

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK COUNCIL** held in the King Edmund Chamber - Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Thursday, 26 April 2018

PRESENT:

Councillor: Derrick Haley (Chairman)
 John Levantis (Vice-Chair)

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|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Councillors: | Roy Barker | Gerard Brewster |
| | Michael Burke | David Burn |
| | James Caston | Rachel Eburne |
| | Paul Ekpenyong | John Field |
| | Julie Flatman | Jessica Fleming |
| | Elizabeth Gibson-Harries | Nick Gowrley |
| | Gary Green | Kathie Guthrie |
| | Lavinia Hadingham | Matthew Hicks |
| | Glen Horn | Barry Humphreys MBE |
| | Esther Jewson | Diana Kearsley |
| | Anne Killett | Sarah Mansel |
| | Wendy Marchant | John Matthissen |
| | Lesley Mayes | Suzie Morley |
| | Dave Muller | Mike Norris |
| | Derek Osborne | Penny Otton |
| | Timothy Passmore | Jane Storey |
| | Andrew Stringer | Keith Welham |
| | Kevin Welsby | John Whitehead |
| | David Whybrow | Jill Wilshaw |

129 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

129.1 There were no apologies received

130 **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS BY MEMBERS**

There were no declarations of interest.

131 **MC/17/36 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2018**

131.1 Subject to Minute 127.34 being amended to read "Councillor Stringer welcomed the opportunity to sit down with the Administration and look at past alternative Green Group submissions and it was for this reason on balance that he would be voting for the recommendations in the report"

It was Resolved: -

That the Minutes be approved as a true record.

132 MC/17/37 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

132.1 The Chairman thanked everybody who had attended the Chairman's dinner or who had made a contribution to the fund, which was now approaching £2000 for the evening.

133 MC/17/38 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

133.1 The Leader presented his report and invited questions from Members.

133.2 Councillor Otton asked about MYGO in Stowmarket and whether it was under threat, she also raised concerns about the use of plastic bags that she had received her council papers in.

133.3 In response Councillor Gowrley confirmed that MYGO had already finished in Stowmarket. However, the Council was working with the MIX to see if an alternative provision could be provided. Reassurance was also given that the plastic bags were fully bio-degradable.

134 TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PROCEDURE RULE

The Corporate Manager for Democratic Services reported that the Council had received a petition with 85 valid signatures relating to a bus service in Combs Ford. This petition had also been sent to the County Council and the Council was awaiting their response.

135 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

135.1 There were no questions received

136 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

136.1 The following questions were received in accordance with Council procedure Rule 12 of the Constitution:-

Question 1

Councillor Stringer to Councillor Whybrow Cabinet Member for Planning:

“Given the new Joint Local Plan will include a joint housing number for both Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils – and will equally have a joint five year housing land supply number – how can Mid Suffolk District Council as a sovereign council have authority over the work at Babergh District Council to meet these numbers.”

Response from Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning:

“This remains an issue to be resolved. Working to develop the Joint Local Plan at the same time as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is being revised does have challenges because officers and Councillors are having to adapt to an evolving policy context. Early documentation emerging from the Government’s White Paper, “Fixing the Broken Housing Market” (early 2017), and the “Right Homes Right Places” consultation (late 2017), described a clear direction towards joint numbers for joint plans so officers had been working on that basis. The recent consultation on the revised NPPF is silent on the matter but the revised Planning Practice Guidance (a technical document) indicates that it will be a matter of choice for authorities working towards joint plans. So the question of whether the two Councils have a joint number or individual numbers remains part of the emerging work.

The cross-party workshops that have been delivered over the past couple of months articulated the anticipated requirement to combine numbers. There was general agreement to this during the discussion, although the implications might not have been discussed at length, and there are workload and timetabling implications to having separate numbers (for example separating out each Councils approach to Spatial Distribution). Current interpretation of guidance indicates that it remains a choice available to the Councils, however, so your officers will be seeking external advice to clarify this point.

Of course, if both Councils choose to have a combined number then the opportunity exists to create a Joint Housing Delivery Board, for example, which could provide a mechanism that would enable each Council to influence the others’ activity to stimulate housing delivery.”

