

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Cabinet** held in the Conference Room, Riverside, Lowestoft on **Tuesday, 05 March 2024 at 6:00 PM**

Members of the Cabinet present:

Councillor Paul Ashton, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Toby Hammond, Councillor Vince Langdon-Morris, Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte, Councillor Caroline Topping, Councillor Sarah Whitelock, Councillor Kay Yule

Other Members present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Mike Deacon, Councillor Alan Green, Councillor Lee Reeves, Councillor Craig Rivett

Officers present: Chris Bally (Chief Executive), Chris Bing (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Kerry Blair (Head of Operations), Kate Blakemore (Strategic Director), Sarah Davis (Democratic Services Officer), Lorraine Fitch (Democratic Services Manager), Andy Jarvis (Strategic Director), Nick Khan (Strategic Director), Andrea McMillan (Planning Manager - Policy, Delivery and Specialist Services), Laura Mundy (Principal Planner (Policy and Delivery)), Philip Ridley (Head of Planning and Coastal Management), Alli Stone (Democratic Services Officer)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Candy and Councillor Daly.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3 Announcements

There were no announcements from the Leader or Cabinet Members

4 Minutes

On the proposition of Councillor Langdon-Morris, seconded by Councillor Hammond it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 Statutory five-year review assessment of the East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan and Local Development Scheme update

Councillor Yule, the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management introduced report ES/1869 which related to the Statutory five-year review assessment of the East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan and Local Development Scheme update.

The report presented to Cabinet addressed three key matters:

1. The five year statutory review assessment of the Waveney Local Plan.
2. The recommendation arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings of 19th October and 16th November 2023 to “Review the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Local Plan documents in relation to affordable housing supply sooner rather than later and include environmental sustainability.”
3. The Written Ministerial Statement published on 19th December 2023, setting out an expectation for all local planning authorities to have an up to date local plan timetable in place within 12 weeks.

Councillor Yule summarised the Waveney Local Plan review assessment as provided in published report. Councillor Yule advised that the review needed be undertaken by 20 March 2024.

Both of the Council’s Local Plans were informed by evidence contained in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Both plans have policies that required a percentage of affordable housing to be delivered on sites of 10 or more dwellings (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan) or 11 or more dwellings (Waveney Local Plan).

Over the local plan periods to date, 639 affordable homes have been delivered in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area (since April 2018) and 554 have been delivered in the Waveney Local Plan area (since April 2014).

Whilst it was not currently considered necessary to review the Strategic Housing Marketing Assessment (SHMA) or Local Plans, the section of the report on the Local Development Scheme and indicative future Local Plan timetable addresses this recommendation.

The Chair invited Councillor Deacon, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to summarise the recommendations from that Committee.

Councillor Deacon outlined that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recently undertook two reviews with the aim of making recommendations to Cabinet to increase the provision of affordable and social housing in East Suffolk.

One recommendation was that the SHMA and Local Plans were reviewed sooner rather than later, and it was suggested that Cabinet consider that particular recommendation within report ES/1869.

As part of the Review of Affordable Housing Planning Requirements, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had sought the views of local developers. Councillor Deacon thanked all who participated and drew attention to comments, concerns and suggestions raised, as detailed in paragraphs 1.3 to 1.9 and Appendix A of report ES/1870 on the agenda. The feedback helped form the Committee's view that the SHMA and Local Plans need to be reviewed as soon as possible, given the changed landscape since the documents were approved, and Cabinet was asked to give this due consideration.

There were no questions from Cabinet Members

Councillor Rivett referred to recommendation (5) concerning amendments and commented that this provided reassurance to all Councillors that there were control measures in place to mitigate any significant changes being made after a Cabinet decision was made. Councillor Rivett stated that he hoped that this would be applied to more decisions going forward to provide clarity on amendments.

Councillor Byatt queried the timescales regarding the additional supplementary planning documents, in particular custom and self-build so there could be a full and comprehensive plan.

