

Confirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Full Council** held via Zoom, on **Wednesday, 22 July 2020 at 6:30 pm**

Members of the Committee present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Edward Back, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Stuart Bird, Councillor Jocelyn Bond, Councillor Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw, Councillor Norman Brooks, Councillor Stephen Burroughes, Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Alison Cackett, Councillor Jenny Ceresa, Councillor Judy Cloke, Councillor Maurice Cook, Councillor Tony Cooper, Councillor Linda Coulam, Councillor Janet Craig, Councillor Mike Deacon, Councillor Graham Elliott, Councillor John Fisher, Councillor Tony Fryatt, Councillor Steve Gallant, Councillor Tess Gandy, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Tony Goldson, Councillor Louise Gooch, Councillor Tracey Green, Councillor TJ Haworth-Culf, Councillor Colin Hedgley, Councillor Ray Herring, Councillor Mark Jepson, Councillor Richard Kerry, Councillor Stuart Lawson, Councillor Geoff Lynch, Councillor James Mallinder, Councillor Chris Mapey, Councillor Debbie McCallum, Councillor Frank Mortimer, Councillor Trish Mortimer, Councillor Mark Newton, Councillor Keith Patience, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Carol Poulter, Councillor David Ritchie, Councillor Craig Rivett, Councillor Keith Robinson, Councillor Mary Rudd, Councillor Letitia Smith, Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte, Councillor Ed Thompson, Councillor Caroline Topping, Councillor Steve Wiles, Councillor Kay Yule

Officers present:

Katherine Abbott (Democratic Services Officer), Stephen Baker (Chief Executive), Liz Beighton (Planning Development Manager), Ruth Bishop (Senior Planner (Policy & Delivery)), John Brown (Building Maintenance Manager), Emma Chapman (Economic Regeneration Project Officer), Sarah Davis (Democratic Services Manager) Cairistine Foster-Cannan (Head of Housing), David Howson (Housing Strategy Manager), Andrew Jarvis (Strategic Director), Helen Johnson (HAZ Programme Manager), Nick Khan (Strategic Director), Bridget Law (Programme Manager), Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer), Andrea McMillan (Principal Planner (Policy & Delivery)), Sue Meeken (Political Group Support Officer (Labour)), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Philip Ridley (Head of Planning & Coastal Management), Hilary Slater (Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer), Paul Wood (Head of Economic Development & Regeneration)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Allen and Councillor Blundell.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

3a Minutes - 22 January 2020

It was proposed by Councillor Burroughes, seconded by Councillor Back and by a majority vote

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 January 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3b Minutes - 26 February 2020

It was proposed by Councillor Back, seconded by Councillor Gallant and by a majority vote

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 February 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Announcements

The Chairman of the Council announced that, during the Covid19 pandemic, he had attended two minor events which had adhered to social distancing requirements. A further eight formal engagements had been cancelled. The Vice Chairman added that all of his formal engagements had been cancelled.

The Chairman invited the Leader of the Council to make any announcements he wished.

Councillor Gallant, the Leader of the Council, announced the formal appointment of Councillor Steve Wiles as an Assistant Cabinet Member in support of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development, Councillor Craig Rivett. Councillor Wiles would predominantly focus on the economic recovery of the District post Covid19 and the Leader referred to the wealth of professional experience Councillor Wiles would bring to the role and that his support would be vital in understanding the issues and challenges ahead.

The Leader of the Council announced the resignation of Councillor William Taylor as one of the Ward Members for Framlingham due to time constraints and other demands. Mr Taylor has asked the Leader to convey his sincere thanks to Councillor Herring, Councillor Poulter, Councillor Cook and former Councillor Geoff Holdcroft for their support and guidance during his term of office. The Leader said that Councillor Cook continued as one of the Ward Members for Framlingham and a by-election for the vacant seat would be held in May 2020.

The Leader also announced that, with immediate effect, Councillor Keith Patience had been appointed as a member of the Licensing Committee and that Councillor Tess Gandy had resigned from the Committee.

