

# Public Document Pack



<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>MONDAY, 20 MARCH 2023 9.30 AM</b>
<b>VENUE:</b>	<b>KING EDMUND CHAMBER, ENDEAVOUR HOUSE, 8 RUSSELL ROAD, IPSWICH</b>

<b>Members</b>	
<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)

This meeting will be broadcast live to You Tube and will be capable of repeated viewing. The entirety of the meeting will be filmed except for confidential or exempt items. If you attend the meeting in person you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed and that the images and sound recordings could be used for webcasting/ training purposes.

The Council, members of the public and the press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded.

## 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/22/52 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 FEBRUARY 2023** 5 - 14
- 4 **TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME**

5        **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.

6        **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.

7        **JOS/22/53 INFORMATION BULLETIN - REVIEW ON CURRENT LEVELS OF UNTREATED SEWAGE DISCHARGES TO WATERS IN BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK**        15 - 18

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:

Review On Current Levels Of Untreated Sewage Discharges To Waters In Babergh And Mid Suffolk

8        **JOS/22/54 INFORMATION BULLETIN - A REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF BRINGING PUBLIC REALM IN HOUSE**        19 - 22

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:

A Review of the Impact of Brining Public Realm In House

9        **JOS/22/55 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION TRACKER**        23 - 32

**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](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: 296384 or Email: [Committees@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto: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.

### **Evacuating the building in an emergency: Information for Visitors:**

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.

This page is intentionally left blank

# 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, 20 February 2023 at 09:30am

### PRESENT:

Chair: Keith Welham

Councillors:	Simon Barrett	Terence Carter
	Siân Dawson	Paul Ekpenyong
	Kathryn Grandon	John Hinton (Co-Chair)
	Robert Lindsay	David Muller
	Adrian Osborne	Keith Scarff

### In attendance:

Councillor(s): Jan Osborne – Babergh Cabinet Member for Housing  
Lavinia Hadingham – Mid Suffolk Cabinet Member for Housing

Officers:

- Chief Planning Officer (PI)
- Area Planning Manager (GW)
- Business Practice Manager – Development Management (JH)
- Professional Lead – Digital Solutions (JM)
- Senior Environmental Health Officer (DW)
- Housing Needs and Standards Manager (JK)
- Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change (FD)
- Corporate Manager for Economy and Business (MG)
- Economic Development Officer (CF)
- Corporate Manager for Law and Governance (JR)
- Lead Officer for Overview and Scrutiny (AN)

Witness(es): P. Branton – Wincer Kievenaar Architects  
J. Tanner – Hollins Architects  
J. Platt – Locus Planning

### Apologies:

Councillors: Melanie Barrett  
James Caston

## 76 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / SUBSTITUTIONS

76.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Melanie Barrett and Councillor James Caston.

76.2 Councillor Simon Barrett substituted for Councillor Melanie Barrett.

**77 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

77.1 None declared.

**78 JOS/22/42 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2023**

78.1 It was resolved that the minutes of the Joint Committee held on 23 January 2023 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

**79 JOS/22/43 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE BABERGH MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2023**

79.1 It was resolved that the minutes of the Babergh Committee held on 23 January 2023 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

**80 JOS/22/44 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MID SUFFOLK MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2023**

80.1 It was resolved that the minutes of the Mid Suffolk Committee held on 23 January 2023 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

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

81.1 None received.

**82 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

82.1 None received.

**83 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

83.1 None received.

**84 JOS/22/45 ARE PLANNING PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE CUSTOMERS GETTING A VALUABLE SERVICE?**

84.1 The Chief Planning Officer presented the report to the Committee outlining before Members the creation of an annual pre-application advice service survey in 2018, the results of previous surveys, the results of a new pre-application advice service officer survey, a summary of the survey information

and questions, and introduced 3 witnesses in attendance who were available to answer questions from Members regarding their experiences with the pre-application advice service.

- 84.2 Councillor Barrett questioned whether 45% of survey respondents rating the quality of advice received between 8 and 10 out of 10 was a satisfactory amount. The Chief Planning Officer responded that 45% was not acceptable and that he would like to see future survey results above 50%.
- 84.3 Councillor Barrett further questioned the process behind an overturn of officer recommendation between the pre-application advice phase and the decision phase. The Chief Planning Officer responded that pre-application advice is given based on strict information provided to officers and that the recommendation may change due to new information coming to light.
- 84.4 The Witnesses responded that a change in decision on an application between the pre-application stage and the decision stage is often due to different officers handling each stage alongside the introduction of new consultation responses and information.
- 84.5 Councillor Ekpenyong questioned if significant changes in officer advice during the pre-application stage were passed to senior officers for checking and verification. The Chief Planning Officer responded that all pre-application advice was checked off by senior officers before it was dispatched to applicants.
- 84.6 Councillor Dawson questioned if the recommendations proposed focussed more on officers than customers and whether this was an effective route to take in improving the service. The Chief Planning Officer responded that the recommendations intended to change the customer survey to an “open” rather than annual survey which would allow more feedback to be captured and encourage fast, real-time changes to the service.
- 84.7 The Witnesses responded that a change to an “open” survey would allow applicants to submit feedback on a case-by-case basis which could lead to more accurate results regarding the service.
- 84.8 Councillor Scarff questioned how much dialogue takes place between applicants and planning officers during the pre-application advice stage and how much information was sent by the applicants to planning officers. The Witnesses responded that the costs of the service meant that smaller companies often submit minimal information as part of the pre-application advice stage and only submit more once they receive an indication as to whether the application will be accepted due to the investment needed.
- 84.9 Councillor Grandon queried how Babergh and Mid Suffolk’s planning authority compares to other planning authorities and what could be done to improve the pre-application service. The Witnesses responded that Babergh and Mid Suffolk compared well to other authorities, particularly due to the ability to engage with consultees at the pre-application stage, but that

communication between planning officers and applicants was not as good as it could be.

