

## **MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK COUNCIL** held in the Virtual Teams Meeting on Thursday, 21 January 2021

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor: Barry Humphreys MBE (Chair)  
Paul Ekpenyong (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:	Oliver Amorowson	Gerard Brewster
	David Burn	Terence Carter
	James Caston	Rachel Eburne
	John Field	Julie Flatman
	Jessica Fleming	Dr Helen Geake
	Peter Gould	Lavinia Hadingham
	Matthew Hicks	Sarah Mansel
	John Matthissen	Andrew Mellen
	Richard Meyer	Suzie Morley
	David Muller	Mike Norris
	Penny Otton	Timothy Passmore
	Stephen Phillips	Dr Daniel Pratt
	Harry Richardson	Keith Scarff
	Andrew Stringer	Wendy Turner
	Rowland Warboys	Keith Welham
	John Whitehead	

### **In attendance:**

Guest(s): Sharon Head

Officers: Chief Executive (AC)  
Strategic Director (KN)  
Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer (EY)  
Assistant Director – Corporate Resources (KS)  
Assistant Director – Housing (GF)  
Assistant Director – Environment and Commercial Partnerships (CC)  
Assistant Director – Economic Development and Regeneration (FD)  
Assistant Director – Customers, Digital Transformation and Improvement (SW)  
Corporate Manager – Financial Services and Commissioning and Procurement (ME)  
Corporate Manager – Governance and Civic Office and Deputy Monitoring Officer (JR)  
Corporate Manager – Strategic Property (SC)  
Senior Governance Officer (HH)

### **Apologies:**

Kathie Guthrie

**37 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS**

Councillor Carter declared a local non-pecuniary interest in Item 11, in his capacity as Vice-Chair of Mid Suffolk Disability Forum.

**38 MC/20/15 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2020**

**It was RESOLVED:-**

**That the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 11 November 2020 be confirmed and signed as a true record and be signed at the next practicable opportunity.**

**39 MC/20/16 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2020**

**It was RESOLVED:-**

**That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2020 be confirmed and signed as a true record and be signed at the next practicable opportunity.**

**40 MC/20/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 40.1 The Chair referred to Paper MC/20/17 which was for noting. He announced that the Stowmarket Dementia Group thanked Members for their contributions.
- 40.2 The Chair welcomed Councillor Eburne back to the Council after her absence.
- 40.3 Councillor Eburne thanked Members for the Cards and flowers she had received during her absence.

**41 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 41.1 The Chair invited the Leader, Councillor Morley to make her announcements.

- 41.2 Councillor Morley made the following announcements:

This second COVID-19 wave was worse than the first last Spring and she was horrified to see the current level of daily deaths and hospital admissions.

The Council was in a third national lockdown, but it was going to take a long time before a significant reduction in rates of infection, hospitalisations and deaths was seen.

Suffolk had been badly hit like all regions; and the public awareness and messaging campaign must continue. Mid Suffolk needed everyone to stay at home and follow the lockdown rules and she urged Members to promote these messages across all their communities.

The District Council was of course continuing to support residents, communities and businesses in response to Covid-19 and she wanted to highlight a couple of particular elements from all the information Councillors received on a fortnightly basis.

Firstly, the Closed Business Lockdown Payment grants, the Council had started to pay qualifying businesses this week. As the Council already held the data regarding many businesses, automatic payments were being made and these will reach approximately 70% of the businesses with a rateable value who were eligible. In addition, new grant applications had been launched for any businesses, who had not previously received a lockdown grant from the Council. The website had been updated accordingly and it was the best place to refer any businesses in Councillors' Wards that may have contacted them.

([www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes/](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes/) - Just in case)

There were now a variety of Government grants available and full details were on the Council's website, including a comprehensive infographic describing them all; and the Council was guiding businesses through this to make it as simple as possible to ensure businesses swiftly receive all of the money that they were entitled to.

Secondly regarding the Covid-19 vaccination programme. Many of the Districts most vulnerable residents have already received their first vaccination.

Concerned residents had contacted Councillors as to when they would receive their jabs, how they would be informed, where they would need to go and how they would get there. These are exactly the conversations that she had been having, alongside Councillor Hicks, Councillor Passmore, and fellow Council Leaders at the Local Outbreak Engagement Board meetings to ensure that the communication to all residents was effective, clear and timely.

