

## **BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of the **BABERGH CABINET** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 4 April 2022

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor: John Ward (Chair)

Councillors:	Jan Osborne	Clive Arthey
	David Busby	Michael Holt
	Elisabeth Malvisi	Simon Barrett
	Siân Dawson	

### **In attendance:**

Councillors: Mary McLaren

Officers:

- Chief Executive (AC)
- Assistant Director - Environment and Commercial Partnerships (CC)
- Assistant Director – Corporate Resources and Section 151 Officer (KS)
- Assistant Director – Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer (EY)
- Corporate Manager – Governance & Civic Office (JR)
- SRP Operations Manager (AW)
- Corporate Manager – Economy & Business (MG)
- Sustainable Travel Officer (KD)
- Senior Governance Officer (HH)

### **Apologies:**

Councillors: Derek Davis  
Alastair McCraw

## **97 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS**

97.1 Councillor Osborne declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 11 in her role as the Council's representative on the Gainsborough House Society.

## **98 BCA/21/46 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 MARCH 2022**

**It was RESOLVED: -**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on the 7 March 2022 be confirmed as a true record of the meeting.**

## **99 BCA/21/47 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 7 FEBRUARY 2022**

**It was RESOLVED: -**

**That with the following amendment the minutes of the meeting held on the 7 February 2022 be confirmed as a true record.**

**Paragraph 76 amend RESOVED to RESOLVED.**

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

None received.

**101 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

None received.

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

There were no matters referred.

**103 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST**

The Forthcoming Decisions List was noted.

**104 BCA/21/48 HOMES ENGLAND 2021/22 COMPLIANCE AUDIT PROGRAMME - IPSWICH ROAD, BRANTHAM**

104.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Osborne to introduce the report.

104.2 Councillor Osborne provided an overview of the report and proposed the recommendation, as detailed in the report.

104.3 Councillor Busby seconded the recommendation.

104.4 Members debated the issues including that this development was an exemplar in design and demonstrated a creative approach to regeneration and that the scale of the scheme made it acceptable to residents.

**It was RESOLVED: -**

**That Babergh District Council formally acknowledged the compliance audit received from Homes England in relation to the affordable housing development at Ipswich Road, Brantham.**

**REASON FOR DECISION**

To meet the obligations set out in the funding agreement between the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England) and Babergh District Council in relation

to the Shared Ownership Affordable Homes Programme 2016-2021.

**105 BCA/21/49 COUNCIL TAX ENERGY REBATE 2022/23**

- 105.1 The Chain invited the Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Barrett to introduce the report.
- 105.2 Councillor Barrett provided a summary of the Council Tax Energy Rebate and proposed the recommendations, as detailed in the report.
- 105.3 Councillor Ward seconded the recommendations.
- 105.4 Councillor Arthey was concerned for the discretionary element of the recommendations.
- 105.5 Councillor Busby queried the payment timeline for the Council Tax Energy Rebate and the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources clarified the circumstances for the receipts for the Government funding and the payment dates.
- 105.6 Councillor Osborne asked for details for the discretionary part of the rebate payments and the SRP Operations Manager stated that the payment of £150 would be paid to around 950 households and that there was a small discretionally fund available for additional rebates.
- 105.7 In response to questions from other Members attending the meeting the SRP Operations Officer detailed the methods applied by the Council to identify primary residents in the area and how they would receive the rebate of £150. The determination of holiday homes registered, as a main residence, would depend on data matching however, the Council did not have access to data outside the area. The Council was reliant on the information provided by customers, such a matching electoral roll registrations with council tax payments and against those registered as paying the full council tax charges. In addition, the Government was undertaking work around records matching and multiple payments to account holders across the country.
- 105.8 During the debate Councillor Arthey raised his concern for the criteria for the discretionary scheme and that Cabinet should provide a steer on the scheme before it being implemented. He proposed an amended recommendation for 3.1 to be replaced by Option 2 in the report.
- 105.9 Councillor Osborne seconded the proposed amendment.
- 105.10 Members debated the amendment and some Members thought that the proposed amendment would delay the distribution of funding and over complicate the process required to implement the scheme to residents, who were in need of assistance.
- 105.11 The Monitoring Officer provided procedural advice on how to proceed with

the proposed amendment.