- 84.10 Councillor Lindsay questioned about the time taken by officers to provide in-depth pre-application advice and whether the financial charges to access the service appropriately cover this time. The Area Planning Manager responded that the time taken to put together and issue pre-application advice had recently been reviewed in conjunction with the costs of the service and that it was deemed appropriate.
- 84.11 Councillor Lindsay further questioned the reasons why officers took a significant amount of time to issue pre-application advice for straightforward applications. The Area Planning Manager responded that the same level of detail was provided in responses towards both straightforward applications and complex applications.
- 84.12 Councillor Carter queried if the survey responses were case specific or account for a customer's experience with the pre-application service across an entire year and whether the survey records any change in advice given by officers. The Professional Lead for Digital Solutions responded that the survey did not ask for the outcome of the pre-application advice and that responses cover a customer's annual experience.
- 84.13 Councillor Ekpenyong queried why the advice received on heritage was regarded as being better value for money than other forms of advice provided as part of the pre-application service. The Chief Planning Officer responded that heritage advice required officers to be on-site which allowed for better understanding of the issues and more communication with the applicants.
- 84.14 The Witnesses responded that heritage advice received was not consistent and that they generally had a poorer experience than what was reflected in the survey figures. Councillor Lindsay raised that the results of the survey may be inaccurate due to only a small number of applicants requesting and receiving heritage advice.
- 84.15 Councillor Welham questioned if there would be benefits to introducing a check-list of information that should be submitted as part of the pre-application process. The Witnesses responded that a formal check-list would not be necessary but there would be benefits from having the opportunity to submit further information that the case officer can request for before issuing a final response.
- 84.16 Councillors debated the item on the following issues:
- Introducing a target for customer satisfaction over a short-term period.
  - Encouraging Officers to work in the office more regularly for more collaborative working and mentoring opportunities to be able to provide more accurate pre-application advice.
  - The proposed recommendation to make the survey "open" rather than annual and the potential benefits.



- Quarterly internal audits of the pre-application advice provided.
- Refreshing the questions asked on the survey to encourage more responses
- Recording the outcome of the pre-application advice received on the survey so that answers can be viewed in context

84.17 Councillor Welham put forward the following amended recommendations to the Committee:

- That the contents of the report be noted by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- That Officers be requested to alter the frequency and content of the survey of customer experience of the pre-application service to “open” rather than annual.
- That Officers be requested to undertake an annual survey of Development Management Planning Officers of their experience of customer service.
- That Officers develop a model for quarterly audit of timeliness, quality and customer service including to assess the effectiveness of the pre-application advice process in the validation of applications and correlation of advice with outcome.
- That the Corporate Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer review the results of the above-mentioned surveys and audit with the Client Side Panel and report at least bi-annually to the Cabinet Members for Planning.
- That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requests the Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer consider arrangements to provide adequate training and mentoring opportunities for all planning staff with a view to providing an improved level of pre-app service.
- That the Corporate Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer aim for an overall quality of advice level of satisfaction of 60% by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

84.18 Councillor Lindsay proposed the recommendations as read out by the Chair.

84.19 Councillor Grandon seconded the recommendations.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:**

- 3.1. That the contents of the report be noted by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 3.2. That Officers be requested to alter the frequency and content of the survey of customer experience of the pre-application service to “open”**

rather than annual.

- 3.3. That Officers be requested to undertake an annual survey of Development Management Planning Officers of their experience of customer service.
- 3.4. That Officers develop a model for quarterly audit of timeliness, quality and customer service including to assess the effectiveness of the pre-application advice process in the validation of applications and correlation of advice with outcome.
- 3.5. That the Corporate Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer review the results of the above-mentioned surveys and audit with the Client Side Panel and report at least bi-annually to the Cabinet Members for Planning.
- 3.6. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requests the Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer consider arrangements to provide adequate training and mentoring opportunities for all planning staff with a view to providing an improved level of pre-app service.
- 3.7. That the Corporate Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer aim for an overall quality of advice level of satisfaction of 60% by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

## 85 JOS/22/46 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT & CIVIL PENALTIES POLICY

- 85.1 A short break was taken between 11:36am and 11:47am.
- 85.2 Councillor Jan Osborne – Babergh’s Cabinet Member for Housing - introduced the report to the Committee outlining before Members the need to maintain and improve housing standards in the private rented sector, the current work of the housing standards team, the purpose of the enforcement policy, the guidelines for both landlords and officers regarding enforcement and improvements, the proposal for an introduction of a charge for officer and administration time to recover costs when formal action must be taken, the introduction of civil penalties for landlords, and the collaboration between other Suffolk Councils in the development of the policy.
- 85.3 The Senior Environmental Health Officer presented the report to the Committee outlining before Members the work undertaken to improve and regulate housing standards, the link between the Private Housing Enforcement Policy and corporate policy, how and when action will be taken under the new policy, collaboration with Police and Fire services, civil penalties as an alternative to prosecution, the guidance and regulations for determining a fine value, and examples of when civil penalties will be actioned.
- 85.4 Councillor Scarff questioned if the starting points for fines were determined by the Housing team. The Senior Environmental Health Officer responded that the b starting points were determined by Housing using strict criteria but that

these could move up or down within the band range dependent on the severity of the situation that is being addressed.