There were now 19 (Primary Care Network) vaccination sites in place across Suffolk. For Mid Suffolk these are located at:

- Debenham Leisure Centre
- The Mix, Stowmarket
- Woolpit Health Centre

In addition, all three hospitals – James Paget, West Suffolk & Ipswich were all vaccinating, and an additional large site would be provided in Ipswich shortly. Two further pharmacy sites (Ipswich & Lowestoft) have also been approved.

There was also an increasing supply of the Oxford vaccine available. This vaccine did not have some of the same logistical challenges as the Pfizer vaccine which should enable more people to be vaccinated more quickly. At the moment however there was what was being referred to as a 'Push model' in place i.e. local NHS was not responsible for managing the supply of the vaccine, but they hoped to be able to move to a 'Pull model' shortly, so they could draw down the level of vaccine they needed based upon demand. In any event they remained on track to achieve the first two Government milestones of vaccinating all care home residents and staff by 24<sup>th</sup> January and all of the first four cohorts by mid-February.

She was pleased that an excellent new Suffolk wide website [sneevaccine.org.uk](http://sneevaccine.org.uk) had now been launched but Councillor Hicks and Councillor Passmore and she would continue to push (and support) the NHS with regard to effective communication to all

residents.

The Council was not directly involved in the delivery of the vaccination programme but were supporting and facilitating it in a number of ways. Just two examples of this were the work that the planning, assets and legal officers were doing in support of the Woolpit GP Surgery, with the neighbouring housing developer, to deliver an expanded car park which would enable the acceleration of the vaccine programme in that area; and the provision within Council's existing car park sites such as in Stowmarket to support delivery of the vaccination programme at The Mix.

The Council was also a partner on the Suffolk-wide 'resources cell' and so would continue to redeploy officers where possible, and when needed, to ensure the delivery of not just the vaccination programme but also the new testing programme for asymptomatic workers, who are unable to work from home. This testing programme was expected to be rolled out over the next few weeks.

Last night there was the first of what would be a regular meeting for the district and county councillors to hear from and pose questions to the NHS. She hoped Members had taken this opportunity up. Those who attended would know that she had asked a number of questions on the Council's behalf.

Tonight, was also the second equivalent community session for members of the public.

She was proud of how the Council was still continuing to deliver on the wider priorities during these difficult times and she wanted to mention the fantastic news, published this week, regarding the successful purchase of 121 new council homes including developments in Haughley, Stowmarket and Woolpit. This was of course in addition to the work already underway to build 130 council homes at the former Needham Market Middle School site and at the former headquarters.

She was also pleased to announce, in line with Customer Strategy to support customers to contact the Council at a time that suits them 24/7, that a pilot scheme would be launched tomorrow, that enabled customers to easily access online information through new and innovative automated telephony and chatbot services. Through this enhancement, customers would be able to log queries such as missed waste collections, find out information about environmental services and receive links to the online forms via SMS text at any time of the day or night. The pilot would run for twelve months and provide valuable insight into how customers wished to engage with the Council, which will further inform plans for digital services in the future.

Finally, she wanted to highlight the Cabinet's recent decision to move the Council's fleet of vehicles, in particular waste and housing vehicles to Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil rather than diesel. In line with commitment to tackling climate change this alone will cut approximately a quarter of the Council's total CO2 emissions and 90% of the Council's vehicle emissions.

## **42 TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES**

None received.

**QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES**

43.1 The Chair invited Sharon Head, a member of the public to ask her question.

**Question from Sharon Head to the Cabinet Member for Environment:**

One of the key recommendations for meeting Government climate change targets, in the 2020 report by Government advisory body the Climate Change Committee, was 'Low-cost, low-regret actions to encourage a 20% shift away from all meat by 2030 rising to 35% by 2050, and 20% shift from dairy products by 2030'.

Good quality plant-based meals are healthier and can be cheaper. They can also be more inclusive, as the same meal can be shared by a wide variety of people - including Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu people and those with dairy allergies.

There is good evidence that a shift in diets away from meat and dairy products to more plant-based options is good for both climate change mitigation and for human health.

Will the District Council commit to implementing menu changes that remove bias towards meat and dairy, within its own sphere?

