

**Unconfirmed**



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Cabinet** held remotely via Zoom, on **Tuesday, 2 June 2020 at 5:00pm**

**Members of the Cabinet present:**

Councillor Norman Brooks, Councillor Stephen Burroughes, Councillor Maurice Cook, Councillor Steve Gallant, Councillor Richard Kerry, Councillor James Mallinder, Councillor David Ritchie, Councillor Craig Rivett, Councillor Mary Rudd, Councillor Letitia Smith

**Other Members present:**

Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Alison Cackett, Councillor Judy Cloke, Councillor Tony Cooper, Councillor Linda Coulam, Councillor Graham Elliott, Councillor Tracey Green, Councillor Colin Hedgley, Councillor Mark Jepson, Councillor Steve Wiles

**Officers present:**

Stephen Baker (Chief Executive), Gary Bellwood (Programme Development Officer), Bradley Borley (Business Support Manager (SCPHA)), John Brown (Building Maintenance Manager), Paul Clack (ICT Team Lader (SCPHA)), Karen Cook (Democratic Services Manager), Cairistine Foster-Cannan (Head of Housing), Phil Gore (Head of Environmental Services and Port Health), Kathryn Hurlock (Asset and Investment Manager), Richard Jacobs (Port Health Manager (SCPHA)), Andrew Jarvis (Strategic Director), Nick Khan (Strategic Director), Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Chris Phillips (Senior Estate Surveyor), Paul Wood (Head of Economic Development and Regeneration)

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**1 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3 Announcements**

The Leader announced that he was pleased to appoint, with effect from 2 June 2020, Councillor Wiles as the Assistant Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development. The Leader referred to the challenges that had arisen from the COVID-19 pandemic and, as such, the amount of work to be undertaken in respect of economic recovery. The Leader referenced that, as of 1 June 2020, the Government had begun its phased re-opening of non-essential retail; the first step in its ambitions

was to kick-start local economies and for customers to return to shops. In the coming weeks and months, the Leader stated, East Suffolk Council (ESC) would need to help businesses to prepare for trading safely in east Suffolk high streets, town centres and other public places.

Last week, the Leader stated, saw significant developments in EDF Energy's project at Sizewell, and with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development being the lead Cabinet Member for this important and challenging area of business too, Councillor Rivett would be extremely busy. For this reason, Councillor Wiles' role would focus on supporting Councillor Rivett in the economic development recovery work.

The Leader advised members that, as well as being a county councillor, and a town councillor, Councillor Wiles had a wealth of experience and knowledge in retail. The retail sector was about to launch the biggest re-opening in its history and ESC would be there to provide support to businesses and traders. In conclusion, the Leader stated that Councillor Wiles was well placed to understand the issues ahead, and he was confident that he would be a great asset to the Cabinet.

After thanking the Leader, Councillor Wiles referred to the huge changes that had been witnessed to day to day lives, the things that had been taken for granted had changed, as shops, schools and places of work had undergone temporary closures. With life slowly returning to normal new challenges were faced as high streets began to welcome back customers. Councillor Wiles stated that, historically, retail had been based on service and shopping experiences, soon all the doors would start to open to the public and a new focus would be expected, and indeed needed. ESC would, Councillor Wiles stated, have a key part to play to assist and advise, and he looked forward to the challenge and he also looked forward to working with Councillor Rivett and officers to try to deliver this aim.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development, firstly, took the opportunity to thank Councillor Wiles for joining him; he then reminded members present that, on 28 May 2020, ESC went live with the discretionary fund as part of the Council's COVID-19 response. This followed on from the two previous grant schemes where ESC had allocated, to date, approximately £58m to over 5,000 small businesses. The new scheme was aimed at small and micro businesses that were not eligible for the previous schemes. Eligible businesses could now apply for up to £10k and Councillor Rivett advised that all details were available on the ESC website. In conclusion, the Deputy Leader advised that the other two schemes remained open.

#### **4 Minutes**

##### **RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 May 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **5 Temporary Extension to Fixed Term Contracts - Economic Regeneration**

Cabinet received report **ES/0382** by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development who reported that the East Suffolk Regeneration and Development Programme had expanded significantly over the past 18 months; primarily, this now involved ambitious employment, residential, leisure, cultural and public realm led development programmes for Lowestoft and Felixstowe. The invitation from Government to bid for up to £25m from the Towns Fund and develop a comprehensive Town Investment Plan for Lowestoft had further extended the Council's plans and had culminated in the need to review the current staffing resource associated with delivering these programmes.

The Deputy Leader advised that, currently, two full-time project support officers provided support across the whole of the East Suffolk programme and these posts were due to expire at the end of December 2020. This would be a critical time when the Regeneration Team would be delivering a number of projects, including those within the high profile Town Investment Plan. The Deputy Leader was therefore requesting a one year extension for both support officer posts.

The delivery of these programmes would form a central part of East Suffolk Council's economic recovery plan following the COVID-19 downturn and therefore it was crucial that they were adequately resourced to ensure east Suffolk emerged from the recession with a stronger and more resilient economy. The cost to extend the support officer contacts for an additional year would be £76k and it was proposed that this was funded equally from Enterprise Zone income and the Council's core budget.

Councillor Elliott stated that he agreed with the Deputy Leader in that this work was crucial, but he referred to the fact that the funding was still only on a year by year basis; because of this he wondered whether ESC was attracting the best people for these jobs when it could only offer a year's contract at a time. In response, the Head of Economic Development and Regeneration advised that this was an interim measure until the Town Investment Plan was concluded, and the external funding was secured; the plan was then to have more permanent roles within the Regeneration Team. By its very nature regeneration was project work related and, as such, there was a definitive start and end point so, in some ways, it was appropriate to have fixed term positions. Referring to the right calibre of people, the Head of Economic Development and Regeneration stated that he had an excellent team in place and he wanted to put in place this initial short term approach so that ESC did not lose those people, and with the understanding that once the Town Investment Plan was concluded, ESC could then make more permanent arrangements for those staff.

## **RESOLVED**

That a one-year extension to the two Project Support Officer roles within the Economic Regeneration Team be approved to reduce the risk to delivery of the current and future East Suffolk Regeneration and Development Programme. This extension will run from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 and result in growth to the 2020/21 budget of £38k.

## **6 Exempt/Confidential Items**

### **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 Schedule 12A of the Act.

**7 PHILIS Replacement System**

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

**8 External Wall Cladding and Window Replacement, St Peters Court, Lowestoft**

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

**9 Felixstowe Ferry Public Conveniences - Sewerage Provision**

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

The meeting concluded at 6:20 pm

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Chairman