

Confirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Full Council** held in the Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, on **Wednesday, 28 September 2022 at 6:30 PM**

Members present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Edward Back, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Stuart Bird, Councillor Chris Blundell, Councillor Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw, Councillor Norman Brooks, Councillor Stephen Burroughes, Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Alison Cackett, Councillor Jenny Ceresa, Councillor Maurice Cook, Councillor Tony Cooper, Councillor Linda Coulam, Councillor Janet Craig, Councillor Tom Daly, Councillor Mike Deacon, Councillor John Fisher, Councillor Tony Fryatt, Councillor Steve Gallant, Councillor Tess Gandy, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Tony Goldson, Councillor Louise Gooch, Councillor Colin Hedgley, Councillor Ray Herring, Councillor Mark Jepson, Councillor Richard Kerry, Councillor Stuart Lawson, Councillor Geoff Lynch, Councillor James Mallinder, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Sarah Plummer, Councillor Carol Poulter, Councillor Russ Rainger, Councillor Mick Richardson, Councillor David Ritchie, Councillor Keith Robinson, Councillor Letitia Smith, Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte, Councillor Ed Thompson, Councillor Caroline Topping, Councillor Steve Wiles, Councillor Kay Yule

Officers present:

Stephen Baker (Chief Executive), Chris Bing (Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer), Neil Cockshaw (Programmes and Partnerships Manager), Shannon English (GLI Political Group Support Officer), Andrew Jarvis (Strategic Director), Nick Khan (Strategic Director), Karen Last (Electoral Services Manager), Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer (Regulatory)), Sue Meeken (Labour Political Group Support Officer), Brian Mew (Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Fiona Quinn (Head of Environmental Services and Port Health), Lorraine Rogers (Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Julian Sturman (Specialist Accountant - Capital and Treasury Management), Karla Supple (Senior Communications and Marketing Officer) and Nicola Wotton (Deputy Democratic Services Manager).

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Cloke, T Green, D McCallum, F Mortimer, T Mortimer, M Newton, K Patience, C Rivett and M Rudd.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3 Minutes

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Meeting held on 27 July 2022 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Announcements

The sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The Chairman of the Council

The Chairman reported that this was the first Full Council meeting since the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, therefore, as Chairman of East Suffolk Council, and on behalf of the authority, she would like to say a few words.

Although we all knew that this day would come, it was still a very great shock. The outpouring of genuine emotion in the days that followed reflected the deep affection we felt for her Majesty and the huge respect she earned from 70 years of selfless service.

Like many thousands of people, the Chairman had laid flowers in her memory - visiting the Lowestoft war memorial to do so – and she felt it was very moving to see the tributes there, around East Suffolk, and throughout the country. Her Majesty visited Lowestoft herself in 1985 as part of a number of visits to East Suffolk, which also included the opening of the Concert Hall at Snape Maltings in 1967 and a trip to Felixstowe as part of her Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1977.

Members' thoughts remained with the Royal Family as they came to terms with their loss and, on behalf of East Suffolk Council, the Chairman stated she would also like to pledge the Council's support and very best wishes for a long and successful reign, to his Majesty King Charles III.

Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council

The Leader, on behalf of the Conservative Group, echoed the words and sentiments that the Chairman had eloquently expressed.

All were saddened by the passing of our monarch, which brought to an end the second Elizabethan era. We now move forward as a nation, into the latest Carolean age. We wish our new sovereign well in the delivery of his duties and offer our sincere heartfelt condolences to all members of the Royal Family.

Councillor Byatt, Leader of the Labour Group

Councillor Byatt also echoed the words of the Leader and felt that this was a strange time. He reported that he was lucky enough to have served Her Majesty whilst in uniform, as he had served in the Police and the Coastguard.

He reported that he was at home the other day and he came across his father's slider stick, from when he had served as an officer in the Nigerian Army. Councillor Byatt's father had been presented with the slider stick, by the Queen, as the Leading Cadet, which was a great honour and he cherished that memory throughout his life. It was important to have a link to our monarch, however tenuous that may be.

He stated that the Queen showed great integrity, commitment to public service, continuity and she had been a great ambassador for this country.

Councillor Beavan, Leader of the GLI Group

Councillor Beavan stated that you didn't need to be a royalist to appreciate the Queen's lifelong contribution. Thankfully, she had been spared debilitating illness and suffering.

In mourning the loss of the Queen, he stated that we will have all reflected on our own short spans, between the gift of birth and the loss of death - that we should also strive to contribute in our own small way to our community, country and planet. He commented that the good that she did would not be interred with her bones.

The Chairman then invited all those present to have a moments' reflection as a mark of respect for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Chairman of the Council

The Chairman reported that she had attended the following events, since the last Full Council meeting:

- Sunday, 11 September 2022 – County Proclamation in Ipswich, followed by Lowestoft's Proclamation
- Saturday, 17 September 2022 – County Service of Commemoration & Thanksgiving for the Life of Our Late Sovereign – St Edmundsbury Cathedral

Leader of the Council

Freeport East

The Leader reported that, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Council was required to report all executive decisions which were exempt from call in to the next meeting of Full Council. At the time the decision was taken, it was exempt from call in due to urgency, as the decisions needed to be made before the meeting of Freeport East Supervisory Board took place on 26 August 2022 and the Chairman of the Council had agreed to this request.

On 23 August 2022, Councill Rivett took a Portfolio Holder Decision for the Leader of the Council to agree the Articles of Association and Members Agreement, as published on CMIS, subject to minor amendments, and to appoint Councillor Gallant as East Suffolk Council's Director of Freeport East Limited at the Freeport East Supervisory

Board meeting on 26 August 2022.

Unfortunately, agreement on the Articles and Members Agreement was unable to be reached at the August Freeport East Supervisory Board meeting.

The Articles and Members Agreement continued to be reviewed and revised by Freeport East members. The next Freeport East Supervisory Board meeting would take place on 17 October 2022. It was hoped that the revised incorporation documents would be brought to and agreed at that meeting.

Extraordinary Full Council Meeting in November 2022

The process to appoint a new Chief Executive, to replace Stephen Baker on his retirement, was progressing well. The Leader stated that he had been really pleased but not surprised that there had been so much interest from a significant number of top-quality applicants. Steering the tiller of this excellent ship would be a challenging but extremely rewarding role.

He was also pleased to announce that the process of appointing to the new Strategic Director growth post was also progressing extremely well.

The Leader stated that there would need to be an Extraordinary Full Council meeting, to consider and approve the Appointment Committee's recommendation that a formal offer of employment be made to the successful candidate for the Chief Executive position. The date of this meeting would be Wednesday, 2 November 2022 at 7.00pm at East Suffolk House.

Unfortunately, there was no other way to confirm the appointment, it was a requirement in the Constitution and the meeting had to take place in person, it could not take place remotely. To defer the confirmation of the appointment until the next scheduled Full Council meeting on 23 November would delay the whole process and the new Chief Executive may not be able to start in post until later in 2023.

The formal offer of employment to the successful candidate for the Chief Executive position would be the only significant item of business on the agenda, unless anything urgent arose in the meantime. For the avoidance of doubt, the Full Council meeting on 23 November would take place as scheduled, as well. The meeting of Full Council on 2 November would be in addition to, rather than a replacement for, the meeting of Full Council on 23 November.

Full Asylum Dispersal Regional Allocation

The Leader took the opportunity to update Members on the Full Asylum Dispersal Regional Allocation process.

