

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK CABINET** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 4 March 2024

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Teresa Davis	Rachel Eburne
	Andrew Mellen	Andrew Stringer
	Tim Weller	Richard Winch

In attendance:

Councillor (s): Ketih Scarff

Officers:

- Chief Executive (AC)
- Interim Monitoring Officer (JR)
- Director - Corporate Services
- Director – Planning and Building Control (TB)
- Director - Operations & Climate Change (ME)
- Head of Strategic Policy (JH)
- Climate Change Manager (SW)
- Infrastructure Officer (JM)
- Professional Lead - Key Sites and Infrastructure (CT)
- Assistant Manager - Governance (HH)

Apologies:

None

89 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

There were no declarations of interests made by Councillors.

90 MCA/23/44 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2024

It was RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 7 February 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

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

None received.

92 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

None received.

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

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

94 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST

94.1 In response to Councillor Mellen's query regarding the Officer Decision for 11 April 2024, the Director for Housing clarified that Bailey Garner was a consultant company who would be supporting the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Project.

94.2 There were no further comments made for the Forthcoming Decisions List.

95 MCA/23/45 FINANCIAL MONITORING QUARTER 3 2023/24

95.1 The Chair, Councillor Mellen, invited the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resource to introduce the report.

95.2 Councillor Eburne introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the tabled papers and the amended recommendations 3.1 to 3.3 in the tabled papers.

95.3 Councillor Eburne proposed the recommendations in the table papers which was seconded by Councillor Winch.

95.4 Councillor Winch referred to the General Fund Capital and that there was £440K allocated for the Empty Homes Grant and £340K allocated for the affordable housing and asked what the intention were for these unallocated sums of money.

95.5 The Director for Housing would respond to this question outside of the meeting.

95.6 Councillor Winch had compared the total income for the latest figures HRA in the report compared with the figures that was presented at Council and queried the variation between income and costs in the two reports.

95.7 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resource responded that this was partly due to the new properties noted in the budget which were slightly different from what was expected. The Finance Business Partner – HRA Revenue, detailed that the forecast in the council budget was taken from the business plan which had accounted for some of the temporary accommodation properties differently in the cost of services and not under the income. That would be altered for next year's budget so the figures

would be in aligned with the business plan.

- 95.8 In response to questions from other Members attending the meeting regarding the changes to the Disabled Facilities Grant. The Director for Housing would make sure that the correct date be included in the minutes. [This item will be presented to Cabinet on the 7th May 2024 – Forthcoming Decisions List reference number *Cab 475 Housing Assistance Policy under the Regulatory Reform Order*]
- 95.9 During the debate Councillor Eburne stated that there was good cost management in the report and that the administration would monitor the cost closely.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That, subject to any further budget variations that arise during the rest of the financial year, the projected surplus on the General Fund of £2.36m referred to in section 4.2 and Appendix A of the report be noted;**
- 1.2 That, subject to any further budget variations that arise during the rest of the financial year, the projected overspend on the Housing Revenue Account of £3.364m and the under spend on the capital programme of £23.248m referred to in section 4.3 and Appendix B of the report be noted;**
- 1.3 That, the Council's compliance with the Prudential Indicators during quarter two referred to in section 4.4 and Appendix C of the report be noted.**

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that Members are kept informed of the financial position for both General Fund Revenue and Capital, Housing Revenue Account and Capital and the Prudential Indicators.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The recommended option is set out in the Recommendations. There are no other available options.

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

96 MCA/23/46 UPDATE ON THE REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING REFERRAL AND OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE POSITION

- 96.1 The Chair, Councillor Mellen, invited the Cabinet Member for Housing and Property to introduce the report.

- 96.2 Councillor Winch provided an introduction in the report:
- 96.3 Awaab's Law was introduced after the tragic death of a two-year-old due to prolonged exposure to mould in his home. The Law focused on hazards that poses a significant risk to the health or safety of the actual resident of the dwelling and that a hazard did not have to be at category 1 in order to be in scope of Awaab's Law.
- 96.4 Following the current consultation, if the registered provider was made aware of a potential hazard in a social home, they must investigate within 14 days and if a hazard was found, the landlord must undertake emergency repairs must be undertaken within 24 hours and additional repairs with seven days.
- 96.5 Councillor Winch stated that the Council did not currently have the full overview of potential hazards being investigated and how many investigated hazards were more than 14 days old.
- 96.6 In response to comments from other Members attending the meeting regarding that some tenants could not afford to heat their homes to avoid damp and mould the Director for Housing detailed how the Housing team took a holistic approach and worked with tenants and the Residents Panel to resolve the issues.
- 96.7 Councillor Eburne stated that work was being conducted into supporting residents in need and bringing together all the issues to support residents and tenants who needed support the most.
- 96.8 During the debate Councillor Weller stated that ward councillors were at times dealing with tenants who suffered from that damp and mould in their properties and that this could lead to tenants suffering health issues. Councillor Weller thanked Councillor Winch for being proactive and put measures in place to identify the issues.
- 96.9 Councillor Eburne supported this statement but recognised that there were still work to be done for damp and mould. But Councillor Eburne was please that work was being undertaken and thanked Councillor Winch.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED: -

