

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK COUNCIL** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Thursday, 26 May 2022

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Oliver Amorowson	Gerard Brewster
	David Burn	Terence Carter
	James Caston	Austin Davies
	Rachel Eburne	Paul Ekpenyong
	John Field	Julie Flatman
	Jessica Fleming	Dr Helen Geake
	Peter Gould	Kathie Guthrie
	Lavinia Hadingham	Matthew Hicks
	Barry Humphreys	Sarah Mansel
	John Matthissen	Andrew Mellen
	Richard Meyer	Suzie Morley
	David Muller	Penny Otton
	Timothy Passmore	Harry Richardson
	Keith Scarff	Andrew Stringer
	Rowland Warboys	Keith Welham
	John Whitehead	

In attendance:

Officers:

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

Apologies:

Mike Norris
Stephen Phillips
Dr Daniel Pratt

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

- 1.1 On the proposal of Councillor Morley and seconded by Councillor Hadingham, Councillor James Caston was nominated for the position of Chairman of the Council.
- 1.2 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Eburne, Councillor John Field was nominated for the position of Chairman of the Council.
- 1.3 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 17 votes for and 13 votes against,

It was RESOLVED:

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

- 1.4 Before vacating the chair, Councillor Ekpenyong Councillor Ekpenyong congratulated Councillor Caston on being elected as Chair. Councillor Ekpenyong thanked Karen Sayer, Civic Officer for providing support during his chairmanship and announced that a cheque for £1,565 had been presented to his charity.
- 1.5 Councillor Ekpenyong also thanked other officers for their support in Council meetings.
- 1.6 Councillor Caston thereupon made his Declaration of Office.
- 1.7 Councillor Caston thanked everyone who had voted for him and paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman, Councillor Ekpenyong for chairing the Council with distinction through the pandemic, providing an excellent example of how the duty should be carried out.
- 1.8 Councillor Caston also announced that his chosen charity for his term of office was Stowmarket ASD Saturday Club, which supports five to eleven year olds with Autism.

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

- 2.1 On the proposal of Councillor Flatman and seconded by Councillor Hadingham, Councillor Ekpenyong was nominated for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- 2.2 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Field, Councillor Rowland Warboys was nominated for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- 2.3 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting, by 17 votes for and 14 votes against,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Paul Ekpenyong be elected as Vice-Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2022/23.

- 2.4 Councillor Ekpenyong thereupon made his Declaration of Office.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interests by Councillors.

4 MC/22/1 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2022

It was RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2022 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

5 MC/22/2 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5.1 The report was noted.

6 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

6.1 Councillor Morley introduced her report and made the following announcements.

6.2 As always, I want to highlight some of the fantastic things the Council has been delivering since we last met, but I also want to begin by acknowledging how wonderful it is to be able to hold our Annual Council meeting in our Council Chamber with so few Covid restrictions. I say 'few' because whilst it is great to see some sense of normality has returned, we must also be mindful that Covid hasn't suddenly disappeared. The arrival and spread of monkeypox is perhaps a useful reminder of how quickly such things can spread in humans in today's society. Most importantly though, there are still those in our communities in Mid Suffolk, and in our own cohort of Councillors, who are more vulnerable and so it is our duty to continue to try and keep everyone safe and well.

6.3 I also wanted to begin by again reiterating our thoughts and support for the people of Ukraine. I know we have consistently done this at our Council meetings, and I know we are all united in this regard. I feel it is vitally important though that we continue to ensure that the war remains in the spotlight and at the front of our minds. Suffolk as a whole, and Mid Suffolk in particular is playing its part as the public sector in welcoming and supporting those refugees who are fortunate enough to have escaped and come here. And I also want to pay tribute to the generosity and compassion of our residents who have flung open their homes, and whole communities, to our Ukrainian friends.

6.4 Away from the national stage, and of far less importance in the grand scheme of things, it was wonderful to be at the opening of the Duck & Teapot at Needham Lake. It is unbelievable to think that this is the delivery of a 20 year ambition for the town. Although we wouldn't have wished the provider there to have been overwhelmed in their first week, it is a really positive sign of the support and level of demand that so many people have flocked there. I know the provider has made changes to be able to cater for the level of demand and will especially be increasing capacity for the forthcoming bank holidays.

