

Confirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Annual Full Council** held remotely via Zoom on **Wednesday, 23 September 2020 at 4:30 pm**

Members present:

Councillor Melissa Allen, Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Edward Back, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Stuart Bird, Councillor Chris Blundell, 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 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 Louise Gooch, Councillor Tracey Green, Councillor Colin Hedgley, Councillor Richard Kerry, Councillor Stuart Lawson, Councillor Geoff Lynch, Councillor James Mallinder, Councillor Debbie McCallum, Councillor Frank Mortimer, Councillor Mark Newton, Councillor Keith Patience, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Carol Poulter, Councillor David Ritchie, Councillor Craig Rivett, Councillor Keith Robinson, Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte, Councillor Ed Thompson, Councillor Caroline Topping, Councillor Steve Wiles, Councillor Kay Yule

Officers present:

Stephen Baker (Chief Executive), Karen Cook (Democratic Services Manager), Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer), Andrea McMillan (Principal Planner (Policy and Delivery)), Desi Reed (Planning Policy and Delivery Manager), Philip Ridley (Head of Planning and Coastal Management), Lorraine Rogers (Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Hilary Slater (Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer), Nicola Wotton (Deputy Democratic Services Manager)

1 Election of a Chairman

The current Chairman, Councillor Hedgley, welcomed everyone to the Annual Full Council Meeting and he then sought nominations for the position of Chairman of the Council for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

Councillor Hedgley then took the opportunity to propose Councillor Robinson as Chairman of the Council and this was seconded by Councillor Rivett. There being no other nominations, it was

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Robinson be elected as Chairman of the Council for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

The Retiring Chairman, Councillor Hedgley, handed the badge of office over to the new newly appointed Chairman, Councillor Robinson.

Councillor Hedgley, then said a few words about the past 18 months, as he had been unable to do so at the Chairman's Reception, which was planned to take place in the summer and had been cancelled due to the pandemic.

He reported that during the last 18 months, he had been supported by a first class team of professionals. He started by thanking Mrs Lennard, who provided civic support to the Chairman, for all of her help, guidance, efficiency and organisational skills, which were very much appreciated. He then took the opportunity to thank the Democratic Services Team and in particular, Mrs Cook and Mr Makin, and also Mrs Slater, the Monitoring Officer, for all of their help and support. He also wished to thank Mr Baker, the Chief Executive, who led and inspired by example. He then thanked everyone for their unstinting support whilst he had been Chairman of the Council, he felt that it had been a pleasure and a privilege to undertake the role.

Councillor Hedgley then updated Members on the reasons why he had proposed Councillor Robinson, for the position of Chairman. He reported that Councillor Robinson had a wealth of experience of the democratic process and he wished him well for the future. He reported that Councillor Robinson would meet some amazing people whilst Chairman and his humour and good fellowship would stand him in good stead. Therefore, it had given him great pleasure to propose Councillor Robinson for the position of Chairman of East Suffolk Council, as he would be an asset to the Council.

Councillor Fryatt then took the opportunity to say a few words about Councillor Hedgley, the former Chairman. He stated that he had known Councillor Hedgley for many years and had been impressed by the way he had undertaken the role of Chairman, over the past 18 months. His dedication to the role was a credit to him and the Council.

Councillor Hedgley then handed over to Councillor Robinson, newly elected Chairman of East Suffolk Council, for the remainder of the meeting.

Councillor Robinson thanked Councillors Hedgley and Rivett for proposing and seconding his appointment as Chairman of the Council. He commented that he had huge boots to fill, undertaking the role after Councillor Hedgley, and he thanked Councillor Hedgley for all of the help and support that he had provided, whilst he was Vice-Chairman of the Council, last year.

Clarification was provided, following a query from Councillor Thompson, regarding the signing of the form of acceptance for the office of Chairman of the Council. It was confirmed that the form would be signed by both Councillor Robinson, newly elected Chairman of the Council, and by Mr Baker, Chief Executive, outside of the meeting, in order to preserve the appropriate social distancing requirements, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chairman sought nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Council.

Councillor Coulam proposed Councillor Ceresa for the position of Vice-Chairman. Councillor Coulam stated that she was confident that Councillor Ceresa had all of the skills and attributes needed to be successful in the role and to ultimately become an effective Chairman of the Council, in due course. The nomination was seconded by Councillor Back, who stated that Councillor Ceresa was very personable, approachable and would undertake the role and duties with both diligence and enthusiasm.

There being no further nominations it was

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Ceresa be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

The Chairman then invited Councillor Ceresa to say a few words, if she so wished.

Councillor Ceresa thanked those present for electing her. She stated that her appointment was a privilege and she would do her best to support the Chairman in his role over the coming months.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors TJ Haworth-Culf, M Jepson, T Mortimer and M Rudd.

An apology for lateness was received from Councillor R Kerry.

The list of those Councillors who were present at the meeting was readout by Ms Wotton, Deputy Democratic Services Manager, for the benefit of the members of the public who were watching the meeting via YouTube.

4 Declarations of Interest

Councillor M Pitchers declared a Local Non Pecuniary Interest in Item 7 - Appointments to Outside Bodies for 2020/21 (Non Executive), as he was a Trustee for the North East Suffolk branch of Citizens Advice.

5 Announcements

The Chairman reported that he had no announcements on this occasion. He then invited the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members and the Chief Executive to give their announcements.

Leader of the Council

Councillor Gallant, the Leader of the Council, offered his congratulations to Councillor Robinson and Councillor Ceresa for their appointments this evening. He was confident in their abilities and he knew that they would both be excellent ambassadors for East Suffolk Council, which would build upon its reputation as a first-rate super District. He thanked them both for taking on these roles in this difficult climate.

The Leader reported that the outgoing Chairman, Councillor Hedgley, could be very proud of the way that he had conducted himself whilst he was Chairman of the Council. He had been a strong and fair Chairman and had put aside his political leanings to ensure that all Members had a fair opportunity to have their say during Full Council debates. He had adapted remarkably well to the new remote meetings format and had been both persistent and patient in overcoming the various IT glitches that were unfortunately unavoidable at times. The Leader stated that he was sure that all Members would join him in thanking Councillor Hedgley for his hard work.

The Leader reported that in May last year, he had sought election as the Leader of the new East Suffolk Council. He remarked that it was inconceivable that some 15 months later, we would be in the position where we had to meet virtually. At that meeting in May last year, the Leader had set out his plans for the road ahead and then he provided an update on how the Council had already begun to deliver against some of those plans.