The Planning Manager - (Policy, Delivery and Specialist Services) advised that the Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document was going to be brought to Cabinet in April for adoption. The Custom and Self Build Housing Supplementary Planning Document was going back to the Local Plan Working Group at its next meeting and then to Cabinet in May. The Healthy Environments document would also be going to the Local Plan Working Group in April and then to Cabinet in June 2024.

Councillor Langdon-Morris noted he had some questions and climate related concerns which he was working through with Councillor Yule and would continue to do so outside of the meeting.

There were no further questions.

On the proposition of Councillor Yule, seconded by Councillor Whitelock it was by majority vote

RESOLVED

That Cabinet:-

1. Approves the content and conclusions of the review assessment of the East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan (Appendix A of this report) and agrees that the Local Plan is effective and that a local plan update is not necessary.
2. Agrees that the review assessment of the East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan (Appendix A of this report) be published.
3. Notes the information contained in this report relating to the forthcoming planning reforms.
4. Approves the Local Development Scheme (Appendix B of this report) and agrees to its publication, replacing the Council’s existing Local Development Schemes, and that this will take effect from Friday 15th March 2024.
5. Authorises the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, to make any presentational and typographical changes to the Waveney Local Plan review assessment and the Local Development Scheme prior to them being published.
6. Notes the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings of 19th October 2023 and 16th November 2023 (as set out in paragraph 2.38 of this report), and that the approval of the Local Development Scheme (Appendix B) setting out an indicative timeline for a future local plan review responds to this recommendation.

6 Reports from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Deacon, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced report ES/1860 which set out recommendations following the recent Review of Affordable Housing Planning Requirements and the Review of the Provision of Social Housing in East Suffolk.

Councillor Deacon stated that as he had previously mentioned under the previous item, the Committee undertook the reviews to see if there was anything that could be recommended to Cabinet to increase the supply of affordable and social housing for those residents that need it.

The two reviews identified the challenges to providing more housing, many of which were outside the Council’s control. The Committee felt, however, that their recommendations would help to increase the availability of affordable and social housing in East Suffolk. Cabinet was being asked to give due consideration to the report and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing’s response to the recommendations.

There were no questions from Cabinet Members.

There were no questions from other members present.

The Chair thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the work they had done.

On the proposition of Councillor Beavan, seconded by Councillor Yule it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

1. Explore innovative and creative ways to provide more affordable, efficient and environmentally friendly housing within East Suffolk.
2. Review the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Local Plan documents in relation to affordable housing supply sooner rather than later and include environmental sustainability.
3. Increase the target for providing Council housing stock from 50 to 100 units per annum.
4. Lobby Government on changing the Right to Buy Scheme so that a higher percentage of the receipts can be made available to supply more housing stock.

7 Simpler Recycling - Food Collections

Councillor Smith-Lyte, Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment, introduced report ES/1871 which related to the Simpler Recycling - Food Collections. The purpose of the report was to provide Cabinet with information on the nationwide Simpler Recycling requirements required by March 2026.

Councillor Smith-Lyte summarised the background and purpose of the report. In December 2018 Government published its Resources and Waste Strategy (RAWS). This was the first national review of waste policy for over 10 years, and aimed to reduce waste, improve recycling and support the development of a circular economy.

The recently published Simpler Recycling Policy included nationwide requirements to improve recycling under the Environment Act 2021. East Suffolk Council already met many of the requirements but would need to provide new or alternative services by March 2026, including recycling glass bottles, jars, and cartons. Food waste collections would need to be provided on a weekly basis.

The report focused on the new food waste collection service and should be seen as a step forward in the Council's strategic objective, focusing on the reduction and the re-use of waste materials. The food collection service would be for all food, both cooked and uncooked. Residents would be asked to separate their food waste into a Council provided food bin with a caddy for use inside the home.