**Response from Councillor Fleming, Cabinet Member for Environment:**

Thank you for your question requesting a commitment from the Council to promote a plant-based diet, which you suggest might be brought in incrementally over time. This is not something that we would support for many reasons, including the fact that the Council is not actively involved in catering or supplying food. Pandemic aside, we share catering services with other organisations at Endeavour House and are pleased to report that for the most part, sourcing is local, and the food is varied and excellent with options for all tastes. However, I do believe there is widespread support for better farming and food production practices, and local sourcing to reduce food miles and emissions. We take the position that these kinds of choices are for individuals, and the Council caters for individual preferences very effectively and is continually seeking opportunities to improve the environmental footprint of all our services.

**Supplementary Question:**

"Will you regularly advise food outlets in the district, during visits and via bulletins, about the climate and food hygiene advantages of vegetarian and plant-based menus?"

**Response from Councillor Fleming, Cabinet Member for Environment:**

We do not have a regular bulletin to food outlets in the district currently, though

we are building a database of emails so this could be done in the future. However, our Food Safety Team who do speak with the businesses on a regular basis can and do talk to them about potential changes to their menus to reflect current wants and needs. Of those still operating, most are trying to contend with managing new takeaway services and it does not feel the right time to talk to them about changing their operation. We continue to support our businesses in every way we can, and should businesses want to talk to us about how they can change their offer, we would be more than willing to help.

**44      QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES**

None received.

**45      MC/20/18 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT**

- 45.1 The Chair invited the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Welham to present his report.
- 45.2 Councillor Welham introduced Paper MC/20/18 and answered questions from Members.
- 45.3 Councillor Field referred to the Planning Enforcement performance and that residents often felt that the Council did not enforce the breaches of planning restrictions.
- 45.4 Councillor Welham responded that there were a lot of alleged breaches reported to the Council and that officers were not as good at passing on information regarding the alleged breaches that were not planning issues, but this has been tightened up. Historically there had been a lot of outstanding cases which had been reviewed. A new software programme had been introduced and there was now a process in place to log all new cases reported and to follow the progress of each case. There were still a lot of cases which had to be considered and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had therefore suggested that a Task and Finish Group be organised as per the recommendations.
- 45.5 Councillor Warboys queried if there was a space for feedback to indicate if a case had been settled satisfactorily or not.
- 45.6 Councillor Mansel commented that residents had felt frustrated as they had not even received an automated response when submitting cases and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee responded that the new software logged every case and assigned a case officer.
- 45.7 Councillor Norris asked if Members could be provided to Members and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny responded that this was being considered.

**46      RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM CABINET / COMMITTEES**

- 47.1 The Chair invited the Chair of the Joint Audit and Standards Committee, Councillor Muller to introduce Paper JAC/20/3.
- 47.2 Councillor Muller provided a summary of the Report and **MOVED** the recommendations in the Report, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Caston.
- 47.3 Councillor Matthissen questioned the borrowing for CIFCO and Gateway 14, which he felt was large in comparison to other loans, and whether the borrowing from the PWLB for council houses would be more difficult if the Council continued to invest in CIFCO.
- 47.4 The Assistant Director – Corporate Resources, explained that investment into CIFCO would be completed at the end of this financial year. However, in the next financial year the Council would have to borrow more for Gateway 14 but this would not jeopardise borrowing from the PWLB for housing development as Gateway 14 is primarily an economic regeneration site.
- 47.5 In response to further questions from Councillor Matthissen, the Assistant Director – Corporate Resources, clarified that if the £50m had not been fully invested into CIFCO by the end of March then no further investments would be made in the new financial year.
- 47.6 Councillor Mansel asked for clarification for paragraph 2.3 of the report, for the debt yield activity for borrowing rates and whether the Council would not be able to borrow at lower rates. The Assistant Director – Corporate Resources explained that the Council would be able to access loans from the PWLB and that in 2021/22 there would not be anything in the Capital Programme that would be subject to yield activities, so the Council would be able to borrow. Since the announcement about the changes to PWLB lending the rate had been reduced by 1% bringing it back down to competitive levels.
- 47.7 Councillor Field queried the Schroder Fund performance, which currently was evaluated at £800k less than expected (Page 52, Table 6.2) and if that was a concern for the Council.
- 47.8 The Assistant Director explained that the investment market had been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and then detailed how the investment fund was monitored and that if the market value was less than that invested and the investment was sold at that point, the money would have to be taken from the General Fund Budget to cover the loss, but the investment is a long-term one.
- 47.9 Councillor Eburne referred to Appendix B, page 45 paragraph 2.2, and if the Council had reviewed its housing ambition in the light of the lower rate available and if not whether the Council would be taking advantage of this rate to invest in sustainable housing.