The Leader had spoken about developing a brand-new Strategic Plan, which was a vision for East Suffolk. Using the “Hothouse” concept, eight teams which had consisted of staff, Councillors, and colleagues from across the Council were asked to develop and deliver a new Strategic Plan based around five key priorities, which were:

- Enabling Our Communities
- Caring for Our Environment
- Remaining Financially Sustainable
- Delivering Digital Transformation
- Growing Our Economy

The East Suffolk Council Strategic Plan was then adopted at Full Council in February 2020 and was now live and at the heart of what the Council did. The Leader reported that the Council remained committed to enabling our communities to become more resilient by supporting, encouraging and, most importantly, empowering them to identify issues and develop solutions.

Since last year, the Council had successfully initiated the Community Partnership program, with eight active Partnerships chaired by Members of the Council, who had identified impactful changes that could be made at a local level, to enhance the community and its residents. The Strategic Community Partnership Board was continuing to support the programme, which was already beginning to yield some fantastic results.

The Covid19 pandemic had presented many challenges and it had also highlighted the significant contributions made by Councillors, the officers, charitable groups, town and parish councils and the many volunteers who had given up their time to help during the crisis. Councillors had stepped up to the mark as community leaders and had helped shape the response. The Council relaunched the ‘Hidden Needs Program’ with a fund of £100,000, designed to help people who were struggling with social isolation and loneliness.

Donations of over £100,000 from Councillors’ Enabling Communities Budgets were

added to the hardship fund, which supported many people as part of the County's wider 'Home but Not Alone Scheme', which provided a true lifeline for vulnerable residents. Councillors had, through their remaining individual budgets, supported many more worthwhile projects and initiatives.

The Leader reported that in his speech last year, he had spoken about the environment and the need for the Council to consider its role on environmental initiatives. Since then, Councillors had been committed to this principle and proactive in their approach. Last year in July 2019, Councillors unanimously voted to step up the Council's positive work on environmental issues to help fight climate change, by declaring a Climate Change Emergency. An effective, cross-party Environment Task Group was created, which looks look at ways the Council can meet its ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030. Caring for our environment was one of the key priorities of our new Strategic Plan and it was woven into everything that we do as a Council – from our new build housing stock to our vehicle fleets.

The Leader also had ambitions to continue improving efficiency and reducing costs. He had also highlighted the importance of embracing new ways to become even more business-like. The Council, as a local authority, had been at the heart of an immense national response to Covid19 and the Council received money to support rough sleepers, businesses, and the critical funding needed to establish our shielding programme at the outset of the pandemic. The furlough scheme and the range of other grants made available had been a lifeline to many businesses, especially within the local hospitality industry and the Council had paid out over £66 million directly to local businesses, through the government business support schemes.

With regards to digital transformation, the Leader had spoken last year of the Council's huge potential to become more digitally agile, to modernise internally, to be more efficient, and to support communities better. Operationally, the Council was already on its way to making the necessary adaptations and the pandemic had gone some way to accelerating our plans. The lockdown restrictions called for the Council's teams to work from home and this change also saw a shift in the way the Council does its business, with the introduction of virtual meetings. Following a successful pilot in Framlingham last year, our 'Smart Towns' Project will now be rolled out to 11 other market towns across the district. This would result in 12 towns in East Suffolk benefitting from new technology including free WiFi and footfall tracking, The 'Smart Towns' project would provide a 'digital springboard' for local businesses, enabling them to maximise the benefits of the digital economy and bounce back even stronger.

The Leader stated that the importance of the regional economy could not be overstated, and that the Council had a major part to play in the continuing growth of the national economy. The pandemic had had a significant impact on the business community and the Council had been at the heart of the response, by providing that much needed support for small and medium-sized businesses. The Council was delivering and overseeing huge projects which would bring significant opportunities – none bigger, of course, than the Lowestoft Flood Management Scheme, which saw the Council awarded £43 million, which was the biggest award in the Country, which has been a huge endorsement of Lowestoft and the district. The Council had also received three quarters of a million pounds to revitalise the East Point Pavilion and was re-developing the old Deben High School site in Felixstowe, for local benefit, and the

refurbishment of Bungay Pool and Gym continued as the latest stage of the Council's ambitious leisure programme. The Leader advised that the virus would not restrict nor prevent the Council's ambitions for the district.

The Leader then reported that, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, he would provide an update on the Cabinet Members, their Assistant Cabinet Members and the various areas of responsibility that sat within their individual Portfolios, which were as follows:

Councillor Steve Gallant - Leader of the Council

Assistant Member - N/A
Community Partnerships Board
Council Policy and Strategic Finance
Council Performance
Communications
Member Development
Consultation and Parish Liaison
Legal and Democratic services

Councillor Craig Rivett - Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development

Assistant Member - Councillor Steve Wiles
Economic Development
Regeneration
Growth and Skills
Enterprise Zones
Energy
Assets and Property Services

Councillor Mary Rudd - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health

Assistant Member – Councillor Mark Jepson
Health and Wellbeing
Licensing
Food & Safety
Port Health
Health Promotion/NHS
Emergency planning
Community Safety

Councillor Stephen Burroughes - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Customer Services and Operational Partnerships

Assistant Member - N/A
Customer Services
Customer Access
Channel Shift
Complaints

Commercial Partnerships
IT and Digital Transformation

Councillor David Ritchie - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management

Assistant Member - Councillor Tony Cooper
Development Management
Building Control
Local Plan
Conservation and Design
Planning Policy
Coastal Management
Coastal Partnership East

Councillor Richard Kerry - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing

Assistant Member - N/A
Housing Stock
Tenant Services
Building Services
Housing Development
Private Sector Housing
Travellers
Homelessness

Councillor Maurice Cook - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources

Assistant Member - N/A
Value for Money
Financial Compliance and Planning
Medium Term Financial Strategy
Council Tax and Business Rates
Payables and Purchasing
Capital Programme
Treasury Management
External Audit
Welfare Reforms (Universal Credit)
Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP)
Audit and Risk Management
Counter Fraud
Data Protection

Councillor James Mallinder - Cabinet Member with responsibility for The Environment

Assistant Member - N/A
Environment Protection
Pollution Control
Waste Management

Joint Environmental Sustainability Policy
Green agenda
Countryside Management
Environmental Partnerships

Councillor Norman Brooks - Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport

Assistant Member - Councillor Alison Cackett
Transport and Infrastructure
Car Parks
Rights of Way
Civil Parking Enforcement

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

Assistant Member - N/A
Communities
Tourism
Young People/Apprentices/Youth Council
Leisure
Sport
Theatre and Arts

The Leader concluded his announcements by reporting that he was incredibly proud to be part of this Council and was committed to continuing to deliver against the Council's Vision, which was being turned into a reality. He then thanked the Councillors and all Officers most sincerely for their continued support and dedication.