In conclusion, the Leader referred to the current situation with regard to Covid19; he said that whilst some elements of life and work were slowly returning to normal it was clear that the pandemic was not over with continuing issues around the transmission of the disease, the threat of a second wave of infections and an awaited vaccine solution. The Leader said he had reflected on the Council's achievements in response to the pandemic and he wished to pay tribute to all Members and Officers of East Suffolk Council for their tireless work in exceptional circumstances. He added that it was not, however, the time for the Council to rest on its laurels but rather to press on with its aims in order to continue to do the best for the District. The Leader said that although East Suffolk had low infection levels, lives had been lost or affected by the pandemic and, on behalf of the Council, he offered sincere condolences to all those who had lost a loved one. The Leader referred to the funding the Council had provided to various schemes and initiatives in support of the community, such as the hardship fund, the Grand-pad scheme and the Home but not Alone scheme, as well as the licensing of markets and events to encourage people back in town centres. The Leader added that the Council, as an organisation, had worked as one and had stepped up to the challenges the pandemic had created. He also wished to pay tribute to the many volunteers for their exceptional work in their communities and said that East Suffolk was all the better for their efforts. The Leader acknowledged that the current pandemic should not divert the Council from its determination and clarity of purpose; he added that the Council remained in a strong position to deliver its aims and ambitions. The Council was not immune to financial hardship but because of its careful management of its finances it was able to withstand the impact of exceptional circumstances. The Leader said it was important to continue with the Council's ambitions and desired outcomes for its communities, to also continue to support those affected by the current national situation and to also successfully deliver the proposed huge projects and the huge benefits and opportunities they would realise. The Leader highlighted some of the schemes and initiatives, within the Strategic Plan, which would not cease because of the pandemic; he stated that the virus would not cow the Council and its plans and ambitions would not be restricted or prevented by the pandemic. The Leader closed his announcement by stating that although the pandemic was not over, the Council would press on to deliver to East Suffolk what it needed, deserved and expected.

The Chairman invited the Cabinet Members to make any announcements they wished.

Councillor Ritchie, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, announced the award of £43m towards the Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project which, he said, would protect and underpin many of the other positive projects underway or proposed in Lowestoft. In September 2020, phase one of the project would commence with the walls around the tidal harbour, phase 2 would start in September 2021 either side of the Bascule Bridge, and phase 3 to the tidal barrier at the entrance to Lake Lothing in order to mitigate against the impact of tidal surges would be carried out over four winters and conclude in December 2025.

The Cabinet Member also referred to the project at Kessingland and Benacre for the realignment and setting-back of coastal defences which had been awarded £3.3m and would be managed by the Water Management Alliance; this was, he said, an essential project for the East Suffolk coast. In conclusion, the Cabinet Member wished to record

his thanks to Coastal Partnership East for their hard work, over a long period, in order to ensure projects were underway promptly.

5 Questions from the Public

The Chairman advised that no Questions had been submitted by the electorate as provided for under Council Procedure Rule 8.

6 Questions from Members

The following questions from Members had been submitted in pursuance of Council Procedure Rule 9:

(a) Question from Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte to the Leader of the Council:

"As a council, we represent 170 Towns and Parishes and nearly 250,000 individuals across the District. We owe it to each and every one of our communities to ensure that the response to the Sizewell C application issued in their name, through East Suffolk Council, is a fair and robust representation of their views. The influence we have today will be a legacy for our future generations.

To this end, the GLI Group of Members ask the question of the Leader of the Council:

"As the Sizewell C application has now been given the green light to proceed to the next stage, and with the significant repercussions it would have on our economy and environment, would the Leader of the Council now accept that it is time to allow Members to have their say? Will he fully commit to an extraordinary meeting of the Council, dedicated wholly and specifically to a rigorous and transparent debate about this local, national and internationally important infrastructure decision?"

In order for this to be productive, meaningful and optimally influential, the timing of the meeting should be held once the draft Cabinet response has been compiled and shared with Members, and with sufficient time to ensure Members can garner comment from their own communities. It should also ensure an adequate period for any revisions or recommendations from that Full Council debate to be adequately included in the response before referral back to Cabinet for agreement. Only after that, should the final response be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

It is crucial that all members are afforded a free vote during the Full Council debate to enable them to reflect the views of their Wards on a decision that will have the most impact on our communities for years to come."