- 47.10 The Assistant Director – Corporate Resources confirmed that the Council would be able to access the lower rate for housing and that the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan would include this moving forward.
- 47.11 Members debated the issues and Councillor Stringer asked that it be noted that he would vote for the paper but under protest as he thought that some of the indicators in the report would be detrimental to communities. He did not agree with rushing to complete the investments in CIFCO as indicated in the report.
- 47.12 Councillor Meyer commented that the CIFCO Board was not rushing to invest money but was applying careful consideration for investments to provide a cashflow to the Council. The investments for CIFCO were paying off and income was being made to the Council.
- 47.13 Councillor Passmore thought that the Council should have a variety of investments and that ethical investment was important along with providing good returns to the Council.
- 47.14 Councillor Field supported local investments but in the light of recent performance nationally he had a reasonable concern for the investment performance irrespective of the performance of CIFCO.
- 47.15 Councillor Muller thanked Members for the debate.
- 47.16 The Chair put recommendations 3.1 and 3.2 to Members for the vote.

By 28 votes for and 1 vote against, 4 abstentions.

**It was RESOLVED: -**

- 1.1 **That the Treasury Management activity for the first six months of 2020/21 as set out in the report and Appendices be noted.**
- 1.2 **That it be noted that both Councils' Treasury Management activity for the first six months of 2020/21 was in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy, and that the Council has complied with all the Treasury Management Indicators for this period.**

**48 MC/20/19 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

- 48.1 The Chair invited the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to introduce Paper MC/20/19.
- 48.2 Councillor Welham summarised the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's reasoning behind the recommendations to the Councils and explained that Members had considered the benefits and value of representation on each of the Outside Bodies.

- 48.3 Councillor Welham **PROPOSED** Recommendations 1.1 to 1.6 and the tabled recommendation, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Matthissen.
- 48.4 Councillor Brewster explained that the circumstances had changed for representation on Haven Gateway Partnership due to recent developments.
- 48.5 Council Mansel queried the cost of the subscription fee for the East West Rail Consortium. She added that she did not feel that she could vote on the recommendations on block as some of the recommendations were for consideration, and she was unsure of what was involved with a 'recommendation to consider'.
- 48.6 The Chair advised Members that the cost for subscription for East West Rail Consortium was £1500 per year.
- 48.7 Councillor Welham explained that some Members had been elected as representatives to Outside Bodies, which either did not exist or no longer required member representation. Some of the issues required that the Council debated the representation before a decision could be made.
- 48.8 Councillor Passmore queried how much the Council currently paid to Haven Gateway Partnership.
- 48.9 Councillor Welham suggested that each recommendation was voted for individually.
- 48.10 The Chair proposed that Members voted on the recommendations as follows:
- Recommendations 1.1, 1.4 and 1.5 together  
Recommendations 1.2 and 1.3, 1.6 and 1.7 separately.
- 48.11 Councillor Welham **APPROVED** the suggested split of the recommendations.
- 48.12 In response to Councillor Field's question regarding Haven Gateway Partnership, Councillor Brewster explained that Haven Gateway Partnership was working with the free ports and that this could be beneficial for projects such as Gateway 14 and could bring some positive developments to the Council.
- 48.13 The Chair informed Members that the Council paid £5k to the Haven Gateway Partnership per year.
- 48.14 Councillor Matthissen queried the tabled recommendation and Councillor Welham explained that the recommendation was for a representative to be appointed to the Suffolk Disability Forum but that it may be more appropriate for a Member to be appointed to the Mid Suffolk Disability Forum.
- 48.15 In response to Members questions on the appointment process for representation on Outside Bodies, the Monitoring Officer explained that the

Leader appointed the Outside Bodies representatives and that the recommendations provided a steer to the Leader of the wishes of the Council. Once the Leader had decided the representatives, they would be brought back to Council to agree.

48.16 Councillor Carter queried if the Leader decided not to appoint to a Outside Body would Members be advised of the reason why.

48.17 Members debated the recommendations and representation on Outside Bodies including:

- That it was important that Council was represented on the East West Rail Consortium, to be involved with any issues relating to train lines in the District.
- That the contribution of £5000 to Haven Gateway Partnership would be money well spent, as recent developments including the possibility of Felixstowe becoming a freeport would justify the cost.
- Some Members agreed that a Councillor observer provided a different perspective on Mid Suffolk Local Citizens Advice (LCA) rather than an officer.
- Some Members disagreed with the above and felt that there were no requirements for further representation on the Mid Suffolk LCA.
- That enough information was received from the Mid Suffolk LCA.