Cabinet Members

There was no update from any Members of the Cabinet, on this occasion.

Chief Executive

Mr Baker, the Chief Executive, offered his congratulations to Councillors Robinson and Ceresa for their appointments as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.

Mr Baker then thanked Councillor Hedgley for being the first Chairman of East Suffolk Council and said that it had been a pleasure to work with him over the past year. He then echoed the Leader's comments about the Council's response to the pandemic. He reported that he was confident that the Council would rise to the coming challenges in relation to the pandemic and beyond, and he thanked everyone for their continued hard work in that respect.

Events attended by the former Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council

Councillor Hedgley, former Chairman of the Council, reported that due to the pandemic, he had only attended one socially distanced celebration of the Battle of Britain in Lowestoft, since the last Full Council meeting.

Councillor Robinson, former Vice-Chairman of the Council, reported that due to the pandemic, he had only attended one socially distanced celebration of VJ Day, in Lowestoft, since the last Full Council meeting.

6 Political Balance and Allocation of Seats on Committees 2020/21

The Council received report **ES/0359** from the Leader of the Council. The Leader reported that the Membership of the Committees and Sub-Committees of East Suffolk Council was determined under the terms of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. This regulation ensured that seats on Committees and Sub-Committees were allocated on a politically proportionate basis. It was noted that there were 61 seats in total on the Council's Committees. They could be broken down as follows:

Audit and Governance Committee – 9 seats
Licensing Committee – 15 seats
Planning Committee North – 9 seats
Planning Committee South – 9 seats
Scrutiny Committee – 13 seats
Appointments Committee – 6 seats

The Leader updated Members that there was currently one vacant seat in the Framlingham Ward. In accordance with Government legislation, a by-election for this vacancy would take place in May 2021.

Members noted that the necessary calculations had been undertaken regarding the apportionment of seats in a manner which, in opinion of the Monitoring Officer, best met the statutory requirements. The appendix to this report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Leader then drew Councillors' attention to the appendix which contained the nominations to the Committees and proposed that all of the uncontested seats be voted upon en-bloc and he called for a seconder.

The Chairman then invited Councillor Byatt to speak.

Councillor Byatt took the opportunity to congratulate Councillors Robinson and Ceresa for their appointments of Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council. He then asked if he could respond to the Leader's comments made earlier in the meeting, about the last 18 months. The Chairman confirmed that this would be acceptable.

Councillor Byatt commented that it had been very important to have cross-party involvement in the development of the Strategic Plan. He felt that the arrival of Covid19 had been extremely unfortunate, as it had meant that the Council had to focus on supporting its residents through this difficult time, rather than implementing the Strategic Plan. Officers had worked tirelessly to contact those people who were isolated and vulnerable and everyone had been forced to get used to working in isolation. He thanked the Leader for the regular meetings that he held with the Group Leaders, they had been very useful and informative. Everyone had adapted to working from home and the Opposition Groups had an important role to play in supporting policies that would benefit the district, scrutinising the administration and the implementation of those policies. Councillor Byatt then updated Members on the

responsibilities of his group, who would be shadowing the Cabinet Members. The Labour Shadow Cabinet Members were as follows:

Councillor M Deacon - Deputy Leader of the Labour Group and Shadow Member for the Felixstowe Peninsula

Councillor K Patience - Shadow Member for Housing and Transport

Councillor J Craig - Shadow Member for Communities including Health, Leisure and Tourism

Councillor T Gandy - Shadow Member for Resources

Councillor M Pitchers - Shadow Member for Planning and Coastal Management

Councillor L Gooch - Shadow Member for the Environment

Councillor Byatt reported that all of the Members of his Group would be willing and able to work with the substantive Cabinet Members, wherever possible, and he thanked the Leader for allowing him to speak on this matter. He then took the opportunity to clarify whether Councillor Deacon would still be nominated for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, as originally shown in the circulated Appendix. The Leader confirmed that this was the case.

The Chairman then invited Mrs Slater, the Monitoring Officer, to explain how the voting would take place at this meeting.

Mrs Slater clarified that the meeting schedule contained the nominations for the Committees and that the uncontested seats would be appointed en-bloc which would reduce the number of votes required during the meeting. Should there be any contested seats or positions such as Chairman or Vice-Chairman, or any amendments proposed to the meeting schedule, these would be considered en-bloc, once there had been questions and debate upon the matter. The Chairman then invited Members to ask questions about the meeting schedule.

Councillor Byatt reported that there was an amendment from the Labour Group, which was to propose Councillor Pitchers for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee North. He confirmed that this would be the only amendment for consideration at the meeting from his Group.

Councillor Elliott sought confirmation that only the Committee places were being considered at this point and he raised concerns about taking amendments en-bloc, as he felt that they should be considered on an individual basis. Mrs Slater advised that only one amendment had been received and proposed and that it needed to be seconded by another Councillor, therefore on this occasion it would be dealt with individually. It was confirmed that the Working Groups and Outside Body appointments would be considered later in the meeting.

The Leader provided clarification that the Council was currently in questions and that the recommendations within the report had only been proposed, they had not been seconded yet, therefore it was not possible to make any amendments at this stage in the proceedings. He then moved the recommendations contained within the report and this was duly seconded by Councillor Rivett.

There being no further questions, Councillor Byatt proposed the amendment that

Councillor Pitchers be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee North and this was seconded by Councillor Deacon. There being no further questions or debate upon the amendment, the amendment was put to the electronic vote. After collating the responses, Mr Baker declared that the vote on the amendment was **LOST**.

Having been proposed and seconded earlier in the meeting, the recommendations contained within the report were then put to the vote and it was

RESOLVED

1. That, with effect from 23 September 2020, in order meet statutory requirements, seats on Committees and Sub-Committees of the Council be allocated in accordance with the table in paragraph 2.6 of the report.

2. That the Leader be granted Delegated Authority to make any necessary changes to the membership of the Committees for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year, in consultation with the other Group Leaders.

7 Appointments to Outside Bodies for 2020/21 (Non-Executive)

The Council received report **ES/0361** from the Leader of the Council. The Leader reported that in accordance with Part 2 (Section B) of the Council's Constitution, the Council was asked to appoint Councillor representatives to Outside Bodies where the role related to a Non-Executive Function. The Cabinet, at its meeting on 6 October 2020, would consider representation on Outside Bodies where the role related to an Executive Function. The appointment of Councillors to Outside Bodies was important, as it provided support to the organisation concerned, enabled Councillors to fulfil their community leadership roles and enabled the appropriate monitoring of performance/budgets, in line with best practice.