He reported that Kevin Foster MP, Minister for Safe and Legal Migration, wrote to Council Leaders and Chief Executives on 13 April 2022 announcing the introduction of 'full dispersal' and again on 9 May 2022 to launch the 'informal consultation' inviting views from councils and other interested parties to help shape the design of the reformed asylum dispersal system.

One key driver behind the reform of asylum dispersal was to reduce or eliminate the need for contingency hotels; nationally there were over 31,000 people in contingency accommodation, with 1,231 in 12 such hotels in the East of England.

Full dispersal was also aimed at establishing 'fairer distribution' of asylum seekers. The East of England had low levels, compared to the other regions and nations. The Home Office had now issued regional allocations for the UK, as a whole. These were based on an illustrative planning number of 100,000 asylum seekers in dispersed and core initial accommodation by December 2023. In the East of England, the accommodation providers were Serco and Clearsprings Ready Homes.

It was important for the Home Office, that Local Authorities and providers (Serco and Clearsprings Ready Homes) remained flexible depending on how things materialise. The Home Office projections use the principle of gradual alignment of the percentage of asylum seekers housed in each region, relative to the percentage of asylum seekers to be accommodated within the UK population as a whole.

Based on this, by the end of December 2023 Serco and Clearsprings would need to procure dispersed accommodation in our region for 5.2% of the total projected population of asylum seekers in the UK, which equated to 5,200 bedspaces. According to the latest Home Office statistics available (June 2022), the East of England already houses 1,872 asylum seekers in dispersed accommodation, which meant that a further 3,328 bedspaces would need to be procured by Serco and Clearsprings in our region over the next 18 months.

The proposed allocation by Local Authority in the East of England, to be achieved by December 2023, meant that Suffolk was looking at a proposed allocation adjusted to 484 and in East Suffolk that equated to 176 asylum seekers.

The Leader confirmed that this may be challenging to achieve within the timescales given by the Home Office and the asylum transformation team had been alerted accordingly. Regional allocation would be work in progress and, therefore, any submission to the Home Office would be illustrative, subject to political approval.

East Suffolk Council held a 'hot mapping' meeting with Serco to explain the Council's circumstances, with regards to accommodation activity to date and have confirmed that the Point of Contact was Fern Lincoln, for the purpose of progressing any property proposals. The Council has, therefore, responded to the Home Office request and would continue to work with Serco and other Local Authorities in the region by ensuring expectations were realistic, given the many challenges we face when finding suitable properties in the District. Early discussions of any proposed properties were paramount for Local Authorities, to avoid rental price escalation and to ensure they met quality standards.

Clearsprings, Serco and the Home Office would commit to working strategically and collaboratively with Local Authorities and other partners including to ensure that no Local Authority was adversely impacted by the number of bedspaces procured, their distribution or by the profile of asylum seekers accommodated.

The Leader stated that this was a lot of information to take in, therefore, this

announcement would be emailed to all Members, for information, outside of the meeting. He reported that Councillor Cloke was the Council's Member lead on this subject and she would be able to answer any further questions, as they arose.

Cabinet Members

Councillor Ritchie, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management

Councillor Ritchie reported that he was delighted to announce that Building Control had won in three categories in the regional finals of the Local Authority Building Control Awards. The 3 categories were: Best local builder (Chapel Properties), Best residential and small commercial designer (Robert Allerton) and Best Non-Residential New Build (Martello Café in Felixstowe).

He wished them well in the national awards and he congratulated Mark Harvey, Building Control Partnership Manager, and his team for their achievements.

Councillor Cook, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources

Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP)

Anglian Revenues Partnership (ARP) was proud to have been shortlisted for the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV) annual Performance awards; the IRRV was the professional body for Revenues and Benefits services.

ARP had been shortlisted for two awards, in the Excellence in Education/Staff Development category and for the Excellence in Innovation (Digital Transformation) category. A small number of staff were attending the IRRV national conference Performance Awards event on the 5 October 2022.

Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF)

Councillor Cook stated that Members may recall that the Government had provided the Council with £7.937m of funding to implement a scheme of discretionary rate reliefs to businesses in the district that had been affected by the pandemic. Following the Government's funding allocation methodology, those reliefs were targeted at businesses which were not in receipt of other reliefs or support, and which were also unable to pursue rating appeals as a way of reducing their rates bills.

This scheme had been an important measure in providing support to businesses affected by the pandemic, but had undoubtedly been challenging to administer, due to the need to ensure equitable treatment of businesses and compliance with subsidy control (state aid) issues, whilst maximising use of the available funding.

The deadline for awarding reliefs under this scheme was Friday, 30 September. Councillor Cook stated that he was pleased to report that the Council, working through the Anglia Revenues Partnership, had allocated 1,955 CARF reliefs totalling £7.908m, around 99.6% of the available funding.

Councillor Kerry, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing

Councillor Kerry reported that the Council had been involved in the redevelopment of the former Deben High School site for housing and he had recently found out that the project had won a National Design Award, for design quality. Further information would be available on the National Design Awards website in due course, including comments from the judging panel and a short video. He took the opportunity to thank the Housing Development Team for their ongoing hard work in respect of this development.

Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism

Councillor Smith reported that she had attended the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) awards, which took place recently in Stowmarket. She was pleased to inform Members that 2 councils in the district - Carlton Colville Town Council and Felixstowe Town Council had been nominated for awards. She was very pleased that Councils in the district were leading the way.

Councillor Burroughes, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Customer Experience, ICT and Commercial Partnerships

Councillor Burroughes reported that it was National Customer Services Week from 3 - 7 October and he encouraged all Members to get involved and celebrate the work that they do. Customer Services worked very hard, often in difficult circumstances and they tried their best to support local residents.

Chief Executive

Mr Baker reported he had nothing to add on this occasion.

Councillor Deacon asked if there was any opportunity to ask a question in relation to the announcements that had been made this evening? The Chairman confirmed that there was no opportunity to ask questions in relation to the announcements.

5 Questions from the Public

a) Question submitted by Mr Robertson to Councillor Rudd, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Safety

Has East Suffolk Council initiated discussions within a multi-dimensional agency framework regarding a court injunction being issued against Car Cruising happening in Lowestoft, particularly the Kessingland Bypass, under the Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972 as it can take up to a year to implement a court injunction on Car Cruising?

N.B. As Councillor Rudd had given apologies for the meeting, this question was answered by Councillor Jepson, Assistant Cabinet Member with responsibility for

Community Health.

Response from Councillor Jepson, Assistant Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Safety

As you are aware, this is the second question we have had regarding this, over the last couple of months. East Suffolk Council convened a multi-agency meeting in late August to consider the evidence to support potential further action in relation to Gateway Retail Park, speeding along Kessingland Bypass and the more recent issue of car cruising. This meeting was attended by Peter Aldous MP, County and District Councillors, Suffolk Police, Suffolk County Council and ESC staff (including Environmental Protection, Communities and Legal Teams). The purpose of the meeting was to consider both the diary sheets submitted by local residents relating to the three issues/sites listed above together with other data, including relating to monitored traffic speeds on the Kessingland Bypass.

Partners reiterated their commitment to use the most appropriate and proportionate tools to tackle the problems identified by local residents but emphasised that depth and quality of evidence is key in order to take any kind of effective further action.

In terms of the use of injunctions, case law makes it clear that if we can find out who the individual drivers are, then we should, and that 'evidence is essential to a successful outcome, particularly if the injunction is against persons unknown', and that this evidence must show 'that there is a sufficiently real and imminent risk of a tort being committed to justify precautionary relief. It also states that the injunction should have clear geographical and temporal limits'.