That Members noted the report.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that members and senior leaders of the councils have oversight of the journey with the Regulator back to a position where we are compliant.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: None

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

97 MCA/23/47 MSDC Q3 PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 97.1 Councillor Mellen, as the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resilience introduced the report and summarised the performance for quarter three including that this was the last performance based on the previous corporate plan and the going forward performance reporting would reflect the changes made under this administration.
- 97.2 In response to Councillor Winch's question relating to the format and timing of the report, the Head of Strategic Policy responded that the layout and timing of the report were under consideration.
- 97.3 Councillor Davis was concerned for the number of residents, who were not digitally active and asked if the programme put in place to support these residents could be made more inclusive. Councillor Davis also questioned the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and asked that jargon and acronyms were avoided in the report.
- 97.4 Councillor Mellen responded that Cabinet Members would be involved in suggesting KPIs and how performance would be reported going forward.
- 97.5 The Director of Corporate Services detailed the work undertaken in relation to digital inclusion for residents was in conjunction with libraries, the Housing team and Suffolk County Council.
- 97.6 In response to questions from other Members attending the meeting regarding contaminated waste and staff absences, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Wellbeing responded that this was being addressed by providing more information to residents. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resilience responded that the number of days taken for sickness has increased slightly from a previously low number.
- 97.7 The Chief Executive Officer advised that the number of days taken for sickness usually increased slightly in the winter quarter, however the number was still very low in comparison to other authorities.
- 97.8 During the debate Councillor Eburne stated that Cabinet would be clear on how to report performance, including adding a financial dimension and picking up on the green performance areas too. The report would change to be more meaningful and continue to develop.

The Performance Report 2023-24 – Quarter 3 was noted.

98 MCA/23/48 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - CIL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME MARCH 2024

- 98.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Heritage, Planning and Infrastructure to introduce the report.
- 98.2 Councillor Stringer provide an introduction and proposed the recommendations as detailed in the report.
- 98.3 Councillor Davis seconded the recommendations.
- 98.4 During the debate Councillor Winch stated that the report was clear and proved that the CIL programme was working well.
- 98.5 Councillor Stringer stated that early advice was helping on the CIL applications and that was working well was a testimony to the Officer working on the CIL programme.

By unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That the CIL Expenditure Programme (March 2024) and accompanying Technical assessments of the following CIL Bids (forming Appendices, A and B) be approved (including decisions on these CIL Bids for Cabinet to make and to note - delegated decisions only) as follows:-**

Decisions for Cabinet to approve: - Ringfenced Infrastructure Funds (Walsham Le Willows)

CIL Bid, Location and Infrastructure Proposed	Amount of CIL Bid and total cost of the infrastructure	Cabinet Decision
M23-21 WALSHAM LE WILLOWS Solar Panels	Amount of CIL Bid £21,337.68 Total cost of the project £28,450.24 (includes VAT) Total of other funding £4,612.56 Walsham Le Willows Memorial Hall £1,000.00 SCC Councillor Locality Grant £1,500.00	Recommendation to Cabinet to approve CIL Bid M23-21 for £21,337.68 from the Ringfenced Infrastructure Fund

	MSDC Councillor Locality Grant	
--	--------------------------------------	--

Decisions for Cabinet to make: - Local Infrastructure Fund

CIL Bid, Location and Infrastructure Proposed	Amount of CIL Bid and total cost of the infrastructure	Cabinet Decision
M23-25 CROWFIELD Crowfield Village Hall – Multi Use Sports Area	Amount of CIL Bid £27,282.15 Total costs of the project £50,006.55 Other funding sources are: Parish Council Contribution from Neighbourhood CIL: £3,262.70 S106 funding: £19,461.70	Recommendation to Cabinet to approve CIL Bid M23-25 for £27,282.15 from the Local Infrastructure Fund
M23-30 THORNHAM Thornham Walks Pioneering Paths	Amount of CIL Bid £100,000.00 Total cost of the project £141,146.70 (includes VAT) Other funding sources are: £20,146.70 Friends of Thornham Walks £20,000.00 MSDC Community Development Grant	Recommendation to Cabinet to approve CIL Bid M23-30 for £100,000.00 from the Local Infrastructure Fund