Response from Councillor Steve Gallant, Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council thanked Councillor Smith-Lyte for her questions. He said that before responding he wished to make it clear that the role of East Suffolk Council in the process to determine the Development Consent Order submitted for the Sizewell C new nuclear build was that of a statutory consultee. The final decision would be taken by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy following his

consideration of a report to be prepared by the appointed examining authority and having regard to the national policy statement on nuclear energy and the potential local impact. The Council would inform the examining authority of its views through the examination process which was likely to take place in late 2020/early 2021. He added that, notwithstanding Councillors particular views on the proposals, given the consenting process and the Council's role within it, the Council must ensure that, if the Secretary of State consented to the project, it helped achieve the best possible outcomes for the residents and communities of East Suffolk. The Leader continued that, having regard to the specifics of the question posed, he could confirm that an extraordinary meeting of Full Council would be held on 21 September 2020 to assist the Cabinet to form East Suffolk Council's consultee response. The extraordinary meeting of Full Council would receive a draft of the emerging relevant representations which will need to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by 30 September 2020. The meeting would he said, provide an opportunity for all members of the Council to consider the submission and, more importantly, to provide local views on the issues arising from the proposals. He continued to say that the views from Full Council would be collated, reviewed and presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 25 September 2020. At this meeting, Cabinet would consider and finalise the Council's final representation. In its deliberations, Cabinet would have due regard to the comments of Full Council, of the local community and the technical advice of the Council's officers. The Leader said that he hoped members agreed these arrangements afforded an opportunity for a wide range of views to be considered and would help to inform the final submission. The Leader reminded members that they were also able to make their own, individual submissions to the Planning Inspectorate by the deadline so that they too could be considered within the process.

In response to the question, the Leader confirmed that members would be afforded a free vote at Full Council. In so saying, the Leader stressed that it had always been his view that each and every member of the Council had the right to debate, vote or abstain from voting, as they saw fit. The Leader said that, notwithstanding, some matters might be deliberated within political group meetings but that it remained his view that the formal vote would be a free one. The Leader acknowledged that members had strong views on the benefits and dis-benefits of the programme, on the challenge of funding such a project and the foreign interest in strategic infrastructure ventures. However, he hoped that these issues would not cloud the question that must, for the benefit of residents, remain foremost in members' minds - that being, if the Secretary of State consented to the building of Sizewell C, what could be done to minimise its impact and maximise the benefits for east Suffolk. In conclusion, the Leader wished to remind members that the Council was a consultee and not the decision-maker on this proposal.

Councillor Smith-Lyte asked a supplementary question : "At the extraordinary Full Council, can we have a recorded vote please?"

The Leader of the Council referred to the Council's Constitution and the process for requesting a recorded vote.

(b) Question from Councillor Janet Craig to Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Operational Partnerships

“Now that the responsibility for the Closed Circuit Television System in Lowestoft has been passed back to East Suffolk Council, can you advise whether the digital upgrade to the system, which Lowestoft Town Council had planned to carry out, will still be going ahead.”

Response from Councillor Rudd

- The responsibility for Lowestoft's CCTV scheme passed back to East Suffolk Council in April 2020, with the agreement of Lowestoft Town Council. One of the main drivers for this was this Council's investment in superfast fibre cable in the town which presented opportunities to achieve what Councillor Craig has raised in her question - the delivery of a significant upgrade of the CCTV system. All 57 CCTV sites are in the process of being connected to the new network; the upgrade was made possible because of the high data capacity of the superfast fibre network. The system will, therefore, operate with high definition cameras; these will be more effective for the operators and the police as they captured high resolution images. In addition, the camera network could now be streamlined with a single camera now able to provide the coverage and picture quality of two or three of the existing cameras. As the project progressed, the team will look at how the CCTV infrastructure cabinets and poles might be used to support other technology, such as pollution or footfall sensors, 5G boosters etc. In this way, the modernisation of the town centre and delivery of the proposed new 'masterplan' would also be supported.

- The Chairman invited Councillor Craig to ask a supplemental question: "Are all the current cameras being upgraded?"

Councillor Rudd replied that approximately 90% of the current cameras would be upgraded.

- (c) Question from Councillor Tess Gandy to the Cabinet Member for Community Health

“Government statistics have shown that since Coronavirus lockdown, nationally cases of domestic abuse, against both women and men, have risen greatly.

Here in Suffolk, a ‘Freedom of Information’ request has revealed that Suffolk Police’s domestic abuse control room received 1,268 calls in March 2020 (i.e. start of lockdown), compared to 703 in March 2019. Various organisations have also expressed concerns about the likely rise in the reporting of actual domestic abuse criminal incidents following the ease of lockdown, as those experiencing domestic abuse are in a better position to report it.