- 85.5 Councillor Scarff further questioned if civil penalties notices could be used in a similar way to press releases after the conviction of a landlord. The Senior Environmental Health Officer responded that civil penalty notices were able to be publicly put on the national register of offences.
- 85.6 Councillor Muller queried how many prosecutions had been actioned within the last 18 months. The Housing Needs and Standards Manager responded that there had been 0 prosecutions in the last 18 months.
- 85.7 Councillor Carter questioned if enforcement action could be taken by the Councils towards landlords linked to criminal activity to prevent them from owning and renting out property. The Senior Environmental Health Officer responded that there were powers to ban individuals to rent out properties but that it was a measure only used in extreme circumstances.
- 85.8 Councillor Carter further questioned whether enforcement would be taken against the landlord or the tenant in cases where hoarding is present. The Babergh Cabinet Member for Housing responded that this did not fall under the new enforcement policy but that it was the responsibility of the Housing Solutions team.
- 85.9 Councillor Ekpenyong questioned if there was a programme for regular inspection of private rented properties, how many improvement notices had been issued in the last 18 months, and how the national register of offences can be accessed. The Housing Needs and Standards Manager responded that inspections were a reactive service, that only a small number of improvement notices had been issued, and that the national register is published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 85.10 Councillor Hinton questioned what systems are in place to identify landlords within the district and if the policies also applied to registered social landlords. The Senior Environmental Health Officer responded that a current register of private landlords was being formulated and that social landlords did fall under the proposed policies.
- 85.11 Councillor Grandon questioned if the penalty band ranges were national rates. The Senior Environmental Health Officer responded that these band ranges were determined by the Councils but that consultations with other Suffolk Councils were conducted before reaching the final figures.
- 85.12 Members debated the item on the following issues:
- The potential increase in safety for residents
  - Building a register of private landlords within the Districts

85.13 Councillor Welham put forward the following amended recommendations to the Committee:

- That the Overview and Scrutiny recommend to Cabinet to adopt the new private rented sector housing enforcement policy including the use of civil penalties as an alternative to prosecution. Agree a fair charging regime to recover the costs of housing enforcement action taken by the Council.
- To recommend that Cabinet approve and authorise the use of civil penalty and financial penalty powers provided by the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (Appendix 2), Electrical Safety Regulations (Appendix 3) and Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) Regulations (Appendix 4).
- To recommend to Cabinet the proposed charges for relevant housing enforcement action based on officer time taken and that any revenue arising from civil penalties will be retained within the service to meet the legal or administrative costs and expenses incurred under the relevant housing law.
- To recommend to Cabinet that comments made at this meeting be made available to them when they discuss implementing the Private Sector Housing Enforcement & Civil Penalties Policy.

85.14 Councillor Carter proposed the recommendations as read out by the Chair.

85.15 Councillor Ekpenyong seconded the recommendations.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:**

- 3.1. That Overview and Scrutiny recommend to Cabinet to adopt the new private rented sector housing enforcement policy including the use of civil penalties as an alternative to prosecution. Agree a fair charging regime to recover the costs of housing enforcement action taken by the Council.**
- 3.2. To recommend that Cabinet approve and authorise the use of civil penalty and financial penalty powers provided by the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (Appendix 2), Electrical Safety Regulations (Appendix 3) and Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) Regulations (Appendix 4).**
- 3.3. To recommend to Cabinet the proposed charges for relevant housing enforcement action based on officer time taken and that any revenue arising from civil penalties will be retained within the service to meet the legal or administrative costs and expenses incurred under the relevant housing law.**
- 3.4. To recommend to Cabinet that comments made at this meeting be made available to them when they discuss implementing the Private Sector Housing Enforcement & Civil Penalties Policy**

**86 JOS/22/47 INFORMATION BULLETIN**

- 86.1 A short break was taken between 12:42pm and 12:45pm.
- 86.2 Councillor Simon Barrett and Councillor Dave Muller left the meeting at 12:45pm.
- 86.3 The Corporate Manager for Business and Economy and the Economic Development Officer presented the Information Bulletin to the Committee outlining before Members the 2022 Recovery Plan for businesses post the Covid pandemic, details of the Recover and Re-Grow stages of the Recovery Plan, the role of Babergh and Mid Suffolk in supporting skills and education development, the external skills picture, local skill development schemes, and future plans for supporting young people's skill development.
- 86.4 Councillor Carter questioned what support was available to SEN students for their welfare and development in schools and the transition between education and employment. The Economic Development Officer responded that collaboration with Suffolk County Council was taking place to develop schemes intended to support SEN students specifically.
- 86.5 Councillor Ekpenyong queried what support was in place to develop technical and complex skills to enable people to pursue a career in high-skilled industries. The Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded that one of Gateway 14 Skills and Innovation Centre's main purposes was to develop young people's skills in these areas as well as attract high-growth and technical organisations into the Districts for young people to be able to pursue careers in this sector locally.
- 86.6 Councillor Lindsay left the meeting at 13:05pm.
- 86.7 Councillor Hinton questioned what support there was for apprenticeships and developing the skills required to access careers in emerging industries such as renewable energies and robotics. The Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded these skills would be included as part of the Gateway 14 Skills and Innovation Centre and that the number of apprenticeships currently undertaken in both Districts is higher than it was pre-Covid.
- 86.8 Councillor Grandon left the meeting at 13:15pm.
- 86.9 The Information Bulletin was noted.

**87 JOS/22/48 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST**

- 87.1 No comments.

**88 JOS/22/49 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION TRACKER**

- 88.1 No comments.

**89 JOS/22/49 BABERGH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN**

89.1 No comments.

**90 JOS/22/50 MID SUFFOLK OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN**

90.1 No comments.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 13:20pm.

.....  
Chair

# Agenda Item 7

## INFORMATION BULLETIN

### Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023



## Water Quality - Rivers and Sewage Discharge

### Introduction

1.1 This information bulletin provides background to the issue of water quality of our rivers and sewage pollution within them. Water quality and sewage events have been raised by our councillors and our communities around concerns for the natural environment and public health.

1.2 In November 2022, both Councils debated motions around this issue, and resolved to:

*This Council resolves to:*

*Ask the chair of the scrutiny committee to invite senior officers of Anglian Water plus senior representatives from the Environment Agency and Natural England to attend a meeting to answer questions on the current levels of sewage discharge.*

1.3 This bulletin identifies who is attending Joint Overview and Scrutiny and their responsibilities, background around storm water flood events in national policy, actions surrounding this matter by Suffolk County Council and information around local water quality issues we are aware of.

### Responsibilities

2.1 It is important to note that the Councils do not have statutory duties, or expertise around, water quality and sewage pollution. The following bodies below however all play a part.

