

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **BABERGH CABINET** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Tuesday, 3 October 2023

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Jessie Carter	Derek Davis
	Alastair McCraw	Daniel Potter
	Deborah Saw	John Ward
	Helen Davies	

In attendance:

Guest(s): Shirley Jarlett - IBC Assistant Director—Governance & Monitoring Officer
Shaheen Warren - Principle Practice Lead – New Local

Councillor(s): Mary McLaren

Officers:

- Chief Executive (AC)
- Deputy Chief Executive (KN)
- Director – Planning and Building Control and Interim Director – Communities & Wellbeing (TB)
- Director – Economic Growth and Climate Change (FD)
- Director – Operations (ME)
- Director – Customers, Digital Transformation and Improvement (SW)
- Corporate Manager – Finance, Commissioning & Procurement (BP)
- Corporate Manager - Customer Operations (SL)
- Corporate Manager – Strategic Policy (JH)
- Corporate Manager – Communities (VM)
- Sustainable Travel Officer (KD)
- Cost of Living Coordinator (ED)
- Assistant Manager - Community Safety and Resilience (RY)
- Communities Officer (BT)
- Assistant Manager – Governance (HH)

Apologies:

David Busby (Chair)
Sallie Davies

29 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

29.1 There were no declarations made by Councillors.

30 BCA/23/15 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

It was RESOLVED: -

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 5 September be approved and signed as a correct record.

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

31.1 None received.

32 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

32.1 None received.

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

33.1 There were no matters referred from the Overview and Scrutiny or the Joint Audit and Standards Committees.

34 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST

34.1 There were no comments made for the Forthcoming Decisions List.

35 BCA/23/16 VARIATION OF AGREEMENT OF THE SHARED REVENUE PARTNERSHIP

35.1 The Chair introduced the report, as Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets and Investments.

35.2 Councillor Ward proposed the recommendations as set out in the report. Councillor Saw seconded the motion.

35.3 Councillor McLaren questioned whether the call in process would be the same as the current process, and how members could be informed about decisions made by the Shared Revenues Partnership Committee should they want to call-in any decision. The Ipswich Borough Council Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer responded that it would go to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that had called it in, additionally all meetings were public meetings and minutes from the meetings were available. Councillor McCraw added that as the Chair of the Shared Revenues Partnership Joint Committee, he would be happy to provide a summary of what was discussed at each meeting to other members.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED: -

That Cabinet authorised the Director of Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance to enter into the Deed of Variation at Appendix A to the report.

REASON FOR DECISION

To enable changes to be made to the Partnership Agreement dated 7 January 2011 to ensure the continued effective operation of the Joint Committee

36 BCA/23/18 CORPORATE PLAN REFRESH

- 36.1 Councillor Potter joined the meeting at 16:12pm.
- 36.2 The Chair, Councillor Ward introduced the report as acting Leader of the Council.
- 36.3 Councillor Ward gave an overview of the report and proposed the recommendations. Councillor Saw seconded this motion.
- 36.4 The Chair invited the Principle Practice Lead – New Local to present to the committee.
- 36.5 Councillor Ward questioned whether the community sessions would be held in person or if online sessions would also be used. The Principle Practice Lead – New Local responded that all of the sessions would be held in person and online engagement would be sought through an online survey.
- 36.6 Councillor Saw queried what the predicted response rate for the online survey was. The Principle Practice Lead – New Local responded that it was hard to predict the response rate given the tight deadline. However, through the communications plan, it would be possible to monitor the number of responses and promote the survey in areas where engagement had been low to encourage participation.
- 36.7 Councillor Saw further questioned how the responses from in person sessions would be formulated into strategy. The Principle Practice Lead – New Local responded that a central tool would be structured for the facilitated sessions, and all data from the sessions would be collected into a central location and analysed.
- 36.8 Councillor McCraw questioned the bespoke training for Councillors and how this would be communicated to members. The Principle Practice Lead – New Local responded that training sessions had been put in place, which Members could attend. Additionally, bespoke training for officers and Councillors was being considered.
- 36.9 Councillor Ward thanked the Principle Practice Lead – New Local for her presentation and outlined that the strategy was comprehensive.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED: -

To endorse engagement on the emerging vision and strategic priorities as set out in Appendix A

REASON FOR DECISION

To enable the progression of the refresh of the Corporate Plan.