6.5 Absolutely vital to this new facility is not just the catering aspect of course but also the brand-new Changing Places facilities. And it is wonderful news that we have been successful in our bid to secure funding for two more Changing Places facilities, at the Food Museum in Stowmarket, and at Stradbroke Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre. This is of course in addition to the over £1m that we paid across to 49 towns and parishes in April from the Community Infrastructure Levy to ensure other vital local infrastructure can continue to be improved or added across Mid Suffolk.

6.6 Of course, the other major news since we last met was the start of infrastructure works at Gateway 14. I was immensely proud to be asked to put the first spade in the ground on site on behalf of all of you. I will not go on now about how wonderful Gateway 14 will be for our residents, for employment, for skills, for Stowmarket, for the whole district, and for the wider Freeport area; but this is our largest single investment in recent years (if not ever) as Mid Suffolk to directly deliver an economic stimulus that will build a thriving and more sustainable future for our residents. I know we are all looking forward to celebrating the next milestones in this project as the site begins to take shape. Gateway 14, however, doesn't sit alone and is of course part of our wider strategic approach, particularly to restarting and regrowing our local economy following the pandemic. I can only echo Councillor Brewster's words as he launched our 'Economic Recovery Plan' last month:

"Our ambition is to support strong growth across the district, to encourage innovation and creativity, to upskill our communities and help stimulate a wide range of job opportunities. To achieve this, we need to continue building strong working relationships with a range of partners, encouraging investment, connecting our communities and promoting our towns and villages as places that people want to call home."

6.7 One of key aspects of our economy in this region is Energy. With Bacton, Sizewell and Off-shore wind, as well as an increasing number of local energy schemes, it is hard not to see us as powering the nation! And of course energy and in particularly energy prices have become international news over recent months.

6.8 Whilst the energy itself is important, so too is how that electricity is transported. As you will know we are currently being consulted as part of National Grid's East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project, which is a proposal to build a new high voltage network reinforcement between Norwich, Bramford and Tilbury. This is just the first stage of consultation for this project, but it has the potential to have a significant impact on large swaths of our district.

6.9 As such, I have already been engaging with our local MP, Dan Poulter and I was really pleased that we were able to provide a briefing for all of our Towns and Parishes earlier this week. Cabinet is due to consider the issue in detail on Monday 6th June on behalf of the Council. However, I do not believe this is, nor should be, a party-political matter and as such I have ensured that there will be the opportunity for all Councillors to speak and help shape the Council's response to the consultation at that meeting.

- 6.10 Having said that I do not want to pre-empt that debate I do also feel it is safe to say that many of us and our communities believe that the best option would be for the power to be transported under the sea rather than across land. I am looking forward to having the fuller discussion though on 6th June.
- 6.11 In the meantime, although it is unusual to single out individual officers for praise at Council meetings, I would like to take this opportunity to put on public record our thanks to Bron Curtis whose expertise and professionalism in all things relating to energy and planning continues to be invaluable to us. Thank you Bron.
- 6.12 Of course I can't talk about energy without also mentioning the cost of living crisis. I am hopeful that during the course of today, whilst writing my speech, the Chancellor will have announced a further package of support for those most in need; going beyond the payments of £150 which we are already administering for those in Council Tax Bands A to D. In addition to that though we have just published our own draft emergency 5-point plan to help tackle the crisis over the next 6 months. This again is due to be debated at the same Cabinet meeting on 6th June and I would encourage as many of you as possible to attend to ask questions.
- 6.13 Finally on a much lighter, and more celebratory, note we of course have the Queen's Jubilee and bank holidays next week. There are a plethora of activities going on across the district and the bunting will be out everywhere. I know you will all want to promote the celebrations happening in your wards both next week and as part of the wider Festival of Suffolk throughout the year. And I hope you will all be able to join me roadside, following Cabinet on 6th June, to cheer on the cyclists as the Women's Tour again flies through Mid Suffolk.
- 6.14 Councillor Mellen stated that he was grateful the opportunity for members affected by the National Grid's East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project to contribute to the upcoming Cabinet meeting and asked if their comments would be able to amend what the Council is going to respond to the consultation.
- 6.15 Councillor Morley replied that everyone had the opportunity of putting in their own representations online independently of the Councils response.

