

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the **BABERGH COUNCIL** held on Tuesday, 19 January 2021

PRESENT:

Councillors: Kathryn Grandon (Chair)
Adrian Osborne (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:	Clive Arthey	Sue Ayres
	Melanie Barrett	Peter Beer
	David Busby	Sue Carpendale
	Trevor Cresswell	Derek Davis
	Siân Dawson	Mick Fraser
	Honor Grainger-Howard	Richard Hardacre
	Michael Holt	Bryn Hurren
	Leigh Jamieson	Robert Lindsay
	Elisabeth Malvisi	Margaret Maybury
	Alastair McCraw	Mary McLaren
	Mark Newman	Zachary Norman
	John Nunn	Jan Osborne
	Alison Owen	Lee Parker
	Stephen Plumb	John Ward

In attendance:

Officers: Chief Executive (AC)
Strategic Director (KN)
Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer (EY)
Assistant Director – Corporate Resources (KS)
Assistant Director – Assets and Investments (EA)
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:

Jane Gould
John Hinton

35 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

There were no interests declared by Councillors.

36 BC/20/15 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2020

It was RESOLVED: -

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 10 November 2020 be confirmed as a true record and signed at the next practicable opportunity.

37 BC/20/16 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2020

It was RESOLVED: -

That with the following amendments the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2020 be confirmed and signed as a true record at the next practicable opportunity.

Paragraph 33.10 be amended to read: Councillor McCraw thanked the Corporate Manager for ICT for the presentation which had made the technical issues easy to understand. He thought that it was important to take care when creating the processes and that to be successful, IT being intuitive had to be key. He felt that it was good that the Council was not subservient to Suffolk County Council and that the Council had its own ICT Strategy.

38 BC/20/17 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND LEADER

38.1 The Chair referred to Paper BC/20/17, which was for noting.

38.2 She invited the Leader, Councillor Ward to make his announcement.

38.3 Councillor Ward made the following announcement:

This second COVID-19 wave was much worse than the first last Spring, Suffolk has been badly hit like all regions. Fortunately, all districts in the county, including Ipswich, were at last showing a steady and significant decrease over the past few days. The latest data from the Suffolk Corona watch site showed that in Babergh the infection rate is now 411.8 per 100,000. In total, there had been 3,137 confirmed cases and sadly 132 deaths since the pandemic began, although this latter number was the latest data from the ONS and was only up to 1st January. The Council must continue with the public awareness and messaging campaign and follow the lockdown rules. However, the vaccination programme was underway and accelerating which was good news.

The new Closed Business Lockdown Payment grants were now available, and payments had started for this and the tier 4 grants to qualifying businesses. The grant situation had become quite complex as there were several that continue to be available. Full details have been published on the Council's website, including a comprehensive infographic describing them all.

Before the debate for the petition that the Council had received from Hadleigh regarding short-term parking charges, he just wanted to address another petition that was received from Thomas Morelli in Sudbury. The constitution governed the rules to validate a petition to avoid fraud and unfortunately this petition, as submitted, contravened those rules. He knew that this had disappointed many people, including some Members, but the rejection of this petition on these grounds was consistent with the rejection of previous petitions for the same reason. If these rules were ignored, others would demand the same leeway and the petition

scheme would collapse. However, this was a difficult and sensitive matter and it had been considered carefully how a reasonable way might be found in line with the constitution whilst also recognising the efforts that Mr. Morelli had gone to in capturing a section of public feeling on these issues. The Council did therefore invite him to speak today on the Hadleigh parking petition, but he declined.

In respect of the Belle Vue land and house sale, Mr. Morelli's petition's request to delay consideration was consistent with the Council's timeline as the matter would be considered by Cabinet on 11th March 2021.

