

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, CORKS LANE, HADLEIGH ON THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2013

PRESENT: Mr S R Barrett – Vice-Chairman in the Chair

Mr C W Arthey	Mr A F D W Osborne
Mr P K Beer	Mrs A K Pollard
Mr N A Bennett	Mr A J Ward
Mr J R B Cave	Mrs S M Wigglesworth

Mr N A Ridley was also in attendance at the meeting.

The following Members were unable to be present:-

Mr A C Bavington, Mrs S Carpendale, Mr A J Hinton and Ms J A Jenkins.

33 SUBSTITUTES

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 5, substitutes were in attendance as follows:-

Mr P K Beer (substituting for Ms J A Jenkins)
Mr A F D W Osborne (substituting for Mr A J Hinton)
Mr A J Ward (substituting for Mrs S Carpendale)

34 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The following Members declared local non-pecuniary interests in the matter referred to in Minute No. 40 in their capacity as Town or Parish Councillors, but indicated that they could speak and vote on the item:-

Mr S R Barrett, Mr C W Arthey, Mr A F D W Osborne, Mr A J Ward and Mr N A Bennett.

35 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

36 PETITIONS

None received.

37 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

38 RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Review of Partnership Accountability (Joint Scrutiny Committee 2 October 2013)

The Head of Corporate Organisation presented the recommendations of the Joint Scrutiny Committee and updated Members on comments made during the Executive Committee's consideration of this item. Members had before them [Paper JSC/16/13](#) which was considered by the Joint Scrutiny Committee at its meeting.

Members noted that further work was ongoing to define partnerships and accepted the need for a review, as recommended.

RESOLVED

- (1) That a review is required so that there is a clear understanding of whom the Council should be working with to deliver its strategic priorities and the benefits and savings therein.**
- (2) That the review should encompass both Councils' arrangements for Councillor representation on outside bodies. Further, it is suggested that a joint review is concluded by April 2014. In addition, a comprehensive list of all the Council's partnerships should be maintained with a clear understanding of the relationships. A policy with supporting procedures should be developed to cover all partnerships to determine the governance arrangements.**

39 WORK PLAN

The Head of Corporate Organisation submitted a report ([Paper N66](#)) relating to items which had been identified on the Committee Work Plan.

Members noted that the Performance Report for Quarters 1-3 would be added to the business for the meeting on 14 January 2014. Further revisions to cover the arrangements for the Budget process will follow.

RESOLVED

That the contents of Paper N66 together with the above update be noted.

40 LEVEL OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT TO TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS FROM 2014/15 ONWARDS

The Head of Corporate Resources submitted a report ([Paper N67](#)) seeking to establish the future level of Support Grant to Town and Parish Councils, and approval to delegation arrangements regarding the Scheme. She outlined the background to the recommendations in the report and explained the arrangements for keeping Parish and Town Councils informed of the changes from the previous Scheme, and the reasons for the changes.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the current level of Council Tax Support Grant for Town and Parish Councils be phased out over a 4 year period at a 25% reduction each year starting in 2014/15.**
- (2) That the Head of Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of Strategy Committee, be authorised to finalise the Local Council Tax Support Grant Scheme arrangements for Babergh, following discussions with Town and Parish Councils, subject to there being no detrimental impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy beyond that allowed for in Resolution (1) above.**

41 CITY DEALS

The Strategic Director (Place) reported that the Greater Ipswich City Deal document would shortly be ready for signature by the respective partners, and requested Member approval to the sign-off.

RESOLVED

That the Strategic Director (Place) in consultation with the Leader of the Council be authorised to sign off, and advise the Cabinet Office of the agreement to, the final document on behalf of Babergh District Council.

42 DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR PURCHASE OF A DWELLING

The Corporate Manager – Housing Revenue Account presented a report from the Head of Housing ([Paper N70](#)) seeking Member approval of delegation arrangements for eligible purchases.

Members were advised of a minor amendment to the officer recommendation, to include a reference to the survey of any property put forward for purchase.