Councillor Yule stated she supported the recommendations and was concerned about the amount of contaminated recycling that was noted and queried if there would be any training with Town / Parish Councils regarding the new processes coming into effect.

Councillor Smith-Lyte anticipated there would be instruction with the roll out into the community.

The Head of Operations added that the Communications Lead had been engaging with Suffolk colleagues and a communication plan would be implemented. He added that food collections should be fairly straight forward. The Suffolk Waste Partnership had considered how residents would understand the processes and collections. East Suffolk Council had been part of the discussions, and this would be revisited when it came back Cabinet and the recycling component was reviewed.

Councillor Topping added that the document did state there should be liaison with community groups and outlined there would be upcoming roadshows showcasing the work of East Suffolk Council and that refuse, recycling and general waste collection would be part of that work.

Councillor Langdon-Morris was curious to understand more about the exploration of carbon offsets or carbon credits and how carbon footprint could be measured.

Councillor Hammond added that there was a variety of complex carbon calculations around biogenic waste and the generation of methane. There was some work being undertaken with Officers and specialist consultants on the Beccles incinerator development. There was an opportunity to join up some work.

Councillor Ashton added that he was concerned to read that half of all food waste was in packaging and in date when thrown away.

Councillor Smith-Lyte responded with her concern regarding in-date unopened waste and stated it was an area she would like to address. Councillor Smith-Lyte added that there would have to be some consultation around the roll out of the work, which could include having representatives on the vehicles out in the community. Councillor Smith-Lyte was also open to other suggestions from colleagues on how this could be addressed.

Councillor Topping stated that waste might not all be household and could also be coming from supermarkets or stores where through contamination or other means which resulted in disposal.

Councillor Whitelock stated that wormeries could be considered and highlighted personal experience of their success.

Councillor Rivett asked if there were any timelines for communication and training to be provided to residents and Members.

Councillor Smith-Lyte responded to state there would be, however she did not have the information at the present time.

The Head of Operations followed up that timelines for communication and training would be picked up with the Communications Team.

Councillor Topping outlined that there was ongoing work with Suffolk Public Sector Leaders and she would share any updates as they become available.

Councillor Rivett sought clarification that collections would be curb side. Councillor Smith-Lyte confirmed that this was the case.

Councillor Byatt added that it was a complex issue with a deadline of March 2026. He encouraged exploring what other areas outside the UK have in place along with other Councils more locally.

Councillor Byatt stated that developers should be engaged regarding the inclusion of essential collection points on housing sites. Councillor Byatt highlighted that supermarkets should be engaged too and consideration given to utilising open spaces and community composting. The importance of the issue was discussed further along with the need to positively engage residents and consider residents who did not have access to gardens or open spaces.

Councillor Smith-Lyte thanked Councillor Byatt for this points and ambition. There had been exploration outside the UK which included Finland and the Netherlands. Engaging with supermarkets about better labelling and information to consumers was another area which required exploration. Consideration to options for people living in flats / apartments and community space was also needed.

Councillor Topping added that the earlier meeting of the Shareholders Reference Group (SRG) touched on the matter in question and East Suffolk Services were aware of the changes and were getting prepared for them.

On the proposition of Councillor Smith-Lyte, seconded by Councillor Whitelock it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

1. Approve the introduction of a weekly separate food waste collection by 31 March 2026 to meet new statutory requirements.
2. Give delegated Authority to the Head of Operations, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for The Environment to agree and authorise a suitable procurement strategy, individually and/or collectively with partner councils, to deliver the necessary infrastructure in terms of vehicles, bins and material processing through New Burdens funding.
3. Agree to exploring cross-border service provision for food waste collections and implement if it is practicable and would deliver savings

On the proposition of Councillor Hammond, seconded by Councillor Yule it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That under Section 100A(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 Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

9 Exempt Minutes

On the proposition of Councillor Ashton, seconded by Councillor Hammond it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The meeting concluded at 6:46pm

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Chair