The Leader reported that it should be noted that appointments made to Outside Bodies should be sensitive to the need to represent, as far as possible, the diverse nature of the local community. The table of the Council's Non-Executive Outside Bodies had been circulated to the Group Leaders and a number of nominations had been made. A table containing the nominations received had been tabled for all Councillors to refer to. It had also been emailed to Councillors and published on the Council's website. The table included information about each Outside Body including how many representatives were required, and where possible, how often the Outside Body would meet and the location of its meetings. Where more than one nomination for a seat on an Outside Body had been received, these would be decided by a vote. Where no nomination had been received for an Outside Body, the Leader confirmed that he would accept nominations during the consideration of this item. Should no nominations be received, he would consider the matter and make an appointment outside of the meeting.

There being no questions, the Leader then proposed all of the uncontested nominations for the Outside Bodies en-bloc and this was seconded by Councillor Rivett. The Leader stated that he would then deal with any contested nominations.

Councillor Byatt then proposed 3 amendments, on behalf of the Labour Group, which were seconded by Councillor Pitchers. The amendments were:

- That Councillor Craig be appointed to the Citizens Advice (North East Suffolk);
- That Councillor Gooch be appointed to the East Suffolk Travel Association (ESTA);
- That Councillor Gooch be appointed to the East Suffolk Travel Association (ESTA) Management Committee.

Councillor Byatt queried whether any places were available on the Lowestoft Place Board and the Leader clarified that the Lowestoft Place Board was an Executive Appointment and therefore, those appointments would be made by the Cabinet, rather than Full Council.

Councillor Elliot then stated he would like to propose 2 amendments, on behalf of the GLI Group. Those amendments were:

- That Councillor Beavan be appointed to the Southwold Harbour and River Blyth Users' Association;
- That Councillor Thompson be appointed to the Disability Advice Service for East Suffolk.

There being no questions or debate on the proposed amendments, the Chairman invited Councillors to vote. Mr Baker reminded Members that they would be asked to vote upon Councillor Byatt's 3 amendments en-bloc first. There would then be a second vote for Councillor Elliott's 2 amendments. Councillor Elliot queried if 2 separate votes could be undertaken for his 2 amendments or whether he needed to make 2 separate amendments and there followed some discussion in that respect. Councillor Byatt raised a point of order at this point in the proceedings. Councillor Byatt queried whether he could undertake the vote for his amendments separately too? Mr Baker reported that the vote was just about to commence electronically and Councillor Byatt would be able to submit further amendments later in the meeting. Mrs Slater clarified that should separate votes be undertaken, they would need to be undertaken via a roll-call, as the electronic voting had been prepared with the amendments being taken en-bloc, not individually.

An electronic vote then took place for the 3 amendments proposed by Councillor Byatt for the Labour Group and those Councillors unable to vote electronically gave their votes verbally. Upon being put to the electronic vote, the 3 amendments were **LOST**.

The Chairman then invited Councillor Elliott to speak. Councillor Elliott stated that he would undertake the vote for his 2 amendments together. He reported that this was his last day of being Leader of the GLI Group and he then confirmed the 2 amendments which he would like to be put to the vote.

The Chairman then invited Councillor Beavan to speak and Councillor Beavan confirmed he would second the 2 amendments proposed by Councillor Elliott. Councillor Beavan then stated that he had been honoured to inherit Councillor Allen's place on the Southwold Harbour and River Blyth Users' Association Outside Body, which he had held at Waveney District Council. He had been saddened to lose his seat on that Outside Body when East Suffolk Council was created, as he felt that this was not in the best interests of the Council, given his extensive knowledge and

experience of the Harbour. The Chairman clarified that the meeting had not yet gone into debate about this matter and Councillor Beavan confirmed that he would reserve his right to speak later.

There being no further questions, the Chairman then moved the meeting into debate.

Councillor Beavan continued to state his concerns and disappointment about the proposed appointment to the Southwold Harbour and River Blyth Users' Association. The Chairman stated that those comments were not appropriate and he then invited Councillor Thompson to speak.

Councillor Thompson stated that he was keen to be appointed to the Disability Advice Service for East Suffolk, as he fulfilled all of the necessary criteria and would understand the help and support required by others in the community, due to his personal experiences.

The Leader stated that he took exception to Councillor Beavan's comments, which he felt were unnecessary.

Councillor Elliott commented that he felt it was so important to have someone in place who really understood the issues and, in his opinion, there was nobody else with as much knowledge and experience of Southwold Harbour as Councillor Beavan. Councillor Elliott stated he was very disappointed with the approach from the Administration.

Councillor F Mortimer sought clarification regarding Councillor Elliott's amendment, which proposed Councillor Thompson be appointed to the Disability Advice Service for East Suffolk. It was confirmed that the appointment was not for the Disability Advice Service for North East Suffolk, which was a separate organisation.

Councillor Pitchers then stated that he felt that he would abstain from the vote on the proposed amendment by Councillor Elliott, as there would not be separate votes for those amendments.

There followed some further discussion regarding the nominations to the various Outside Bodies positions.

Councillor Smith-Lyte then raised a point of order at this stage in the meeting. She asked if the Chairman could request Councillors put their microphones on mute, as there was some interference with the sound this evening.

An electronic vote for the amendments put forward by Councillor Elliott on behalf of the GLI was undertaken, and those Councillors unable to vote electronically gave their votes verbally. Upon being put to the electronic vote, the 2 amendments were **LOST**.

An electronic vote was then taken for the original proposal made by the Leader. Upon being put to the electronic vote, it was

RESOLVED

1. That Councillors be appointed to those Outside Bodies outlined in Appendix A

for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

2. That, unless otherwise stated, the Leader of the Council be authorised to fill any outstanding vacancies left unfilled by Council.

3. That the Leader be granted Delegated Authority to make any necessary changes to the membership of the Outside Bodies for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year, in consultation with the other Group Leaders.

8 Appointments to Working Groups 2020/21

Council received report **ES/0360** which was presented by the Leader of the Council. The Leader reported that the Council appointed to a number of Working Groups each year, as part of its corporate governance framework, in support of the democratic process and decision-making arrangements. Councillors were appointed to Working Groups to help address local issues and to achieve sustainable solutions, which helped to deliver a strong and sustainable local economy and improved the quality of life for everyone living and working in the District.