RESOLVED

That the Head of Housing in consultation with the Lead Members for Finance and Resources (Jennie Jenkins) and Housing (Tony Bavington) be delegated authority to approve the purchase of additional affordable homes using HRA financial resources within existing approved budget limits, subject to satisfactory independent valuations and survey.

43 MORTGAGE RESCUE SCHEME SYNDICATION

The Corporate Managers – Housing Revenue Account and Supported Housing jointly presented a report from the Head of Housing ([Paper N69](#)) seeking Member approval to the Council becoming a syndicator under this Scheme and using Right to Buy receipts for purchasing rescued properties.

RESOLVED

- (1) That Babergh District Council enters into an agreement with Orbit Housing Association to become a syndicator for the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.**
- (2) That the Council's retained Right to Buy receipts be used to purchase Mortgage Rescue properties in the Babergh District.**

44 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The Corporate Manager – Supported Housing presented a report from the Head of Housing ([Paper N68](#)) asking Members to approve a Homelessness Strategy for the next 5 years. She responded to questions from Members which included clarification of some of the differences between the two Councils' previous policies.

RESOLVED

That the Homelessness Strategy (Appendix A to Paper N68) be endorsed.

45 SUFFOLK WASTE PARTNERSHIP (SWP) INTER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT

The Head of Environment submitted a report ([Paper N71](#)) seeking approval to a new Inter Authority Agreement to replace the previous Memorandum of Understanding. He responded to questions from Members on various aspects and undertook to clarify, outside the meeting, the situation regarding replacement of textile bags.

RESOLVED

- (1) The SWP Inter Authority Working Agreement (IAA) document (Paper N71 – Appendix A) together with the various Annexes identifying the contractual or project specific agreements (Annexes 1 – 4 attached to the report) be approved.**
- (2) That future Annexes to the IAA be developed to cover other waste streams, and to be agreed by the Head of Service, in consultation with the relevant Lead Member (John Hinton), unless they involve a significant change in budget or policy, in which case these would be reported to Committee for approval.**

46 PLANNING REVIEW BUSINESS CASE

The Head of Economy submitted a report ([Paper N72](#)) on the outcome of the Planning Review and seeking Member approval to the next stages of the process. Members were aware of the new Planning Protocol currently subject of consultation and its relevance to the vision for the Planning Service, together with the training issues which were being addressed.

RESOLVED

That the 'one service' vision described in Paper N72 be adopted, to enable Officers to proceed to the next stages of planning and implementation.

47 A JOINT GYPSY AND TRAVELLER STEERING GROUP FOR BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK COUNCILS

The Corporate Manager – Strategic Housing presented a report from the Head of Economy ([Paper N73](#)) proposing the formation of a joint steering group across Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Members noted that the Babergh appointments to the new Group would be subject to consultation with the Political Group Leaders in the usual way, but that there is no political balance requirement.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the formation of a Joint Gypsy and Traveller Steering Group made up of Members from both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, Officers and representatives of the Norfolk and Suffolk Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Services, be approved.**
- (2) That the Lead Member – Housing for Babergh, together with 3 other Babergh Councillors sit on the Joint Steering Group and that the Council be asked to confirm the appointments.**
- (3) That meetings of the Steering Group be held every 2 months, alternating between Hadleigh and Needham Market.**
- (4) That any item requiring a formal decision be reported to the Executive and Strategy Committees as necessary.**

48 PROPOSED APPROACH TO A REVIEW OF THE COUNCILS' ACCOMMODATION NEEDS AND ASSETS

The Strategic Director – Corporate submitted a report ([Paper N74](#)) seeking authorisation to commission providers to carry out a review of both Councils' current and future accommodation needs. He asked Members to include an amendment to the officer recommendation in 2.1 of the report with the addition of the words, 'and liabilities' to the Councils' 'needs' and 'assets'.

RESOLVED

- (1) That a review be undertaken of the Councils' accommodation needs, assets and liabilities.**
- (2) That the Strategic Director (Corporate) be authorised to commission providers to undertake the review, as set out in Paper N74.**

The business of the meeting was concluded at 6.35 p.m.

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Chairman