- Defra – responsible for protecting the natural environment including water quality targets under the Environment Act 2021, and implementation of the 25 Year Environment Improvement Plan.
- Natural England have shared objectives with Defra under the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan, with a remit to conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment.
- Ofwat – regulator of water quality – legally required to act in accordance with the Strategic Policy Statement and duties under the Water Industry Act 1991.
- Environment Agency – issue permits to water companies which includes monitoring pollution events, assessing compliance of these permits and making use of monitoring data and taking necessary enforcement action.
- Anglian Water – water company operating across our districts, required to meet permits set by Environment Agency to meet challenges set out by Government in 25 Year Environment Improvement Plan

Attendees: those attending Joint O&S on 20<sup>th</sup> March include Grant Tufts – Anglian Water

### Background

3.1 The Government has been formulating its environment plan since 2018, with legally binding requirements set under the Environment Act 2021 and other previous legislation. In relation to pollution from sewage the following policy papers from Government set the scene:

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018) [25-year-environment-plan.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Environment Improvement Plan (2023) [Environmental Improvement Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan (2022) [Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

3.2 This final plan published in 2022 identified that water companies are being set the following targets:

- By 2035 water companies will have improved all overflows discharging into or near every designated bathing water, and improved 75% of overflows discharging to high priority sites.
- By 2050, no storm overflows will be permitted to operate outside of unusually heavy rainfall, or to cause any adverse ecological harm.

3.3 It should be noted however that this last plan has a current legal challenge lodged in the High Court, on the grounds of its legality against other legislation to ensure adequate water quality is maintained.

3.4 Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub Committee discussed The Quality of Suffolk's Rivers and Coastal Waters. Anglian Water, the Environment Agency, and Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust. Presentations were given around the wider picture of water quality and contributory factors to this, including Catchment Sensitive Farming to reduce nutrients entering waterways. Anglian Water gave an overview of work to improve infrastructure and work being undertaken with the farming community and Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust outlined physical work to watercourses to improve water quality. The agenda, papers, recording of the meeting and minutes can be accessed here: [Meeting Documents - Committee Minutes \(suffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

3.5 The committee agreed that a workshop for stakeholders would be held with the objective of responding to the Anglian Water consultation on their Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan and of finalising recommendation on how local authorities could contribute to the drive to improve the quality of river water in Suffolk. The committee also requested information Bulletins from the EA around discharges into Suffolk rivers and water quality in Suffolk's estuaries.

3.6 Our Councils and Suffolk County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, work together on issues surrounding surface water management on new development granted planning permission. New responsibilities will be formed under the Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that will give more powers to SCC to prevent surface water from entering the wider sewerage system. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee wrote to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in October 2022. This letter raised the importance of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act and its implementation.

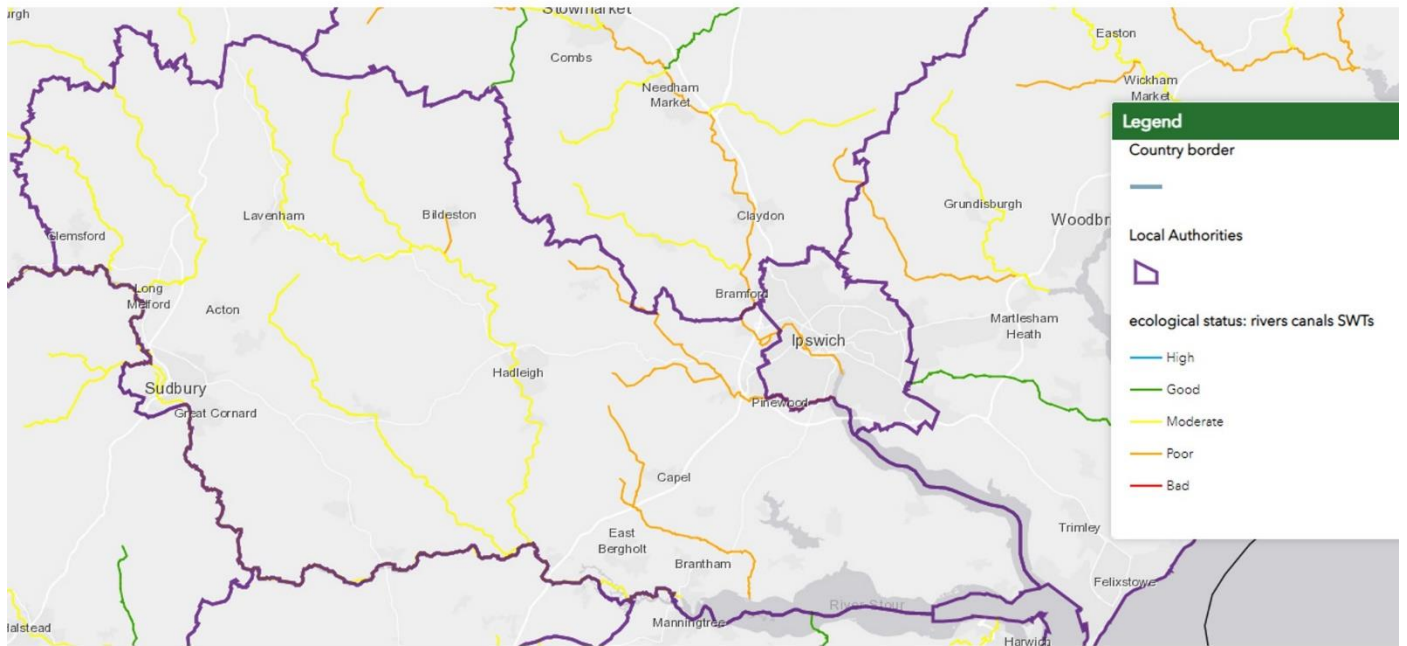
3.7 The Act although enacted in 2010, Schedule 3 has yet to be fully implemented. This schedule introduces Sustainable Drainage Approval Bodies (SABs), which would be SCC for our districts, and in effect gives them more powers to require sustainable drainage systems across more developments. This in effect will reduce the amount of water entering sewerage systems and reduce the pressure on these systems at times of high rainfall events