37 BCA/23/17 COST OF LIVING: REVIEW OF 6 MONTH PLAN AND BEYOND

- 37.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Customers, Digital Transformation and Improvement to introduce the report.
- 37.2 Councillor Derek Davis queried whether armed forces personnel could be included under the scheme and not be disadvantaged for not being a protected characteristic. The Cost of Living Coordinator responded that homelessness related to the armed forces was covered under the scheme, however, the needs and vulnerabilities within this group could be looked at going forward.
- 37.3 Councillor Carter questioned how households, who were above the threshold for support but still financially struggling, could be helped under the scheme. The Cost of Living Coordinator responded that work was being undertaken with the SRP to identify households in debt. Additionally, frontline staff had been trained on support available for households, so that they could signpost to support where available.
- 37.4 Councillor Saw questioned whether there were different challenges between market towns and villages. The Cost of Living Coordinator responded that work was ongoing with Suffolk County Council to increase access to community transport in rural locations to enable greater accessibility to services. Additionally, work with organisations such as Citizens Advice was ongoing in order to get information into rural areas and identifying key issues such as food poverty and food insecurity in these areas.
- 37.5 Councillor Potter questioned the household support fund and how it could help mitigate future issues. The Cost of Living Coordinator responded that as the funds were administered by Financial Inclusion Officers, they had the capabilities to advise on additional grants and longer term solutions for affordable housing.
- 37.6 Councillor McLaren queried whether warm places grants would continue. The Cost of Living Coordinator responded that the impact of these grants were currently being reviewed by Suffolk County Council and in the meantime the grants team would be able to advise where additional funding would be possible. Councillor McCraw added that Councillors were able to use their Member Locality Budgets in their Wards.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED: -

To note phase 3 of the Cost of Living Action Plan and endorse the commitment to develop a longer term approach to preventing poverty which seeks to understand the underlying drivers of poverty across both districts at a hyper local level through continued work with internal and external stakeholders and to include wider engagement with Town and Parish Councils.

REASON FOR DECISION

The Cost of Living Action Plan is a proactive response to the quickly changing nature of the cost of living crisis and has been developed in partnership with internal and external stakeholders to ensure a holistic approach.

Our approach must continue to work across systems to consider the needs of our residents and the work being delivered across our organisation and by partners. Failure to sufficiently coordinate our approach risks missing opportunities to work more efficiently and in a way which reduces duplication and will mitigate gaps in support for the most vulnerable.

Equally, while the delivery of support to residents experiencing crisis is crucial at this time of heightening financial pressures, we are mindful that it would be prudent to balance crisis support with the need to work more preventatively. Without comprehensive work to understand and address the underlying drivers and mitigations of poverty across our districts, we cannot sustainably equip our communities with the tools they need to remain resilient to economic shocks in the longer term.

38 BCA/23/19 BMSDC ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) INFRASTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

38.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Environment to introduce the report.

38.2 Councillor Potter introduced the report and proposed the recommendations outlined in the report. Councillor Carter seconded the motion.

38.3 Councillor Derek Davis queried how the predicted 663 electric vehicle charging points by 2040 would be achieved. The Sustainable Transport Officer responded that this was the total number of publicly available charging points and not all of these would be provided by the Council and would be provided by commercial partners.

38.4 Councillor Derek Davis further questioned how businesses and village hall could be aided and encouraged in installing charging points. The Sustainable Transport Officer responded that a toolkit was being developed to provide

information on installation of charging points. Additionally, village halls and sports clubs have access to Suffolk County Council's Plug in Suffolk scheme and businesses had access to the UKSPF scheme that the Council had secured funding for.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 **Cabinet approved that option 1 was taken forward and that the joint Councils' draft EV Infrastructure Implementation Plan be approved.**
- 1.2 **That the completion of the final documentation was delegated to the Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change in consultation with Portfolio Holders for Environment, Culture & Wellbeing in Babergh and Thriving Towns and Rural Communities in Mid Suffolk.**

REASON FOR DECISION

- 1.1 The approval of the EV Infrastructure Implementation Plan will support the councils' future ambitions around the growth of EVs
- 1.2 The EVIIP will support and provide guidance and opportunities for third party investment in the districts, including community organisations
- 1.3 The EVIIP provides a clear plan for generating future investment and makes the case for external funding
- 1.4 The EVIIP supports local and national strategies with the future transition to EVs beyond the life of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles.