He would also like to explain some more about what was happening with the Sudbury Access Point. Firstly, the future of this had already been decided as an officer-delegated decision was made on 1st December and the details of this had been published on the Council's website. Councillor Parker explained the situation very clearly in his email to all Members on 18th December 2020. The current Service Level Agreement with Sudbury Town Council was due to expire at the end of March 2021. The Town Council wanted the Council to pay a significantly increased amount for them to continue to run the service. A new agreement could not be reached because the Council simply could not pay an increased sum for a diminishing service. Therefore, a decision had to be made regarding future intentions. The Council could not allow the current agreement to expire without making provision for its replacement as the consequence of doing so would be that no access point of any sort would exist from 1st April 2021. But most importantly, this now gave the Council the opportunity to provide a different service that focused more on the Council's customer strategy.

Details of a replacement access point, with a continuing face-to-face service, in a new location were being finalised and Members would be informed of the details in the very near future.

Finally, he wanted to take the opportunity to say that debate and even demonstrations were legitimate ways to protest and express opposition to policies. What was not legitimate or acceptable were attacks on his or any other Member's homes. Neither was relentless personal online abuse, nor the recent public comments about shooting Babergh Councillors made by two Hadleigh Town Councillors last week, although he accepted that they were made in jest. These things were counterproductive.

The increasing coarseness of political debate, fuelled by intolerable levels of online abuse that politicians at all levels receive, should worry all. It, inevitably, encouraged some to believe that violence was an acceptable form of protest.

- 38.4 Councillor Ayres asked the Leader if consideration of the number of users from the past two years of the current Access Point in Sudbury had been included in the decision and if clarification of a better service could be provided.
- 38.2 The Leader responded that an outline of the service would be provided in due course.
- 38.3 Councillor Cresswell questioned that as the advice centre in Sudbury was already set-up, how much it would cost to set up the centre on another site. He also asked how many hours officers were expected to work in the new setting.
- 38.4 Councillor Owen questioned if an assessment for the new service had been provided to ensure they meet the requirements for the most vulnerable of users of the centre, as the people using the centre were the ones most in need of the one-to-one service provided.

38.5 Councillor Ward pointed out that it was an access point and not an advice centre and the responses would be provided outside the meeting.

39 TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

39.1 There were no validated petitions received.

40 PETITION FOR DEBATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME

40.1 The Chair read the Petition as detailed in the Agenda.

40.2 The Monitoring Officer outlined the process to be followed for the debate, detailed under Part B of Section 3.1 of the Petitions Scheme contained in the Constitution.

40.3 The Monitoring Officer advised Members that questions had been received from Hadleigh Town Council and a member of the public regarding the subject matter of the petition and the Chairman had agreed to vary the order of business on the Agenda to take these questions at the same time as the petition.

40.4 The Monitoring Officer also advised that as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had recently considered the proposed Parking Policy report, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be invited to present any comments from the Committee which were relevant to the debate.

40.5 The Chair invited the petition organiser, Mr Laing, to present the petition.

Mr Laing made the following presentation:

Whilst other Councils across the Country are introducing periods of free parking to try and encourage footfall in the high street, this Cabinet, having established that the average parking time is 64 minutes, has cynically sought to charge after only 30 minutes. Babergh's own Q and A page has a link to the Association of Town and City Management, to a report they clearly attach some weight to. From that report Rugby Council are working with retailers to shape parking. The retailers can issue permits to customers for 4 hours free parking. Another example, not from the report, Tees Valley has just these months introduced free parking for a minimum stay of two hours, up to a maximum of three hours. This policy to be in place for two years.

Tees Valley's Mayor has said that everyone across our region deserves a vibrant and thriving high street, that can still flourish in an age of online shopping. They are the life blood of our area and introducing free parking can help make them an even more dynamic and vibrate place to live and do business.

From the statutory guidance for Local Authorities on Enforcing Parking restrictions, the Secretary of State recommends that enforcement authorities, should consult locally on their parking policies when they appraise them, they should seek the views of people and businesses with a range of different parking needs, including the views of the police. The appraisal should take account of the impact on the local economy and the viability of local shops and high streets. To my knowledge none of this has happened.