It was noted that the Council's Working Groups for 2020 / 21 were:

- 1 The Local Plan Working Group
- 2 The Housing Benefits and Tenant Services Consultation Group
- 3 The Member Development Steering Group
- 4 The Lowestoft Transport and Infrastructure Prospectus Steering Group

The Leader reported that the Working Groups had clear terms of reference, which outlined their roles, responsibilities and reporting mechanisms, thereby increasing openness and transparency and making the best use of resources. It was noted that this information was contained within Appendix A to the report. Where specific post holder nominations were required, these were also outlined in Appendix A. Where there were vacancies, the Leader stated that appointments would need to be proposed and the votes for those seats would take place on an individual basis. He then proposed the recommendations contained within the report, which were seconded by Councillor Rivett.

Councillor Elliott reported that he would like to propose a couple of amendments on an individual basis. He reported that he had taken the GLI seat on the Local Plan Working Group, in May 2019. Councillor Yule had also been very keen to sit on the Local Plan Working Group and therefore, Councillor Elliott had decided that Councillor Yule would take the GLI seat from September 2020. He commented that the situation was strange, as the Labour Group had 2 seats on this Working Group, whereas the GLI only had 1 seat, despite being the largest Opposition Group on the Council. He felt that it would be sensible to have a further GLI seat on the Local Plan Working Group, as that would be more representative. He therefore took the opportunity to propose that an additional seat for the GLI be created, which would be taken by Councillor Elliott, and he called for a seconder. This was duly seconded by Councillor Beavan.

Councillor Byatt queried whether the creation of an additional seat on the Local Plan

Working Group for the GLI would necessitate a change to the Constitution, or whether the Council was able to make such a change this evening? Mrs Slater, the Monitoring Officer, reported that the size of the Local Plan Working Group would have been decided when it was established. Therefore, it was not within the gift of Full Council this evening, to simply increase the size. Councillor Byatt queried whether this matter could be deferred until further work had been undertaken, to see if the size of the Working Group could be increased?

Councillor Byatt then took the opportunity to comment about the Member Development Steering Group (MDSG), as the Council had just been awarded the Charter Plus Award for Member Development. He thanked the officers for their hard work in this respect and the Members of the Council who sat on the MDSG.

Councillor Pitchers then provided clarification regarding the circumstances for the Labour Group being allocated 2 seats on the Local Plan Working Group, whilst the GLI had only 1. He stated that at the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2019, each Opposition Group had been allocated 1 seat each. A vote was then undertaken regarding the remaining unallocated seat and, upon being put to the vote, a Labour Councillor had been elected to fill that vacant seat.

The Leader commented that the allocation of seats on the Working Groups reflected the political proportionality of the Council, therefore it was not appropriate to add in an additional seat at this time.

Councillor Elliott agreed that there needed to be fair representation, therefore he felt it was only right that the Labour Group and the GLI had the same number of seats on the Local Plan Working Group. He stated that sharing the seats fairly would be appropriate and he suggested that the Conservatives should have 8 seats instead of 9 and then the Labour Group and GLI could have 2 seats each, which would adequately reflect the political proportionality of the Council. He commented that he did not wish for Councillor Pitchers to lose his seat, as he had made a valuable contribution to the LPWG for over 12 years. However, Councillor Elliott noted that there were 2 seats on the LPWG that were to be filled by Planning Committee Members, so he felt that there should be scope to enable him to sit on the LPWG.

There followed some discussion in this respect. The Leader stated that political proportionality was considered in detail and it looked across the Council's Committees and other appointments and it may not be possible to have an exact political representation on every Committee, due to the numbers involved. It was not possible to have half of a Councillor, for example, and therefore, it was not feasible to look in detail at one Committee or Working Group in isolation. There had to be some give and take with the figures and then the overall political balance was achieved. The Leader then referred to Mr Baker for his comments. Mr Baker stated that Mrs Slater, the Monitoring Officer, would advise shortly, as there were some slight differences in the political proportionality of the Working Groups, when compared to the Committees.

Mrs Slater advised that she did not strictly include the Working Group membership in the political proportionality calculations, however, a reflection of the political representation in the Council was achieved, wherever possible, as that was a fair way to allocate seats. She reported that the LPWG would report to the Cabinet, as it looked

at Planning Policy, and it was therefore for the Cabinet to look at the composition and Terms of Reference of the LPWG. Should there be any concerns about the size and composition of the LPWG, then it was for the Cabinet to discuss and decide on a way forward, not Full Council this evening. Should there be any changes to size of the LPWG in future, the appointments to it could be brought back to a future Full Council meeting for consideration. The Leader stated that the LPWG needed to be of a sufficient size and composition in order to undertake its workload and if the size were reviewed and increased on this occasion, there could easily be more Councillors wishing to join in the future, and this could make the LPWG inefficient and unwieldy if it became too large.

Councillor Topping stated that Labour had 2 seats on the LPWG, compared to 1 seat for the GLI and the Labour Group also had 1 seat on the Housing Benefits and Tenant Services Consultation Group, whilst the GLI had none. Therefore, in her opinion, it appeared as though the GLI were being somewhat unfairly treated. She felt that the Labour Group should give up one of their seats, in order that the 2 Groups had the same number of seats and representation.

The Chairman invited Councillor Ritchie, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, to say a few words. Councillor Ritchie stated that he was also Chairman of the LPWG and that he fed back any issues regarding his Portfolio, including any feedback from the LPWG meetings, to the Cabinet, as appropriate. He did feel that the work of the LPWG was very important and that the Group was very influential, as their work would affect the whole District. The LPWG meetings were an opportunity to thrash out any discussions, however, it was not decision making, any decisions would be taken to Cabinet or possibly Full Council, where all points of view were considered and taken on board.

Councillor Byatt commented that the Labour Group consisted of 7 Members, whereas the GLI was a 'softer' group or coalition and was not political of itself. He wondered whether there could be a vote this evening for the LPWG places.

Councillor Bird stated that he fully endorsed the words of the Leader earlier in the debate, where he stated that political balance was achieved across the piece and not in isolation. He felt that there would always be a minor imbalance somewhere, as it was not possible to have half or quarter of a person on a Committee and a seat could not be shared. A Member was either appointed or they were not and selectively looking at one or two Committees or Working Groups in isolation was not helpful.

Councillor Pitchers then provided further clarification that when he was appointed to the LPWG last year, it was as the Planning Committee North's representative, not as a Member of the Labour Group.