Supplementary Question

Can you categorically on record now say that Mid Suffolk councillors of this Council will have a vote as to whether this is a joint or a separate housing number?

Response from Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning:

In as much as prior to submission of the Reg 19 document, no I can’t because I’m not sure myself whether it will be Cabinet approved to go to consultation or full Council. I might be able to receive some advice on that but very much so both options are still open and I personally wouldn’t want to see a single or a joint number being agreed as the way forward without Members of cross parties agreeing that that was the right thing to do.

137 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CABINET MEMBERS

137.1 The following questions were received for the Cabinet Member reports:

CMU8 - Councillor Gowrley Cabinet Member for Assets and Investment

Question 1: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Gowrley - Cabinet Member for Assets and Investment

Regal Car Park: Will the remodelling of the car park include improved pedestrian access and additional blue badge parking?

Response from Councillor Gowrley - Cabinet Member for Assets and Investment:

Options for re-lining and provision of designated parking spaces will be considered as part of the re-modelling of the Ipswich Street car park adjacent to the Regal Theatre. There are opportunities offered through the project to consider afresh, pedestrian access and blue badge parking. I am aware that our partner Stowmarket Town Council has invited representatives of Mid Suffolk Disability Advisory Forum to be involved in the design phase of the project, an invitation that they have accepted

CMU9 - Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities

Question 1: Councillor Eburne to Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities

With reference to your Council report, I am concerned that we do not currently have full staffing levels in order to support our local communities especially in regards to external funding opportunities. Several staff are off sick and the team are not at full capacity.

Please can you advise?

Response from Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities:

The capacity and resilience within the Communities teams is kept under regular review. Communities did indeed have significant levels of sick leave last year, but we now only have one member of staff off sick and that ill health absence is covered by a temporary worker. There are currently 2 vacancies for Communities Officers across the safer and stronger and health and well-being teams, which have just become vacant in the last month as a result of a retirement and an internal secondment. There is also a vacancy for a Business Support post. The managers have taken the opportunity of these vacancies to relook at the skills they require to better respond to the nature of the teams' work and are currently revising job descriptions, prior to advertising these posts. However, an additional post was established in the team in March and has already been filled. There has been no reduction in capacity with regard to external funding. In fact, recently external funding was added to the job description of a second officer in the team to increase resilience in this important area of work. The development of the Communities Strategy over the next 6 months will also be an appropriate point to carry out a more fundamental review of the skills and capacity required to deliver the priorities in the longer term.

Question 2: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities

Assets of Community Value (ACV): While welcoming the success with the Redgrave Cross Keys pub, have you lobbied Government regarding the unsatisfactory aspects of the ACV process?

Response from Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities:

No, we haven't lobbied Government. I have, however, asked officers to review the learning from ACVs and reviews of ACVs in Mid-Suffolk during 2017/18 and I will consider next steps after I have received that briefing.

Question 3: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities

Noting that we are going to produce a community strategy which is noted at paragraph 4.1 in the portfolio report. I was asking if there would be a task and finish panel for the producing of a community strategy?

Response from Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities:

We are currently working on an engagement plan to support the development of the Communities Strategy. At this time we don't anticipate that we will establish a dedicated Member Task and Finish Group, but we will definitely be holding workshops for Members and statutory, voluntary and community sector partners. We recognise that proper collaboration with Members, communities and partners during the process of developing this strategy will be key to its success.

Question 4: Councillor Marchant to Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities:

I'd like to ask you about the great local run at Needham Market at the top of page of 29. Sometime ago I was asking about the possibility of refreshments being provided early Sunday mornings for them, so how is that progressing? And also the dementia awareness. In Needham Market we already have a Dementia Awareness Group. It says here a new dementia action alliance in Needham Market and Eye so could you tell us more about that thank you.

Response from Councillor Flatman - Cabinet Member for Communities:

So firstly the refreshments at Needham Market, that is on our agenda and we are hoping to build something there so watch this space on that one. The dementia question, I can't answer that sorry, I will have to go back to officers and check that one out, I think that's just some extra work going on there as well but I will come back to you privately on that one.