Since this question was submitted, a report has been provided to those local residents that submitted diary sheets and the intention is to meet interested parties to explore the most appropriate next steps, which may or may not include a court injunction.

b) Question submitted by Mr Wilkinson to Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council

The SZC planning application has been rejected by the Planning Inspector. The development cannot go ahead as there is no guaranteed, reliable potable water supply. It has yet to receive environmental permits for the contamination it will inevitably create. It has yet to receive a site licence from the Office of Nuclear Regulation. The outcome of the ground anchor trials is yet to be announced. The impact of the huge volume of seawater required to cool the reactors will have on the marine environment of Sizewell Bay and the killing of the millions of fish, fish fry and fish eggs which will result is a matter of deep political controversy at Hinkley as it is at Sizewell. EDF is in deep financial trouble in France and SZC, once promised as a 'subsidy free' development now has to rely on public and government handouts which will go directly to the French government to bail out its near-nationalised company. SZC is an environmental, financial and political mess which, even if it was to be built, will do nothing to help avert the climate crisis and will only add to our biodiversity crisis. You don't combat an existential emergency by taking 15 years to build a nuclear complex which itself has a massive environmental impact. Does the leader of the council agree that the SZC development should not proceed in these circumstances.

Response from Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council

Thank you Mr Wilkinson. The delivery of the Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station can only take place when all the relevant consents and permits are in place and the promoters have the financial backing to deliver the project.

To put it simply, Sizewell C should and only will proceed when all the necessary consents, permits and funding is in place to help to contribute to our energy mix and security of supply.

East Suffolk Council is not a decision-making authority on any of these consents or decisions but is a critical consultee on some.

All throughout the DCO process East Suffolk Council has rightly adopted a neutral position on the project, recognising that whilst the site was a nominated site within the New Nuclear Energy National Policy Statement. If it were to go ahead, we would need to ensure we that we do all we can to get the best possible development with all the necessary mitigation and compensation in place to minimise impacts on our residents and businesses.

This resolution was agreed by Cabinet, in detail, on the 21st September 2020.

East Suffolk Council has achieved a great deal of improvements and enhancements throughout the Examination process, I am rightly proud of the Members and Officers who secured the outcomes we did through that process working in collaboration with the promoter and the impacted communities, to fully understand the potential impacts and how they could be alleviated.

I do need to make clear that the assertion that the Inspectors recommend Refusal of the DCO is not correct. Whilst some may say this is nuanced but the Inspectors report was clear when it concluded:

For all the above reasons and in the light of the Examination Authorities findings and conclusions on important and relevant matters set out in this Report and based on the evidence and information before us at the close of the Examination, the Examination Authorities recommends that unless the outstanding water supply strategy can be resolved and sufficient information provided to enable the Secretary of State carry out his obligations under the Habitats Regulations, the case for an Order granting development consent for the application is not made out.

The government in its decision letter commented that "sufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the applicant has options available to it that will ensure a permanent water supply is secured" and in conclusion having regard to this the government considered the overall planning balance and, for the reasons set out in the decision letter, has concluded that the very substantial and urgent need for the proposal outweighs the harms, and that development consent should therefore be granted for the Proposed Development.

c) Question submitted from Mr Wilson to Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council

Sizewell C, approved despite PINS' recommendation for refusal. Over recent months, further information has come to light, including:-
Evidence, PM2.5s (a type of air pollution the thousands of vehicles the SZC project will introduce to East Suffolk's rural road network) causes lung cancer.

Growing evidence of EDF's incompetence and unsuitability as a developer, such as:-

- France are fully nationalising EDF because it has debt of 43 billion Euros, faces billions of additional costs to refurbish aging reactors and fund decommissioning costs.
- Half of EDF's 56 nuclear reactors are currently out of action, exposing the lie that nuclear is 'always on'.
- French government refusal to sign the UK govt's investment proposals, giving doubt about EDF's desire or ability for SZC involvement.
- The first operational EPR, Taishan 1, offline for a year with major problems indicating possible inherent flaws in the EPR design.
- Flamanville EPR construction started 2007- still not operational
- The decision that an AFD is required at Hinkley Point C

However, no change in that SZC does not have a guaranteed potable water supply for its 60 years of operation, meaning that SZC could be built but never operate.

Given the acknowledged damage SZC will inflict on Suffolk Coast & Heath's AONB, the Sizewell Marshes SSSI, the Heritage Coast, risk to RSPB Minsmere and given the doubts about EDF and the unproven EPR technology, how can the council continue to support the SZC project and meet the requirement that Councillors have to act in the public and local community interest?

Response from Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council

I also thank Mr Wilson for his question. My response to Mr Wilson's question is essentially the same as I have provided in detail a moment ago to Mr Wilkinson. I do understand the concerns amongst some residents in our district regarding their fears on the delivery of the SzC project.

However as set out previously, East Suffolk Council is not a decision-making body in the consenting or permitting regimes that need to be addressed before any construction work commences.

As stated previously we have sought to ensure we achieve the best outcomes if the project were to be undertaken and I am proud of the achievements to date.

However, I can reassure Council that if SzC were to commence construction those elements of the Discharging of Requirements and the Monitoring processes, where East Suffolk Council has responsibility, will be considered thoroughly and diligently throughout the many years of construction, to ensure the work programme is done with the least impact possible and the necessary mitigation and compensation outcomes negotiated are delivered.

Questions from Members

a) Question submitted by Councillor Craig to Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism

It is widely acknowledged that Southwold is one of the jewels of the coast of East Suffolk, and a key player in our Tourism Strategy.

Unfortunately, on September 7th there was yet another report in the local Press of sewage being discharged into the River Blyth, leading to a national campaigning group again stating that it was inadvisable to enter the water at Southwold. In addition, a Pollution Risk Warning advising against bathing was issued by the Environment Agency on 10th September for Lowestoft South Beach.

How will this Council protect visitors and residents alike from what appears to be a known discharge of untreated sewage into our waterways, onto our beaches and into the sea?

Response from Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism

The issue of river and coastal water quality is important to not only East Suffolk council but to all its residents and visitors. Whilst responsibility for the monitoring and enforcement of the water and sewerage sector in England sits with the Environment Agency, East Suffolk council work closely with them on this key matter.

For the protection of residents and visitors, for the six areas with designated bathing water status, the council put out signs advising against bathing in response to the Environment Agencies daily Pollution Risk Forecasts. In addition, the council work closely with Anglian Water as they work to deliver improvements to their assets that impact both river and coastal water quality.

East Suffolk council welcome increased designation of bathing waters, both coastal and inland as, once designated, the Environment Agency develop a bathing water profile and put plans in place to monitor and protect the bathing water.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Craig

When our new Environment Secretary, Ranil Jayawardena, meets with the water companies, it is essential that he understands the broader issues of raw sewage discharge into our water ways, beyond the risk to public health. Two of our MPs in East Suffolk hold coastal seats, so it is imperative that through them, this Council holds Anglian Water and the Environment Agency to account. We really cannot wait for the target date of 2050 to resolve this issue. To that effect, will you now take action and write to Peter Aldous and Therese Coffey, asking them to brief the Secretary of State, on what is becoming an increasingly urgent matter for our district? Perhaps you will also remind the Secretary of State for Health, that she is in the ideal position to champion this on public health grounds as well, given her own commitment to healthier living.