- 105.12 Upon the advice received from the Monitoring Officer the Cabinet Member for Finance stated that the Option 2 proposal was too bureaucratic to achieve the overall goal of providing financial assistance to residents, and he reassured Members that he would follow the steer from Cabinet in relation to payments from the discretionary scheme.
- 105.13 Councillor Arthey stated that he was satisfied that as long as the Cabinet Member for Finance followed the steer provided by Members of the Cabinet, he would withdraw his proposal for an amendment, which was supported by the seconder, Councillor Osborne.
- 105.14 Councillor Holt asked that the SRP Operations Officer and the Cabinet Member for Finance put the details of the Discretionary Scheme before Members in due course.

**It was RESOLVED: -**

- 1.1 That Cabinet gave authority to the Assistant Director for Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance to agree the discretionary Council Tax Energy Policy, in accordance with the relevant Government guidelines.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet gave authority to the Shared Revenues Partnership (SRP) Operations Manager to administer the scheme for the Council Tax Energy Rebate and the discretionary Council Tax Energy Policy.**

#### **REASON FOR DECISION**

To provide support to households to pay energy bills.

To enable the implementation of the discretionary policy.

#### **106 BCA/21/50 BMSDC SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL VISION & LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN**

- 106.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Travel, Councillor Malvisi to introduce the report.
- 106.2 Councillor Malvisi provided an overview of the report and thanked the officers for their work.
- 106.3 Councillor Malvisi proposed the recommendations in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Barrett.
- 106.4 Councillor Arthey queried how the BMSDC Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) tied in with Suffolk County Council (SCC) CLWIP.
- 106.5 The Sustainable Travel Officer responded to this query and additional

questions from Councillor Arthey by detailing that SCC had encouraged all boroughs and districts to produce an LCWIP, which could be merged together to supersede the SCC LCWIP and that SCC did not have any say in the individual LCWIPs. In terms of funding the highway projects it was likely that SCC did not have the funding and might submit Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) bids to enable the projects to go ahead. Further that funding would be collaborative between Government funding and other funding streams such as CIL.

- 106.6 In response to further questions from Councillor Ward, the Sustainable Travel Officer explained that there was a complex delivery process and that this could involve providing a steer to SCC on some projects. However, some projects could be provided by Babergh District Council, such as cycling storage and locker facilities in villages to encourage visitors.
- 106.7 Councillor Busby and Councillor Holt queried the method of prioritisation of the projects and how the LCWIP list of schemes would be brought forward for funding and implementation.
- 106.8 The Assistant Director for Environment and Commercial Partnerships explained that a cross party group would be looking at the list of schemes before SCC would evaluate and determine which schemes could be progressed, depending on the available funding. The list of schemes would be continually updated.
- 106.9 In a response to Councillor Dawson's question relating to the short-, medium- and long-term projects, the Sustainable Travel officer detailed the scoring criteria and methodology provided by the Government and advised that it had been slightly adjusted to provide scoring for rural areas.
- 106.10 Councillor Barrett referenced the identified projects list and queried whether some universally acknowledge unsuitable projects could be removed.
- 106.11 The Assistant Director for Environment and Commercial Partnerships stated there were currently a number of consultations being undertaken and that projects would remain on the list until they have been concluded.
- 106.12 Members continued to pose questions to the Officers including the Gainsborough Walk, the unfair disproportion of the locations in relation to deliverability, inclusion of the level of costs in the infrastructure maps, Government funding and respective fund matching by the Council and consideration of issues around getting safe routes to schools in relation to the LCWIP.
- 106.13 Councillor Busby withdrew his seconding of the proposed recommendations as he was not satisfied that the scheme included all the proposed projects listed in the LCWIP.
- 106.14 Councillor Ward seconded the recommendations as detailed in the report.
- 106.15 The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable

Travel stated that Cabinet was endorsing the LCWPI Strategy and not agreeing the list of schemes in the document.

**It was RESOLVED: -**

- 1.1 That the joint Councils' draft LCWIP and Sustainable Transport vision be endorsed.**
- 1.2 That the completion of the final documentation be delegated to the Assistant Director for Economic Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Travel.**

**REASON FOR DECISION**

Endorsement is recommended so that the LCWIP can be supported and utilised as recommended by National Government guidance. The Sustainable Travel Vision will be used to inform the public about our key values, aims, ambitions and narrative around Sustainable Travel. The LCWIP will also be made public, but the key functions of this document are to inform SCC Highways and our own planning directorate of our active travel infrastructure ambitions, in order to capture opportunity for delivery.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 3:19pm.

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Chair