

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Full Council** held in the **Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Melton** on **Thursday 28 March 2019** at **7.00pm**

Members present:

N Yeo (Chairman), J Bidwell, S Bird, C Block, C Blundell, M Bond, S Burroughes, P Coleman, M Deacon, P Dunnett, J Fisher, A Fryatt, S Gallant, S Geater, M Gower, G Harding, S Harvey, T-J Haworth-Culf, C Hedgley (Vice Chairman), R Herring, G Holdcroft, M Jones, R Kerry, S Lawson, S Mower, M Newton, C Poulter, D Savage, A Smith

Officers present:

K Abbott (Democratic Services Business Manager), S Baker (Chief Executive), P Mackie (Strategic Funding Manager, Coastal Management), B Parker (Head of Coastal Partnership East), P Ridley (Head of Planning & Coastal Management), H Slater (Head of Legal & Democratic Services)

Others present:

T Doherty (Project Manager, Balfour Beatty)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cooper, Councillor Green, Councillor Hudson, Councillor Kelso, Councillor Lynch, Councillor McCallum, Councillor Mulcahy and Councillor Whiting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 3 January 2019 be confirmed as a correct record;
- (b) That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 January 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

4. Announcements

The Chairman welcomed all to the last meeting of Suffolk Coastal's Full Council and said she wished to take the opportunity to mark an historic meeting. The Chairman said it had been an honour to serve as the last Chairman of the Council which had been in existence for 45 years and provided high quality services to its communities.

The Chairman referred to the example set by the outstanding Chairmen who had served

previously and said that she had done her best to also make a mark during her year in office and so retire the Chain of Office on a high note. The Chairman regretted that her attendance at certain formal events had been curtailed by health issues. The Chairman continued to say that her time as Chairman had provided the opportunity to meet many people from across the district and that she had been most impressed with the positive and upbeat attitude of communities. The Chairman also referred to the opportunity to work with charities and said she was particularly proud of the work to bring young people and the elderly together across the district.

In conclusion, the Chairman said the meeting also marked the start of a bright new era with the formation of East Suffolk Council and she said, she was confident, those Councillors elected to serve on the new Council would continue to ensure the delivery of the best possible services to its communities.

The Leader of the Council said it was difficult to believe that, after an organic journey of over ten years, the new Council would be launched on 1 April. The Leader paid tribute to the Chairman for her year in office and praised her enthusiasm, exceptional drive and remarkable courage when dealing with health challenges. Council applauded the Chairman. The Leader also commended Councillor Hedgley, as the Vice Chairman, for his outstanding support and contribution to that role.

The Leader also made reference to those in the community, partnerships and voluntary sector which had engaged with Suffolk Coastal over the last 45 years. He referred to the remarkable amount and extent of change, improvement and progress which had been achieved in that period. The Leader said it was important to recognise the significant contribution to the Council's achievements and progress and to recognise the success and innovation of Suffolk Coastal as it came to an end.

The Leader continued to express his personal appreciation to all the Council's Officers, past and present, and praised the high calibre of the Officers and their skills in supporting and delivering the ambitions of the Council and its communities. The Leader stated that he did not think there was a better group of local government Officers in the UK.

The Leader also referred to Councillors, present and past, and extended his personal thanks to them for their essential contribution to a very successful and innovative Council. Council applauded the Leader's remarks.

Councillor Block wished to endorse the Leader's commendation of the Council's Officers and added her personal thanks for their guidance, tolerance, valued judgement and advice.

Councillor Burroughes congratulated the Chairman on her very successful year in office. He added that much of the successful achievements and ambition of Suffolk Coastal had been due to the hard work and drive of the Leader and expressed the hope that that would continue.

Councillor Deacon also congratulated the Chairman for her exceptional year in office, he added his personal thanks to the Officers of the Council who, he said, always dealt with matters in an admirable way. He wished the new Council every success.

The Chief Executive Officer endorsed the Leader's comments about the extraordinary amount of

change successfully delivered for the district. The Chief Executive Officer referred to the most recent staff engagement survey results and shared four or five of the key aspects which, he said, indicated an improvement on previous surveys. He wished to reassure the new Council that its Officers stood ready and able to continue to provide a high quality service with confidence.

5. Written Questions

There were no Written Questions.

6. Notices of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion.

7. National Scheme for Planning Apprenticeships

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning introduced the presentation on the new national scheme which had been developed to help address the national shortage of planning officers, at all levels. In so doing, he praised what he described as an exceptional piece of work by the Head of Planning and Coastal Management and which was at the cutting edge of transforming the apprenticeship system in the UK.

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management provided a short presentation:

- National shortage of planners at all levels: diversity issues
- Suffolk had funded a Level 3 Town Planning Apprenticeship in 2016
- Involvement in the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) employer-led group to develop a Degree Apprenticeship in 2017
- Eighty employers, to date, have expressed an interest in the apprenticeship
- The Chartered Town Planning Degree Apprenticeship was launched in March 2019
- Highest Funding Band of £27,000 – Apprenticeship Levy
- Six early adopter Universities: Others indicating interest
- Level 4 (Undergraduate) to Level 7 (Masters) taking between two and six years
- Apprentices would be able to gain practical experience in town planning, probably within their local area; to gain an RTPI accredited degree; and to become fully qualified with the RTPI as a Chartered Town Planner
- Employers would benefit by being able to develop talent in-house; staff retention with local knowledge; more accessible to local people who had not previously considered such a role; succession planning made easier; able to use the Apprenticeship Levy
- A flow chart summary of the apprenticeship process was provided

In addition to the presentation, the Head of Planning and Coastal Management said that the progress of the Degree Apprenticeship had been managed and overseen by the Institute for Apprenticeships to ensure standards for employers, effective coordination with education facilities and funding.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Planning and Coastal Management for his work on the scheme and for his informative presentation.