The draft Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 is currently on its third reading in the House of Commons, “Part 4 of the 2020 Act introduces a new statutory duty on local authorities, placing clearer accountability on local areas to ensure the needs of victims within refuges and other forms of domestic abuse safe accommodation are met in a consistent way across England”. What action will this Council take to ensure this duty is met, given the limited refuges available in East Suffolk and that the £208,411.00 allocated funding received by the PCC Tim Passmore to support services dealing with domestic abuse across the whole of Suffolk will only stretch so far?”

Response from Councillor Rudd

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The Government's advice to people to stay at home as much as possible created additional challenges to those at risk of domestic abuse and who then felt unable to access safe support. Domestic abuse remained a priority for partners across Suffolk and East Suffolk Council has been working, in partnership, to deliver enhanced support to those suffering domestic abuse.. Suffolk has three women's refuges which are all part of a national network of safe accommodation for female victims fleeing domestic abuse. Due to the high risk of harm, it is often safer for a victim to relocate outside of their county or city and, as such, refuges in Suffolk are available to anyone across the country. Immediately following the announcement of lockdown, the three refuges remained open for their existing residents but new referrals were suspended to minimise the risk of the spread of Covid-19. With support from Public Health Suffolk, all three refuges had resumed referrals with the necessary infection control procedures in place. Supporting Councillor Rudd said refuges normally operated at 90% capacity and, although there were currently spaces, these were filled quickly. In partnership with Anglia Care Trust and Orwell Housing, the Council had delivered several additional services including specialist satellite accommodation support; this had ensured the safety of those fleeing domestic abuse and provided a holistic approach to supporting victims who were not able to access refuge accommodation because of their complex needs. There were 11 such units, two in the north of the county and 9 in the south, which were accessible to all of Suffolk's local authorities on a reciprocal basis. Refuges were an important part of the support available to victims but, whenever possible, there should be choice and the option to stay in their own home was also important. As a result of pooled funding from partners in Suffolk, a universally available scheme, delivered with the support of a national charity, undertook security measures to homes of victims so they could be safe in their own property., if appropriate in the individual circumstances. The Council worked closely with the county council and Anglia Care Trust to extend the domestic abuse outreach services. The Domestic Abuse Advisory Service had made its free helpline available 24/7 and anyone with concerns, including professionals supporting a client or friends and family concerned for a loved one could access this local support which included a live webchat between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday. Councillor Rudd said the advice to victims remained to ring 999 if they were in immediate danger, if they were unable to speak, to remain on the line and to press 555 when prompted. Suffolk Constabulary had distributed awareness packs to 80+ supermarkets and the free helpline had been promoted through social media. The Council also had Officers within the Housing Needs team who could support domestic abuse victims to access safe accommodation. In conclusion, Councillor Rudd said the Council remained committed to support victims of domestic abuse.

Councillor Gandy was invited to ask a supplementary question, this was "With reference to the funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner, how financially viable is this extensive level of support in the long term?"

Councillor Rudd replied that the PCC's funding went, largely, to the Lowestoft Domestic Violence team. She added that domestic abuse support remained on-going and foremost in minds.

(d) Question from Councillor Louise Gooch to the Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Operational Partnerships

“Unless we are mistaken, Lowestoft is still a Fairtrade Town and in support of this, the coffee bar at Riverside serves Fairtrade Coffee.

Recently it was reported that Nestle has decided that it will no longer be using Fairtrade cocoa beans in its chocolate products. Please can we be assured that as companies make their policies more or less supportive of the principle of Fair Trade, this Council will adjust its products for sale accordingly across all outlets within ESC buildings.

Response from Councillor Burroughes

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Councillor Burroughes said that East Suffolk Council had made a previous commitment to support Fair Trade and ethically sourced products. To this end, Fairtrade products were sold in the café and vending machines at the Riverside offices and Fair Trade tea and coffee was available to all staff and visitors at both Riverside and East Suffolk House. He said that Members could be assured that Fair Trade products were available and could see this for themselves when they next visited the offices. In the event that a supplier ceased to source Fair Trade products, the Council would change its suppliers; however, it was difficult for the Council to know the detail of each product's sourcing. He confirmed that if it was apparent that a provider was no longer providing appropriately sourced products, the Council would, potentially, find an alternative supplier. He stressed that the Council remained committed to providing a Fair Trade choice for its staff and visitors.