CMU10 - Councillor Brewster - Cabinet Member for Economy

Question 1: Councillor Marchant to Councillor Brewster - Cabinet Member for Economy

It's about the tourist information office closing in Stowmarket. I was very sorry to hear that because tourism brings in a lot of money into the district so could you tell us more about the reasoning why you've closed it or couldn't you have done more in conjunction with the museum and worked with them?

Response from Councillor Brewster - Cabinet Member for Economy:

Yes thank you for that question. Yes tourism does bring an awful lot of money into not just the local area of this district but into the wider district as well. We have reviewed what is happening with the TIC and there are other ways and better ways of actually delivering the tourism information. It's recognised across the country and many district Councils now have closed TICs. We don't have necessarily a legal responsibility to provide TICs but we will be working and this workshop will actually help you to understand where we are going with it and I think that is probably where we are. Obviously this is a reasonably confidential area at the moment because of staffing.

CMU11 - Councillor Burn - Cabinet Member for Environment

Question 1: Councillor Otton to Councillor Burn - Cabinet Member for Environment

The bottom of page 37 on the warm homes fund. I'm sure we are all pleased to see that this money is available. What concerns me, and I'm sure lots of you have had unsolicited phone calls purporting to be companies or saying this is a government scheme and would you like to take it up, so I am somewhat worried that there are residents who will be receiving these phone calls and I just want to know how you are going to be able to ensure that any phone calls that are made to often elderly people that are vulnerable are actually legitimate. And therefore what worries me is because so many times they feel that they are unsolicited or maybe dodgy that they actually are not taking up the funds that are available for them.

Response from Councillor Burn - Cabinet Member for Environment:

I can't give you a direct answer to that straightaway but it is something that I too feel very strongly about and we do need to be sure that there are mechanisms in place for being able to at least prove our bone fides or at least the way in which the phone call is introduced to the customer. I'll try and find out what the actual procedure is and let you know.

Question 2: Councillor Field to Councillor Burn - Cabinet Member for Environment

It's on page 38 Section 3.6 it's the second paragraph seems to present a somewhat disastrous view of the IDOX system and the problems with it almost equal to the TSB I guess but when I look at page 51 para 4.3 there's a much more rosy spectacle to view, seems to be suggesting there that it's all going brilliantly and we've reduced the number of days to do various searches by 9 days just wondered what the actual true position is?

Response from Councillor Burn - Cabinet Member for Environment:

The true position depends on what day you are talking about. These reports cover 3 months as you know and they are drafted on the basis that when the news comes in that's when the text is written down. I cannot tell you exactly what date that particular paragraph on page 38 applies to nor can I tell you what date the paragraph on the later page, which I had nothing to do with, applies to but the two are not necessarily one and the same so that may explain the difference between them. The current position I think is probably considerably rosier than the one on page 38 but again I'll try and find out the answer and let you know what the current position is.

Question 3: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Burn - Cabinet Member for Environment

Christmas and New Year waste collections: Do the statistics quoted relate to Mid Suffolk alone or to the combined performance of the two Districts?

Response from Councillor Burn - Cabinet Member for Environment:

The statistics quoted in both BDC and MSDC reports on Christmas waste were specific to both Councils although the general 30% uplift in volume was generic. The tonnage, additional lorry loads and Christmas trees was specific for each.

CMU12 - Councillor Whitehead - Cabinet Member for Finance

Question 1: Councillor Eburne to Councillor Whitehead - Cabinet Member for Finance

In the minutes of today's papers paragraph 127.31 I'd asked at the last meeting whether the Medium Term Financial Strategy was based on actual housing completions or the projected ones that are in the joint Local Plan and Cllr Whitehead had at the time had said he'd come back to me with an answer so I wondered if Council could have an answer in due course.