Response from Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism

Thank you for that suggestion, Councillor Craig. Perhaps you would wish to write to them yourself?

b) Question submitted by Councillor Daly to Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council

Following the announcement on 20 July 2022 that the Sizewell C planning application was approved and a Development Consent Order issued by the Secretary of State, will the Leader of the Council join the GLI Group in standing behind the residents' group Together Against Sizewell C and the 10,400 people who signed the petition opposing the build?

Response from Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council

You will have heard earlier the answers to two questions from residents regarding the SzC development.

I stand by those responses and refer again back to the Resolution of the Cabinet meeting held on the 21st September 2020 where Cabinet agreed the position that if the SzC project were to be consented by government then we would want to seek the least impact and maximum benefits for our communities and businesses if it were to go ahead.

Since that time, the world we now live in has changed and I feel even more strongly that the decision Cabinet made in 2020 was the right one for the district, but also for the nation, as we play an important role in helping deliver energy security as part of a mix of technologies enabling us all to "keep the lights on".

I can understand the objectors concerns that have been expressed eloquently throughout the Examination process. but the government has an energy strategy that promotes an energy mix, including new nuclear, to ensure we can all have the fundamental right to be able to keep warm, safe and enjoy life.

I agree there will be harm in our district, especially during construction, but the package negotiated by the Council has achieved significant mitigation and compensation.

In addition, I strongly believe that our districts economic prospects and skills enhancement will deliver significant improvements for the long-term benefit of our economy which will help businesses. and allow our youngsters to have opportunities to secure employment and thus remain in the area in which they grew up.

Therefore, to answer your specific question, no I will not join the GLI Group in supporting Together Against Sizewell C on this matter.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Daly

The Sizewell C build was opposed by the RSPB, East Suffolk Friends of the Earth and the vast majority of local residents. East Suffolk Council is looking increasingly isolated in its lack of opposition. We should take particular notice of the Examining Officer's conclusion, which was that Sizewell C should not be built in that Suffolk location where the water supply cannot be guaranteed. The Leader has referred to that but part of the Judicial Review is that no evidence was offered by the Secretary of State in relation to the water issues. Another thing the Examiner said was that the coastline would not be resilient for the whole lifetime of the project, which is so important. In light of this, can I ask that, even at this late stage, we should apply reason and oppose the build?

Response from Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council

Thank you. First, I would like to clarify the environmental agenda. The GLI wants us all to get rid of our cars and to ban flying. They campaign against and criminalise renewable energy because it is not green. The Conservatives, on the other hand, take action, rather than just talking. Through the leadership of our Cabinet Member for the Environment, James Mallinder, we are converting all of our Council vehicles to electric or HVO, saving 90% of our carbon output. Our Cabinet Member for Housing, Richard Kerry, has ensured we are building passive housing, which requires little or no heating. We have also approved a new solar farm, which will save 11,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year and will provide electricity for 16,500 homes. We will work to get the maximum benefit from national energy projects, such as Sizewell C and Scottish Power off-shore wind farms for our residents, including hundreds of local jobs and apprenticeships, plus opportunities for local businesses to benefit from increased orders. All of this is in addition to our policies of re-wilding, less grass cutting and our feeding the bees campaign to increase biodiversity throughout the district. We have on the table a district wide network of walking and cycling routes for residents health and wellbeing. All of this is in the control of and being done by East Suffolk Council.

Councillor Beavan raised a point of order at this point as he felt that the response to a Members' Supplementary Question had turned into a speech. The Chairman stated that the Leader was entitled to provide an answer to the question.

Councillor Gallant stated that opposition parties may demand change for supposed national policies for their political agenda, however, this Council would focus on the climate emergency and cost of living crisis. This Conservative Administration would need to make sure that life was worth living after we had achieved our goal of carbon neutrality by 2030. Councillor Gallant concluded that he was not interested in banner waving, nor political posturing, he had been elected to make a positive difference to the 250,000 residents, visitors and the future generations that would follow on behind us.

c) Question submitted by Councillor Smith-Lyte for Councillor Mallinder, Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment

During Councillor Smith-Lyte reading out her question, Councillor Gallant raised a point of order and stated that the question being read out should be the same as the question which had been submitted and published on the agenda. The Chairman confirmed that this was correct. Councillor Smith-Lyte stated that she had wished to give a short preamble first, however, she agreed to read out her original question.

Our local residents are being inconvenienced by the lack of glass recycling facilities. Everyone wants to do their part for the planet, and we as the waste management organisation need to make that easier for them. Has the Cabinet Member for the Environment considered employing local private companies to do doorstep collection of glass recycling as many other councils do, if our waste management officers cannot do it? Or alternatively, can more glass recycling banks be installed in areas where residents request them?

Response from Councillor Mallinder, Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment

There are currently 250 bottle banks in our district, which are all placed for easy access by village halls, pubs and shops. Using a bottle bank really was important, as this was closed loop recycling. There was a wide held misconception that recycling a glass bottle, simply re-created another glass bottle, however, it was really down to recycling and creating component parts.

I know that Councillor Smith-Lyte cares for the Environment nearly as much as I do and I work hard to make sure we have the right recycling facilities for our residents. This Council declared a climate emergency, reinforcing our commitment to the environment in our Strategic Plan and we have a duty to encourage and educate our residents do the right thing. The right thing in this instance is recycling glass in the bottle banks.

East Suffolk Council is not the solution but it is part of the solution. I ask all Members to communicate to your residents and local communities about recycling glass and if any community that feels they need an additional bottle bank, please let me know.

This encouragement to do the right thing for glass recycling is really important and will mean that all those small changes will make a big difference over time.

Comment from Councillor Smith-Lyte

I don't have a supplementary question, however, I am slightly insulted that there has to be some sort of competition about who is the most eco-friendly.

7 Petitions

No petitions had been received as provided by Council Procedure Rule 10.

8 Notices of Motion

a) Motion submitted by Councillor Byatt

The Chairman invited Councillor Byatt to read out his Motion.

Councillor Byatt proposed his Motion, which was seconded by Councillor Deacon and

he read out the following:

"This Council recognises that an increasing number of our residents are being negatively affected by the cost of living crisis.

It is our Council's responsibility to offer relevant advice and support regarding East Suffolk services which may be able to help them, and should ensure that they have access to such advice and support.

We must not assume that everyone uses the Internet, and others may not find using the phone easy. It is important, therefore, to offer residents the opportunity of a face-to-face discussion.

In the light of this, we will review the current opening hours of our Customer Service Centre at the Marina Centre in Lowestoft, and other provision within various Libraries across the District, to assess if there needs to be an expansion of their opening hours and staffing."

The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.4, the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the Opposition Groups had met to discuss this Motion and agreed a way forward. The recommendation from this meeting was that the Motion would be discussed this evening. She therefore proposed from the Chair that this Motion be discussed this evening and it was seconded by the Leader of the Council. The Chairman invited Members to vote on the proposal to debate the Motion this evening and it was unanimously **CARRIED**.

The Chairman then invited Members to debate.

The Leader stated that Customer Services recognised that a variety of channels were needed to meet the needs of its customers. Face to face service remained important and following a review, the opening hours had been changed to make sure there were sufficient resources to meet the needs of our customers. We constantly monitor demand, complaints and staff provision and were now available in more locations than ever before in the Marina Centre in Lowestoft, the libraries in Aldeburgh, Halesworth, Leiston, Saxmundham, Woodbridge and Felixstowe. Also, Digital Champions were available by appointment, to assist the public to access services online, as well as how to use smart phones etc for personal use. A number of roadshows were planned to take place around the district to provide advice to people concerned about the cost of living eg rising fuel costs, money saving, benefits and debt management, as well as information on the financial support available.

