

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK CABINET** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 2 August 2021

PRESENT:

Councillor: Suzie Morley (Chair)
Gerard Brewster (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: David Burn Julie Flatman
Jessica Fleming Peter Gould
Lavinia Hadingham Harry Richardson
John Whitehead

In attendance:

Councillor(s): Rachel Eburne
Andrew Mellen
Keith Welham

Officers: Chief Executive (AC)
Assistant Director – Corporate Resources (KS)
Assistant Director – Housing (GF)
Assistant Director – Environment and Commercial Partnerships (CC)
Corporate Manager – Financial Services, Commissioning and Procurement (ME)
Assistant Manager – Financial Accountant (RH)
Service Improvement Advisor – Environment & Commercial Partnerships (SB)
Senior Governance Support Officer (HH)

Apologies:

None

28 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

There were no declarations of interests declared.

29 MCA/21/12 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 JULY 2021

It was RESOLVED:-

That the minutes from the meeting held on the 5 July 2021 be confirmed as a true record.

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

None received.

31 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

None received.

32 MATTERS REFERRED BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY OR JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEES

There were no matters referred.

33 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST

The Forthcoming Decisions List was noted.

34 MCA/21/13 GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2020/21

34.1 The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Whitehead introduced the report, providing Members with a summary of the report.

34.2 Councillor Whitehead proposed the recommendations in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Gould.

34.3 Councillor Eburne queried the increase in the reserves and related spending for the Covid Mitigation fund and the revenue carried forward, of which the majority related to staffing.

34.4 The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Whitehead, responded that the Covid mitigation reserves would be carried forward, but that it was currently not possible to determine what this would be spent on as this depended on the Covid situation.

34.5 The Assistant Director for Corporate Resources added the furlough scheme would end this year and this would put pressure on a number of areas requiring this funding.

34.6 The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Whitehead, the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources, and the Chief Executive provided responses to questions relating to the revenue of £717k. Appendix E detailed the proposed spend for the revenue carried forward, however it was too early to determine spend elsewhere. ICT was the largest item for the Customer and Digital Transformation project and some of the allocated funding covered staffing. Teams were recruiting, and employment vacancies were being advertised. More staff had been employed than ever before in terms of full time equivalent employment. Initially recruiting had been challenging during the pandemic lock down periods, however recruiting had now recovered.

34.7 Councillor Welham questioned the improvements to Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre, which were separate from refurbishments in the budget and whether

improvements were still required to be undertaken and if they would be completed in this current financial year. The Corporate Manager for Corporate Resources deferred the response to the appropriate Assistant Director, to provide a response outside the meeting.

34.8 The Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Flatman, added that work had been completed for Stradbroke Leisure Centre and that the gym in Stowmarket Leisure Centre was now open. However, smaller improvements were to be completed this year.

34.9 The recommendations were put to the vote.

By a unanimous vote.

It was RESOLVED:-

1.1 That the 2020/21 General Fund financial outturn of £911k surplus as set out in this report be noted.

1.2 That the following transfers be approved;

- a) Transfer to reserves of £297k being the net amount for specific earmarked reserves, referred to in section 6.5 of this report;**
- b) Surplus of £613k be transferred to the Growth and Efficiency Fund.**

1.3 That the revenue carry-forward requests totalling £717k referred to in paragraph 6.12 and Appendix E of this report be approved.

1.4 That the total Capital carry-forward requests referred to in paragraph 6.18 of this report totalling £8.937m be approved.

Reason for Decision:

To ensure that Members are kept informed of the outturn position for both General Fund Revenue and Capital and to approve earmarked reserve transfers and carry forward requests.

35 MCA/21/14 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2020/21

35.1 The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Whitehead provided Members with a summary of significant areas of the report.

35.2 The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Whitehead and seconded by Councillor Hadingham.

35.3 In response to Councillor Welham's questions regarding the new build

programme including acquisitions, the planned maintenance allocation and the under spend on the maintenance budget, the Assistant Director for Housing clarified that he did not have the figures for new build and acquisitions. However, the Council was expected to deliver over 270 new homes during the next twelve months. Planned expenditure included planned maintenance and work was being undertaken to catch up on the capital spend for contracts through the Council's procurement framework. Long-term planning and timely spending on improving the housing stock was important.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:-

- 1.1 That the 2020/21 HRA financial outturn as set out in this report be noted.**
- 1.2 That the transfer of £523k, being the HRA revenue surplus for the year (£1.087m more than planned) as per paragraph 6.4, to the Strategic Priorities Reserves be approved.**
- 1.3 That the HRA capital carry-forward requests referred to in paragraph 6.19 of this report totalling £7.391m be approved.**

Reason for Decision:

To ensure that Members are kept informed of the outturn position for both Housing Revenue and Capital and to approve earmarked reserve transfers and carry forward requests.

36 MCA/21/15 THE CREATION OF A PARKING STRATEGY FOR BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS

Note: The meeting was adjourned between 11:31am and 11:43 am.

- 36.1 The Cabinet Member for Environment introduced the report and advised that the Strategy had been scrutinised by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that the recommendations from this Committee would be taken into consideration when creating the Parking Strategy.
- 36.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Fleming, proposed the recommendations in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Richardson.
- 36.3 In response to Councillor Whiteheads questions, the Assistant Director for Environment and Commercial Partnerships confirmed that the data collected would be of good quality, however some assumptions had to be made taking into consideration the events of the past year.

- 36.4 Councillor Welham raises questions regarding the dates for the strategy, residents parking schemes, and the encouragement of cycling, walking and use of public transport.
- 36.5 The Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Fleming, responded that there was some scope for flexibility with regard to the dates for the Strategy. She continued that the Parking Strategy would help to identify residents' needs in relations to parking, including residential parking schemes and indiscriminate parking issues. The Council was currently undertaking work to encourage cycling and walking, including a Task and Finish Group for Cycling and Walking and the development of a Cycling and Walking strategy.
- 36.6 In response to Councillor Mellen's question, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Fleming, responded that the Strategy needed to be adaptable in relation to personal transport.
- 36.7 Members debated the strategy including priorities, the need for a parking strategy, carparking in local areas to support residents and businesses and working with Suffolk County Council, as part of the solutions for parking issues.
- 36.8 Councillor Brewster commented that the Parking Strategy did not take tourism into account.
- 36.9 The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that it was important to do something rather than nothing at all and that the Council needed to provide finance to address the different parking requirements in the future.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That the start of the formulation of Babergh and Mid Suffolk's first parking strategy be agreed.**
- 1.2 That funding of £20,500 for Mid Suffolk's contribution towards the formulation of the parking strategy, from the Growth and Efficiency Fund earmarked reserve, be approved.**

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure the best possible outcomes for our communities, for both on-street and off-street parking, by looking ahead and working in collaboration with key stakeholders.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 12:43 pm.

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Chair