Response from Councillor Whitehead - Cabinet Member for Finance:

I must confess that it was only when I read the minutes late last week that I noted that again and subsequent to speaking to you just before Council I had a quick look at some spreadsheets in the finance department and to be honest I think when we'd seen the term projected completions I perhaps had gone off at a wrong tangent because in the minutes I referred to the strategic planning team and I assume in terms of that's where the completions would come from. Now looking at the spreadsheet which is headed up CTB1 which stands for Council Tax Base 1 the projections start from looking at historic data from the Council Tax Base and projecting that forward. I'm assured and I believe that these are conservative figures which are based on historic council tax base movements. The spreadsheet itself ran to several tabs and is a quite complex one but I think we should be able to pull together a short paragraph to explain more where they've come from.

CMU13 - Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing

Question 1: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing

Right to Buy: While welcoming the purchase of 39 properties into our housing stock, how many have been sold through Right to Buy in the same 8 month period.

Response from Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing

MSDC sold 26 properties in financial year 2016/17 and 31 properties in 2017/18.

Supplementary Question

First apologies I didn't spot the fact that the 39 properties that we bought which is welcome actually was over a 3 year period so my question is not quite correct in asking about the number we'd sold through right to buy. What I was trying to ascertain was whether we were actually increasing or decreasing our housing stock and so I think on the whole if we bought 39 in 3 years and we've sold 57 in 2 years I think we can unfortunately deduce that our housing stock is still shrinking so if you could perhaps just confirm my understanding that would answer the question.

Response from Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing:

I will confirm this and come back to you.

Question 2: Councillor Otton to Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing

Yes paragraph 4.2 on sheltered housing review, I know you are doing this review but in the meantime I am very concerned that it appears that there is some policy decision that no one will be admitted to what was a de-sheltered accommodation who is under 40. I have information where this has happened and I don't normally bring what I consider to be local instances to Council but I was really disturbed that somebody had applied for a house who was blind and wanted to be there because they would have the support of their family but was categorically told on numerous occasions that because they were not over 40 they would not be entitled to be allocated this property. Now I would seriously hope that there is discretion here when you are reviewing this sheltered housing review but I have been told that in other places people under 40 and obviously people with young children have been allocated properties in these sheltered areas.

Response from Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing:

As I am not aware of this case personally I am unable to comment but as far as I am aware the policy is they are not accepting anybody under 50 in the de-sheltered houses.

Question 3: Councillor Field to Councillor Wilshaw Cabinet Member for Housing

My question was about the right to buy reinvestment programme I just found I was unsure about this. Are these properties we're buying opportunistically at full market value or are they properties that you have the right to buy and are being recovered at a discounted value or are they properties that developers are making available through the affordable housing programme and therefore at an appropriate price which one understands it is usually somewhat lower than market housing?

Response from Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing:

I think that we as far as I can remember we are actually buying houses at the value that they should be so we are buying them through right to buy and we are getting them at the face value or we are negotiating down as much as we can.

Question 4: Councillor Stringer to Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing

How many houses were completed in Mid Suffolk April 2017 to April 2018, whether built by housing associations, Mid Suffolk District Council, house builders and self builders?

Response from Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing:

The current working estimate is between 350 – 400 completions during 2017/18 – the confirmed number will become clear during the latter part of May.

Supplementary Question

Given that number falls short of our current housing supply number that we should hit which is 440 odd which is due to rise by an extra 130 in the new joint Local Plan would you agree if we are to achieve and maintain this supply number this Council needs to become a serious player in our own housing delivery future?

Response from Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing:

Yes we are trying to do that at the moment.

Question 5: Councillor Humphreys to Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing

it's really refreshing to see the work that has been done on the Homeless Reduction Act and the fact that we are actually getting prepared well in advance of it being implemented so well done for that. Just a question and I know its fluid so I'm not expecting it by the actual figure but roughly how many people suffer from homelessness within Mid Suffolk and more importantly how many rough sleepers do we have?

Response from Councillor Wilshaw - Cabinet Member for Housing:

I will find out and come back to you.

CMU14 - Councillor Horn - Cabinet Member for Organisational Delivery

Question 1: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Horn - Cabinet Member for Organisational Delivery

Access Strategy: Will there be a Task and Finish Panel to work on the refresh of our access strategy?