In light of the support being provided by the Council, the Leader proposed an amendment to the Motion, which was seconded by Councillor Blundell. The amendment was:

This Council recognises that an increasing number of our residents are being negatively affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

It is our Council's ambition to offer relevant advice and support as part of our Ease the Squeeze Campaign we want to help all residents to ensure that they have access to the

best advice and support.

We must not assume that everyone uses the Internet, and others may not find using the phone easy. It is important, therefore, to offer residents the opportunity of a face-to-face discussion if this is their preference.

In the light of this, we acknowledge the plans being put in place by both the Communities Team and The Customer Service Team and urge them to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the customer engagement model and implement change where necessary.

The Chairman invited Members to debate the amendment.

Councillor Coulam commented that she had shared information about the Cost of Living Roadshows on Facebook, to raise awareness amongst her constituents.

Councillor Byatt stated that the amendment was within the spirit of the original motion and he noted the Cabinet Member update in Item 15, by Councillor Burroughes, regarding the Customer Services and Customer Experience Teams. However, he was still concerned by the digital exclusion of many local residents. He gave the example of one of his constituents from Pakefield, who had tried in vain to book a slot at the household waste recycling centre by phone. She did not have access to the internet and eventually turned to Councillor Byatt for assistance. Whilst he had been able to help her book a slot, he was concerned about the many other people who would experience similar difficulties and reduce digital exclusion.

Councillor Cook reported that the Ease the Squeeze campaign was providing a number of ways to assist residents to get help during this difficult time. It was important for all Councillors to share information and signpost residents to get the help that they need.

Councillor Burroughes commented that he was glad that Councillor Byatt was able to support the amended Motion. Since Members had talked about our digital transformation plans in 2019, the Customer Access Strategy had been transformed and regular updates had been received on progress. Residents were now able to access support in more places than before, increasing from 4 to 7 sites, and Digital Champions were available by appointment in libraries to assist on a variety of technical matters. Councillor Burroughes offered to speak to Councillor Byatt in more detail outside of the meeting. It was noted that 3 Financial Inclusion Officers had also been appointed to assist people to cope during the cost of living crisis. It was noted that nobody was immune from the current crisis, everyone was affected to some degree.

Councillor Topping stated that she had been speaking to Councillor Burroughes about this for some time and she stated that she was glad that Councillor Byatt had submitted this motion. She stated that Beccles was the largest town outside of Lowestoft in Waveney and at one time there had been a district Council office in the town, as well as Councillors available to speak to the public in the library. When Covid arrived, everything had changed and the area in the library where Councillors and officers could meet with the public was removed. Councillor Topping stated that she was receiving complaints and queries all the time from residents, which should be answered by Council officers. She stated that she was desperate to get an officer to

come to speak to the public in Beccles and deal with their queries, even if it was just for a couple of hours a week. The population in Beccles was ageing, who often did not have smart phones and the ability to get online. She stated that Bungay was in an even worse position, as they did not have the bus or train routes to get to the Marina Centre in Lowestoft or Halesworth. She noted that the Cost of Living Roadshow would be in Beccles on 27 October between 11 am and 2 pm, however, if residents were unable to attend, their questions would remain unanswered.

Councillor Jepson took the opportunity to highlight the work of the Community Partnerships (CPs), who were identifying a number of warm rooms across the district and each CP had the option to fund their own. It was important to share the work of the CPs and inform residents of the help and support available in their areas.

Councillor Smith echoed the words of Councillor Jepson and took the opportunity to invite Councillor Topping to contact her outside of the meeting, to discuss the issues in Beccles. Councillor Smith stated that she would also see if the Communities Team would be able to assist.

Councillor Gooch stated that she supported Councillor Byatt and Councillor Topping's comments and she felt that support needed to be in person by default, rather than by digital methods. She gave an example of an article in the Daily Express, which mentioned the difficulty some people had in paying for their telephone and internet bills. Many people may not be able to afford to use digital means in the future and, as such, people would really want to see a friendly person, face to face.

Councillor Lynch stated that his ward of Kesgrave had a population that was 50% larger than Beccles and he expected local residents to come to him for help and support, as a Town and District Councillor. He commented that a significant part of a Councillors' role was to assist their constituents, in a variety of settings. He did not expect officers to undertake this role.

Councillor Mallinder stated that one of his constituents had made an appointment to see a customer services advisor face to face and it was important to remember that this facility was available, and to inform constituents, as appropriate.

Councillor Blundell reported that it was important the residents knew what the Council was doing. Communication was key and Councillors should make themselves available to answer questions and share information. At the Foodbanks in his ward, additional information was being provided about the Ease the Squeeze campaign and all the help and support that was available. He felt that it was an excellent campaign and should be supported by all Members.

The Leader thanked Members for the interesting debate. He was concerned about the view that officers should meet with the public and deal with their queries, as he felt that was what all Councillors had been elected to do, Councillors were the link between the public and the Council. He also did not agree with the Council communicating face to face by default, as he felt it would be more expensive and time consuming for people to have to drive to the nearest customer services facility, queue up and speak to an officer there. Digital by default was a much simpler and more efficient way of working, with other methods of contact available for those unable to

use digital communications.

As the amendment to the motion had been moved and seconded, the Chairman invited Members to vote on whether or not to accept the amendment. Upon being put to the vote the amendment was **CARRIED**.

N.B. Councillor Brambley-Crawshaw and Councillor Topping left the meeting at this point in the proceedings at 7.38 pm.

The Chairman clarified that the amended Motion had now become the Substantive Motion. There being no further debate, the Motion was put to the vote and it was **CARRIED**.

b) Notice of Motion Submitted by Councillor Beavan

The Chairman invited Councillor Beavan to read out his Motion.

Councillor Beavan sought clarity on procedure at this point during the proceedings. Mr Bing, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, reported that in accordance with the Constitution, the Motion would become 'live' once it had been moved and seconded. The Mover, when moving the Motion, should explain the purpose of it. Councillor Beavan should therefore read out his Motion and explain the purpose of it and then seek a seconder.

Councillor Beavan stated that the Motion had been published on the agenda and he wished to take it as read. He then explained why Members should support the motion. He stated that everyone would agree that staff were the Council's most valuable asset but some of them, due to the cost of living crisis, would not be able to feed their families or warm their homes. People could not afford to live on the national living wage of £9.50 an hour, nor the real living wage of £10.90 an hour. Morally, Members should not wish to see any East Suffolk Council employee in a foodbank queue. The motion attempted to ensure that never happened, by automatically raising the lowest paid in line with the UK median salary.

Councillor Beavan stated that most of the Council's low paid staff were apprentices, however, next year the Council would take on Norse, where many more staff were trying to raise families on low wages. He stated that a target was needed to raise wages over the next few years. The Council's vacancy rate was now 9% which put a strain on the remaining employees and public servants continued to fall behind, as real wages had been cut by 28% in ten years. The labour market was tight as retailers raised their pay rates and the Council needed to stay competitive.

He felt that the pay deal was unlikely to match 10% inflation next year, so that would be another pay cut for most staff. However, the present pay deal was looking at a flat rate increase of nearly £2k for everybody, which meant that those earning less than £19k (£10 an hour) kept up with inflation. He asked why the Council could not keep doing this every year, until all staff were above survival level?