39 BCA/23/20 EMPLOYER SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERING POLICY

- 39.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for People and Place (East and West) to introduce the report.
- 39.2 Councillor Saw gave an overview of the report and proposed the recommendations as detailed in the report. Councillor Derek Davis seconded this motion.
- 39.3 Councillor Derek Davis asked if it would be possible to implement a reward system for the scheme to encourage young people to volunteer. The Corporate Manager – Communities responded that those that currently volunteered within the District were able to apply for funding for their organisation, and a celebration event would be held for employees who volunteered in the District.
- 39.4 Councillor McLaren queried whether the maximum of 3 days of paid leave could be flexible dependent on the type of volunteering undertaken. Councillor Saw responded that it was known that not all employees would

take the 3 days leave and looking at other councils there had been little take up elsewhere. The Communities Officer added that members of reserve forces, who required additional days had a separate policy under the leave policy, and were covered outside of the scheme.

- 39.5 Councillor McCraw praised the scheme for including current volunteers and not only rewarding new volunteers.
- 39.6 Councillor Ward highlighted that whilst there was a financial cost to the scheme, it would be valued by the staff who used it.
- 39.7 Councillor Derek Davis suggested that lanyards for the scheme be produced for those who take part in order to promote the scheme between officers in a face to face setting.
- 39.8 Councillor Carter praised the scheme and that it would benefit young people by making them a part of their community and would be beneficial on their CVs.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED: -

To note and support the implementation of the Councils first Employer Supported Volunteering Policy.

REASON FOR DECISION

Through research carried out by the National Council of Voluntary and Community Organisations (NCVO), we know that paid work is the number one reason why people do not volunteer. In response to this, by working closely with VCFSE organisations through an Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) scheme, the councils can strengthen the support and trust between residents, communities and key anchor organisations, whilst also benefitting staff wellbeing, building the strength and capacity of the VCFSE sector and aligning with its own Community and Wellbeing strategies.

40 BCA/23/21 REVISED SAFEGUARDING POLICY - CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK

- 40.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for People and Place (East and West) to introduce the report.
- 40.2 Councillor Saw gave an overview of the report and proposed the recommendations outlined in the report. Councillor Derek Davis seconded this motion.
- 40.3 Councillor Derek Davis questioned how many officers already had DBS

check. The Corporate Manager – Communities responded that whilst the figures were not currently available, a review of roles had taken place to identify which were required to be DBS checked and what the renewal process was for officers already in post. The Deputy Chief Executive added that roles that required DBS checks, would be reviewed every 3 years.

40.4 Councillor Carter questioned what was being done for at risk children that were not in the system to get help. The Corporate Manager – Communities responded that the Council did support young people in other ways and that Officers and Councillors would be trained to recognise where support was required, and how to make referrals and raise safeguarding concerns. Additionally, the Youth Social Prescribing Programme in schools had allowed additional support for young people in schools and enabled access for young people to get to support and sports groups.

40.5 Councillor McCraw highlighted that under the induction scheme for officers and Councillors safeguarding training was provided and renewed frequently.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED: -

1.1 Option 1 and approve the revised Safeguarding Policy for Children, Young People and Adults at Risk was agreed.

1.2 It was agreed that for the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to have delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Safeguarding Policy in line with outcomes derived from the Annual Section 11 Audit or future Internal Audit Reviews.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that an overarching approach to safeguarding is embedded across the councils, identifying roles and responsibilities of employees, councillors, and volunteers ensuring the safety of children, young people, and adults at risk.

41 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC (WHICH TERM INCLUDES THE PRESS)

41.1 The meeting was not required to go into closed session.

42 THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

It was Resolved: -

That the confidential minute of the meeting held on the 5 September 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 17:48 pm.

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Chair