The Chairman invited Councillor Gooch to ask a supplemental question. There was no further question but Councillor Gooch stated she welcomed the Cabinet Member's reply and was heartened by his reassurance. Councillor Gooch referred Council to a written history of Fair Trade in Lowestoft.

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7 Petitions

The Chairman announced that no petitions had been submitted as provided for by Council Procedure Rule 10.

8 Notices of Motion

A Motion had been submitted by Councillor Peter Byatt in pursuance of Council Procedure Rule 11. This had been published on the agenda for the meeting.

Councillor Byatt advised that, following discussions with the other Group Leaders, a slight alteration to the amendment had been made, in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules and the consent of the Chairman. The altered Motion was displayed to Full Council:

"The following Motion has been submitted by Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11: Motion submitted by Councillor Peter Byatt:

In addition to modifying or enhancing the three priorities in the current East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan that facilitate and signpost businesses towards their own economic growth or encourage inward investment, East Suffolk Council, as an anchor institution, has the opportunity in its revised Delivery Plan to kick start economic recovery through its own procurement policies and via its purchasing decisions to encourage/support local economic recovery and to build overall community wealth within the community through its significant purchasing power.

Keeping money in the local economy as a way of driving positive economic and social outcomes is not new and has been championed and promoted by Preston Council since 2012 ('The Preston Model'). Its progressive procurement is now being followed by other councils throughout the UK and the Welsh Government.

At its heart is inclusive economic growth. By encouraging anchors, such as Councils, to spend their money locally and socially, the concept of Community Wealth Building has:

- Developed the skills of local people within Preston and the wider Lancashire area;
- Created stable, well paying jobs;
- Reduced levels of in-work poverty;
- Kept money circulating in the local economy and
- Demonstrated the power of anchor institutions to realise good local economies for people and place.

Therefore, this Motion calls on East Suffolk Council to:

1. Convene a cross party Member/Officer Task and Finish Group, chaired by the Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development, and to task it with Investigate Community Wealth Building and embed it into our policies to enhance the quality of life and opportunities for people in East Suffolk

2. Instigate new procurement policies that drive local economic growth within its Economic Growth and Recovery Delivery Plan and which
Identifying where the council spends its budget procuring goods and services, money and how much is leaking out of East Suffolk;
Researching procurement and community wealth building best practice nationally .
Reviewing the Council's procurement policies and practice,
Developing proposals for new procurement policies that will deliver a fully compliant procurement service leveraging maximum economic and social benefit for the Council and for residents and businesses of East Suffolk,
Reporting back to Cabinet
Leverage maximum local and economic benefit from East Suffolk's spend on goods and services, shifting spend on local and socially responsible suppliers;
Encourage and monitor the percentage of suppliers that pay at least or in excess of the national living wage;
Develop the capacity of local business if local suppliers are limited in number;
Map where suppliers are located with ward level deprivation data and
Develop a social value framework to procurement that promotes local training and employment; supports the long-term sustainability of the VCSE sector; includes

democratic forms of ownership such as co-operatives and promotes environmental sustainability.

3. Inspire other authorities in Suffolk to take up a similar stance

4. Encourage other anchor institutions within East Suffolk such as Scottish Power Renewables, EDF Energy, Felixstowe Port etc. to adopt similar this first steps to deliver on a community wealth building approach for long term social and economic gain throughout the District region."

The Chairman invited Councillor Byatt to address Full Council. Councillor Byatt referred to the social and economic shock which the Covid-19 pandemic had caused nationally and which, he said, would take years to fully recover from. Councillor Byatt referred to the number who had sadly died, others who had lost their jobs and the many businesses which might, sadly, be unable to continue to trade. Councillor Byatt said certain parts of the north of the District were already classed as amongst the most deprived neighbourhoods in England, with low wages, minimal opportunities and, in places, poor education and skills levels. Councillor Byatt recognised that pockets of deprivation existed throughout Suffolk including difficulties accessing services and low income levels. He stated that efforts to re-start the economy, to date, had focussed on infrastructure and "shovel-ready" projects to address an anticipated rise in unemployment. He referred to the LEPs observation that some 32,000 individuals had applied for Universal Credit for the first time in April 2020 and had forecast local unemployment to potential be between 6% and 25% by the end of the year.