Councillor Beavan then proposed his Motion, which was seconded by Councillor Thompson. A copy of the Motion is shown below, for completeness:

This Council notes:

- 1. As of July 28th, ESC had 82 vacancies, 10% of the workforce.*
- 2. Attracting and retaining staff will become more difficult as pay lowers.*
- 3. With inflation above 10%, the current pay deal being discussed by Government means a real-terms paycut for most staff, but rightly prioritises lower paid staff with a flat rate increase so that they can feed their families and warm their homes.*

This Council resolves:

- 1. To write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State calling on Government to fund competitive salaries for public servants.*
- 2. To set a new minimum wage target at 75 per cent of median hourly pay by 2030, amounting to £11.70/hr on present figures. This would see the minimum wage rise at a rate on par with average wages, making sure that those earning the least don't fall too far behind.*
- 3. To pay for this by restricting top salaries to less than four to five times median earnings (£100k to £125k pa at present).*
- 4. To explore the feasibility of running a three-month pilot of a four-day working week in 2023 to see if productivity can be maintained while improving staff's work/life balance.*

The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.4, the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the Opposition Groups had met to discuss this Motion and agreed a way forward. The recommendation from this meeting was that the Motion would be discussed this evening. She therefore proposed from the Chair that this Motion be discussed this evening and it was seconded by the Leader of the Council. The Chairman invited Members to vote on the proposal to debate the Motion this evening and it was unanimously **CARRIED**.

The Chairman then invited Members to debate.

Councillor Cook reported that the number of staff vacancies in East Suffolk Council, was a constantly moving feast. The latest information he had was that there were currently 75 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) vacancies, which represented just under 9% of the total workforce. This was a welcome improvement. Higher inflation affected all employees, when prices were rising faster than wages and salaries. It was, therefore, no more difficult in local government to attract and retain staff than in any other sector. Local government remained a secure and well rewarded provider of employment and the greater challenge in this area might be retaining sufficient young talent in the district to fill the vacancies. That said, the Council's excellent record on apprenticeship schemes and the retention of those employees after their initial period was testament to ESC as an employer.

Councillor Cook stated that, as the current pay offer to local government staff had not been agreed with all the unions and with inflation now falling, due mainly to a fall in petrol and diesel prices, it was not yet clear that there would be a pay-cut in real terms. He confirmed that today, the Council had received an update from the LGA that on a turnout reported to be 34%, UNISON's members had voted by 63.5% to 36.5% to accept the National Employers' final pay offer for local government services ('Green Book') employees.

Councillor Cook reported that, of course, in order for the pay deal to be finalised so that it can be implemented and paid to employees, GMB and/or Unite must also vote to accept the employers' offer. We must now wait for Unite's membership consultation to close on 14 October 2022 and GMB's to close on 21 October 2022. If further updates were received before those consultations closed, Members would be kept informed.

Councillor Cook then updated Members on the reversal in the increase in National Insurance:

- For an annual salary of £30k, the annual NI saving for an employee was over £200 (£2,092 compared to £2,309 which was the July rate)
- For an annual salary of £40k, the annual NI saving for an employee was over £300 (£3,292 compared to £3,634 which was the July rate)

For clarification, Members noted that £30k was close to the mid-point of SCP1-53 (so excluding Chief Officers) - Band 6 SCP 27 £31,895 (current pay before pay award). £40k was close to the mid-point of all SCP (including Chief Officers) - Band 8 SCP 36 £40,578.

In terms of the Motion itself, Councillor Cook report that, as previously stated, this Council would not lobby the Government on matters in which we were not a party to the issue. Public sector wages and salaries were determined by the Government in agreement with employers and Trade Unions and any representation by this Council had little or no influence. Of course, any Member, individual or group was entitled to write, if they wished, either direct or via their MP.

In respect of the Council considering running a pilot scheme for a reduced working week, Councillor Cook reported that the Council was aware that other Councils were considering this as a possibility. However, having only recently introduced the Council's own hybrid scheme of balanced office and home-based work to maintain efficiency and provide for a better work/life balance for our employees, it would be prudent to assess the success of this initiative and note the outcome of the pilot scheme in South Cambridgeshire before contemplating such a pilot here.

With regards to items 2 and 3, Councillor Cook reported that there was a fundamental misunderstanding, in that the Council does not have the authority to either of them. The setting of the minimum wage was the sole duty of the Government and the restriction of top salaries was a matter for the Government, as far as the public sector was concerned, and employers in the private sector. Councillor Cook stated that he suspected that the Unions would not entirely welcome such a proposal, since the figures suggested would include senior teachers, doctors and other senior public sector employees. On that basis, he could not support the motion and he urged colleagues to vote against it.

Councillor Goldson asked Councillor Beavan who would pay for the increase in staff wages? It would be the tax-payer and he stated that in this economic climate it would not be well received.

Councillor Byatt reported that whilst he supported the principle of the motion, he understood that the Council could not commit additional funds that it did not have on

increasing staff wages. He agreed that staff should be valued and supported.

The Leader reported that it was not possible for the Council to set its own minimum wage or take money from the top earners to give to others. He also commented that the Council was in the process of appointing a new Chief Executive and a Strategic Director for Growth. It was, therefore, important to get the best people for those 2 roles, which meant having an attractive salary, comparable to other Councils'. The evidence was there in the number of applications received from excellent applicants. He reassured Members that the staff salary situation would be monitored over time, to ensure the Council was doing the best for its staff.

Councillor Daly stated that he supported Councillor Beavan's motion. He asked why those on lower pay were always paid the minimum? Why could their wages not be increased to ensure that all frontline staff were on a comfortable wage?

Councillor Thompson stated it was important for the Council to address this issue. Staff needed to have a good wage and a vacancy rate of 10% was a concern. The Council needed to attract and retain good people.

Councillor Beavan stated that he disagreed with some of the earlier statements, including the figures quoted by Councillor Cook. He also felt that those working for the LATCO and East Suffolk Services were really still East Suffolk Council employees. He stated that pay for those at the top was always increased, however, those at the bottom of the pay scale were often ignored and he was concerned that the inequality was only increasing. Growth was currently being suppressed and it was important to have an equal and fair society.

There being no further debate and as the Motion had already been moved and seconded by Councillor Beavan and Councillor Thompson, the motion was then put to the vote and it was **NOT CARRIED**.

9 Community Governance Review – East Suffolk

Full Council received report **ES/1285** by Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council. The purpose of the report was to request Full Council to approve the final recommendations of this district-wide Community Governance Review (CGR).

It was noted that, at its Annual Meeting on 25 May 2022, Full Council had approved the request to begin a consultation on the draft recommendations for the Community Governance Review. A public period of consultation ran from 30 May to 8 July 2022. The CGR Member Working Group met to consider the responses to the consultation and to agree the final recommendations to be considered by Council. The final recommendations could be found in Appendix A to the report.

The Leader took the opportunity to thank Karen Last, Electoral Services Manager, and her team for their exemplary work in respect of the review and he also thanked the Community Governance Working Group Members for their contribution.

There being no questions to the Leader, he then moved the 3 recommendations within the report, which was seconded by Councillor Kerry.

The Chairman invited Members to debate.

Councillor Byatt commented that he had taken part in the Working Group meetings and he also commended the work of officers in relation to the CGR. He then proposed that Members moved straight to the vote.

The Chairman invited Members to vote and it was therefore

RESOLVED

1. That the final recommendations, as set out in Appendix A to report ES/1285, be approved.
2. That the Chief Executive be asked to write to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to request their consent to make the changes to district ward and county division boundaries and consequential parish warding arrangements ahead of the elections in May 2023.
3. That the re-organisation Order(s) are produced to include all changes agreed by Council and where consent is granted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), where necessary.

