

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual meeting of the **BABERGH COUNCIL** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Wednesday, 25 May 2022

PRESENT:

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

Officers:	Chief Executive (AC) Monitoring Officer (EY) Assistant Director – Corporate Resources (ME) Corporate Manager – Governance and Civic Office (JR)
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Apologies:

Kathryn Grandon
John Hinton

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

- 1.1 On the proposal of Councillor Arthey and seconded by Councillor Ward, Councillor Kathryn Grandon was nominated for the position of Chair of the Council.
- 1.2 On the proposal of Councillor Simon Barrett and seconded by Councillor Norman, Councillor Sue Ayres was nominated for the position of Chair of the Council.
- 1.3 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 20 votes for and 10 votes against.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Kathryn Grandon be elected as Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2022/23.

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

- 2.1 On the proposal of Councillor Clive Arthey and seconded by Councillor Gould, Councillor Derek Davis was nominated for the position of Vice Chair of the Council.
- 2.2 This nomination was **PUT** to the Council for voting and by 18 votes for, 9 votes against and 3 abstentions.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Derek Davis be elected as Vice Chairman of Babergh District Council for the municipal year 2022/23.

- 2.3 Councillor Davis thereupon made his Declaration of Office.
- 2.4 Councillor Davis thanked everyone who had voted for him and paid tribute to the outgoing Chair, Councillor Adrian Osborne for giving 'a good innings' and being a credit to Babergh District Council during challenging and difficult times.
- 2.5 Councillor Davis took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interests by Councillors.

4 BC/22/1 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MARCH 2022

It was RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2022 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

5 BC/22/2 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND LEADER

- 5.1 The report from the Chairman was noted.
- 5.2 The Vice-Chairman invited Councillor Ward to present his report as Leader of the Council.
- 5.3 Councillor Ward made the following announcements:

LU & Regeneration Bill

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill was announced in the Queen's Speech earlier this month. The bill is a long one: it has 11 parts to it and 338 pages, but I just want to highlight a few of the proposals in the Planning and Infrastructure Levy parts.

It specified a number of amendments to existing legislation regarding planning and local plans, for example:

- local plans will be simplified by providing national policies in general areas so there is no need for local policies
- there will be mandatory design codes
- plan making will be streamlined by:
 - gateway checks on plans before examination
 - replacing the LDS with a simpler Local Plan Timetable process
 - And the 5YLS requirements for the first 5 years of a plan will be removed

All these amendments are designed to ensure that it takes no longer than 30 months to produce a plan.

There will be a new infrastructure levy, replacing CIL:

- It will be locally set and collected
- It will be charged on the sale value of a property; the threshold will provide a build cost allowance to negate viability debates
- There will be a new right to require an affordable percentage
- The neighbourhood share retained
- The Infrastructure Delivery Strategy will specify use of the levy with priorities; there will be a duty to engage with providers

He could provide a more detailed summary for anyone who would like it.

What's Next for Sudbury Exhibition

You will have seen last week's media release that we will be holding a new public exhibition showcasing plans and proposals for Sudbury next month. This will update residents on progress on several projects since our last exhibition in January 2020.

While we focused on providing support for our communities and businesses during the Covid lockdowns, we also made progress on our plans, particularly the regeneration of the Hamilton Road Quarter, which is a very complex and difficult scheme.

Visitors to the exhibition will be able to get an update on plans for the future of Market Hill, development of the Hamilton Road Quarter and the new café at Belle Vue Park, developments on the Virtual High Street and the new Innovation Lab in Borehamgate which will provide a resource for start-up and small businesses. There will also be a range of other initiatives and projects on show, including Gainsborough's House, St Peter's Church and the solar car port in the Station Road car park.

Finally, visitors will also see the new initiatives from the Bridge Project and will be able to find out about the work of the Sudbury Culture Group which promotes the town's attractions and heritage.

He was sure it would be a great success and generate a lot of comment and feedback.

