

Tuesday, 5 December 2023



MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISIONS NOTICE

**DECISIONS BY THE MID SUFFOLK CABINET
CALL IN DEADLINE 5:00PM ON 13 DECEMBER 2023**

The following decisions have been taken by the Cabinet and will come into effect on 14 December 2023 unless the call-in procedure is activated. For clarity, where an item is 'to be noted', 'received' or recommended to Council for a decision, this is deemed not to be a formal Executive decision and so the call-in provisions will not apply.

MCa/23/30 FINANCIAL MONITORING QUARTER 2 2023/24

It was **RESOLVED**: -

- 1.1 That, subject to any further budget variations that arise during the rest of the financial year, the projected surplus on the General Fund of £2.878m referred to in section 4.2 and Appendix A of the report be noted;
- 1.2 That, subject to any further budget variations that arise during the rest of the financial year, the projected overspend on the Housing Revenue Account of £1.488m and the underspend on the capital programme of £19.750m referred to in section 4.3 and Appendix B of the report be noted;
- 1.3 That, the Council's compliance with the Prudential Indicators during quarter two referred to in section 4.4 and Appendix C of the report be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that Members are kept informed of the financial position for both General Fund Revenue and Capital, Housing Revenue Account and Capital and the Prudential Indicators.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The recommended option is set out in the Recommendations. There are no other available options.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

MCa/23/31 UPDATE ON THE REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING REFERRAL AND OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE POSITION

It was RESOLVED: -

That Members noted the report.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that members and senior leaders of the councils have oversight of the journey with the Regulator back to a position where we are compliant.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

MCa/23/32 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023-24 - QUARTER 2

The Performance Report 2023-24 – Quarter 2 was noted

MCa/23/33 MSDC RINGFENCED FUNDING FOR RURAL TRANSPORT PROVISION - ADDENDUM RE: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

It was RESOLVED: -

That Cabinet approved £560k of the total £820k earmarked reserve funding previously approved in the 2023/24 budget, be spent on revenue rather than capital.

REASON FOR DECISION

Formally documenting the approval for this change in capital/revenue budget split provides a clear audit trail.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

MCa/23/34 SKILLS & INNOVATION CENTRE ON GATEWAY 14

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That Cabinet endorsed the Full Business Case (FBC) attached as Appendix A (confidential).**
- 1.2 That Cabinet approved the full delivery of the project as outlined in the FBC for an approximate 35,690 sq ft. Skills and Innovation Centre on Gateway 14 at Stowmarket up to a maximum total cost envelope of £18.75m.**
- 1.3 That Cabinet, if minded to approved recommendation 3.2, approved the recommended funding strategy detailed in Appendix D (confidential) as the Cabinet's preferred method of delivering the project, SUBJECT TO the satisfactory completion of all related legal, financial, cost and valuation advice and contractual agreements, full access to Freeport seed fund capital payment and full access to the required level of Pot B retained business rates generated on the Gateway 14 site as part of Freeport agreements (as forecast in the recommended funding strategy attached as Appendix D - confidential).**
- 1.4 That Cabinet delegated its authority for completion of all necessary matters and agreements pursuant to the approval of recommendation 3.3 to the Council's Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change and Section 151 Officer/Director for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Leader of the Council. This requires that all 'subject to' elements within 3.3 are met.**
- 1.5 That Cabinet authorised the forward funding of next stage technical design, planning and related preparatory works, up to a total value of £150k, from the Gateway 14 capital budget.**

REASON FOR DECISION

To maximise the opportunities available to the Council to lead the development of a new unique facility which offers skills development, business support, entrepreneurship and innovation at Gateway 14 in Stowmarket. This local leadership opportunity arises from the Council's economic growth and strategic asset management functions, Gateway 14 site investment, Freeport East designation and the Council's active skills, education and innovation sector partnerships.

This proposal seeks to meet the immediate and future skills needs of employers and workers in the local and wider sub-regional area and to address persistent skills gaps which will support transition towards a higher wage economy. It will provide bespoke services to address gaps in provision and add value to the regional economy with a particular focus on, but not limited to, growth of green skills, digital skills, environmental innovation and support for supply chains in the green economy.

The proposal meets many Council, local partnership and government outcomes but also creates the conditions to stimulate some new and exciting partnerships which enhance opportunities for local communities and provides a regionally significant centre in Stowmarket and within the Freeport area.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

- 2.1 **DO-NOTHING. Not Recommended.** A 'do-nothing' approach will fail to explore an opportunity to deliver an innovative solution towards bridging long-term skills gaps (including green and digital skills) in the local and sub-regional area. It will also fail to contribute towards strategic priority outcomes across a range of corporate and local growth plans and policies. It will not deliver against Gateway 14 aims for the wider site or Freeport East ambitions for growing world-class innovation clusters.
- 2.2 **WORK WITH PARTNERS AND SPECIALISTS TO SCOPE AND DESIGN A VIABLE DEVELOPMENT. Approved at Outline Business Case (OBC) stage.**
- 2.3 **PROCEED ONLY UP TO PLANNING OUTCOME STAGE GATEWAY BEFORE MAKING A LATER FINAL DECISION TO INVEST / PROCEED TO ASSET CREATION. Not Recommended.** This option would create risk from both the forward funding of technical design and planning costs and by the Council deferring its commitment to proceeding with the project, which could negatively impact access to the essential seed fund capital and Pot B business rates.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared:

Councillor Rachel Eburne declared an Other Registrable interest as a Director of Freeport East Limited.

Councillor Andrew Stringer declared an Other Registrable interest as Director of Gateway 14

Any Dispensation Granted: The Monitoring Officer had granted dispensation to Councillor Andrew Stringer