48.18 The debate continued and Members were divided on the issues for representation on the Mid Suffolk LCA.

48.19 The Leader clarified that the Council provided funding to the Mid Suffolk LCA and that an observer on the Board would not make any difference, as the Council already worked well with the LCA in Stowmarket. She added that she would support the tabled recommendation for either Mid Suffolk Disability Forum or Suffolk Disability Forum to best serve the residents of the District.

48.20 Members generally agreed that because of the recent development for a free port in Felixstowe, continuation of representation on Haven Gateway Partnership would be beneficial to the Council and that the current funding for the organisation was outweighed by the long-term advantages it could bring.

48.21 Councillor Field thought that representation on the East West Rail Consortium would enable the Council to be involved in and influence decisions made for railway developments in the District and that the sum of money paid to the Consortium should be considered against the potential yield which could be quite high.

48.22 Members supported the recommendation for representation on the East West Rail Consortium for various reasons, some for economic and development opportunities and some for the environmental and carbon reduction

possibilities. It was generally agreed that it was important that the Council became involved in future developments and expansion of railway travel and transportation.

48.23 Councillor Brewster clarified that the Council was still part of Haven Gateway Partnership and that he was attending meetings with the organisation. With the regards to the East West Rail Consortium, he had attended meetings in recent months and had found it useful, as trains would be able to transport goods from the port in Felixstowe.

48.24 Councillor Eburne was disappointed that recommendation 1.4, which had been agreed before had not yet come to fruition. She then commented on the proposed observer on the LCA and that it would be useful to have an observer to report back to Members on the work of the LCA.

48.25 Councillor Welham summed up the issues and considered that representation on Haven Gateway Partnership might be an advantage due to recent developments. With regards to the template for receiving updates from Members, this had been attempted last year and had received very little feed-back. The proposed updates would be used in the annual review of Outside Bodies by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In respect of the issues around Mid Suffolk LCA, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had generally agreed that a councillor observer would report differently than an officer, which he thought was important as the Council was the biggest funder for the Mid Suffolk LCA and that the Leader should consider this in her decision.

48.26 The Chair advised Members that the recommendations would be divided up and that recommendations 1.1, 1.4 and 1.5 would be voted on together, the rest of the recommendations would be voted on separately.

48.27 Recommendations 1.1, 1.4 and 1.5 were put to Members for voting.

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:** -

- 1.1 That the following appointments to Outside Bodies, no longer requiring representation, be removed from the appointments made:**  
**Mid Suffolk District Council:**  
**Joint Waste Management Board**  
**Suffolk Joint Emergency**  
**Planning Policy Panel.**
  
- 1.2 That a reporting mechanism in the form of a template for Representatives on Outside Bodies be established to provide valuable information to members and Public, the information to be presented as part of the annual review of Member Representation on Outside Bodies to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

- 1.3 That support and training be established for members when appointed as representatives on Outside Bodies.**

48.28 Recommendation 1.2 was put to Members for voting.

By 5 votes for and 28 against.

**It was Resolved:**

**That the vote was lost.**

48.29 Recommendation 1.3 was put to Members for voting

By 21 votes for and 12 votes against

**It was RESOLVED: -**

- 1.4 That consideration be given by Mid Suffolk District Council that an observer be appointed to Stowmarket Citizens Advice in line with Babergh District Council.**

48.30 Recommendation 1.6 was put to Members for voting

By a unanimous vote

**It was RESOLVED:-**

- 1.5 That Mid Suffolk District Council considers taking up the appointment of a representative to the East West Rail Consortium by making a payment of the subscription fees required for full participation.**

48.31 Recommendation 1.7 was put to Members for voting

By 32 votes for and 1 abstention

**It was RESOLVED :-**

**That Mid Suffolk District Council approach the Suffolk Disabilities Forum to establish whether formal Councillor representation on the forum would be appropriate and possible and that any appointment to the Suffolk Disabilities Forum be made by resolution of the Full Council.**

- 49 MC/20/20 TO NOTE DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD UNDER DELEGATED POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 2 OF THE CONSTITUTION**

- 49.1 The Chair invited the Monitoring Officer to introduce Paper MC/20/20, which was for noting.
- 49.2 The Monitoring Officer introduced the report and in response to Councillor Mansel's question assured Members that going forward, officers would endeavour to bring these reports to the next available Council meeting.