7 DESIGNATION OF COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES

7.1 On the proposal of Councillor Richardson and seconded by Councillor Morley,

It was RESOLVED:

That the following Committees and Joint Committees be appointed:

- **Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
- **Development Control Committee A**

- **Development Control Committee B**
- **Planning Referrals Committee**
- **Mid Suffolk Licensing and Regulatory Committee**
- **Joint Audit and Standards Committee**
- **Joint Appointments Committee**

8 MC/22/3 POLITICAL BALANCE AND COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEES

8.1 The Monitoring Officer introduced the report.

8.2 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Muller,

It was RESOLVED:

1.1 That the Committees' size and numerical allocation of seats be approved as detailed in Appendix A of the report.

1.2 That Committee Members be appointed as set out in Appendix B to the report.

9 ELECTION OF CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES

9.1 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Morley,

It was RESOLVED:

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

9.2 Councillor Caston left the meeting during the election of Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Councillor Ekpenyong took the chair for this item.

9.3 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Field, a nomination for Councillor Keith Scarff to be Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee was tabled.

9.4 On the proposal of Councillor Muller and seconded by Councillor Guthrie, a nomination for Councillor Caston to be Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee was tabled.

9.5 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor James Caston be elected as Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal year 2022/23.

9.6 On the proposal of Councillor Meyer and seconded by Councillor Morley, a nomination for Councillor Hicks to be Chair of Development Control Committee A was tabled.

9.7 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Davies, a nomination for Councillor Mansel to be Chair of Development Control Committee A was tabled.

9.8 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Matthew Hicks be elected as Chair of the Development Control Committee A for the municipal year 2022/23.

9.9 On the proposal of Councillor Muller and seconded by Councillor Hadingham, a nomination for Councillor Humphreys to be Vice-Chair of Development Control Committee A was tabled.

9.10 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Davies, a nomination for Councillor Mansel to be Vice-Chair of Development Control Committee A was tabled.

9.11 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Barry Humphreys be elected as Vice-Chair of the Development Control Committee A for the municipal year 2022/23.

9.12 On the proposal of Councillor Muller and seconded by Councillor Burn, a nomination for Councillor Guthrie to be Chair of Development Control Committee B was tabled.

9.13 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Field, a nomination for Councillor Stringer to be Chair of Development Control Committee B was tabled.

9.14 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Kathie Guthrie be elected as Chair of the Development Control Committee B for the municipal year 2022/23.

9.15 On the proposal of Councillor Guthrie and seconded by Councillor Hicks, a nomination for Councillor Muller to be Vice-Chair of Development Control Committee B was tabled.

9.16 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Amorowson, a nomination for Councillor Stringer to be Vice-Chair of Development Control Committee B was tabled.

9.17 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Dave Muller be elected as Vice-Chair of the Development Control Committee B for the municipal year 2022/23.

9.18 On the proposal of Councillor Fleming and seconded by Councillor Morley, a nomination for Councillor Guthrie to be Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committee was tabled.

9.19 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Field, a nomination for Councillor Otton to be Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committee was tabled.

9.20 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

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

9.21 On the proposal of Councillor Guthrie and seconded by Councillor Flatman, a nomination for Councillor Muller to be Vice-Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committee was tabled.

9.22 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Mansel, a nomination for Councillor Otton to be Vice-Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committee was tabled.

9.23 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

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

9.24 On the proposal of Councillor Whitehead and seconded by Councillor Morley, a nomination for Councillor Muller to be Co-Chair of Joint Audit and Standards Committee was tabled.

9.25 On the proposal of Councillor Mellen and seconded by Councillor Warboys, a nomination for Councillor Eburne to be Co-Chair of Joint Audit and Standards Committee was tabled.