Careeriosity

Our next Careeriosity event takes place in Sudbury on the 1st June. Careeriosity is a skills and education initiative for young people aged 13- 24 led by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, which aims to inform young people about the fantastic and varied range of jobs available in Suffolk and how to access them. The Sudbury event is about the marketing industry and is being hosted by branding & marketing agency Mackman group in Meadow Lane, who are really committed to the event. Feedback from past events has been excellent and those attending have found them worthwhile and meaningful. More information can be found on the website. So please encourage any young people you know to attend and mention it to schools and youth groups if you get a chance.

Sudbury ATM

And finally, yesterday evening the Chief Executive and I were kindly invited to the Sudbury Annual Town Meeting to tell everyone what Babergh has been up to in the past year. Now I am used to getting quite a warm welcome when I go to my parishes and my ward, indeed only last week at a fairly full church in Higham after I delivered my annual report, I got a round of applause. So, it was with some surprise and gratitude that following an hour of giving our reports and taking questions we also received a round of applause from the attendees at the annual town meeting, it was very worthwhile event, there were some very good questions and everyone was really appreciative of the fact that we are trying our best to engage more with the town and improve what has admittedly at times been a fractious relationship. I had a good chat with the clerk and also the new Mayor Ellen Murphy and she was very appreciative of the fact that we put in the effort to do that, and they were very interested in what we had to say so all in all a very good evening for us both.

6 DESIGNATION OF COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES

6.1 On the proposal of Councillor Carpendale and seconded by Councillor Ward,

It was RESOLVED:

That the following Committees and Joint Committees be appointed:

- **Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
- **Planning Committee**
- **Babergh Licensing and Regulatory Committee**
- **Joint Audit and Standards Committee**
- **Joint Appointments Committee**

BC/22/3 POLITICAL BALANCE AND COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEES

- 7.1 Councillor Beer questioned the allocation of placements on the Planning Committee.
- 7.2 The Monitoring Officer confirmed the rules for political proportionality of committees and confirmed that the allocation of placements was correct.
- 7.3 Councillor Busby **Proposed** the recommendation contain in the report which was **Seconded** by Councillor Plumb.
- 7.4 Councillor Beer **Proposed** an amendment to the recommendation to increase the membership of the Conservatives from 3 to 4 seats and decrease the membership of Independent Conservatives from 2 to 1 seat on the Planning Committee and to change one seat on the Joint Audit and Standards Committee from Conservative to Independent Conservative. This was **Seconded** by Councillor Dawson.
- 7.5 This amendment was rejected by Councillor Busby and Councillor Plumb as proposer and seconder of the original recommendation.
- 7.6 The Monitoring Officer clarified that the amendment proposed was for the planning committee to remain at 11 places, the Conservative group would have 4 of those places and the Independent Conservative group would have 1 place and the Joint Audit and Standards Committee would remain at 5 places, the Conservative group would have 1 place and the Independent Conservative group would have 1 place. However, as the Independent Conservatives have 3 out of their 4 members on Cabinet, they would not be able to fill the 2 seats on the Joint Audit and Standards Committee.
- 7.7 By a vote of 10 votes for and 20 votes against the amendment was lost.
- 7.8 The original recommendations were **PUT** to the Council for voting, by a vote of 20 votes for and 10 votes against,

It was RESOLVED:

- 1.1 **That the Committees' size and numerical allocation of seats be approved as detailed in Appendix A to the report.**
- 1.2 **That Committee members be appointed as set out in Appendix B to the report.**

ELECTION OF CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES

- 8.1 On the proposal of Councillor Ward and seconded by Councillor Arthey, Councillor John Hinton was nominated for the position of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

8.2 On the proposal of Councillor Sue Ayres and seconded by Councillor Maybury, Councillor Sian Dawson was nominated for the position of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

8.3 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting, by a vote of 20 votes for and 10 votes against.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor John Hinton be elected as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

8.4 On the proposal of Councillor Ward and seconded by Councillor McCraw, Councillor Adrian Osborne was nominated for the position of Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

8.5 The nomination was **PUT** to the Council, by a vote of 20 votes for, 9 votes against and 1 abstention.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Adrian Osborne be elected as Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

8.6 On the proposal of Councillor Ward and seconded by Councillor Arthey, Councillor Stephen Plumb was nominated for the position of Chair of the Planning Committee.