**It was RESOLVED:** -

**That Council notes the decisions taken under delegated powers by the Chief Executive as detailed in Appendix A of Paper MC/20/20.**

**50 MC/20/21 STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2025**

The meeting was adjourned between 7:54 pm and 8:10 pm.

Note: Councillor Geake left the meeting at 8:06 pm.

- 50.1 The meeting had reached the guillotine deadline and the Chair asked for a proposer and seconder for the meeting to continue.
- 50.2 Councillor Carter **PROPOSED** that the meeting continued, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Muller.
- 50.3 Members approved by consensus and none spoke against the proposal.

**It was RESOLVED:** -

**That the meeting continued beyond the guillotine deadline, until all business was concluded.**

- 50.4 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments, Councillor Gould to introduce Paper MC/20/21.
- 50.5 Councillor Gould introduced the report and **Moved** the recommendation in the report, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Morley.
- 50.6 Councillor Field referred to paragraph 7.3 and asked if there would be any briefings for the opposition and other Members of the Council and not just for Cabinet Members. He thought that the opposition would like to have the opportunity to be constructive.
- 50.7 Councillor Gould responded that in many of the activities of the projects Members had opportunities to be involved and that the expectation was that Members would be briefed.
- 50.8 In response to Councillor Passmore's question, the Assistant Director – Assets and Investments confirmed that the evaluation of the total value of the assets was undertaken by an external party, as this was a CIFCO requirement and that this was carried out on a rolling basis of three or five

years.

- 50.9 Councillor Welham referred to page 103, bullet points 1 and 3 and asked if the Carbon Reduction Management Plan would ensure that all new council facilities were energy efficient and delivered to sustainable specifications, and that the Council would insist on this.
- 50.10 The Assistant Director – Assets and Investments explained that standards applied to council housing developments and the Council's own occupational houses. The carbon reduction plan was key to the Council and the Strategic Asset Management Plan would support the Carbon Reduction Plan in relation to the delivery of new build housing and require assets. There would be an appropriate approach to ensure sustainable new build houses, similar to operational properties.
- 50.11 Councillor Stringer queried page 81 regarding the timeframe of the 'pipeline' delivery of houses, to which Councillor Gould explained that the long term 'pipeline' delivery timeframe was for the overall plan and that some of the development would be completed sooner rather than later.
- 50.12 Members debated the report and Councillor Richardson thanked Councillor Gould for the report. He thought that there was a broader impact of the Council owned assets, such as that 61% was open and amenities spaces, which had an impact on the wellbeing of residents and communities.
- 50.13 Councillor Field thought that the document did not represent a whole Council vision but a restricted one, though he was in agreement with some aspects of the plan. He considered whether the Council should be a vehicle for investments to deliver what residents required. He thought that there should be a level of reporting for failures and successes and that the data should be available on the website.
- 50.14 Councillor Otton was uncertain that she supported the recommendation, she thought that the Constitution required that any financial decision over £10k was required to be made by Cabinet and that any officer decision under that figure had to be reported.
- 50.15 The Monitoring Officer clarified that the scheme of delegation allowed officers to make decisions over £10k, and that any decision over the value of £10k had to be advertised.
- 50.16 Councillor Otton commented on page 135, paragraph 8.3 and that she was concerned that disposal of properties for community groups, often run by volunteers, as these would be leased at market value and many community groups might be forced to comply with a lease at market rates.
- 50.17 Councillor Gould explained that normally there was a requirement for leasing properties at market value, however there might be a social value, which could be taken into consideration. The Assistant Director – Assets and Investments added that if there were any leases at less than best value

payable, the decision would be transparent. This meant that they would be following a decision process and that a paper would be presented to Cabinet for consideration.

50.18 Councillor Moley thought that it was absolutely fundamental for the Council's decision-making process to have a Strategic Assets Management Plan and she thanked Councillor Gould and the Assistant Director – Assets and Investments for their work especially during the Covid-19 period.

50.19 Councillor Welham felt that a great range of views would have added value to the document and a greater understanding behind the document. He thought that when the document was reviewed it would be beneficial to seek views across the Council. He then queried the cost of managing the assets and the differences between the two Councils and how that would be mitigated.