## **Local context**

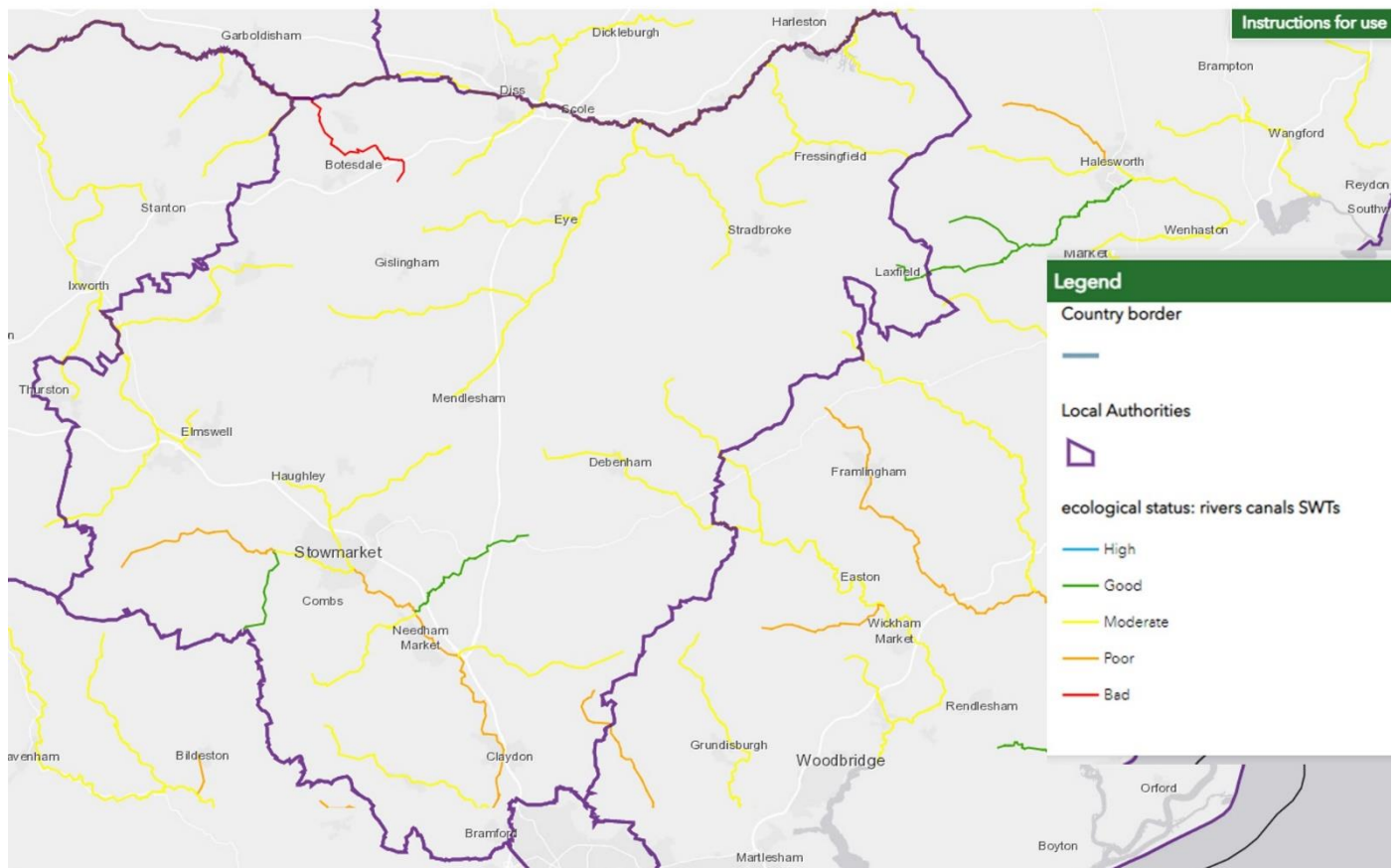
4. 1 Our districts have a number of valued waterways, both for their ecological value and also the recreational benefits they bring. The Environment Agency monitor the ecological status of these under the Water Framework Directive. Below are figures indicating the ecological status of rivers and canals in our districts. The majority have 'moderate' status with some 'poor' and one 'bad'. It must be noted however that this relates to more than just storm overflow events from sewerage, and there are a number of contributing factors. But this is provided for wider context.



**Babergh**



**Mid Suffolk**



4.2 Further information on the status of Suffolk’s rivers is available in information supporting SCC’s Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub Committee, under ‘Evidence Set 2’ which can be accessed at this link: [Meeting Documents - Committee Minutes \(suffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Our communities**

5.1 Water quality issues have been raised by our communities, notably the River Stour Trust who are seeking to obtain designated Bathing Water Status for a section of the River Stour between Sudbury and Great Cornard. The Councils at officer level support the Trust in seeking this designation, but recognise water quality is a complicated issue that several stakeholders identified above all play a part in. The Councils are however committed to working with these stakeholders to address this issue for our communities.

## **Conclusion**

6.0 Officers have been asked to bring representatives of all the parties with an interest in this matter to O&S to discuss and answer questions. Some bodies have not been able to send representatives to this meeting. Officers do not make any recommendations to O&S members in respect of river water quality or sewage discharge into rivers. O&S members are asked to note the information contained within this report when considering questioning of attendees, of course as well as their own research and experience in this area.

**Jo Hobbs, Strategic Delivery Adviser - Planning & Building Control**

**Will Burchnall, Corporate Manager - Public Realm**

**Mark Emms, Director of Operations and Regulatory Services**

**Tom Barker, Director for Planning and Building Control**

# Agenda Item 8

## INFORMATION BULLETIN

### Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023



### Babergh Public Realm insourcing - a VFM review

#### Background, aims and objectives

Babergh District Council (BDC) had outsourced its public realm operations under contract to idverde since 2007. In May 2020, both Councils commissioned East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) to prepare a detailed Options Review of the contract, which considered the following four delivery models:

1. Continue to deliver the services 'as is'.
2. Bring the services together in a single in-house operation.
3. Outsource both services.
4. Establish a trading company (wholly owned LATCo) to deliver both services.