The British Retail Consortium has warned of conditions getting worse for non-essential shops and the high street generally. Retail figures for 2020 are the worst on record except for food and online shopping. The Centre for Retail research has said that 2020 was the worst for high street job losses in 25 years.

This proposal in its present form fails. It fails for not engaging with town and parish councils. It fails for not engaging with local businesses or the general public and it fails to not take into account the demise of the high street and the need to rebuild.

This meeting can and should be the start of that engagement and collaboration, so I urge the cabinet to think again and to delay any decision until a more inclusive proposal is forthcoming.

40.6 The Chair invited the Mayor of Hadleigh, Frank Minns to ask his question:

Question 1

Councillor Minns on behalf of Hadleigh Town Council to ask the following question to Councillor Malvisi, Cabinet Member for Environment:

In the light of the widespread opposition to the introduction of short-term parking charges in Hadleigh, illustrated by the petition the Council is to consider, does BDC now agree that the proposal should be withdrawn and a coherent plan for parking across the town be developed through consultation with HTC and residents?

Response from Councillor Malvisi, Cabinet Member for Environment:

As I explained to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee yesterday, I carefully listened to their debate and I will listen to this debate this evening and I note Councillor Minns comments and suggestions, I do anticipate that the proposal being considered by Cabinet in February will differ greatly to the current proposal.

The Chair invited Mr Young, a Hadleigh resident to ask his question:

Question 2

Mr Roger Young to ask the following question to Councillor Malvisi, Cabinet Member for Environment:

I start by noting that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are suggesting that the parking management and principles as mentioned in Appendix A be implemented no sooner than September 2021.

How is it sensible to implement the changes in Appendix A before the results of the comprehensive parking strategy review is completed and publicly reviewed surely, implementation should wait for the result of the review, otherwise time and money might be spent unnecessarily and create confusion for the public.

Response from Councillor Malvisi, Cabinet Member for Environment:

The difference between the Parking Strategy Review (including future paths steered by development requirements) and what we are doing now, is that this is a 'Current Needs Analysis'. Appendix A is what we need to be doing right now; the Strategy looks ahead at future needs, our needs in 5-10 years if not longer.

Supplementary Question:

I come from a base where in management you need to first get the facts. None of us know **now** what the new normal will be when Covid subsides.

We don't know how the public's shopping habits will change, or what the High Street will look like.

Can Council abort the current parking proposals until we have reliable data, that the strategy document should produce?

Response from Councillor Malvisi, Cabinet Member for Environment:

Earlier last year the Council passed the Climate Change Action Plan and the Biodiversity Action Plan and that we need to incorporate, adopt, recognise new modes of transport. Our parking provision for bicycles, to start to provide facilities for electrical vehicles whether it be electric cars or electric bicycles and ordinary pedal bikes, we have a very poor provision for these services in our car parks and we need to get that done and we need to do that now, not in five to ten years.

40.7 The Chair invited the Ward Member for Hadleigh North Ward, Councillor Dawson to speak:

Councillor Dawson thanked the Hadleigh resident, who brought forward this petition. She fully understood and realised there was need to balance Babergh's budget, but it was not the right time to introduce these hard-hitting parking tariffs hidden in the budget. Any decisions that affect so many businesses and people should be assessed following proper consultation as discussed by Mr Young, and an understanding of the local issues and how this has come about. She felt that issues were not properly addressed in the report, which she outlined as follows:

- Why was there no consultation with stakeholders i.e. local businesses, shoppers or residents?
- Why was there no communication with county councillors, local district councillors, town councillors or even the Mayor?

She questioned the value of the information and the timing of the snapshot study on which the proposal was based, and she thought that this kind of decision should not be based on informal observations taken in February. There was no evidence of the algorithms used, of the displacement of cars to side streets, the environmental damage and the generation of further carbon emissions, which we are meant to be reducing and most importantly, the effect it had on the local economy in Hadleigh.