8.7 On the proposal of Councillor Simon Barrett and seconded by Councillor Norman, Councillor Peter Beer was nominated for the position of Chair of the Planning Committee.

8.8 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 20 votes for and 10 votes against.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Stephen Plumb be elected as Chair of the Planning Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

8.9 On the proposal of Councillor Plumb and seconded by Councillor Arthey, Councillor Leigh Jamieson was nominated for the position of Vice Chair of the Planning Committee.

8.10 The nomination was **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 21 votes for and 9 votes against.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Leigh Jamieson be elected as Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

8.11 On the proposal of Councillor Arthey and seconded by Councillor Lindsay, Councillor Lee Parker was nominated for the position of Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee.

8.12 On the proposal of Councillor Beer and seconded by Councillor Holt, Councillor Margaret Maybury was nominated for the position of Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee.

8.13 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 18 votes for and 12 against,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Lee Parker be elected as Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

8.14 On the proposal of Councillor Hurren and seconded by Councillor Malvisi, Councillor Sue Carpendale was nominated for the position of Vice Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee.

8.15 The nomination was **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 22 votes for, 6 against and 2 abstentions,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Sue Carpendale be elected as Vice-Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

8.16 On the proposal of Councillor Carpendale and seconded by Councillor Busby, Councillor Bryn Hurren was nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Joint Audit and Standards Committee.

8.17 The nomination was **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 22 votes for, 5 against and 3 abstentions,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Bryn Hurren be elected as Co-Chair of the Joint Audit and Standards Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

8.18 On the proposal of Councillor McCraw and seconded by Councillor Ward, Councillor Clive Arthey was nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Joint Appointments Committee.

8.19 The nomination was **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 20 votes for and 10 votes against,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Clive Arthey be elected as Co-Chair of the Joint Appointments Committee for the municipal year 2022/23.

9 BC/22/4 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES FOR 2022/23

9.1 Councillor Ward introduced the report and asked for someone to take up the second position on the East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board and for a replacement for Councillor McLaren on the Suffolk Violence and Abuse Partnership.

9.2 Councillor Maybury volunteered to take up both positions.

9.3 On the proposal of Councillor Ward and seconded by Councillor Arthey,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillors be appointed to the Outside Bodies detailed below:

NAME OF BODY OR PANEL	NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES TO BE APPOINTED	NAME OF MEMBER NOMINATED
Association for Suffolk Museums	1	John Nunn
East of England Assembly of Leaders	1	The Leader
East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board	2	Alistair McCraw Margaret Maybury
Gainsborough House Society	1	Simon Barrett
Greenways Countryside Project JAC	2	Ric Hardacre Zachary Norman
Ipswich and District Citizens Advice Bureau	1 (observer)	Bryn Hurren
Ipswich Strategic Planning Area Board	1 (+1 substitute)	Lee Parker (Sub: Clive Arthey)
Joint Advisory Committee and Partnership to Dedham Vale (AONB)	2	John Nunn Derek Davis
Joint Advisory Committee and Partnership to Suffolk Coast and Heath	2	John Nunn Derek Davis