The Chairman then asked Councillor Elliott if he wished to proceed with his proposed amendment and he confirmed that he did, and that the Motion had been seconded earlier in the meeting. At the request of the Leader, Councillor Elliott then provided clarification on his proposed amendment. He stated that he wished to appoint himself as one of the Planning Committee Members, from Planning Committee North, on the LPWG. Councillor Elliott then confirmed that he wished to replace the Planning Committee North Member on the LPWG. Mr Baker, Chief Executive, then clarified the

proposed amendment again and asked Councillor Beavan if he was still happy to second the updated amendment which had been proposed by Councillor Elliott. Councillor Beavan confirmed that he was. Mr Baker reported that if this item of business was not concluded by 6.25 pm, the meeting would need to be adjourned, in order to allow a short 5 minute break before the Full Council meeting, which must commence at 6.30pm this evening.

An electronic vote then took place for the amendment from Councillor Elliott, that he would replace the Planning Committee North Member on the LPWG. Unfortunately, there was an issue with the electronic voting on this occasion and a roll call vote was undertaken instead, by Mrs Slater, Monitoring Officer. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was **LOST**.

N.B. The Chairman then adjourned the meeting at 6.25pm to allow for a short break prior to the commencement of the Full Council meeting at 6.30pm. The Annual Council meeting would reconvene to finish considering this item, at the rising of the Ordinary Full Council meeting.

The Ordinary Meeting commencing at 6.30pm

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Full Council meeting and he invited the Leader of the Council to say a few words.

Councillor Gallant stated that Members would recall that, at the first East Suffolk Full Council meeting on 19 May 2019, the Council had agreed to adopt the Charter Plus status for Councillor Development across the whole district and to apply for accreditation in 2020. He was very pleased to announce that, following an assessment on Thursday, 17 September 2020 by an Independent Assessment Team, East Suffolk Council had successfully achieved the EELGA Councillor Development Charter Plus award. Mark Palmer, the EELGA Lead Assessor, had stated that:

“East Suffolk Council was able to demonstrate a strong commitment to councillor development and support; and provided robust evidence and examples of how councillor development was supporting the delivery of the Council’s Strategic Plan for the benefit of the residents of East Suffolk. This was a significant achievement for the new Council. Councillor development was clearly led by the political leadership of the Council and had the support and buy in of Councillors on a cross party basis. Councillors and officers through the Member Development Steering Group were leading and supporting the strategic approach to Councillor development.”

The Leader reported that the Council would receive a certificate to confirm the accreditation, and a glass trophy, which could be displayed at the Council offices. He stated that he would like to thank the EELGA Assessment Team for a very productive day, and the representatives from the Council’s partner organisations who agreed to take part, and be interviewed, as part of the process. He also took the opportunity to thank those Councillors on the Member Development Steering Group who were interviewed, and, indeed, to all Members who supported the many development

opportunities which the Charter Plus offered. Finally, he gave many thanks to the Democratic Services Team, who supported this important work.

9 Questions from the Public

The Chairman reported that no questions had been submitted by the electorate, as provided by Council Procedure Rule 8.

10 Questions from Members

The following 3 questions from Members have been submitted in pursuance of Council Procedure Rule 9:

(a) Question from Councillor Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport:

"Until the transfer of parking powers to East Suffolk all on street resident parking permit areas were implemented by Suffolk County Council. With my County Councillor hat on, I have been involved in two schemes in Beccles, until now these schemes have been funded by a County Councillor's locality budget and developed closely with Councillor and community. Please can you tell me what the new process is and how the community and local ward Councillors will be involved in the selection of areas and implementation?"

Response from Councillor Norman Brooks the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport:

Councillor Brooks reported that East Suffolk Council (ESC) had been given delegated powers for the administration of on-street paid parking places including the powers to make, vary or revoke Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) (these include 'pay-and-display' and 'permit' parking bays). ESC was to pay for the operation and introduction of payment schemes. The revenue from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and on-street paid parking places regulations will be retained by ESC – Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) must be self-financing.

With regard to a process for considering parking scheme requests, he proposed the following for consideration and development:

1. Residents and businesses register their request for a scheme via a page sitting under www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/parking. The request will be via a questionnaire discovering parking demand, basic travel information, and preferred parking solutions.
2. The responses, statistically analysed and using thematic mapping; and produce a report for Councillors to consider.
3. SCC (Highways) must give written consent for the statutory TRO process to commence – consent may only be withheld for technical reasons e.g. where on-street parking may negatively affect traffic flow, or create a road safety issue.
4. Develop appropriate parking management schemes based on the responses.
5. Non-statutory consultation on the schemes with the relevant ward Councillors and the relevant town and parish councils.
6. The statutory TRO process be completed starting with the minimum 21-day consultation period.
7. Validate the responses of the statutory TRO consultation, analyse the responses

and produce a report for councillors to consider.

8. Consideration of the results be given by a 'panel' of cross-party councillors. The local ward Councillors will be involved and consulted on proposed schemes.

9. The schemes may be tweaked as permitted by the statutory TRO process. Schemes may also be abandoned at this point if appropriate.

10. The TRO be Made and the schemes installed.

The Chairman then invited Councillor Brambley-Crawshaw to ask a supplementary question.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Brambley-Crawshaw

Councillor Brambley-Crawshaw stated that one particular scheme in Beccles was currently at risk of not going ahead because sign-off had not been given and the processes were not clear to the SCC officers who had been working on it for two years. If it was delayed any further, the whole scheme might be lost after £1000s of locality budget being spent on it. Residents were getting very annoyed, as all the legal work had been completed and it should be in place by now. Please could you assure me that the Council will make sure that this scheme goes ahead, as planned, and does not get lost in a messy handover?

Response from Councillor Brooks, Cabinet Member for Transport

Councillor Brooks reported that he could confirm that officers were currently looking at the proposed scheme and an answer would be provided shortly.

(b) Question from Councillor Tess Gandy to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport:

"It is pleasing to hear that East Suffolk Council will be bearing the cost of the RingGo convenience charge. How long is this subsidy expected to continue?"

Response from Cllr Norman Brooks the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport:

Councillor Brooks stated that the subsidy would continue indefinitely, unless a review was called.

The Chairman then invited Councillor Gandy to ask a supplementary question.

Supplementary Question from Councillor T Gandy

Councillor Gandy reported that she was very pleased to hear that, as she felt there was a lack of clarity regarding car park charges across the District. Different areas had had their parking charges increased by different amounts and that was unfair and inconsistent. She asked if the Council was recouping the 20p Ringo Service Charges it was subsidising, by increasing the parking charges in certain areas?

