

## **BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS**

Minutes of the meeting of the **JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 23 January 2023

### **PRESENT:**

Chair: Keith Welham

Councillors:	Melanie Barrett	Terence Carter
	James Caston	Siân Dawson
	Paul Ekpenyong	Kathryn Grandon
	John Hinton (Co-Chair)	Robert Lindsay
	David Muller BA (Open) MCMI	Adrian Osborne
	RAFA (Councillor)	
	Keith Scarff	Keith Welham (Co-Chair)

### **In attendance:**

Councillor(s): Harry Richardson – Cabinet Member for Economic Growth

Officers: Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change (FD)  
Corporate Manager for Economy and Business (MG)  
Arts and Culture Lead Officer (ZB)  
Corporate Manager for Governance and Civic Officer (JR)  
Lead Officer for Overview and Scrutiny (AN)

### **65 APOLOGIES / SUBSTITUTIONS**

65.1 None received.

### **66 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

66.1 None declared.

### **67 JOS/22/38 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 DECEMBER 2022**

67.1 It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2022 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

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

68.1 None received.

**69 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

69.1 None received.

**70 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

70.1 None received.

**71 JOS/22/39 REVIEW OF THE CULTURE, HERITAGE, AND VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY**

71.1 Councillor Harry Richardson – Mid Suffolk’s Cabinet Member for Economic Growth – introduced the report to the Committee outlining before Members the Corporate Peer Review’s recommendation to develop the strategy and the stakeholder consultation undertaken.

71.2 Councillor Muller questioned if a Food Enterprise Zone was planned for Stowmarket at the Gateway 14 site. The Corporate Manager for Economy and Business responded that this was correct.

71.3 Councillor Osborne raised an issue with the lack of hotel accommodation within Babergh and Mid Suffolk to enable visitors to stay within Suffolk. The Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded that they were aware of this issue and that this would be considered at a later stage in the strategy’s development.

71.4 Councillor Grandon queried if the strategy works in partnership with other local tourism schemes. The Corporate Manager for Economy and Business responded that Babergh and Mid Suffolk continues to work closely with other visitor schemes to build an inclusive strategy and that all local authorities within Suffolk work collaboratively as part of the Strategic Tourism Group.

71.5 Councillor Welham queried about the timeframe for the implementation of the strategy. The Arts and Culture Lead Officer responded that the strategy would be going to Cabinet for formal decision in March, that a delivery plan would be provided by the end of June, and that further external consultations would be undertaken regarding appropriate actions between these two deadlines.

71.6 Councillor Welham further questioned if there were links between the strategy and the Joint Local Plan. The Corporate Manager for Economy and Business responded that there were links between the strategy and the Joint Local Plan and that the Councils’ planning policy team were involved in the development and delivery of the strategy.

71.7 Councillor Hinton questioned which Councillors were part of the cross-party Member working group. The Arts and Culture Lead Officer responded that Councillors Jane Gould, Ward, Hurren, Nunn, Otton, Scarff, and Passmore were on the working group and that it had met 3 times to discuss initial findings and the development of the strategy.

- 71.8 Councillor Lindsay questioned about the lack of consultation with churches, sustainability groups, and nature and wildlife organisations. The Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded that sustainability was a key theme featured in discussions and consultations with external stakeholders. The Arts and Culture Lead Officer further added that conversations had taken place with the Churches Conservation Trust and that further consultations will take place with more stakeholders in the near future.
- 71.9 Councillor Lindsay further questioned what support was in place for those who wish to visit the Districts using sustainable methods of transport such as cycling. The Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded that the strategy would be linked in with the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
- 71.10 Councillor Carter questioned why accessibility had not been clearly considered in the development of the strategy and why local disability groups had not been consulted. The Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded that consultees were asked questions concerning health, wellbeing and accessibility and that these themes would start to develop within the implementation stage of the strategy.
- 71.11 Councillor Grandon questioned how heritage and history had been considered within the development of the strategy. The Arts and Culture Lead Officer responded that there was an internal officer working group which included planning and heritage officers that were looking at these specific themes.
- 71.12 Councillor Scarff raised that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee should further scrutinise the strategy once it has reached the implementation stage.
- 71.13 Councillor Barrett questioned if the strategy could be used to support planning applications. The Corporate Manager for Economy and Business responded that this was a possibility and that the Economy Team respond to consultations regarding planning applications that fall inside the scope of the strategy.
- 71.14 Councillor Barrett further questioned if the strategy would offer local skills development opportunities. The Director for Economic Growth and Climate Change responded that this strategy would provide opportunities for skills and employment development in the Districts and that it would look to support those who are employed in these sectors.
- 71.15 Councillor Dawson raised that the strategy should consider a focus on engaging younger residents in the cultural and heritage assets within both Districts.
- 71.16 Councillor Welham suggested that charity, industrial heritage, and fishing themes be considered in further stakeholder consultations and that the use of virtual tourist information centres may be beneficial for local villages.

71.17 Councillor Welham put forward the following recommendations to the Committee:

- That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the report and requests that Officers take account of the comments made by Members.
- That a review of the implementation plan's progress be undertaken by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2024.

71.18 Councillor Scarff proposed the recommendations as read out by the Chair.

71.19 Councillor Ekpenyong seconded the recommendations.

**By a unanimous vote**

**It was RESOLVED:**

**1.1. That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the report and requests that Officers take account of the comments made by Members.**

**1.2. That a review of the implementation plan's progress be undertaken by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2024.**

**72 JOS/22/40 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTION TRACKER**

72.1 No comments.

**73 RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC (WHICH TERM INCLUDES THE PRESS)**

**74 JOS/22/41 TO CONFIRM THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE OF THE MEETING ON 19 DECEMBER 2022**

74.1 It was resolved that the confidential minutes of the meeting on 19 December 2022 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

**75 RE-ADMITTING THE PUBLIC (WHICH TERM INCLUDES THE PRESS)**

The business of the meeting was concluded at 13:00pm

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Chair