Local Government Association – Sparse	1	John Ward
Local Government Association Assembly	1	The Leader
Pin Mill Bay Management Community Interest Company	1	Bryn Hurren
Sudbury and District Citizens Advice Bureau	2 (observers)	Adrian Osborne Alison Owen
Suffolk Coastal Forum	1	Derek Davis
Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee	1 (+1 substitute)	Alistair McCraw (Sub: Jane Gould)
Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board	1 (+1 substitute)	Mary McLaren (Sub: Jane Gould)
Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee	1 (+1 substitute)	Margaret Maybury (Sub: Sue Ayres)
Suffolk Police and Crime Panel	1	Peter Beer
Suffolk Violence and Abuse Partnership	1	Margaret Maybury
Suffolk Waste Partnership	1	Clive Arthey
The Quay Theatre Sudbury Board of Trustees Observer	1	Melanie Barrett
Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership	1 (+1 substitute)	Derek Davis (Sub: Melanie Barrett)

10 APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO THE SHARED REVENUES PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

10.1 On the proposal of Councillor Adrian Osborne and seconded by Councillor McLaren,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillors Jan Osborne and Alastair McCraw be appointed as members of the Shared Revenues Partnership Joint Committee and that Councillors John Ward and Clive Arthey be appointed as substitute members for the municipal year 2022/23.

11 APPOINTMENTS TO THE SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS BOARD

- 11.1 Councillor Arthey nominated Lee Parker to fill the vacancy on the Suffolk Joint Standards Board, which was seconded by Councillor Hurren.
- 11.2 The positions on the Suffolk Joint Standards Board as detailed in the tabled papers, with the inclusion of Councillor Parker were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillors Bryn Hurren, Adrian Osborne and Lee Parker be appointed as members of the Suffolk Joint Standards Board for the municipal year 2022/23.

12 APPOINTMENTS TO THE JOINT GYPSY AND TRAVELLER STEERING GROUP

- 12.1 On the proposal of Councillor Jan Osborne and seconded by Councillor Hurren,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillors Sue Ayres, Lee Parker, Jane Gould and Alison Owen be appointed to the Joint Gypsy and Traveller Steering Group for the municipal year 2022/23.

13 APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS

- 13.1 On the proposal of Councillor Arthey and seconded by Councillor McCraw,

It was RESOLVED:

- 1.1 **That Councillors Zac Norman and Lee Parker be appointed to the Community Governance Review Working Group.**
- 1.2 **That Councillors Dave Busby, Stephen Plumb and Elisabeth Malvisi be appointed to the Constitution Working Group.**
- 1.3 **That Councillors Sue Carpendale, Adrian Osborne and Derek Davis be appointed to the Member Learning and Development Working Group.**
- 1.4 **That Councillors Clive Arthey, Sue Carpendale, Peter Beer, Leigh Jamieson, John Ward and Dave Busby (substitute) be appointed to the Local Plan Working Group.**

14 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

- 14.1 The Vice-Chair invited Mr Ferguson, a member of the public to ask his question to the Leader of the Council.

Question 1 Mr Ferguson to Councillor Ward, Leader of the Council

My question to Cllr Ward refers to the introduction of revised car parking charges in Babergh. Cabinet Minutes from last year show that as Leader of Babergh District Council and the Conservative Group, you originally supported a Cabinet decision to introduce increased car parking charges in the District. Subsequently you changed your position on this matter when, with the support of additional Conservative Cabinet members, it was agreed that increased car parking charges would not be introduced in the foreseeable future. As you have now resigned from the Conservative Group and crossed the floor to become an Independent Member of Babergh District Council, have you changed your most recent position on car parking, namely, that Babergh District Council will not introduce additional car parking charges in the remaining period of this current Administration.

Response

Thank you for your question, Mr Ferguson regarding the vexed matter of car parking charges. Firstly, I would like to say that I am not an Independent councillor: like you and several others currently in this chamber were, I am an Independent Conservative councillor.

I do acknowledge that this is the most controversial and divisive decision that Babergh has ever made and so I would first briefly like to provide a reminder of the original Cabinet decision in February 2021. Currently, we have three hours free parking, with a limit of three hours in short-stay car parks and charges for stays longer than this in long-stay car parks. The changes we approved will reduce this free period to one hour, with very modest charges of between £1 and £2 for stays between one and three hours, depending on location. The average dwell time in our town car parks is 64 minutes and so a large number of users would be unaffected by this change.