Councillor Beer and she had over a year ago requested a comprehensive parking strategy review, which to date, neither of them had been consulted on. She thought that this parking review with increased tariffs had been 'slipped' into the annual budget and it seemed that the proposal had been pushed forward to provide a plug for the £45K debt in Hadleigh.

40.8 The Chair invited the Ward Member for Hadleigh South, Councillor Fraser to speak.

Councillor Fraser thanked Mr Laing for raising the petition, and the Hadleigh residents for signing it. The Petition showed the strengths of feeling in the town. He commented that free parking was a unique selling point of Hadleigh and that the residents of Hadleigh were concerned over the survival of the economy of the town.

Councillor Fraser thought that the reason the report had not been well received was because of the way in which the Council had communicated the plans.

Councillor Fraser continued that the two main points from the e-petition were that new parking charges would have an impact on new outlets which had recently been opened and also existing, well established businesses. He agreed with the Mayor of Hadleigh that a full consultation was needed with input from the Town Council, businesses, the Mayor and the Chamber of Commerce. He also advised that a full impact statement of the effect of businesses emerging from Covid-19 pandemic was required.

Councillor Fraser commented that businesses in the area had already been negatively affected by other policies such as the 'Safer Places Scheme' which had not been subject to proper consultation and that business say unanimously that free parking will affect their businesses. He summed up by confirming that the petition had his full support.

- 40.9 The Chair of the Council, Councillor Grandon, then responded to the petition in her capacity as Ward Member for Hadleigh South and emphasised that she was not speaking in her role as Chairman.
- 40.10 Councillor Grandon expressed her support for the petition and commented that the planned parking charges would have an effect on the whole town. Councillor Grandon went on to state that the proposal was purely for economic reasons to support Babergh District Council's budget with no regard for the economic health of Hadleigh. The Parking deficit for Hadleigh was only £45K.
- 40.11 She supported the call for consultation, local Members were not consulted. She did not support any change to short term parking fees, as it would lead to future price increases. She highlighted that while other local authorities were ceasing parking charging, Babergh was introducing charges and this would have an effect on the recovery of businesses from the Covid-19 pandemic and many businesses were operating on slim margins anyway. She felt that the timing of the implementation of the parking charges should be delayed until April 2022 or until after the completion of the Strategic Parking Review. The shortest period of free parking she found acceptable was 2 hours churn is not an issue in Hadleigh. She also felt that parking fees for Hadleigh should be lower than Sudbury. For some a parking charge of £1 was a lot of money.
- 40.12 Councillor Malvisi responded to the petition and informed Members that the petition asked to maintain free car parking in Hadleigh, however the free car parking in both Hadleigh and Sudbury were a subsidised and a discretionary service provided by the Council. She reiterated that the report going to Cabinet in February would be revised and would take the comments made both at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and this meeting into account. However, the car parks in Hadleigh required updating to include bike parking and electrical vehicle charging points. She assured Members that people did not drive to a town because it provided free parking but for what people needed in town. Hadleigh also had a lot to offer tourists.
- 40.13 She continued that a revised policy was needed to enable car parks to be financially sustainable and that any revenue from the car parks would be spent for projects associated with car parking.
- 40.14 The Chair of the Council invited the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to speak.

