

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, 7 November 2022

PRESENT:

Councillor: John Ward (Chair)

Councillors: Jan Osborne
David Busby
Alastair McCraw
Clive Arthey
Elisabeth Malvisi
Mary McLaren

In attendance:

Guest(s): Shirley More – Chief Executive of Befriending Scheme
Francis Torrington – the Befriending Scheme

Councillors: John Hinton – Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

Officers: Chief Executive (AC)
Deputy Executive (KN)
Monitoring Officer (IA)
Director – Corporate Resources and Section 151 Officer (ME)
Director – Assets and Investments (EA)
Director – Planning and Building Control (TB)
Housing Transformation Manager (DW)
Professional Lead – Key Sites and Infrastructure (CT)
Spatial Planning Policy Officer (RK)
Assistant Manager – Governance (HH)

Apologies:

Jane Gould

56 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

Councillor Arthey declared an Other Registrable Interest for Item 9 in relation to the Lindsey application in his role as Chair of Lindsey Parish Council. The Monitoring Officers advised that Lindsey Parish Council had not been involved in the CIL process and Councillor Arthey was therefore allowed to speak and vote on the item.

57 BCA/22/28 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 OCTOBER 2022

It was RESOLVED: -

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 3 October 2022 be confirmed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

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

None received.

59 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

None received.

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

There were no matters referred from the Overview and Scrutiny or Joint Audit and Standards Committees.

61 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST

There were no comments made for the Forthcoming Decisions List.

62 BCA/22/29 TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

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

62.2 Councillor Osborne provided an introduction to the report and moved the recommendations as detailed. This was seconded by Councillor Malvisi.

62.3 Councillor McCraw queried why postal and online responses had been separated in the presentation of data. The Housing Transformation Manager clarified that the separation was done for transparency purposes, and to highlight the similarities between online responses and postal responses.

62.4 Councillor McLaren questioned what form the 4-yearly routine inspection would take. The Housing Transformation Manager responded that the Regulator could carry out inspections, and that the new regulations had reduced the 28- days-notice to 48 hours. Whilst details on the format were not yet available it would involve consumer standards and evidencing that these standards were met, and the regulator would have a wider remit and punitive measures.

62.5 In response to Councillor McLaren's questions regarding the memberships of the Tenancy Board Councillor Osborne detailed the arrangements for meetings memberships and the work undertaken to increase membership and to engage with younger people.

62.6 In a response to further questions from Councillor McLaren regarding the Tenancy Board the Housing Transformation Manager explained that a role profile had been developed as part of the strategy, and that the board

currently operated as both a consultative body and a scrutiny body, which tenancy experts had stated should be separate. Therefore, the tenant board and terms of reference require further development.

- 62.7 Councillor McLaren questioned how tenants did not have digital literacy would be able to access the My Home Bulletin and retrieve reports. The Housing Transformation Manager explained that the My Home Bulletin was introduced in 2019 in a response to a tenant satisfactory survey. The bulletin was produced electronically on a monthly basis and paper copies were available upon request.
- 62.8 Members debated the issues surrounding the Tenancy Engagement Strategy including the dark colours on the heading of the dashboard and that the cost-of-living crisis might be a reason why some people disengage with online activities and that the government's Social Housing White Paper, and the resulting legislation would feed into the strategy.
- 62.9 Councillor Osborne stated that the strategy strengthened communication with tenants, and whilst the strategy would not resolve the issues surrounding antisocial behaviour it would be a supporting factor in resolving these issues.
- 62.10 Members continued the debate on the issues including that tenants should not have ownership of the Councils performance and that it was for managers to know and mitigate performance targets, however the purpose and function of the Tenancy Board was to provide an opportunity for tenants to engage with the Council and to express their views and that public services needed the views of its users. Tenants had a lot to offer in contribution to the tenant service.

63 BCA/22/30 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - CIL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME NOVEMBER 2022

- 63.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Planning, Councillor Arthey to introduce the report. The Chair also introduced the Chief Executive of the Befriending Scheme Shirley Moore and Frances Torrington.
- 63.2 Councillor Arthey provided an overview of the first two CIL bids to Members. Shirley Moore was invited to present the Befriending Scheme to the Members.
- 63.3 Councillor Arthey then provided an overview of the third CIL bid and suggested that recommendations 3.1 and 3.2 be taken separately due to his declared interest in recommendation 3.3
- 63.4 Councillor Arthey proposed recommendations 3.1 and 3.2 as detailed in the report which was seconded by Councillor McLaren
- 63.5 Councillor Ward proposed recommendation 3.3, which was seconded by Councillor Osborne.

- 63.6 Councillor Osborne queried whether the car parks would be free of charge. Councillor Arthey responded that as this was from a CIL bid there would be full public access to the car parks with no charge.
- 63.7 In response to Councillor Malvisi's questions regarding the maintenance of car parks, Councillor Arthey confirmed that the applicants would maintain the car parks.
- 63.8 In response to questions from other members attending the meeting Councillor Arthey advised that in Great Waldingfield there had been issues with parking on verges and loss of car parking spaces to EV charging points.

Note: All remaining items refer to bid 3 -The Befriending Scheme.

- 63.9 Councillor J. Osborne commented that the object was not to increase capacity but accessibility of the services.
- 63.10 Councillor Ward advised Cabinet that planning permission had already been granted and that highway issues had been resolved with Suffolk Highways.
- 63.11 In response to Councillor Osborne's questions regarding access to the site and the number of uses of the service the Chief Executive of the Befriending Scheme confirmed that a minibus service was provided for people using the site, and that traffic to the site would be minimal for drop off and pick up. It was anticipated that 25 people per day would make use of the services provided.
- 63.12 In response to further questions from Members, the Chief Executive of the Befriending Scheme confirmed that the service would be available to other organisations within the District. Councillor McCraw queried the size of the plot and was advised it was a numerical land increase from 1.47 to 4.4 acres.
- 63.13 In response to further questions from Councillor McCraw the Chief Executive of the Befriending Scheme confirmed that the organisation was financially viable and accepted the clawback clause, as set out in the CIL bid offer.
- 63.14 Councillor Arthey added that the CIL funding would go towards the infrastructure on the site and provided a breakdown of the cost for the project.
- 63.15 Councillor Malvisi sought clarification on what had happened at the previous site in Assington. Councillor Arthey advised that a break clause was initiated, and that CIL funding required a lease of 25 years minimum, the funding itself was allocated for permanent infrastructure. However, some permanent structure was able to be transported to Lindsay.
- 63.16 Councillor Malvisi stated that that not owning the land would always present a risk to which Councillor Arthey replied that Cabinet was aware of the risks

related to potential future failure. The Chief Executive of the Befriending Scheme advised that the new landlord was supportive of the Scheme and had confirmed that the 5-year ?? would not be enforced.

63.17 In response to Members' questions the Chief Executive of the Befriending Scheme detailed the nature of the services provided by the organisation and how the Scheme was funded.

63.18 Councillor McCraw stated that the safeguards had been put in place to prevent a repeat failure.

63.19 Councillor J. Osborne stated that the risk was outweighed by the benefits provided by the Befriending Scheme and benefitted those who had critical needs.

63.20 Councillor Ward was concerned about the impact on the local community and the issues raised by the Parish Council however, the Chief Executive of the Befriending Society reassured him that steps had been taken to work closer with the Community.

63.21 Councillor Ward voiced agreement that obstacles had been overcome and that the Council must help improve the health and wellbeing of their residents.

63.22

The business of the meeting was concluded at 3:25 pm.

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Chair