Councillor Byatt said that discussions to look at this issue included how the local economy might be organised for the benefit of East Suffolk's residents. East Suffolk Council was, he said, revising its economic delivery plan to include an additional period of post-pandemic recovery. Councillor Byatt said he believed this was a golden opportunity to create a new East Suffolk normal which, he hoped, would help to tackle deprivation and provide additional resilience to weather future events. Councillor Byatt said that, in January 2020, he had indicated he wished to bring a significant budgetary proposal before Full Council and that this Motion was that proposal. He continued to say that, together, the Council should take this opportunity to focus on the positive benefits it could offer its residents by considering the multiple elements of community wealth building. He said that the Council should give the people of East Suffolk all the confidence that it could to make their lives fairer. He urged Full Council to commence the "levelling-up" now and commended the Motion.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Deacon who stated that it was his belief that there was no desire to return to pre-Covid-19 practices but to do things differently, to rethink and reform. Councillor Deacon hoped the Council's significant purchasing power could be utilised to retain funds within the local economy and to stop it leaving East Suffolk. He stated that the Council needed to ensure this happened so as to re-build the local economy and thereby achieve the most positive social and economic impact. Councillor Deacon said the Council should support the payment of decent wages and use its contracts to create stable well-paid jobs. He added that the Council's list of suppliers should be opened to local enterprises and operations.

The Leader of the Council said he was happy to support the premise of the Motion with a view to carrying out further investigation of what the Council can and cannot do, what it already did, if that remains fit for purpose etc. He added that this was an ideal opportunity to do this, but with care, to ensure that inadvertently disadvantaging local businesses was avoided. The Leader of the Council said it was important to recognise that many local companies had a national trading footprint and it would be a travesty, he said, if the Council set an example to other local authorities which resulted in local companies missing out on business opportunities outside of the local area. He reiterated that he was in favour of looking at the possible opportunities to build the common-wealth sought by the Motion, but with caution and an aim to find ways to inspire others.

The Chairman invited questions, there being no questions, the Chairman invited Full Council to debate the Motion.

Councillor Elliott said he fully supported the Motion and endorsed the comments of Councillor Byatt and Councillor Deacon. He added that the Motion was a step towards a better world and the building of a green recovery.

Councillor Ritchie referred to the very considerable investment in off-shore wind energy on the east Suffolk coast and to the course introduced at Lowestoft College for people who wished to work in that industry. These were, he said, good job opportunities for young people and an excellent approach for the local economy. Councillor Ritchie also referred to the £67m funding for the construction of the Lowestoft Flood Barrier and tidal walls, he said the main contractor for this work had an excellent record for apprenticeships for local people and, he suggested, the contractor's workforce would put money back into the local economy. He concluded by saying that he also wanted the local economy to thrive but there was also a requirement to achieve best value when spending tax payers' money.

Councillor Kerry stated that, when and where possible through the procurement process, local contractors were used by the Council's housing team.

Councillor Smith-Lyte welcomed the Motion. She said that the Council needed to be sustainable in its approach to the local economy and not try to "build out of trouble". Councillor Smith-Lyte said it was important to preserve and protect east Suffolk's natural environment in order to retain and attract tourism. Councillor Smith-Lyte suggested that an East Suffolk £ be considered, similar to that in Totnes, so that money remained in the local economy.

Councillor Herring referred to the Preston Model and queried what had happened there; he added that although it may have been successful, he had some scepticism as the Motion proposed did not state or explain how Preston's economy had been approved as a result of the Model. Councillor Herring acknowledged the significant issues within Lowestoft, but said the Council was responsible for a wide area which had a successful local economy which had promoted itself to businesses and entrepreneurs, alongside an exceptional natural environment, but without what he considered to be protectionist policies. Councillor Herring said that, from the Motion, he was unclear what this Model would achieve for east Suffolk, or how it would deliver for Lowestoft.

Councillor Wiles said there were numerous changes which the Council could embrace, including its purchasing marketing emphasising best quality and value for money. With reference to Councillor Herring's comments, Councillor Wiles referred to a total protectionist approach to an economy and stated that he was confident that these were not successful in the long term. He added that, rather, the promotion to residents of "use local" would be beneficial.

Councillor Mallinder said that, where possible, the Council's procurement processes could encourage local businesses but of equal importance was the need to ensure value for money was also offered to tax-paying residents. He said he would welcome the Motion if it enabled an increased focus on local priorities.