Response from Councillor N Brooks, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transport

Councillor Brooks provided reassurance that the Council was not profiting from the increases in car parking charges, the increases were necessary in order to provide an efficient and effective car parking service, across the whole District.

(c) Question from Councillor Peter Byatt to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing:

"The Competition and Markets Authority are currently investigating a number of major housebuilders, after uncovering information that buyers of leasehold properties may have been misled and charged excessive fees.

This includes inflated ground rents for buyers, which in some cases were scheduled to double every 10 years. Is there any evidence that this mis-selling has been happening to residents in East Suffolk?"

Response from Cllr Richard Kerry the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing:

Councillor Kerry stated that the Housing Service had looked into this matter and had liaised with colleagues in the Planning Service. Neither Service was aware of this being an issue in East Suffolk.

With regards to the Council's own leaseholders, Councillor Kerry advised that East Suffolk charged £10 per year in ground rent for its leaseholders, in a market where leaseholders across the sector were typically charged £50-100 per year, and that figure could be much higher - in excess of £1000 per year in some parts of London. As such, the Council's ground rents were not only below the sector average but nowhere near the levels being seen in private developments.

Leaseholders also paid a service charge based on services provided, such as communal cleaning, grounds maintenance and caretaker services, and a share of the costs of any repairs and maintenance work carried out to communal areas in the scheme where they lived. The level of service charges would vary from scheme to scheme depending on what services were provided in each location, and the costs associated with those services. They also included an administration fee of 10% to cover the costs incurred by both the Housing Service and the Finance Service in administering the charges. In terms of maintenance contributions, where the Council believed it was likely to exceed £250 per property, the Council completed a consultation process before any works went ahead. This process allowed the Council to advise its leaseholders of proposed works and receive their feedback on them, and to provide the quotations for the works where the Council would be using external contractors, with an explanation as to why the Council had chosen not to use the cheapest option for any reason. It also gave leaseholders the opportunity to challenge the Council should they believe the costs to be excessive, and to submit their proposals for alternative contractors, and their own quotes for the work, should they wish to do so.

The Chairman invited Councillor Byatt to ask a supplementary question.

Supplementary Question from Councillor P Byatt

Councillor Byatt thanked Councillor Kerry for his extensive response. He asked who monitored those private companies who provided housing, to make sure that they did not suddenly start increasing or introducing new charges for their tenants and that they abided by the rules? He queried if it was something that the Housing or Planning Teams could do, in the course of their work? He confirmed that the Members would not want this to become an issue in the District.

Response from Councillor Kerry, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Housing

Councillor Kerry reported that he would need to check with the Head of Housing and the Head of Planning and Coastal Management to see what the Council could do, however he confirmed that it would be a positive step to monitor such matters, in order to protect the Council's residents.

11 Petitions

The Chairman reported that no petitions had been received, as provided by Council Procedure Rule 10.

12 Notice of Motion

The following Motion had been submitted by Councillor Gooch in pursuance of Council Procedure Rule 11:

"We acknowledge the efforts that this Council has already made to acknowledge the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to promote renewable energy; Furthermore, we recognise:

- that very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so.
- that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation could enable and empower this council to become a provider of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local customers
- that revenues received by new local renewable electricity providers could be used to help improve the local economy, local services and facilities and to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions;

This Council accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, supported by almost 200 Cross-Party MPs which, if made law, would establish a Right to Local Supply.

This would enable this Council to investigate the feasibility of becoming a provider of locally generated renewable electricity to our own Community, with all the possible benefits that might result from that initiative.

This Council further resolves to

- inform the local media of this decision,
- write to local MPs, asking them to support the Bill if they haven't already done so
- write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN or info@powerforpeople.org.uk) expressing its support."

The Chairman reported that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, a Motion could only be discussed this evening, with the consent of the Council. Otherwise, the Notice of Motion would be referred to the Cabinet or a relevant Committee. He therefore sought the view of the Council, as to whether the matter would be discussed this evening and if so, a proposer and seconder would be required. He then invited the Leader to speak on this item.

The Leader stated that he would support the Notice of Motion being discussed this evening. Councillor Mallinder commented that he would like to propose an amendment to the Motion and he would provide details later in the meeting. Councillor Topping seconded Councillor Gallant's proposal for the Motion to be discussed this evening.

Councillor Burroughes raised a point of order at this point in the proceedings. He queried whether the amended Motion needed to be considered first. Mrs Slater, Monitoring Officer, reported that as the meeting was not yet in debate, the Council was about to take a vote on a procedural matter, on whether or not to debate the Motion this evening, not the actual Motion itself. It was noted that Members would be able to vote on any amendments to the Motion, once this procedural matter was completed.

An electronic vote was then undertaken and the vote to discuss the Motion this evening was **CARRIED**.

Mrs Slater confirmed that the Motion now needed to be proposed and seconded. The Motion was duly proposed by Councillor Gooch and was seconded by Councillor Gandy.

Councillor Gooch then spoke to the Motion. She reported that the Motion being considered this evening was a direct result of the communication received from People For Power to ESC Members, regarding the Local Electricity Bill. The Bill was being tabled by Peter Aldous, the MP for Waveney, and was co-sponsored by 12 cross-party MPs, with support from a variety of different Local Authorities and Town and Parish Councils. Councillor Gooch clarified the wording of the Motion, which stated that Councils could become energy providers, however, it did not force them to do so. Councillor Gooch stated that she had written to the Leader of the Council, and Councillor Mallinder, Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment, about this matter on 7 June 2020 and she had also written to Peter Aldous MP on 9 June 2020, to offer support and encouragement for the first reading of the Bill. Peter Aldous had acknowledged her correspondence. The Bill passed its first reading and was due to have its second reading in the House of Commons on 29 January 2021. The Bill had the support of various organisations such as the Ecologist, the World Wildlife Fund for

Nature and Friends of the Earth. It was noted that many energy providers were currently looking into renewable energy production, in the spirit of the Bill, and were already working with small-scale generators. Councillor Gooch stated that small scale generators did not just reduce emissions, they made the way that power was used more efficient and provided a wide range of social benefits, mitigating fuel poverty, creating jobs and boosting the local economy. If the Council truly wanted to decarbonise the sector quickly and fairly, she felt that local energy production was the obvious choice. This Motion had been brought to Full Council to seek East Suffolk Council's public endorsement of this Bill and to publicise the endorsement in the various ways outlined within the Motion. Councillor Gooch then called for cross-party support.

The Chairman invited any questions on the Motion.