50.20 The Assistant Director stated that there were differences between the clarification of assets between the two Councils, in part the number of assets held. The number of assets was not the best way to measure the cost of managing them but rather the number of cases and activities conducted in relation to each asset.

50.21 Councillor Humphreys thought the Strategic Assets Management Plan was a professional document as it was forward leading and ambitious. It was an evolving document and he asked Members to come forward and contribute to the plan going forward.

By 30 votes for and 1 vote against.

**It was RESOLVED:** -

**That Council approves and adopts the SAMP for 2020-2025 (Appendix 1) including the Transactions and Community Transfer Policies set out in the SAMP as Appendices A and B.**

## **51 MC/20/22 TIMETABLE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2021/22**

51.1 Councillor Morley introduced Paper MC/20/22 and **MOVED** the recommendation in the Report.

51.2 Councillor Brewster **SECONDED** the recommendation.

51.3 In response to Councillor Field's question regarding electronic calendars, the Assistant Director – Governance and Civic Office explained that there was an issue with IT and that officers were working with SCC IT and Modern.gov to resolve the issue.

51.4 Councillor Matthissen stated that there were not enough Council Meetings on the Timetable.

By 28 votes for and 2 votes against, 1 abstention.

**It was RESOLVED:-**

**That the draft Committee Timetable for 2021/22 be approved.**

**52 MOTION ON NOTICE**

**53 MOTION RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLOR MORLEY**

Note: Councillor Norris left the meeting at 8:53 pm.

53.1 The Chair invited the Leader, Councillor Morley to introduce her Motion.

53.2 Councillor Morley said that the District of Mid Suffolk had a long and proud association with the Jewish community and was a refuge for children fleeing persecution by Nazi Germany through the Kindertransport, who came to live with foster families in the district. Sadly, many of the 10,000 children who arrived in the UK were never reunited with their birth parents, who died during the Holocaust. A painful reminder of why tackling hate crime was so important and the potential consequences that could arise when it was allowed to go unchecked. On Wednesday, 27 January, the UK were marking Holocaust Memorial Day, and remember the millions of people murdered during the Holocaust and in genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Kurdistan and Darfur. This was a timely opportunity to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism – as part of the Council's commitment to tackling hate crime in *all* its forms.

53.3 This definition, which was adopted by the UK government in 2016, outlaws all forms of hatred towards Jewish people, including rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism. Adopting this standard did not mean the Council placed any religion, faith or creed above another. It did however, send a clear message, that the Council recognised the definition of anti-Semitism ahead of Holocaust Memorial Day, and that the Council supported the Jewish community, as the Council support all communities within the district and to live here safely.

53.4 She urged all councillors to support the motion and send a clear message to those who seek to sow seeds of hatred.

53.5 Councillor Morley **MOVED** her Motion which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Hadingham

53.6 Members debated the Motion and there was generally agreement that:

- Suffolk had a long history of taking in refugees.
- Over 1000 hate crimes had been recorded in Suffolk last year.
- That understanding for minority groups must be supported.
- That the Motion was appropriate now, as the Memorial Day was being commemorated the following week.
- Some were surprised that anti-Semitism was an issue in Suffolk but supported the motion.
- Some Members shared personal experiences of family history from the Second World War persecution of Jews and others shared memories of visits to concentration camps.
- Any hate crime should be prevented and stopped at any cost.
- The Motion should have been adopted sooner.
- There could be no tolerance for discrimination of any groups in any form.
- As the District became more cosmopolitan a more powerful statement to include all groups should be considered.
- Concerns for the escalation of anti-Semitism and that this kind of crime was a blight on society.
- Some Members had personal experience of war crimes and atrocities of hate and had experienced how no policies, or regulation could control this kind of chaos.

53.7 A few Councillors felt that it was fundamentally wrong to single out one minority group and not others and that all groups must be protected against racism by the Equalities Act, as hate crime, racism and discrimination had to be eradicated.

53.8 The Leader summed up the debate and thanked Members for their contribution. She stated that the Motion was about leadership and to stand against anti-Semitism and she urged Members again to support the Motion.

53.9 The Motion was put to Members for voting.

By 26 votes for and 4 abstentions.

**It was RESOLVED: -**

**That this Council hereby adopts the definition of antisemitism as set out by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, and adopted by the UK Government, and pledges to combat this anti-Jewish racism.**

There were none.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 9:35 pm.

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Chair