Councillor Bird said the Motion was laudable, in principle, but that there were notable areas of caution around a potential protectionist economy route with negative impacts. He stressed that it was incumbent upon the Council to achieve value for money with tax-payers' money and that a local-only approach to procurement and purchasing might not always achieve that.

Councillor Burroughes said a balance needed to be struck between protectionism and an open, free economy. He said it was worth exploring the evidence of where it had been successful elsewhere. In conclusion, he said that the Preston Model needed to be explained further and any move in that direction needed to be evidence-based.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the valid and varied points raised by Members. He added that the Motion did not seek the adoption of a new policy or a change to current policy, but a review of what the Council currently did to make sure it remained fit for purpose and was future-proofed to enable it to continue to promote and enhance the local economy. He continued to say that if, having been reviewed, the current policy was fit for purpose and delivering against the Council's aims and objectives, there would not need to alter it.

Councillor Byatt thanked Members for their comments. He referred Council to the full report on the Preston Model which had, he said, helped to make Preston "the most improved city in 2018". However, in conclusion, he stressed that the purpose of the Motion was to seek the establishment of a cross-party Member/Officer Task and Finish Group to look at the potential for common-wealth building in the local economy. He asked that, if the Motion was carried, the Group be politically-balanced and include the Political Group Support Assistants. Councillor Byatt further asked that the decision on who would sit on the Task and Finish Group be delegated to the Group Leaders. If established, Councillor Byatt suggested that the Task and Finish Groups recommendations be submitted to Cabinet.

The altered Motion was proposed and seconded, therefore, the Chairman moved to the vote. By a majority vote, the altered Motion was carried.

9 Presentation on the Lowestoft Town Centre Master Plan

Council received a comprehensive presentation, introduced by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, on the Lowestoft Town Centre Master Plan. The presentation was delivered by the Strategic Director, the Head of Economic

Development and Regeneration and the Economic Regeneration Officer. In summary, the presentation covered:

- Deprivation key facts for Lowestoft compared to Suffolk overall
- Health and Social Care key facts for Lowestoft compared to its neighbouring Wards
- The Vision: In 2036, Lowestoft Town Centre is the thriving heart of the UK's most easterly coastal community. It prides itself on its maritime past and future; it celebrates its unique heritage and embraces cutting edge innovation
- Stakeholder views
- Challenges to respond to: The impact of Covid19
- Delivering success for the centre of Lowestoft: A sense of arrival, a revised size of retail core, renewable industry, celebration of heritage, and improved connectivity to increase footfall
- Four distinct areas: Each with its own focus, character and offer. Maximise strengths and create economic opportunities through clustering
- Station Quarter/ Heart of Lowestoft/ Innovation Axis/ Historic Quarter
- Long distance cycle and pedestrian connections to the centre
- Green infrastructure framework
- Public realm framework

10 Adoption of North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

Council received report **ES04/33** on the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document which formed one part of the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone partnership project. The Document sought to ensure that new development conserved and enhanced the character of the area and maximised the contribution to the heritage-led regeneration of the area. The report was introduced by Councillor David Ritchie, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management. Councillor Ritchie invited the Senior Planner to provide a comprehensive supporting presentation.

The Chairman invited questions.

Councillor Elliott asked how long the proposed temporary suspension of the Statement of Community Involvement in relation to the requirements for the availability of hard copies of documents on adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document would be. The Senior Planner said legislation allowed a suspension until the end of the year. Councillor Elliott asked if there was a budget to enable free copies of the documents to ensure fair and equal access. The Senior Planner confirmed there was a budget for this and that copies would also be available online. The Leader of the Council welcomed the availability of electronic copies of documents.

Councillor Gooch praised the excellent work undertaken and, with regard to stakeholders' comments, endorsed the wish for clear and legible signage throughout the Zone.

There being no further questions or matters raised for debate, the Chairman moved to

the recommendations, which were proposed by Councillor Ritchie, seconded by Councillor Robinson and by a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

1. That the content of the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document be noted and endorsed.
2. That the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document be adopted.
3. That the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management, be authorised to make any factual or typographical amendments to the Supplementary Planning Document.
4. That the 'Temporary Suspension of Parts of the Statement of Community Involvement for Planning Policy Purposes – Adoption of the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document' be approved.