9.26 The nominations were **PUT** to the Council for voting.

It was RESOLVED:

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

9.27 On the proposal of Councillor Richardson and seconded by Councillor Flatman, a nomination for Councillor Morley to be Co-Chair of the Joint Appointments Committee was tabled.

It was RESOLVED:

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

10 MC/22/4 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES FOR 2022/23

10.1 Councillor Morley introduced the report and proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Richardson.

10.2 The Corporate Manager – Governance and Civic Office drew the Councils attention to the amendments made to the report to remove the Haven Gateway Partnership and amend the name of the Museum of East Anglian Life to the Food Museum.

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillors be appointed to the Outside Bodies detailed below:

NAME OF BODY OR PANEL	NUMBER REPRESENTATIVES BE APPOINTED	OF TO	NAME OF MEMBER NOMINATED
Armed Forces Covenant	1		Barry Humphreys
Association for Suffolk Museums	1		Richard Meyer
East of England Assembly of Leaders	1		The Leader
East of England Local Government Association	1		Suzie Morley
East Suffolk Drainage Board	3		James Caston John Field Keith Welham
East West Rail Consortium	1		Gerard Brewster
Home-Start Mid Suffolk	1		Lavinia Hadingham
Ipswich Strategic Planning Area Board	1 (+1 substitute)		David Burn (Sub: John Field)
Local Government Association – Sparse	1		Suzie Morley
Local Government Association Assembly	1		Suzie Morley Observer: Andy Mellen
Mid Suffolk Domestic Abuse Forum	1		Stephen Phillips
Museum of East Anglian Life Ltd	1 Trustee		Richard Meyer
Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub Committee	1 (+1 substitute)		James Caston (Sub: Keith Welham)
Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board	1 (+1 substitute)		Harry Richardson (Sub: Penny Otton)
Suffolk Health Scrutiny	1 (+1 substitute)		Julie Flatman

Committee		(Sub: Sarah Mansel)
Suffolk Police and Crime Panel	1 (+1 substitute)	Sarah Mansel (Sub: Keith Welham)
Suffolk Violence and Abuse Partnership	1 Trustee	Stephen Phillips
Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP)	1	Jessica Fleming
Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP)	1 (+1 substitute)	Sarah Mansel (Sub: Harry Richardson)

11 APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO THE SHARED REVENUES PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

11.1 On the proposal of Councillor Ekpenyong and seconded by Councillor Richardson,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillors Suzie Morley and John Whitehead be appointed as members of the Shared Revenues Partnership Joint Committee and that Councillors Gerard Brewster and Jessica Fleming be appointed as substitute members for the municipal year 2022/23.

12 APPOINTMENTS TO THE SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS BOARD

12.1 On the proposal of Councillor Eburne and seconded by Councillor Muller,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillors Paul Ekpenyong, John Matthissen and Mike Norris be appointed as members of the Suffolk Joint Standards Board for the municipal year 2022/23.

13 APPOINTMENTS TO THE JOINT GYPSY AND TRAVELLER STEERING GROUP

13.1 On the proposal of Councillor Mansel and seconded by Councillor Geake,

It was RESOLVED:

That Councillors Julie Flatman, John Field, Lavinia Hadingham and Andrew Stringer be appointed to the Joint Gypsy and Traveller Steering Group for the municipal year 2022/23.

14 APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS

14.1 On the proposal of Councillor Muller and seconded by Councillor Richardson,

It was RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That Councillors Suzie Morley, Sarah Mansel, John Whitehead and Penny Otton be appointed to the Community Governance Review Working Group.**
- 1.2 That Councillors Matthew Hicks, Sarah Mansel, Suzie Morley and Keith Scarff be appointed to the Constitution Working Group.**
- 1.3 That Councillors Suzie Morley, Rachel Eburne, Julie Flatman and Stephen Phillips be appointed to the Member Learning and Development Working Group.**
- 1.4 That Councillors David Burn, John Field, Kathie Guthrie and Andrew Stringer be appointed to the Local Plan Working Group.**

The business of the meeting was concluded at 6.34 pm.

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Chair