Response from Councillor Horn - Cabinet Member for Organisational Delivery:

The refresh of the Customer Strategy will be presented to Cabinet in July, we are currently finalising the governance process around this.

Question 2: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Horn - Cabinet Member for Organisational Delivery

ICT: Please can Members receive at least quarterly some measures of down time, support calls and average time to answer calls?

Response from Councillor Horn - Cabinet Member for Organisational Delivery:

We are currently working with SCC IT to agree a range of measures that will be reflective of the service provided which will be shared on a regular basis. For the 3 months of Quarter 4 in 17/18 a total of 94 incidents or additional service requests were raised by 22 Mid Suffolk Councillors. Examples of issues raised include requests for new equipment, support for hardware such as PC's and laptops, and help resetting passwords and accessing emails. SCC IT answered a total of 9878 telephony calls in quarter 4 of 17/18, and the average time to answer a call during this period was 1 min 49; over half of these calls were answered within 30 seconds.

Supplementary Question

Would you support the view that there needs to be a Cabinet report regarding the difficulties with the IT System that serves the Planning Dept – IDOX?

Response: Councillor Horn Cabinet Member for Organisational Delivery

Cllr Morley is the lead Member for ICT and she will be working directly with the portfolio holder for Planning, portfolio holder for business environment right across Cabinet and that decision will be made at that level with the Assistant Directors to decide whether Cabinet is the right place to bring forward that report. I think we do need to see something and we need to understand exactly what is going on I think everybody has had some challenges with IT but let's see what's the right level to bring that forward to is and ask the officer

team to try and resolve some of the issues that have been raised.

CMU15 - Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning

Question 1: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning

Dwelling decisions not issued: While accepting a precise number is difficult to ascertain, please can you provide an approximate number to the nearest hundred, as this is an important measure of the process to achieving housing delivery.

Response from Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning:

2400 – which includes 600 at Chilton leys and 300 at Union Road in Stowmarket, 250, 175, 129 and 64 at Thurston, 120 at Woolpit and 106 at Elmswell as well as a number of other applications that have a resolution to grant permission from Planning Committee but are still in the process of s106 completion.

Supplementary Question

Thank you very much for the estimated numbers on the decisions not issued. I wondered if you have any idea how many of those are held up because the S106s are not getting signed as opposed to those, where clearly at Chilton Leys, the developer is moving forward at 50 or 60 a year and it doesn't need yet to get signed off on the latter ones.

Response from Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning:

I think that's a detail that we'll have greater understanding of when we've actually recruited to the post that's about to go out to the market place in terms of a dedicated officer to look at the stalled sites and look at where we are with legal but I will try and give you information that we have knowledge of at the moment but I think that's probably something that we'll be coming back to you with later in the year in a more informed way than I can respond to now.

Question 2: Councillor Matthissen to Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning

Suffolk Design Guide: In welcoming the grant for this Suffolk-wide work, what arrangements will be made for member input to the process?

Response from Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning:

Councillor input to the work on revising the Suffolk Design Guide is an important part of the process. Tenders are being received and the brief that has been put out requires information from the consultants on how they anticipate engaging Councillors. The timetable anticipates engagement early on and then throughout the process, but arrangements are not developed further than this at present. Given that Councillors are the decision-makers on

major schemes, it is vitally important that the new approach recognises our collective aspirations. Once the consultants have been chosen, which should happen over the next month, I will be able to provide more detail on the mechanisms for engaging Councillors across the County.

Question 3: Councillor Eburne to Councillor Whybrow Cabinet Member for Planning

My question is on the joint Local Plan you had originally said that there would be a report to Cabinet in April which obviously we all know was delayed in terms of the schedule for when that was going to be delivered. I was just wondering if you've got a further update on that for us please?

Response from Councillor Whybrow - Cabinet Member for Planning:

Off the top of my head the answer to that is no. I think this matter has been discussed relatively recently and the last time we discussed a timetable for the Local Plan there's no change since that previous commentary. Still heading towards preferred options Reg 18 out in September and hoping to have Reg 19 published in January so submission would be something like March next year which I think is the timetable I have previously advised.