As you are aware, the Cabinet decision had cross-party support as, indeed, did the 2021/22 budget which included the financial impact based on a proposed implementation start date of July 2021. As a result of the then ongoing effects of the Covid pandemic, the Conservative group changed its mind, and the start date was postponed in the autumn of last year.

Irrespective of my personal view, the Cabinet decision from February 2021 still stands. The implementation date has not been decided yet but will be announced well in advance of new charges being introduced.

Supplementary Question

The Council's declared intention to start developing the old council accommodation at corks lane later this year, can you tell me how Babergh intends to replace the about 100 car parking places across the river that will be lost as the current car parks are now at full capacity even without the planned growth and there does not appear to be any alternative site available in Hadleigh.

Response

This is not really a supplementary to your original question however, what I will say is that the car parking to which you are referring to are not official parking spaces and when I have passed by, and I do several times a week, those car parking areas are not heavily utilised and in any event we have carried out surveys on the official car parks in Hadleigh which show that there is plenty spare capacity on pretty much every day of the week.

15 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13

15.1 The Vice-Chair invited Councillor Dawson to ask her question to Councillor Busby, Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets and Investments.

Question 1 Councillor Dawson to Councillor Busby, Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets and Investments

At last year's Full Council on 18th Nov, I requested clarification on the financial position of Corks Lane. On 4th Jan, 2022 as Cabinet Member for Assets and Investments you provided a breakdown summary of the full annual running costs £500/- (against a budget cost of £342/-) and future recalculated development costs £13m, (against a budget of £12.9m). You advised development works would commence Spring 2022. As we are now past that development date again, please could you provide a definitive date when this project is expected to commence?

Response

Thank you for your question relating to the former HQ property in Corks Lane, Hadleigh. A report is tabled for the Cabinet in June to consider the next steps in relation to this development which, subject to the Cabinet's decision, could mean that works could start on site in August.

Supplementary question

I think as Ward Councillor, it has been very damaging so what bothers me is the approach agreed by the Cabinet in December 2018 would enable the scheme to be brought forward quickly using a construction group, this would overcome the necessity for a lengthy procurement and in December you said this would be coming forward and here we are in May, and we haven't heard anything. The risk management describes the description cannot be delivered on budget or within time scales and any delay could lead to increased costs, this was considered unlikely however I believe the timing is significantly delayed and materials and everything have increased from 18 to 35 percent so therefore I think the figures given for capital funding is not going to be sufficient. Would you not agree with that?

Response

No, the £3.77 million is the borrowing ceiling that we are referring to, the costs are in the region of about £13 million. Depending upon the phasing of the work, depends on how much borrowing that you need at any one particular point in time. If you do the work quickly you need a higher borrowing requirement, but you can be more certain about the overall price because contractors will hold their prices if we spread the work over a longer period, we can work with a lower debt requirement but we cannot guarantee the prices.

Question 2 Councillor Beer to Councillor Arthey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning

Could you advise me and the tax payers of Babergh if the extra hundred thousand pounds allocated in the budget for the Joint local Plan is good value for our residents as we seem unable to deliver a satisfactory scheme?

Response

Thank you for your question and the answer is yes, our planning teams have done a fantastic job during a difficult couple of years and the cost of the Joint Local Plan is good value for our residents who I believe expect some certainty for the future of Babergh and consistency in our decision making. As a former chairman of the planning committee and a member of the cross-party working group that helped to develop the plan for submission, I would have thought you would be aware that we are now in the hands of the planning inspector for examination and modifications which will be subject to public consultation later this year.

Supplementary question

How much extra money will the Joint Local Plan cost, since the inspector gave instructions to officers to review and resubmit the plan?

Response

I don't know that amount yet and I don't suppose anybody else does either, we know it is going to cost more money because we have got more work to do. I can try and get you a more accurate figure probably later in the year.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 7.08 pm.

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Chair