- 40.15 Councillor McCraw referred to the amended proposal and the substantiated proposal and recommendations in the tabled minutes. He outlined the scrutiny process to Members and explained the differences between the two proposals. He pointed out to Members that a Parking Strategy Review would take 18 months and that it appeared that the Council did not have this option available due to budget constraints. He stated that the tabled draft minutes and recommendations were sufficient to explain the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and he commended the paper to Council.
- 40.16 The Chair of the Council then outlined the rules for debating the petition in Council.
- 40.17 Councillor Ward did not see the purpose of the petition. The Council could no longer justify the subsidy of car parks in the District, especially as this was a burden for all residents in the District. The Council needed to free up the funding which covered the upkeep of the car parks as the Government was cutting funding for local authorities forcing the Council to cut costs in some areas and diverting the funding to maintain vital services for residents. It was generally expected that car parks were self-sustaining. There was no evidence that parking charges reduced footfall as footfall was based on the demand of shoppers. In the current climate free services were no longer possible. It had always been the intention to introduce parking charges once the Covid-19 Pandemic was in decline, as part of future plans to ensure that the car parks could support the demand for parking. There is confusion over the long-term strategy review being undertaken. This will support plans for our vision work and have the capacity to support population work.
- 40.18 Councillor Adrian Osborne understood the concerns raised; however, the Council needed to balance the budget to ensure that all services could be delivered and driven forward. An implementation date in late 2021 or early 2022 had been suggested. He thought the decision had been based on facts and not assumption. He would like the Strategic Parking Review to include a review of residents parking permits in our car parks.
- 40.19 Councillor Beer referred to the Motion on the 22 September 2019 which called for a review of parking in Sudbury and Hadleigh. This included talking to partners and stakeholders such as Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council and the Town Councils. He had asked for a working group to be set up but that had so far not happened. He thought the car parking scheme would be charging more for less car parking spaces and that shoppers would have less time, hitting motorists with increases and charges. There was a risk that shoppers would drive further to the larger town in the County, if they had to pay for parking anyway or drivers would drive around looking for free parking spaces and this would have an impact on Council's wish to reduce carbon. He agreed that there was a need to provide better disabled car parking spaces.
- 40.20 Councillor Owen thought that three hours free parking helps to maintain the footfall, which helped employment and town management. There would be far-reaching impact on retailers because of the anticipated decrease in footfall. Free car parking was a way to attract visitors to the towns apart from the friendly and sociable people. Sudbury could not offer the larger outlets that other towns could, and offering free parking was a main attraction along with social tolerance. She thought that the implementation of parking charges would result in losing shops, lower employment, more families on lower income, less business rates and lower Babergh income. She continued, when would congestion and air quality be reduced and by how much.

- 40.21 Councillor Fraser focused on the damage the parking charges would do to Hadleigh and that there had been a lot of damage to the economy and that the high street was fragile. Hadleigh was to lose one of its larger outlets. The High street was unique in what it delivered and could not be compared to other towns in the area. The Country was in crisis due to the pandemic and this had an impact on the footfall. He thought that parking charges should be introduced later and that there should not be any change to parking arrangements until a post Covid-19 impact assessment could be conducted. He thought that the one-hour free parking would not be enough and although there was a fair amount of car parking spaces available there was a risk that the parking charges would result that shoppers would look for free parking in side streets and clog up the streets. He thought that a consultation should take place along with engagement with businesses and that members were here to support businesses and he therefor supported the petition.
- 40.22 Councillor Barrett was disappointed that this was not a full debate and only responding to the petition but pleased that the Cabinet had listened. However, changes to reduce free parking should be considered carefully, as it could have an adverse impact, and this was not the time to discourage shoppers to come to Hadleigh. There was no justification for introducing the parking charges now, as money had been found in the budget for the next year and could not be considered urgent. There had already been a removal of parking spaces in Market Hill, which had had an impact on footfall. She highlighted the point that there had not been a full assessment to understand the footfall and she had a resistance to support paying for parking and queried how much income the Council would actually receive.
- 40.23 Councillor Lindsay raised a point of clarification in respect of Councillor Beer's comments regarding the Motion agreed by Council and advised that this had been amended to examine what level of car parking capacity would be appropriate.
- 40.24 Councillor Lindsay highlighted the Council's plans to reduce carbon emissions by 2030 and the role of sustainable travel plays in this plan. He went on to comment that he agreed with the principle of parking charges in general and felt that free parking should not be subsidised by all taxpayers. He considered Babergh needed to make it clear much would be it spend on sustainable trave if car parking charges were introduced.
- 40.25 Councillor Jamieson commented on the lack of consultation and felt that the proposal should be looked at as part of a wider transport strategy. Increasing traffic churn would have detrimental impact on the carbon reduction, and he reminded Members that the Council was committed to carbon reduction. He thought the report was being brought forward to Council at the wrong time.
- 40.26 Councillor Ayres raised concerns over the effect of parking charges on future footfall figures in the town. Councillor Ayres felt that two hours of free parking was necessary to allowed families and elderly enough time to park and go shopping and added, especially now because of the longer queuing times as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 40.27 Councillor Maybury responded to a query from Councillor Fraser regarding the car parks in Lavenham and confirmed that Lavenham Parish Council wished to take over ownership of car parks in the parish.
- 40.28 Councillor Maybury went on to state, in response to Councillor Malvisi's comments regarding residents subsidising free parking, that this argument could be applied to