10 Treasury Management Outturn 2021/22 and Mid-Year 2022/23 Report

Full Council received report **ES/1287** by Councillor Cook, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources. It was noted that the Treasury Management Policy Statement required an annual report and mid-year report to be produced and noted by the Audit & Governance Committee and Full Council. The Audit & Governance Committee met on the 12 September 2022 to review and note the report. Councillor Cook reported that the report reviewed performance of the treasury management function of East Suffolk Council for the financial year 2021/22 and then reviewed the first half of the financial year 2022/23.

2021/22 Summary:

- Investments totalled £143.37m as at 31st March 2022, which was made up of £87.5m of short-term investments, £40.53m of long-term investments and £15.34m of liquidity investments.
- Interest received during the year totalled £1.08m.
- Borrowing totalled £65.81m as at 31st March 2022 of which £60.40m related to the Housing Revenue Account and £5.41m related to the General Fund.

2022/23 Summary to date:

- Investments totalled £145.57m as at 31st August 2022, which was made up of

£80m of short-term investments, £35.57m of long-term investments and £30m of liquidity investments.

- Interest received to 31st August 2022 totalled £300k.

In conclusion, Members were advised that the Council had operated its Treasury Management function within the prescribed Treasury Management Policy and Prudential Indicators for 2021/22 and for the first half of 2022/23. The Council continued to ensure security over liquidity when managing the Council's investments. It was noted the Council continued to monitor the desire for ethical investments and ensure, where possible, the investments met this criteria.

The Chairman invited questions to Councillor Cook, however, there were none. Therefore, Councillor Cook moved the recommendations contained within the report, which was seconded by Councillor Lynch. There being no debate, the Chairman invited Members to vote and it was

RESOLVED

1. That the Annual Report on the Council's Treasury Management activity for 2021/22 incorporating the Mid-Year review for 2022/23 be noted.
2. That the Prudential Indicators Outturn position for 2021/22 in Appendix B to report ES/1287, be noted.

11 Capital Programme Review 2022/23 to 2025/26

Full Council received report **ES/1286** by Councillor Cook, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources. It was noted that the Council had agreed a programme of capital expenditure for the coming four years, 2022/23 to 2025/26, as part of the budget setting process at Full Council in January 2022.

Councillor Cook reported that there was a need to accurately reflect updates to the General Fund Capital Programme for schemes recently approved, such as the Resilient Coasts Project and also budgets re-phased from 2021/22, including increases for inflationary pressures.

The carry forwards from 2021/22 and budget increases which were reflected in the 2022/23 revised budgets total £5.68m, new projects total £3.2m, these being:

- Southwold Enterprise Hub £0.6m
- UK Shared Prosperity Project £0.6m (£6m 2023/24)
- Pakefield Emergency/Resilient works £1.2m (£9.1m 2023/24)
- Southwold North Dock Wall £0.4m
- ESSL IT Set Up £0.4m (£0.1m 2023/24)

The re-phasing of 2022/23 budgets to later years would total £12.14m.

The Chairman invited questions to Councillor Cook.

Councillor Beavan asked if the £600,000 spent on the Southwold Enterprise Hub had been assessed for value and reviewed? Councillor Cook invited Mr Mew, Chief Finance and Section 151 Officer, to answer this question. Mr Mew reported that the value would be calculated as part of the budget setting process. There was currently no figure available, however, it would be included in the figures presented from Finance for next year.

Councillor Gandy queried the figures on page 69, in Appendix A, for the Capital receipts. She queried why the revised budget figures were £1 million in 2022/23 and £4 million in 2023/24 and she wanted to know if the Council would be selling some assets to achieve that figure? Mr Sturman, Specialist Accountant for Capital and Treasury Management, confirmed that those figures was the allocation of monies received from the sale of the former SCDC Council offices at Melton Hill.

Councillor Gandy queried paragraph 2.1 in the report, which stated the Council did not anticipate capital receipts until they had been realised and she queried the figures for income during 2022/23. Councillor Cook confirmed that the Council knew which funds were expected but it did not allocate or rely on them until they had been received. The figures were then updated when receipts were received.

Councillor Byatt commented on the £1.2 million of emergency funding for the works at Pakefield Cliffs, to try to reduce the significant erosion taking place. He stated that the funding was most welcome and was appreciated by local residents.

There being no further questions, Councillor Cook moved the recommendation within the report, which was seconded by Councillor Burroughes. There being no debate, the Chairman invited Members to vote and it was

RESOLVED

That the revised General Fund Capital Programme for 2022/23 to 2025/26 including revisions as shown in Appendix B to report ES/1286, be approved.

12 Authorisation of Officers - Attendance at Magistrates' Court

Full Council received report **ES/1288** by Councillor Cook, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources. He reported that Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972 allowed local authorities to authorise officers who do not necessarily have legal qualifications (as solicitors, barristers or legal executives) to represent the Council in the Magistrates' Court. Members noted that the Section 223 power was used very widely by local authorities; in particular most district and unitary authorities have been using this power for many years to authorise recovery officers to appear in the local Magistrates' Courts in Council Tax and Business Rate enforcement cases.

East Suffolk Council was one of five authorities which formed part of the Anglia Revenues Partnership. The Partnership operated under a Partnership Agreement approved by the Council. It was, therefore, important to ensure that the list of

authorised officers was refreshed on a regular basis, as this would provide resilience and effective cover, thus improving the Council's ability to recover Council Tax.

The Chairman invited questions to Councillor Cook. There being no questions, Councillor Cook moved the recommendation contained within the report and this was seconded by Councillor Yule. There being no debate, the Chairman invited Members to vote and it was

RESOLVED

That Steven Oxborough, Lucy Talbot, Peter Seeley, Rachel Marsden, Michael Cartwright, Nigel Adams and Kieran Kingston-Miles be authorised to represent East Suffolk Council in the Magistrates' Court in accordance with Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972.

13 Skin Piercing Byelaws

N.B. Councillor Plummer left the meeting during the discussions on this item at 8.23 pm.

Full Council received report **ES/1290** by Councillor Rudd, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health, which was presented by Councillor Jepson, Assistant Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health. Members noted that the Council was responsible for registering businesses that carry out certain skin piercing activities such as acupuncture, tattooing, electrolysis and ear piercing. The Council must also inspect those businesses to ensure that the premises and practices were hygienic and there were controls in place to prevent the risk of blood-borne infection.

It was reported that there were currently outdated sets of Skin Piercing byelaws, adopted by the former Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils, that were in need of consolidation and updating to create a single East Suffolk Council byelaw. By adopting the current national model byelaws, East Suffolk Council would be able to ensure businesses comply with nationally set standards.

Members noted that whilst the Licensing Committee had resolved on the 15 July 2019 to approve that the recommendations in that report be brought to Full Council, this was delayed due to the Covid pandemic and was now being brought for Full Council approval. In the intervening time, a wider review had been undertaken into how the Environmental Health Team could improve its approach to skin piercing activities.

Councillor Jepson reported that as part of standardising the Council's approach, the plan was now to adopt a single new district-wide byelaw for a wider range of beauty treatments such as cosmetic piercing, semi-permanent skin colouring, acupuncture, tattooing, electrolysis and ear piercing (referred to as special treatments) as prescribed by the Department of Health. Alongside this, and to bring the council in line with good practice among other authorities, the Food and Safety team would also improve the information and guidance available to licensees, both in terms of updating outdated

guidance and improving the website.

