

## BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

<b>TO:</b> COUNCIL	<b>REPORT NUMBER:</b> <b>BC/19/20</b>
<b>FROM:</b> Leader of the Council	<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b> 22 October 2019
<b>OFFICER:</b> Arthur Charvonja Chief Executive	

### RENAMING BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposal to change the name of the district from “Babergh” to “South Suffolk”.

<b>2. RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
2.1 Pursuant to Section 74 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) to change the name of the district from “Babergh” to “South Suffolk” from 1 April 2020.
2.2 To allocate up to £10,000 from the Transformation Fund towards the costs of implementing recommendation 2.1.
<b>REASON FOR DECISION</b>
Council is asked to agree the recommendations to affect the name change.

#### 3. KEY INFORMATION

- 3.1 It is proposed to change the name of the district from “Babergh” to “South Suffolk”. If the name is changed the formal name of the council would be “The District Council of South Suffolk” though it will be usually rendered as “South Suffolk Council”.
- 3.2 The Local Government Act 1972 and regulations made under it divided the county of Suffolk into 7 districts and boroughs. Although the name of “Babergh” was prescribed by the Secretary of State the Council can under s.74 Local Government Act 1972 resolve to change the name of the district. A change requires the Council to pass a resolution at a specially convened meeting. The resolution must be passed by a majority of at least two – thirds of those present. This meeting has been convened in accordance with the legislative provisions to consider a change of name.
- 3.3 Other councils have recently adopted a similar approach. In April 2018 Shepway DC changed its name to Folkstone and Hythe DC. Although the name “Shepway” had been used for over forty years it still had no wider recognition; being often taken as a reference to a housing estate in Maidstone or an island off the north Kent coast. The name “Folkestone and Hythe” was adopted instead as it meant that the location of the district would be easily understood.

Councils have generally taken the opportunity to change to a name that is more recognisable, for example, the borough of Thamesdown when it became a unitary council adopted the more familiar name of “Swindon”.

- 3.4 Babergh Councillors will be familiar with this issue as the name and history of the name of the Council is not widely known. People are often unaware of where in the country Babergh is, let alone where in Suffolk, and struggle to pronounce the name of the Council.
- 3.5 As a result of recent reductions in the number of district councils in Suffolk the former names of Forest Heath, St Edmundsbury, Waveney and Suffolk Coastal have all disappeared. It is therefore considered relevant and timely to now replace the name of Babergh with “South Suffolk”. In doing so this would clearly identify the location of the Council and align with the name of our parliamentary constituency.
- 3.6 In order to enable preparatory work to be undertaken and existing materials run down the change of name, it is suggested, should take effect on 1 April 2020.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Babergh and Mid Suffolk have also established a joint, cross party task & finish group to explore a wider re-branding of the two Councils. This group has been requested to report to the Cabinets by the end of the calendar year. If the recommendations of the group are approved then there will be no additional costs associated with the re-naming to South Suffolk Council.
- 4.2 If the wider re-branding work is not approved then it is proposed to mirror the approach of Folkestone & Hythe District Council who adopted an incremental approach to their rebranding, only amending letterheads, signs, uniforms, vehicles and other items on replacement; and so restricting their financial implications to under £10,000.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Babergh District Council has been in existence since the revisions to Local Government arrangements in 1974. Although the name of the district was prescribed by the Secretary of State the Council can under s.74 Local Government Act 1972 resolve to change the name of the district.
- 5.2 Such a change requires the Council to pass a resolution at a specially convened meeting. The resolution must be passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of those present. Thereafter notice of the name change must be sent to the Secretary of State, the Director General of the Ordnance Survey and the Registrar General, and then published in such manner as the Secretary of State may direct.

#### **6. EQUALITY ANALYSIS**

- 6.1 Given the nature of this report and recommendations it is not considered that any of the protected grounds may be affected as a result of the recommendations in this report.

**7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Given the nature of this report and recommendations it is not considered that there are any environmental implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

**8. APPENDICES – None**

**9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS - None**