many projects. Councillor Maybury raised the issue of potential annual increases if parking charges were introduced and that these annual increases should not take place for at least three, if not five years and concluded by stating that she believed this was the wrong time to introduce charges.

- 40.29 Councillor Cresswell commented that Sudbury and Hadleigh should not be divided but work together on this issue. He thought that a survey conducted in February would provide a different result than one conducted in July. The free parking from Saturday noon and all-day Sunday, encouraged families to come to Sudbury and spend the day in town. He therefore felt that the current status should be maintained to encourage people to come to Sudbury. He thought that this was the wrong time to introduce parking charges due to the current climate, and that this had nothing to do with green policies. More strategic work should be conducted to invest in infrastructure to get people from the villages into Sudbury and he supported the petitions.
- 40.30 Councillor Carpendale was pleased to hear that the report would be changed regarding timings and costs when the report went back to Cabinet. She sympathised with the concerns raised for the reality of the impact on the high street charges, which might put people off coming into town. She endorsed the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, namely the one-hour free parking and the deferred implementation date for Hadleigh and Sudbury. However, residents and Councillors must face the realities of the present and future for the costs and financing. She thought it was a pity that the report had surfaced ahead of a comprehensive Parking Review and lacked a transport strategy which should be integrated with the environmental aims for carbon reduction in the District. She added that the handling of the matter had been unfortunate, and she hoped the process would be reviewed, including the lack of consultation and involvement of local businesses.
- 40.31 Councillor Plumb asked Members to consider the options of Hadleigh and Sudbury taking over the management of the car parks similar to Lavenham or if that was not possible, then perhaps the Town Council would be interested in subsidising the second hour to provide two hours free parking in the towns.
- 40.32 Councillor Dawson **PROPOSED** that Council supported the petition, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Beer.

40.33 Councillor Owen requested a recorded vote, which was supported by Councillors Maybury, Beer, Ayres and Cresswell.

NOTE: The meeting adjourned between 7:14 pm and 7:25 pm.

40.34 Members voted on the proposed recommendation.

By 14 votes for and 14 votes against and 2 abstentions.

The Chair used her casting vote, and the vote was **CARRIED**.

It was RESOLVED: -

That Council supports the petition.

For	Against	Abstain
	Cllr Clive Arthey	
Cllr Sue Ayres		
Cllr Melanie Barrett		
Cllr Peter Beer		
Cllr David Busby		
	Cllr Sue Carpendale	
Cllr Trevor Cresswell		
		Cllr Derek Davis
Cllr Sian Dawson		
Cllr Mick Fraser		
Cllr Honor Grainger-Howard		
Cllr Kathryn Grandon		
	Cllr Ric Hardacre	
	Cllr Michael Holt	
Cllr Bryn Hurren		
Cllr Leigh Jamieson		
	Cllr Robert Lindsay	
	Cllr Elisabeth Malvisi	
Cllr Margaret Maybury		
	Cllr Alastair McCraw	
	Cllr Mary McLaren	
	Cllr Mark Newman	
	Cllr Zac Norman	
Cllr John Nunn		
	Cllr Adrian Osborne	
	Cllr Jan Osborne	
Cllr Alison Owen		
		Cllr Lee Parker
	Cllr Stephen Plumb	
	Cllr John Ward	
14 Votes FOR	14 Votes AGAINST	2 ABSTENTIONS

41 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

The questions had been dealt with under the Petition Scheme item.