11 Acknowledgement of the Declaration of Climate Change and Impact on Housing

Council received report **ES/0436** by Councillor Kerry, the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing. The Cabinet Member referred Members to the Notice of Motion raised at Full Council on the 22 January 2020 by Councillor Gooch concerning the Council's declared Climate Emergency and the recently adopted Housing Development Strategy. It had been agreed by Council that the Notice of Motion would not be discussed at Full Council to allow the Housing Team to prepare a comprehensive response on the challenges of carbon neutral housing and how these could be addressed where practicable.

The Cabinet Member said he was pleased to now present the formal report to Council. The report described what had been successfully achieved within the Council's own housing stock over the years to address energy efficiency and carbon reduction – such as the installation of new air-source heat pump technology and the achievement of impressive SAP energy ratings. The report also considered the Council's ambitions for providing sustainable housing in East Suffolk, its encouragement of developers in the district to deliver improved energy efficient homes, and new options being considered to reduce the carbon impact of housing.

The Cabinet Member added that, since Cabinet had considered the report in May, the Council had started discussions with a specialist Passive House Design Consultancy on how new and existing stock might be most effectively designed and upgraded to reduce its carbon impact. Additionally, the Council was arranging a remote 'soft market testing' event in late September for a range of consultants and developers working with the latest innovative technologies and in particular modern methods of construction, including modular housing. The event would provide valuable insight for the Council on the current construction market as well as making the sector aware of its development intentions and sustainable standpoint.

The Cabinet Member said the report made reference to the financial implications, compounded by COVID19, and stressed that expenditure must be affordable and manageable to the Council. In conclusion, the Cabinet Member said the report provided a detailed response to the earlier Motion and, he submitted, satisfactorily

demonstrated that the Council was making great strides to reduce its carbon impact and remained committed to being a sustainable housing provider.

Councillor Gooch, who had submitted the earlier Motion, wished to record her thanks to Councillor Kerry and Councillor Mallinder for their work in this regard.

There being no questions or matters raised for debate, the Chairman moved to the recommendations which were proposed by Councillor Kerry, seconded by Councillor Robinson and by unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That, the investigatory report on East Suffolk Council's actions to reduce the carbon impact of its housing stock and its further future intention to build on its successes to date, be noted and accepted

12 Approval of the Member Development Strategy

Council received report **ES/0435** by the Leader of the Council. He advised that, following a review of the Member Development Strategy and of the Member Development Programme by the Member Development Steering Group, a revised Member Development Strategy and a new Training and Development Schedule for 2020/21 had been prepared. The Leader stated that the Steering Group's review had recognised the benefits of a responsive Training and Development Schedule which reacted to both organisational needs but also to the requests and requirements of Members. He added that the Member Development Strategy would continue to be reviewed by the Steering Group on an annual basis to ensure it remained relevant and aligned to the Council's commitment to member development.

There being no questions or matters raised for debate, the Chairman moved to the recommendations which were proposed by Councillor Gallant, seconded by Councillor Ashdown and by unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the refreshed Member Development Strategy 2019/23 be adopted, and, that the Training and Development Schedule 2020/21 be noted.

13 Cabinet Members' Report and Outside Bodies Representatives' Report to Council

Council received report **ES/0434** by the Leader of the Council. The report provided brief written reports from Cabinet Members and also from the Council's representatives to various Outside Bodies.

Councillor Burroughes apologised to Council for his report not being submitted in time for inclusion and said he would circulate this to all Members after the Meeting.

The Chairman invited questions.

Councillor Robinson, with reference to Councillor Mallinder's report as Cabinet Member for The Environment, asked about possible reductions to the normal cutting

regimes in cemeteries and asked if it was possible to involve Ward Members in such discussions. Councillor Robinson referred specifically to Lowestoft Cemetery which he described as very overgrown. Councillor Mallinder said that such discussions with Ward Members would take place and undertook to speak to Councillor Robinson outside of the meeting.

There being no further questions or matters raised for debate, the Chairman moved to the recommendation which, by unanimous vote, was so

RESOLVED

That the written report by the Cabinet Members and Outside Bodies Representatives be received and noted. the report be received.

14 Exempt/Confidential Items

It was proposed by Councillor Byatt, seconded by Councillor Cook and 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 item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act

The Chairman announced that the public part of the Meeting would not be closed and asked the Democratic Services Officer to end the broadcast on to YouTube.

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- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
- Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

The meeting concluded at 9:33 pm

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Chairman