subject to indexation on an annual review basis.	VM		
			1.7 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the Local Citizens Advice in December 2022	N/A	21.11.22: A review of the Local Citizens Advice Bureaus and their work on the Cost of Living Crisis is coming to Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2022.	Completed
			1.8 Mid Suffolk Cabinet to confirm that funding previously allocated to Thetford and Diss LCA be allocated to Mid Suffolk LCA	N/A	06.06.22: Mid Suffolk Cabinet confirmed at their June cabinet meeting.	Completed
			1.9 Recommendation to Babergh Cabinet that extra funding be provided to Sudbury Citizens Advice to enable greater provision for debt advice across the whole district.	N/A	05.09.22: The Director for Communities confirmed that the Sudbury Citizens Advice has received a 30% uplift in funding.	Completed

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Agenda Item 15

BABERGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2022/23:

TOPIC	PURPOSE	LEAD OFFICER	CABINET MEMBER
23 JANUARY 2023			
General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - Review of savings proposals and updated position	To review and consider the updated 2023/24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.	Director – Corporate Resources Corporate Manager - Finance	The Leaders Cabinet Members for Finance
Review of the Culture, Heritage, and Visitor Economy Strategy	To review the work undertaken so far in setting up the Strategy and the direction for the future & the Strategy's implementation	Director – Economic Growth and Climate Change	
20 FEBRUARY 2023			
Education, Skills, and Employment – What more can the Councils do to raise opportunities and attainment?		Director – Economic Growth and Climate Change	
Are planning pre-application advice customers getting a valuable service?		Chief Planning Officer	Cabinet Members for Planning
BDC: Scrutiny of the Cabinets' communication and sharing of information			The Leaders
20 MARCH 2023			
Review on current levels of untreated sewage discharges to waters in Babergh and Mid Suffolk			Cabinet Members for Environment
20 APRIL 2023			
PRE-ELECTION PERIOD			
18 MAY 2023			

JUNE 2023			
Access and availability of services, leisure, education, and employment for residents			
Scrutiny of the delivery of services for Transport for both Town and rural areas			
Crime and Disorder Panel meeting	The Committee conduct a scrutiny review of the WSCSP to fulfil the Councils Statutory requirements	Director – Sustainable Communities Community Safety Professional Lead - Communities	Cabinet Members for Communities

Topics identified for review but not currently timetabled:

Information Bulletin on Electronic Complaints System

Review of Central Suffolk Lettings

Outcome of Residents Survey to be reviewed

Census Reports

Other topics identified:

- Land Adoptions Policy
- Information Bulletin on the cost of maintenance of tenanted properties.

Agenda Item 16

MID SUFFOLK OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2022/23:

TOPIC	PURPOSE	LEAD OFFICER	CABINET MEMBER
23 JANUARY 2023			
General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - Review of savings proposals and updated position	To review and consider the updated 2023/24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.	Director – Corporate Resources Corporate Manager - Finance	The Leaders Cabinet Members for Finance
Review of the Culture, Heritage, and Visitor Economy Strategy	To review the work undertaken so far in setting up the Strategy and the direction for the future & the Strategy's implementation	Director – Economic Growth and Climate Change	
MSDC: Call-in of the Elmswell Exemplar Housing Scheme	To scrutinise the Elmswell Exemplar Housing Scheme as approved by Mid Suffolk Cabinet on 7 th November 2022.	Director – Assets and Investments	Cabinet Member for Assets and Investment Cabinet Member for Housing
20 FEBRUARY 2023			
Education, Skills, and Employment – What more can the Councils do to raise opportunities and attainment?		Director – Economic Growth and Climate Change	
Are planning pre-application advice customers getting a valuable service?		Chief Planning Officer	Cabinet Members for Planning
20 MARCH 2023			
Review on current levels of untreated sewage discharges to waters in Babergh and Mid Suffolk			Cabinet Members for Environment
20 APRIL 2023			
PRE-ELECTION PERIOD			
18 MAY 2023			

JUNE 2023			
Access and availability of services, leisure, education, and employment for residents			
Scrutiny of the delivery of services for Transport for both Town and rural areas			
Crime and Disorder Panel meeting	The Committee conduct a scrutiny review of the WSCSP to fulfil the Councils Statutory requirements	Director – Sustainable Communities Community Safety Professional Lead - Communities	Cabinet Members for Communities

Topics identified for review but not currently timetabled:

Information Bulletin on Electronic Complaints System

Review of Central Suffolk Lettings

Census Reports

Outcome of Residents Survey to be reviewed

Other topics identified:

- Land Adoptions Policy
- Information Bulletin on the cost of maintenance of tenanted properties.