	£1,000.00 Tesco Bags of Help	
--	---------------------------------	--

Decisions for Cabinet to note: - Ringfenced Infrastructure Fund

CIL Bid, Location and Infrastructure Proposed	Amount of CIL Bid and total cost of the infrastructure	Cabinet Decision
M23-12 STRADBROKE Swimming Pool Changing Places Toilet	Amount of CIL Bid £9,990.00 Total costs of the project £61,381.00 Other funding Changing Places Fund DHLUC £51,391.00	Recommendation for Cabinet to note the delegated decision for CIL Bid M23-12 for £9,990.00 from the Ringfenced Infrastructure Fund
M23-22 BADWELL ASH Playground Project Stage 2	Amount of CIL Bid £8,502.40 Total costs of the project £35,943.50 Other funding Badwell Ash Parish Council £23,835.15 S106 contribution £3,605.95	Recommendation for Cabinet to note the delegated decision for CIL Bid M23-22 for £8,502.40 from the Ringfenced Infrastructure Fund
M23-31 STRADBROKE Health bid for energy efficiency project (project to cover additional costs for Solar panels)	£7,684.00 Total costs of the project £24,100.00 Other funding £12,312.00	Recommendation for Cabinet to note the delegated decision for CIL Bid M23-31 for £7,684.00

	Previously approved CIL bid	from the Ringfenced Infrastructure Fund
	£4,104.00 Stradbroke Parish Council (this funding was included in the original bid)	

1.2 Cabinet noted and endorsed this CIL Expenditure Programme which included the position in respect of approved CIL Bids from Rounds 1 to 12 inclusive (Appendix A Section B) together with details of emerging infrastructure/CIL Bids (Appendix A Section C).

REASON FOR DECISION

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies have been collected since the implementation of CIL on the 11th April 2016. The CIL Expenditure Framework was originally adopted in April 2018 and reviewed with amendments adopted by both Councils in March 2019, April 2020, March 2021, July 2022 (Mid Suffolk), October 2022 (Babergh) and in March 2023. The CIL Expenditure Framework requires the production of a CIL Expenditure Programme for each District and contains decisions for Cabinet to make or note on CIL Bids for CIL expenditure. These decisions relating to the expenditure of CIL monies form one of the ways in which necessary infrastructure supporting growth is delivered.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

There is a diverse spectrum of approaches to CIL expenditure across the country from Unitary Authorities who have absorbed CIL into their individual Capital Programmes to others who ringfence all funds to be spent locally. A range of different approaches was identified in Appendix A of the Framework for CIL Expenditure report provided to Cabinet's on the 5th and 8th of February 2018 and discussed in full during the workshops with the Joint Member advisory panel. Members adopted the original Framework documents set out in paragraph 1.1 above by Council decision in April 2018. These were subsequently reviewed and adopted by both Councils on:-

- First Review - March 2019
- Second Review – April 2020
- Third Review – March 2021
- Fourth Review – 21st July 2022 (Mid Suffolk) and 6th October 2022 (Babergh)
- Fifth Review - March 2023

- Sixth Review – Occurred in Winter 2023; likely to be presented to both Councils for adoption in March 2024

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

99 MCA/23/49 REFRESHED CARBON REDUCTION MANAGEMENT PLAN

99.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture and Wellbeing to introduce the report.

99.2 Councillor Weller provided an introduction and amended recommendation 3.2 to:

3.2 That the Director of Operation and Climate Change in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, would develop a funding package to deliver on the priority actions for 24/25.

99.3 Councillor Stringer seconded recommendation 3.1 and the amended recommendation 3.2.

99.4 Councillor Davis asked for confirmation that the granular section of the action plan would be progressed, as there were some sections that had not been assigned any information.

99.5 Councillor Weller responded that it was an evolving action plan and that the gaps would be filled, as the action were progressed and developed.

99.6 Other Members attending the meeting praised the way the plan had been brought together and that all political parties had been involved in developing the document.

99.7 During the debate Councillor Winch stated that the change of the scope of the report had opened up the debate within the Council and the wider community. Councillor Winch added that it should be clearer that the recommendations were for sheltered accommodation and leisure centres but that there was work to be undertaken for the wider community too.

99.8 Councillor Eburne was pleased to see the variety of initiatives and engagement with the wider community and that all parties had been involved to improve the engagement with the community. Councillor Eburne wanted to make sure that progress was made on the actions and the work undertaken.

99.9 Councillor Mellen stated that climate change was the defining challenge of our time and that it would seem to be a challenge for both society and for the Council. The Council could address its own carbon emissions, but there was larger task to influence the wider society and the Council would try to enable them to make the changes and adjustments to reduce carbon emissions and make the planet more habitable in the long term.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED: -

- 1.1 That the contents of the refreshed Carbon Reduction Management Plan and accompanying narrative at Appendix A & B to the report be approved.
- 1.2 That the Director of Operation and Climate Change in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, would develop a funding package to deliver on the priority actions for 24/25.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that members and senior leaders of the councils have oversight of the journey with the Regulator back to a position where we are compliant.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: None

Any Declarations of Interests Declared: None

Any Dispensation Granted: None

The business of the meeting was concluded at 10:38am.

.....
Chair (& date)