138 MC/17/39 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

138.1 Councillor Eburne presented the report and informed Council that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee sessions had been covering a lot of different areas of the Council. The Committee had tried to ensure that they were really getting to know what the important matters were out in the public domain and to also ensure that the Committee added value to those from a Council perspective, improve transparency and to ensure that any representation to the public is made clear.

138.2 Commenting further she wanted Council to note that following a request with regards to public attendance at meetings this was now being monitored and she also requested that if there were any issues coming up that Councillors would like to scrutinise please could they contact her.

139 MC/17/40 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - CIL EXPENDITURE FRAMEWORK

139.1 Councillor Whybrow introduced the report and informed Council that the report and appendices basically encapsulated the thinking around CIL that was contained in the February Cabinet report but also includes now the work from the Joint Member Panel who met after Cabinet in February.

139.3 Councillor Whybrow went on to outline the key outcomes from the Panel meetings and **MOVED** the recommendations in the report.

139.4 Councillor Guthrie seconded the report and reserved the right to speak.

139.5 Councillor Field queried how money would be allocated where parishes were without a parish council and he sought further explanation on the proposed cap of £100 per existing dwelling if you did not have a neighbourhood plan?

139.6 In response Councillor Whybrow informed Council that where there was no parish council, consultation would be undertaken directly with the community, he felt that this could reasonably be undertaken because the settlement would be very small. Commenting on the cap he stated that this was the cap agreed and this did not roll over.

139.7 Councillor Stringer welcomed the opportunity he had to be on the Working Group and congratulated the team for pulling the report together in a very short time. He also queried how the CIL team would link in with the existing Communities and Grants team as that team already had a lot of inbuilt knowledge about communities.

139.8 In response Councillor Whybrow confirmed that that there was a level of communication that did take place between the two teams to use the knowledge base that existed within the communities teams, he also went onto say that the team was also working and bringing visibility of Section 106 funds and available monies within the same scope as CIL monies. The current software that was being purchased had been trialled internally and was seen to be successful and it was his understanding that the Council was very much a leading authority in terms of bringing together the software that provides visibility in one place for all communities.

139.9 Councillor Otton raised concerns that there would be no public speaking and no appeals process and felt that she would be unable to support the report because of this.

It was Resolved: -

(i) That the detailed CIL Expenditure Framework (including details of implementation and review) forming Appendices A and E to the report and the joint CIL Expenditure Framework Communications Strategy (Appendix B) be approved as recommended by Cabinet.

(Appendices C and D comprise the CIL "Regulation 123 lists" and were approved in January 2016 and accompany the other documents for reference purposes only)

(ii) That the Joint Member Panel (alongside Overview and Scrutiny) inform the Review of the CIL Expenditure Framework within the timescales contained in the Appendix E to the report.

Reason for decision: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies have been collected since the implementation of CIL in April 2016. There is no prescribed way for Councils to decide upon the spend of money collected through CIL so the Council has to agree their own approach.

140.1 Councillor Whybrow introduced the report and informed Council that the Statement of Community Involvement was a joint planning document with Babergh that explained how the Council would engage with the public and other stakeholders in the preparation of planning documents and in determining planning applications. The current version of the joint Statement of Community Involvement for the two Councils was published in March 2014. It had been necessary to update this document to reflect greater use of the Councils' website and move to Endeavour House and the opening of customer access points in Stowmarket and to reflect the support offered to neighbourhood planning groups in producing a neighbourhood plan and to acknowledge the introduction of CIL and to detail the introduction of a pre application charging service. 2017 planning regulations also introduce the requirement to review the Statement of Community Involvement every 5 years.

140.1 This Statement of Community Involvement draft update would also inform the preparation of the wider communities and communications' strategies that were being prepared by the Councils. Councillor Whybrow went on to say that it was recommended that a 4 week public consultation be undertaken on this draft update, in May and June. A final version would come back to Council for adoption later in the year.

140.2 Councillor Brewster seconded the report and reserved the right to speak.

140.3 Councillor Mansel queried the table on page 116 and asked if there was some information missing as the table only referred to pre- applications and it did not appear to include the process for minor and other planning related applications.