42 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

There were no questions received.

43 BC/20/18 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

43.1 The Chair invited the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor McCraw to introduce Paper BC/20/18.

43.2 Councillor McCraw provided a summary of the past two Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and informed Members that recommendations and the minute relating to the Representation on Outside Bodies were included in the Agenda for consideration.

44 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET / COMMITTEES

45 JAC/20/3 HALF YEAR REPORT ON TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2020/21

45.1 The Chair invited the Chair of the Joint Audit and Standards Committee, Councillor Hurren to introduce Paper JAC/20/3.

45.2 Councillor Hurren provided a detailed summary of the report and **MOVED** Recommendations 3.1 and 3.2 in the report.

45.3 Councillor Ward **SECONDED** the recommendations.

45.4 Councillor Lindsay queried the PWLB borrowing rate which had increased by 1% on the Council's loans and whether the Council would be able to borrow from the Municipal Bonds Agency, set up by the LGA, which provided a lower borrowing rate.

45.5 Councillor Hurren asked that Councillor Lindsay raise this at the next Joint Audit and Standards Committee meeting.

45.6 The Assistant Director – Corporate Resources stated that the PWLB interest rate had reduced again by 1%, which made it a more competitive rate. Any borrowing from the Municipal Bonds Agency had been considered and came with conditions such as a joint liability clause, which the Council had to adhere to.

Note: Councillor Holt left the meeting at 7:48pm.

Note: The meeting was adjourned between 7:49 pm. and 7:53 pm due to technical issues.

45.7 The recommendations were put to Members for voting.

By a unanimous vote.

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.

46 BC/20/19 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 46.1 The Chair invited the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor McCraw to introduce the recommendations from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Paper BC/20/19.
- 46.2 Councillor McCraw provided a summary of the reasons behind the recommendations, including that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee had deemed that the Haven Gateway Partnership did not contribute any value to the Council, that the Member reporting template would be used at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's annual review of Outside Bodies and that Members had expressed that training opportunities should be provided to both new and existing Members.
- 46.3 Councillor McCraw **PROPOSED** Recommendations 1.1 to 1.6 which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Malvisi.
- 46.4 Councillor Arthey queried the removal of the Joint Waste Management Board as he thought it still met. However, Councillor Malvisi, who had been appointed to represent the Council at the above Outside Body, agreed with Councillor McCraw that it did not exist.
- 46.5 Councillor Ward asked that Members reconsidered Recommendation 1.2, as representation on the Haven Gateway Partnership would be beneficial to the Council due to the current discussions around free ports.
- 46.6 Councillor Jan Osborne asked for clarification of Recommendation 1.2 and if there were any financial issues to be contributed to the Partnership and where the organisation was based.
- 46.7 Councillor McCraw responded that he believed it was based in Essex.
- 46.8 Members debated the recommendations and Councillor Davis stated that having a seat on Haven Gateway Partnership was important, especially for the Council's involvement with the free port in Felixstowe.
- 46.9 Some Members thought that representation on Haven Gateway Partnership had been useful in the past and others thought representation should only continue if there were current benefits for the Council.
- 46.10 The Chair suggested that Recommendation 1.2 was voted on separately from the rest of the recommendations.
- 46.11 Councillor McCraw the Proposer and Councillor Malvisi, the Secunder both approved of this suggestion.

46.12 Councillor Arthey clarified that the Joint Waste Contract Board did not require specific member representation and he agreed that the Joint Waste Management Board did no longer exist.

46.13 Recommendation 1.2 was put to Members for voting.

By 6 votes for and 21 votes against, 1 abstention.

It was RESOLVED: -

That the vote was lost.