The advantages of doing this were that it would bring the council's skin piercing licensing regime into alignment, improved operational efficiency, simplified the standards for local businesses and offered better protection to public health. In practice, this meant that the existing Byelaws for both former councils (Suffolk Coastal and Waveney) would have to be revoked and the new district wide byelaw would be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval and signing. It was anticipated that this would be agreed and ready for implementation in December 2022, once signed by the Secretary of State.

The Chairman invited questions to Councillor Jepson.

Councillor Deacon raised concerns about the male gendered language used within the byelaws and queried why gender-neutral language could not be used instead? The Leader reported that legislation often used such gendered language and it was widely accepted the 'he and him' referred to all genders in byelaws and other legal documents.

Councillor Goldson raised concerns as he felt that this was an ambiguous report and he queried if Appendix A was still in draft form and whether further comments about the contents could be received. It was reported that Full Council was being asked to approve the byelaws this evening, so that they could be finalised and implemented shortly.

Councillor Goldson stated he was very disappointed with the clinical basis of the byelaws. He quoted Paragraph C on page 89, which stated 'any needle used in treatment is single use and disposable, as far as practicable....' He stated that this was not sufficient, as only single use needles should be used in these sorts of premises. He also raised concerns about the wording in the byelaws in relation to the cleaning of body fluids and the changing of gloves when undertaking acupuncture. He was very concerned and he requested that the byelaws be further reviewed.

Councillor Jepson invited Ms Quinn, Head of Environmental Health, to respond to Councillor Goldson's concerns. Ms Quinn provided clarification that the byelaws had been written and developed by the Department for Health, for all Councils to adopt across the UK, they had not been written by ESC officers. The aim of the byelaws was to reduce the health issues related to skin piercing premises. The new byelaws were a significant improvement upon the byelaws currently in place and would protect local residents who wished to undertake skin piercing and related procedures. She confirmed that the byelaws had been developed with the involvement of a wide range of health experts, as well as skin piercing practitioners.

Councillor Jepson took the opportunity to move the recommendations within the report and this was seconded by Councillor Cackett.

The Chairman invited Members to debate.

Councillor Goldson stated that he felt very strongly about this matter and he did not agree with the adoption of the byelaws, as he felt that they were badly

written. Councillor Goldson then requested that a recorded vote be undertaken for this item.

The Leader stated that the byelaws had not been written by ESC officers, they had been developed by experts and written with the involvement of lawyers. Skin piercing was a complex matter and the byelaws, if adopted, would protect local residents.

Councillor Byatt asked if Councillor Goldson could raise his concerns with the Head of Environmental Services outside of the meeting and it was confirmed that he could.

Councillor Cackett commented that the Secretary of State had to approve the byelaws before they could be implemented by the Council. She stated that they were standard byelaws used by all Environmental Health departments throughout the UK. She commented that Environmental Health Officers could inspect premises, regardless of whether the latest byelaws were in place.

Councillor Jepson stated that the byelaws to be adopted were national byelaws and were used by Councils across the UK. He invited Councillor Goldson to raise his concerns outside of the meeting.

Mr Baker, Chief Executive, asked Councillor Goldson if he still wanted a recorded vote for this item and he confirmed that he did. As 7 Members were needed to request a recorded vote, Mr Baker asked if there were any other Members who wished to have a recorded vote. No other Members supported the request for a recorded vote, therefore the usual voting method, a show of hands, would be used.

The Chairman invited Members to vote and it was

RESOLVED

1. That the adoption of the byelaws, as set out in Appendix A of report ES/1290 be approved;
2. That the Head of Environmental Services and Port Health be authorised to carry out the necessary procedure in relation to the creation of new byelaws and to apply to the Secretary of State for confirmation;
3. That the affixing of the common seal of the Council to the new byelaws be authorised;
4. That the revocation of the existing byelaws referred to at paragraphs 6 to 10 of the byelaws set out in Appendix A of report ES/1290, upon the coming into force of the new byelaws, be approved.

14 Temporary Appointments to Little Glemham Parish Council (LGPC)

Full Council received report **ES/1296** by Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council. The purpose of the report was to seek Full Council's approval to the making of an Order

under Section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972, to appoint two persons temporarily to Little Glemham Parish Council (LGPC), until the May 2023 elections, so that it could be quorate and conduct business.

It was noted that two parishioners had expressed an interest to the Clerk of the Parish Council in being appointed to the Parish Council. Those parishioners were Lynne Gibbs and Laura Tregent.

The Leader clarified that there were no qualifications or criteria which had to be applied to those persons who wished to be appointed under s91 of the LGA 1972. The persons appointed would serve as councillors, save that they have been appointed rather than elected.

The Chairman invited questions to the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Daly asked if it was usual practice for the District Council to make such appointments? The Leader confirmed that it was, as the Parish Council was unable to undertake any business, as it was not able to be quorate. Once the appointments had been made by Full Council, the Parish Council would be undertake business again.

There being no further questions, the Leader moved the recommendation and this was seconded by Councillor Brooks.

There being no debate, the Chairman then moved to the vote and it was

RESOLVED

That the making of an Order, under Section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972, to appoint temporarily, until the elections in May 2023, Lynne Gibbs and Laura Tregent as members of Little Glemham Parish Council be approved.

15 Cabinet Members Report and Outside Bodies Representatives Reports to Council

Full Council received report **ES/1284**, which was presented by Councillor Gallant, Leader of the Council, and provided individual Cabinet Members' reports on their areas of responsibility, as well as reports from those Members appointed to represent East Suffolk Council on Outside Bodies. The Leader stated that the written reports could be taken as read and he invited relevant questions on their contents.

Councillor Byatt stated that he had a number of questions in relation to Councillor Rivett's update reports. As Councillor Rivett was not present at the meeting this evening and he did not have an Assistant Cabinet Member, Councillor Byatt asked if he could send questions to Councillor Rivett outside of the meeting? The Leader confirmed he was satisfied with that approach and he would make sure the questions and answers were circulated to all Members, for information.

Councillor Deacon stated that he was delighted that the Council had received an award for the Deben High School site development and he wanted to know when building

works would start to commence? Councillor Kerry reported that the project was currently out to tender and once a building company had been awarded the contract, building work would commence as soon as possible.

Councillor Byatt referred to Councillor Burroughes report and he asked how Digital Champions were to identify themselves to the customers using the Customer Services centres? Councillor Burroughes reported that the Digital Champions were badged and they were introduced to those customers who needed that support to go online. He stated that he would seek further clarification on this matter and report back to Councillor Byatt outside of the meeting.

There being no further comments or questions, the report was received for information.

16 Exempt/Confidential Item

The Chairman reported that in exceptional circumstances, the Council may, by law, exclude members of the public from all, or part of, a decision-making meeting. There were various reasons that the Council, on occasions, had to do this and examples were because a report contained information relating to an individual, information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person, or information relating to any consultations or negotiations.

This evening, there was one such report, which was the North Felixstowe Garden Neighbourhood.

The purpose of the report was to set out the current status of the development and seek approval of the funding for ESC to progress to the next stage of work. This would assist the Council to help drive forward the best solution for the North Felixstowe Garden Neighbourhood and to ensure the outcome across the whole development.

On the proposition of the Chairman, seconded by the Leader, it was by unanimous vote

RESOLVED

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

17 North Felixstowe Garden Neighbourhood

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting concluded at 8.52 pm.

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Chairman