140.4 In response Councillor Whybrow stated that he would deal with the question outside of the meeting and circulate the answer.

It was Resolved:-

- (i) That the draft update to the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Statement of Community Involvement: Planning Issues, which updates the March 2014 adopted version be noted.**
- (ii) That public consultation be undertaken for four weeks during May and June on the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Statement of Community Involvement: Planning Issues (Draft Update, April 2018).**
- (iii) That the Corporate Manager – Spatial Planning Policy be authorised to make minor technical and formatting amendments to the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Statement of Community Involvement: Planning Issues (Draft Update, April 2018) prior to consultation.**

141 MC/17/42 PAY POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2018/19

141.1 Councillor Whitehead introduced the report and informed Council that the Chief Executive had produced this Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19 in his formal role as Head of Paid Service. The Localism Act of 2011 requires the Council to publish and approve each year a Pay Policy Statement which sets out the

remuneration of its Chief Officers through to its remuneration of its lowest paid employees and the relationships between the two.

141.2 Continuing further Councillor Whitehead asked Council to note the removal of the role of Deputy Chief Executive from the Council's structure and hence also from this Pay Policy Statement with affect from 1 April 2018. He also said that as Babergh and Mid Suffolk have a single organisational structure with harmonised pay grades and terms and conditions of service a single Pay Policy Statement covered both Councils.

141.3 The lowest paid employees were those on the lowest increment within the Grade 1 pay band. At 31 March 2018 that full time equivalent pay was £16,491. Councillor Whitehead asked Members to note that this pay rate exceeds both the National Minimal Wage and the Living Wage set by the Living Wage Foundation.

141.4 Councillor Whitehead also highlighted a reference to the gender pay gap reporting which is now required by a new 2017 regulation under the Equality Act 2010. Both Councils must report that separately although strictly Babergh actually falls below the 250 employee reporting threshold. They are for both Councils reported along with the combined data which is more meaningful giving the fully integrated nature of the workforce.

141.5 Councillor Otton requested that future reports should actually state the salary of the Chief Executive and asked whether Overview and Scrutiny could look at the gender pay gap within the Council to see whether the Council needs to consider any issues as part of being a good employee.

141.6 In response Councillor Whitehead stated that he would be happy to agree to Overview and Scrutiny examining the gender pay gap. As for the publication of the Chief Executive's salary in terms of the statutory regulations they were just required to publish the range and the fact that there were five incremental points.

141.7 Councillor Eburne welcomed the report on the gender pay gap and asked why there wasn't a report with it, detailing what the Council was doing about it. She also asked if the Chief Executive could decide at some point to reinstate the Deputy Chief Executive without seeking Council approval?

141.8 The Chief Executive in response said in terms of the pay equality gap as per the report on line, the Council was currently researching the reasons during this month and next month and so he would hope that by the end of May to be in a position to have published an action plan and would be more than happy to bring that through Scrutiny in advance of it being published to ensure it's a comprehensive action plan that helps to reduce the current gap. In terms of structures he was obliged through legislation that if he wished to bring forward a major change to the Senior Leadership Team that that broader structure would need to come through full Council so not if he were for example adding or removing a single post but if he was making a fundamental change then he would report that full structure change through to full Council. He also gave reassurance that he had no intentions of creating a Deputy Chief Executive post.

On the proposal of Councillor Whitehead and seconded by Councillor Ward

It was Resolved:-

- (i) **That the proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19 attached as Appendix A to the report be approved.**

142 APPOINTMENTS

142.1 There were no changes to placings.

143 RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That under Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the business specified below on the grounds that if the public were present during this item, it is likely that there would be the disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of the Schedule 12a of the Act Category 1.

144 MC/17/43 BMS INVEST - PERFORMANCE, RISK AND GOVERNANCE UPDATE

144.1 Councillor Field and Councillor Barker both declared a personal non - pecuniary interest.

144.2 Councillor Brewster introduced the report.

It was Resolved:-

That the performance report be noted and agreed as an accurate reflection of Mid-Suffolk District Council's current performance across its investment portfolio.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 7.07 pm.

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Chairman