46.14 The meeting had reached the guillotine deadline and the Chair asked for a proposer and seconder for the meeting to continue.

46.15 Councillor McCraw **PROPOSED** that the meeting continued, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Malvisi.

46.16 Members approved by consensus and none spoke against the proposal.

It was RESOLVED: -

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

46.17 Recommendations 1.1, and 1.3 to 1.5 were put to Members for voting.

By 25 votes for and 1 vote against, 1 abstention.

It was RESOLVED: -

1.1 That the following appointments to Outside Bodies, no longer requiring representation, be removed from the appointments made, based on the information received.

Babergh District Council

**Babergh Domestic Violence and Abuse Forum
East West Rail Consortium
Joint Waste Management Board
Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Policy Panel
Suffolk Rail Policy Group**

1.2 That Babergh District Council considers that a Member representative be appointed to Home-Start in line with Mid Suffolk District Council.

1.3 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 be presented as part of the annual review of Member Representation on Outside Bodies to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.4 That support and training be established for Members when appointed as representatives on Outside Bodies.

47 BC/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

47.1 The Chair invited the Monitoring Officer to introduce Paper BC/20/20, which was for noting.

47.2 The Monitoring Officer stated that the decisions had been taken to assist the Council to respond to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

48 BC/20/21 STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2025

48.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments, Councillor Busby to introduce Paper BC/20/21.

48.2 Councillor Busby provided a brief introduction and thanked the officers involved for the work undertaken.

48.3 Councillor Busby **PROPOSED** Recommendation 3.1, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Ward.

48.4 Members had no questions and the Chair invited Members to debate the report.

48.5 Members debated the issues including:

- That this was a timely report as there was a need for the Strategic Assets Management Plan (SAMP)
- The SAMP would be used to support all the Council's policies and projects.
- That the SAMP was a continuous process and would be updated regularly.
- That the Council owned 800 open spaces, some of them very small.
- That some of these small spaces had been constrained by planning applications.
- That now that the internal process was in place, Members hoped to see some management of public places.

48.6 Members thanked officers and commended the expertise that the Council had gained in producing the SAMP.

48.7 The Recommendation was put to Members for voting.

By a unanimous vote

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.

49 BC/20/22 TIMETABLE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2021/22

49.1 The Chair invited the Leader, Councillor Ward to introduce Paper BC/20/22.

- 49.2 Councillor Ward provided Members with a brief introduction and **PROPOSED** Recommendation 3.1 in the report, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Malvisi.
- 49.3 Councillor Owen was concerned that there was only a Full Council meeting every two months.
- 49.4 The Monitoring Officer responded that there were seven Council meetings scheduled over a twelve-month period.
- 49.5 The Recommendation was put to Members for voting.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:-

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

50 MOTION ON NOTICE

51 MOTION RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLOR WARD

- 50.1 The Chair invited The Leader, Councillor Ward to introduce his Motion.
- 50.2 Councillor Ward said that the District of Babergh 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 was marking Holocaust Memorial Day, and remembering 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. 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.
- 50.3 By adopting this standard, the Council would be sending a clear message that the Council was committed to identifying and stamping out anti-Semitic abuse as well as supporting the Council's equality objectives and providing residents and visitors reassurance of this commitment.
- 50.4 He urged all Councillors to support the Motion and send a clear message.
- 50.5 Councillor Ward **MOVED** his Motion, which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Jan Osborne.
- 50.6 Members debated the Motion and all Members agreed that all forms of genocide, hate crime, discrimination and racism should not be tolerated. Even if many people regarded this as a matter of fact, there was still hidden racism and discrimination in everyday life.

50.7 Members welcomed and supported the Motion and some Members shared personal experiences of genocide and racism.

50.8 Councillor Ward thanked Members for the good debate and valuable contributions.

50.9 The Motion was put to Members for voting.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED:-

This Council hereby adopts the above 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.

52 COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENTS

There were no changes to placings.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 8:54pm.

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Chair