Following a Scrutiny session by this Committee, a Cabinet decision in September 2020 resolved that the Public Realm services be brought together in a single in-house operation, Option 2 above. It was also resolved that the LATCo be retained as an option for future consideration. Option 2 was recommended as it offered advantages including:

- could be achieved within current budget levels
- closer cost control that allows the Council to pursue cost-efficiencies and economies of scale
- direct operational control that allows the service to adapt and innovate to meet changing need
- increased service standards and flexibility
- the most efficient response to the evolving plans for enhancing biodiversity
- more 'joined up' management of Council sites and implementation of consistent quality standards
- better understanding of how to work with local partners and other key stakeholders to ensure effective community engagement
- avoided risk associated to specification, procurement and management of an enlarged outsourced contract

#### Financial comparison and outlook

The table below shows the historic contractual costs invoiced by idverde from 2020/21, the transition year 2021/22, forecast current year 2022/23 and budgeted year 2023/24.

		2020/21	2021/22		2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Budget
In House Maintenance - Babergh District Council			7 months	5 months		
Operating Costs						
ID Verde	Open Spaces	360,914	242,737			
ID Verde	Public Conveniences	39,637	26,745			
ID Verde	Street Cleansing	444,894	299,308			
ID Verde	Car Parks	18,708	12,617			
ID Verde	Strategic Property	5,248	3,528			
ID Verde	HRA Estate	179,186	120,571			
Babergh District Council	Additional Staffing/TUPE Transfer			194,449	673,670	754,202
Babergh District Council	Equipment Tools & Equipment				27,140	27,140
Babergh District Council	A14 in house saving				- 36,050	- 36,050
Babergh District Council	Vehicle Fuel			34,057	68,756	57,256
Babergh District Council	Vehicle maintenance costs				80,280	62,500
Babergh District Council	Transformation Costs			60,822		
Babergh District Council	Vehicle depreciation costs				75,125	92,750
			705,506	289,328		
<b>Net Operational Service Cost</b>		<b>1,048,587</b>	<b>994,834</b>		<b>888,921</b>	<b>957,798</b>

### Financial assumptions

1. The costs include the cost of capital depreciation over an 8-year economic asset life.
2. No receipt benefit on disposals proceeds is included.
3. No central service recharges have been included.
4. No recharge to the Housing Revenue Account has been included (i.e. net operational costs before and after x-fer only).
5. CPI 'Services' approx. rate for comparison 2021/22 - 3%, 2022/23 - 5.4%, 2023/24 - 5% (estimated)

### Cost comparison

The budgeted net operational service cost 2023/24 remains **£90,789 lower than idverde 2020/21 contract value**  
Approx. total cost saving to BDC between 2021/22 to 2023/24 over pre-existing idverde contract terms = **£1.074m\***  
(\*assuming CPI Services rates described in financial assumption #5. above are applied)

### Resource levels

#### General Fund (GF)

8.64 FTE (full time equivalent) Street Cleansing Team, 8.64 FTE Grounds Maintenance Team and 0.28 FTE Cleaners transferred from idverde under TUPE. The idverde Operations Manager and Team Leader chose not to join BDC and these posts were subsequently filled through recruitment.

#### Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The HRA contribution to the Public Realm service has been recalculated for the 2023/24 financial year to more accurately reflect the space under management and required specification. This has allowed recruitment to commence of an additional 2.14 FTE permanent and 1.08 FTE 12-month fixed term grounds maintenance posts to further improve standards with the HRA estate and support the Housing Services 'transition to excellence'. This will increase the contribution made from the HRA to the GF from £213,974 (2022/23) to £342,970 (2023/24).

### Benefits realised since transfer

Direct control of street cleansing and grounds maintenance operatives, vehicles and equipment has allowed:

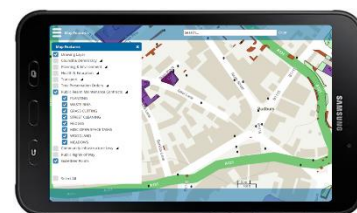
- Rapid response to reported issues, reallocation of resources possible (e.g. same afternoon collection of lorry tyre at Honey Tye, next day clearance of alleyways in Oliver's Close)
- Effective redeployment to suit weather conditions e.g. grass cutting teams transferred to path refurbishment works during summer 2022
- Reduced reliance on subcontractors, resulting in winter hedge maintenance work completed by end of January - previously this was not completed by idverde
- Large mechanical sweeper deployed BDC average 3 days a week and 2,500 miles per month, medium sweeper works in town centres 5 days per week - compared to idverde total subcontracted sweeper availability of 1 day/week
- Fly tipping collection performance improved from 96.1% to 99.7% of all fly tips cleared within 48 hours of notification.
- S1 complaints Nov 2020 – Oct 2021 = 52, Nov 2021 – Oct 2022 = 38 = -27% (with improved reporting levels)
- Grounds and Streets team regularly receiving compliments for the quality of their work.
- Biodiversity Action Plan funded objectives supported:
  - 340 Trees planted (1.8m)
  - 10,240 Hedgerow plants planted (3,400m of new hedging)
  - 23,123m<sup>2</sup> of grassland became managed as meadow to benefit plants and wildlife.
- Site surveying taking place to update mapping (GIS) system, 835 dog and litter bins mapped as part of public realm digital project.
- Mobile working using smartphones and tablets introduced to BDC streets team, increasing efficiency, allowing improved job allocation, tracking, and reporting. Phase 2 roll out to Grounds Team in progress.
- Health screening of staff including Hand / Arm Vibration carried out, resulting in reduced corporate liability and improved welfare.

- Training covering manual handling, safe use of equipment, chainsaws and working on roads completed, resulting in reduced corporate liability, improved safety and welfare.