8. Planned Tidal Flood Barrier for Lowestoft

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Coastal Management introduced the presentation on the proposed project for a tidal flood barrier in Lowestoft as part of the town's wider flood risk management. The Cabinet Member said it was a privilege to introduce the presentation which, he hoped, Councillors would find instructive. The Cabinet Member also wished to briefly and formally recognise the Head of Coastal Partnership East who would retire in the summer and his exemplar work in coastal management.

The Head of Coastal Partnership East briefly outlined the context for the project as to reduce and defend Lowestoft from the risk of flooding and, in this regard, referred to the case for change, an outline of the flood risk, the project's partners and governance, the project's components, tidal flood walls, challenges, and the case for investment. The Head of Coastal Partnership East said that, with regard to the management of the coast, the new East Suffolk Council would be at the frontline in terms of both challenges and opportunities. He added that some difficult decisions would be required, for example, where to defend from flood risk, funding, and if a location was not to be defended how best to mitigate the risk etc. The Head of Coastal Partnership East said the proposed Tidal Flood Barrier for Lowestoft was, potentially, the biggest capital project East Suffolk Council would deliver.

The Strategic Funding Manager (Coastal Management) then presented an overview of the project:

- Case for change: December 2013 tidal surge and impact on homes, businesses, road and rail infrastructure. Present economic footprint: Jobs and GVA (gross value added) and the potential risk to these if no major intervention took place.
- Lowestoft's key role in the offshore energy sector: In the east of England there will be £1.3bn per annum of operation and maintenance opportunities by 2025 and £59.4 bn of capital investment by 2040
- Regeneration and growth: Southern Lake Lothing; the inner and outer harbour; town centre; Heritage Action Zone and south beach are all priority places in the Area Action Plan
- Future economic footprint: Jobs and GVA and, again, the potential risk to these if no major intervention took place
- Challenges: Minimising disruption to Lowestoft Port;; ensuring new infrastructure complements regeneration vision; funding
- Project Partners and Governance
- Project components: Reducing the risk of flooding from rivers and extreme rainfall (stage 1 works) and reducing the risk of flooding from the sea (stage 1 and 2 works)
- Costs for each stage of works: Committed and required and an outline of the funding position
- Funding strategy: Core pillars – including utilities and infrastructure providers, central government 'asks' and other sources
- Case for investment: Flood and coastal resilience, regeneration, delivering government priorities, social value, supporting the community and businesses.
- Parallel: Ipswich Tidal Barrier

The Chairman thanked the Strategic Funding Manager and invited questions on the contents of the presentation thus far.

Councillor Fryatt asked if the intervention of the tidal flood barrier might, potentially, enable homes to be provided on brownfield locations which were currently in flood-risk areas. The Strategic Funding Manager said that flood resistant housing was part of the aspiration for Lowestoft.

Mr Troy Doherty (Project Manager, Balfour Beatty) provided a detailed presentation which included graphics to help describe the construction methodologies, logistics, scale, and challenges associated with the construction of the tidal barrier. Mr Doherty outlined the plans to ensure the minimal disruption to the port, yacht club and windfarm operations during the barrier's construction and also described how the barrier's structure would be built off-site before being moved into position.

The Chairman invited questions.

Councillor Blundell asked about the mechanism which would be used to open and close the barrier. Mr Doherty said this would be hydraulic with a secondary system to clear silt away from the gate. In response to a further question from Councillor Block about the silt clearance system, Mr Doherty explained that this system would be located on the bottom of the gates and, as the gates closed, a series of waterjets would be employed to blow any silt away.

There being no further questions, the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Coastal Management thanked Mr Doherty for his exceptional presentation, and praised the wider team of Coastal Partnership East and Coastal Management for their invaluable work towards the delivery of this major project.

The Chairman thanked all for their contributions and, on behalf of Council, wished the project every success.

9. Cabinet Members' and Outside Bodies Representatives' Reports

Council received report **CL 06/19**.

The Chairman stated that the published reports would be taken as read, unless Cabinet Members or Outside Bodies representatives wished to provide further updates. The Chairman also invited Council to raise any questions on the published reports.

Councillor Holdcroft – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development

Councillor Holdcroft wished to pay particular tribute to Lisa Chandler and Naomi Goold, the Council's Officers who had worked diligently, he said, on the on-going major energy projects and provided "sterling work" on behalf of the Council. Councillor Holdcroft also praised Officers within the Council's Economic Development team and said that, as the responsible Cabinet Member, he wished to formally record his thanks for their excellent and collective work on key and strategic initiatives.

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Fryatt – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning

Councillor Fryatt updated Council on the result of an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate which had been found in the Council's favour.

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Kerry - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing

Councillor Kerry updated Council on funding awarded for street outreach workers as part of the wider rough-sleeper initiative. He also referred to the Council's robust plans to continue to combat homelessness across the new district.

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Gallant – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Safety

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Poulter – Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Green Environment

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Holdcroft – Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum (NuLeAF)

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Holdcroft – Kyson (River Deben) Fairway Committee

Councillor Block advised Council of a review of estuary issues which was underway including the silting of the upper reaches of rivers; she said that she would welcome a discussion on this matter with the Committee.

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Poulter – Suffolk Coastal Norse Partnership Liaison Board

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Jones – Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB Joint Advisory Committee

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Cooper – Association of Suffolk Museums

There were no questions on the published report.

Councillor Block – Internal Drainage Board

There were no questions on the published report.

10. Exempt/Confidential items

RESOLVED

That, under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

11. Exempt Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

The Meeting concluded at 8.35pm