### Further service improvements planned

Over the next 12 months we will be focussed on:

- Successfully onboarding Will Burchnall's successor as Corporate Manager and continuing to build strength in team.
- Addressing historic sub-optimal grounds and cleansing standards within our HRA estate, assisting with 'transition to excellence' model.
- Continuing the public realm digital project – mapping sites on GIS, further transitioning to tablets and mobile devices for reporting and job management.
- Improving HGV Street sweeper resilience through creation of a new higher-grade role which aligns hourly rate for HGV drivers with other local authorities, allowing greater ability to retain and recruit qualified staff, with formal 'pool driver' cover arrangements and searching for a local Sudbury sweepings transfer site.
- Increasing biodiversity and habitat improvements, supporting changes to mowing regimes from amenity standard to meadow/wildflower meadow – with associated transformation of services.
- Working with Customer Services to effectively set up the Council's new website and CRM functions in respect of Public Realm.
- Contributing to the new depot working group and business case design.



### Value for money conclusion

It has been demonstrated that transfer of the services took place within the 2020/21 budget levels and the Council has gained closer cost control, increased service standards and improved flexibility over how it chooses to deliver its Public Realm services. The largely unquantifiable risk associated to specification, procurement and management of an enlarged outsourced contract has been avoided for both Councils through the insourced approach.

Whilst the Babergh and Mid Suffolk services are delivered in the main independently out of different Sudbury and Stowmarket based depot locations, the client service function remains shared but has been strengthened in the process, meaning there has also been considerable benefits both in cost sharing, resiliency, and experience. As anticipated extra resource has been expended in recovering sub-optimal service standards inherited from the incumbent contractor over the first full growing season since the contract transferred. This challenge will continue into 2023/24 season as spaces within the HRA estate are also brought up to the same standards, and specific tenant needs are addressed, before expecting to be recovered by the 2024/24 season.

The service has made a promising start in delivering its Biodiversity Action Plan which at the time of transfer was only just emerging from motions declared during 2019, and this would have been difficult and likely more expensive to deliver under an outsourced contract arrangement.

Will Burchnall now departs as Corporate Manager after a highly productive and successful period of mobilising the new service, reducing a project backlog, and re-energising the Public Realm team. The service is now well placed to continue to transform and better meet challenges including budget pressures, building stronger relationships with stakeholders, take commercialisation opportunities, improve workforce age profile, adapt to changing weather, address biodiversity considerations and continue to modernise through the better use of technology, mapping and data to inform decisions.

**Mark Emms, Director of Operations**

**Will Burchnall, Corporate Manager - Public Realm**

**Jack Burton, Finance Business Partner**

This page is intentionally left blank

## JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION TRACKER

Updated 9th March 2023 - AN

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
20.02.23	JOS/22/45	<a href="#">Are Planning Pre-Application Advice Customers Getting a Valuable Service?</a>	3.1 That the contents of the report be noted by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee	N/A		Completed
			3.2 That Officers be requested to alter the frequency and content of the survey of customer experience of the pre-application service to "open" rather than annual	PI		Ongoing
			3.3 That Officers be requested to undertake an annual survey of Development Management Planning Officers of their experience of customer service.	PI		Ongoing
			3.4 That Officers develop a model for quarterly audit of timeliness, quality and customer service including to assess the effectiveness of the pre-application advice process in the validation of applications and correlation of advice with outcome	PI		Ongoing
			3.5 That the Corporate Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer review the results of the above-mentioned surveys and audit with the Client Side Panel and report at least bi-annually to the Cabinet Members for Planning	TB / PI		Ongoing
			3.6 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee request the Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer consider arrangements to provide adequate training and mentoring opportunities for all planning staff with a view to providing an improved level of pre-app service	TB / PI		Ongoing
			3.7 That the Corporate Director for Planning and Building Control and the Chief Planning Officer aim for an overall quality of advice level of satisfaction of 60% by 30th April 2025	TB / PI		Ongoing
			JOS/22/46	<a href="#">Private Sector Housing Enforcement &amp; Civil Penalties Policy</a>	3.1 That Overview and Scrutiny recommend to Cabinet to adopt the new private rented sector housing enforcement policy, including the use of civil penalties as an alternative to prosecution, and agree a fair charging regime to recover the costs of housing enforcement action taken by the Council.	JK / DW
3.2 To recommend that Cabinet approve and authorise the use of civil penalty and financial penalty powers provided by the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (Appendix 2), Electrical Safety Regulations (Appendix 3) and Energy Efficient (Private Renter Property) Regulations (Appendix 4)	JK / DW	06.03.23: Going to Cabinet for decision.			Ongoing	

20.02.23	JOS/22/46	<a href="#">Private Sector Housing Enforcement &amp; Civil Penalties Policy</a>	3.3 To recommend to Cabinet the proposed charges for relevant housing enforcement action based on officer time taken and that any revenue arising from civil penalties will be retained within the service to meet the legal or administrative costs and expenses incurred under the relevant housing law	JK / DW	06.03.23: Going to Cabinet for decision.	Ongoing
			3.4 To recommend to Cabinet that comments made at this meeting be made available to them when they discuss implementing the Private Sector Housing Enforcement & Civil Penalties Policy	JK / DW	06.03.23: Going to Cabinet for decision.	Ongoing

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
23.01.23 (MSDC)	MOS/22/02	<a href="#">General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (2023-24)</a>	1.1 That the Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the report	N/A		Completed
			1.2 That Cabinet considers an increase in the Locality Award allocation for each Member.	N/A		Ongoing
	Mca/22/27	<a href="#">Call-In of the Decision From the Mid Suffolk Cabinet Meeting 7 November 2022</a>	That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee refers the matter back to the Cabinet for reconsideration with the following observations:  - That Officers undertake further public engagement - That Officers and Cabinet consider locating other sites within the district for the scheme - That Cabinet takes into consideration the planning advice provided	AN / HH		Ongoing

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
23.01.23 (Joint)	JOS/22/39	<a href="#">Review of the Culture, Heritage and Visitor Economy Strategy</a>	1.1 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the report and requests that Officers take account of the comments made by Members.	N/A	N/A	Completed
			1.2 That a review of the progress of the Strategy's implementation plan be undertaken by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2024.	FD	N/A	Completed

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
23.01.23 (BDC)	BOS/22/02	<a href="#">General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (2023-24)</a>	1.1 That the report be noted	N/A	N/A	Completed



Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
19.12.22	JOS/22/32	<a href="#">Review of Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC)</a>	1.1 That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the report	N/A	N/A	Completed

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
22.11.22 (MSDC Only)	MOS/22/01	<a href="#">Draft General Fund and Housing Revenue Account 2023/24 and Four Year Outlook</a>	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	23.01.22: The final 2023-24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account figures were presented to O&S	Completed
			1.4. That Officers look further at the Vacancy Management Factor assumption of 5%.	ME	23.01.22: The final 2023-24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account figures were presented to O&S	Completed
			1.5. That Officers consider further opportunities to increase garage rents.	ME	23.01.22: The final 2023-24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account figures were presented to O&S	Completed
			1.6. That Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggests a more prudent assumption in respect of the Pay Award 2023/24.	N/A	23.01.22: The final 2023-24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account figures were presented to O&S	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	23.01.22: The final 2023-24 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account figures were presented to O&S	Completed
			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	27.02.23: This was done as part of the budget setting work	Completed

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
21.11.22 (BDC Only)	BOS/22/01	<a href="#">Draft General Fund and Housing Revenue Account 2023/24 and Four Year Outlook</a>	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 (Joint)	JOS/22/23	<a href="#">Review of Local Citizens Advice and the Cost of Living Crisis</a>	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	<b>05.12.22:</b> Officers are currently exploring a single multi-disciplinary team, including BMSDC and Citizens Advice officers, to lead on the implementation of the action plan. <b>06.03.23:</b> Both Citizens Advice Bureaus are now directly engaged with the cross-Council steering group supporting our Cost of Living work.	Completed
			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	<b>06.03.23:</b> Data is currently being collected from Councils and organisations across the county with an aim of starting a partnership based on the results.	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	<b>05.12.22:</b> 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.	Completed
			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	<b>06.03.23:</b> Looking to be arranged.	Ongoing
	JOS/22/24	<a href="#">Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet Protocol</a>	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	<a href="#">Joint Homes and Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019 - 2024)</a>	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	<b>07.11.22:</b> 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

24.10.22	JOS/22/17	<a href="#">Joint Homes and Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019 - 2024)</a>	<b>3.3</b> To ask Portfolio Holders and Officers to consider further provision of financial and physical support to all residents wishing to downsize.	AN	<b>07.11.22:</b> 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
----------	-----------	---	--	----	--	-----------

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
30.09.22	JOS/22/8	<a href="#">Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' Parking Strategy</a>	<b>1.1</b> 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	<b>03.10.22:</b> Councillor Hinton made a verbal representation at Babergh Cabinet. <b>03.10.22:</b> Councillor Welham made a verbal representation at Mid Suffolk Cabinet.	Completed
			<b>1.2</b> That Cabinet is requested to carry out further work to replace ( <b>reduce</b> ) carparking demands with alternatives by looking at other areas that have done so successfully.	ME	<b>24.02.23:</b> A new Parking Strategy Manager will be appointed in March and will lead on this in conjunction with KD when considering impact of current/future local business demand.	Ongoing
			<b>1.3</b> 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.	ME	<b>30.09.22:</b> Confirmed that progress reports will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny once implementation had begun. <b>24.02.23:</b> Signed off in principle by Portfolio holders and are currently looking at how it can be brought back to Cabinet and Joint O&S with an update.	Ongoing
JOS/22/9	<a href="#">Shared Revenues Partnership - Council Tax Reduction Scheme</a>	<b>1.1</b> 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	<b>03.10.22:</b> 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	
JOS/22/11	<a href="#">Recommendations from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group for Rural Transport</a>	<b>1.1</b> 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	<b>01.11.22:</b> Will be timetabled to go to Cabinet at the next Overview and Scrutiny Strategy meeting between the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs and the Leaders. <b>27.02.23:</b> Will go to Cabinet for decision in the new municipal year.	Ongoing	
		<b>1.2</b> 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			
		<b>1.3</b> 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			
		<b>1.1</b> 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	JOS/22/11	<a href="#">Recommendations from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group for Rural Transport</a>	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
----------	-----------	--	---	----	--	---------

Date	Item Ref	Item Title	Recommendations	Key Officer	Progress	Status
27.06.22	JOS/22/2	<a href="#">Capital Investment Fund Company (CIFCO CAPITAL LTD) Business Trading and Performance Report</a>	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	<a href="#">Draft Empty Homes Policy</a>	1.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 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 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		
			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		
			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	<a href="#">Review of Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP)</a>	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	<a href="#">Draft General Fund (GF) 2021/22 and Four Year Outlook</a>	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.	ME		Not Started
	BOS/21/2	<a href="#">Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Four Year Outlook</a>	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.	ME	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	<a href="#">Draft General Fund (GF) 2022/23 and Four Year Outlook</a>	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.	ME	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
13.01.22 (MSDC Only)	MOS/21/2	<a href="#">Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Four Year Outlook</a>	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	<a href="#">Call In of the Decision from Mid Suffolk Cabinet (06.12.21)</a>	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	<a href="#">Review of Local Citizens Advice</a>	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
			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	<b>06.06.22 and 05.09.22:</b> 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		
20.12.21	JOS/21/20	<a href="#">Review of Local Citizens Advice</a>	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		Completed
			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	<b>21.11.22:</b> 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	<b>06.06.22:</b> 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	<b>05.09.22:</b> The Director for Communities confirmed that the Sudbury Citizens Advice has received a 30% uplift in funding.	Completed

This page is intentionally left blank