Councillor Mallinder stated that he would like to propose an amendment to the Motion. He then took the opportunity to congratulate Councillor Gooch on her appointment as the Shadow Member for the Environment. He commented that he was pleased that Councillor Gooch cared so much for the environment and he always listened carefully to the concerns and issues that she raised. Councillor Mallinder stated that the environment was not just about the trees and grass outside our windows, it was also how we lived our lives, functioned and heated our homes.

Councillor Mallinder then took the opportunity to thank Councillor Gooch for highlighting this issue and he reported that he, along with the rest of the Council, wanted to help those people in need. Therefore, Councillor Mallinder wished to propose an amendment, which would be shown on 2 slides, for Members to review. The proposed amendment was as follows:

"We acknowledge the efforts that this Council has already made reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to promote renewable energy;

Furthermore, we recognise:

That very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so.

That making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation could enable and empower this council to become a provider of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local customers that revenues received by new local renewable electricity providers could be used to help improve the local economy, local services and facilities and to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions;

This Council accordingly notes that the Local Electricity Bill, sponsored by Peter Aldous MP and supported by almost 200 Cross-Party MPs achieved an unopposed first reading in the House of Commons. This bill is intended to empower and enable new community energy companies to sell energy that they generate directly to local people and in doing so develop a circular economy.

The Council's Environment Task Group is well placed to investigate the feasibility of locally generated electricity for supply to the local community.

This Council accordingly resolves to:

support Peter Aldous MP on his work to promote renewal energy and to tackle fuel poverty, including his efforts to introduce the local electricity bill.

This Council further resolves to:

refer this matter to the Environment Task Group for it to investigate the initiative and to provide a report to the Cabinet."

Councillor Mallinder stated that this was not a gesture, he really wanted to investigate what the Council could do and act upon and he felt that it would be best if this matter was referred to the Environmental Task Group, who would investigate, consider and provide support to the Council for this important matter. He then reported that the Council was already investigating assisting residents, looking into creating energy, being more environmentally friendly and the Council was also involved in the Solar Together initiative.

Members viewed the proposed amendment, which was moved by Councillor Mallinder and seconded by the Leader, who reserved his right to speak.

The Chairman asked Councillor Gooch if she would be happy to accept the amendment to the Motion, and she confirmed that she was. The Chairman clarified that the amended Motion had become the substantive Motion, which would be debated that evening.

Councillor Byatt then asked if Council could review the second slide of the amended Motion again. Councillor Byatt queried why the Council was not keen to inform the local media and publicise this decision. However, he did feel that the Council was looking at doing significant, cross party proposals and they should be celebrated and shared with the media.

Councillor Elliott then sought clarification that Councillor Gooch had accepted the amendment. Councillor Gooch confirmed that she had accepted the amendment to her Motion, however she wished to make a comment about the publicity. She stated that it would be polite to acknowledge the work of People For Power in the campaign, in some way, either via a letter or contact from the Environment Task Group, as that would be a polite gesture. Councillor Mallinder acknowledged the points made by Councillors Byatt and Gooch and he stated that this would be looked at by the Environment Task Group, who would also consider the publicity campaign and media approach, and he confirmed that there would be a full discussion about these matters at a future meeting of the Task Group.

Mrs Slater, the Monitoring Officer, confirmed that Councillor Gooch had stated that she was happy to accept the proposed amendment. Mrs Slater then took the opportunity to check that Councillor Gandy, who had seconded the original Motion, was also happy to accept the amendment. Councillor Gandy confirmed that she was.

The Leader then took the opportunity to speak. He stated that it was the right decision to take this matter to the Environment Task Group, which was cross-party. He then asked Members to consider the route of items of business and where decisions would be made. He felt that discussions on this matter had been delayed unnecessarily, by waiting to bring it to Full Council. He acknowledged that Councillor Gooch had stated that she had contacted him about the matter, however he felt that the information provided had contained insufficient detail about where the matter could go or what should happen. He felt that it would be better to directly approach the appropriate Cabinet Member or a Committee or Task Group, in the first instance.

The Leader stated that he welcomed this initiative and he thanked Councillor Gooch for her flexibility in agreeing to the amendment. In respect of the media, it was noted that this meeting was being broadcast live on YouTube and the media would be able to pick up on various aspects of the meeting by watching the recording, and Members would share the decisions made via their usual channels to promote the work of the Council. The Leader then clarified that it was not a 'no' regarding using the media to publicise this decision, it was about allowing the Environment Task Group to discuss matters fully and make the decisions, including about the publicity.

An electronic vote was then undertaken and it was

RESOLVED

That the Motion be approved.

N.B. At the end of the meeting, Mrs Slater, Monitoring Officer, took the opportunity to explain that there had been a minor administrative error in relation to the tally of votes for this item of business. Clarification was provided that the original vote was counted as 46 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions. The correct information should have been 44 for, 0 against and 1 abstention. She apologised for any confusion caused by this error.

13 Adoption of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan

The Council received report **ES/0362** from the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management. Councillor Ritchie stated that the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan was being presented to Full Council, following a thorough process of preparation which had taken place since 2016. This had involved a number of public consultations and the careful consideration of evidence, followed by an Examination from an independent Government Inspector who had concluded that, with modifications, the Plan was legally compliant and sound and could proceed to adoption. The adoption of the Plan had been debated at the Extraordinary meeting of the Council's Cabinet on 17 September 2020, and following the debate, Cabinet had recommended to Full Council that the Plan be adopted.

The Local Plan was therefore now presented to Full Council for adoption.

Councillor Ritchie clarified that the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan covered the former Suffolk Coastal district and set out the strategy for growth and development over the period 2018-2036. Once adopted, the Plan would guide decisions on planning

applications within that area. The Plan would sit alongside the Waveney Local Plan which had been adopted in March 2019, and the Local Plan for the Broads (prepared by the Broads Authority) which was adopted in May 2019, together providing up to date plans across the whole of East Suffolk. There were in addition, 7 'made' Neighbourhood Plans in the former Suffolk Coastal area and a number of others under preparation.

Councillor Ritchie then updated Members on the work undertaken during the creation of the Local Plan, since 2016.

Councillor Ritchie explained the process in that an independent Inspector was appointed to examine the Plan, to consider whether it was legally compliant and sound. Public hearings were held during August and September 2019, and subsequently the Inspector published his post-hearings letter in January 2020. That led to consultation on Main Modifications, held for ten weeks between May and July 2020, and following consideration of the responses received the Inspector published his final report on 8 September 2020. That report concluded that the Plan was legally compliant and sound, subject to a number of Main Modifications being made, and could be adopted. The Plan, with the modifications incorporated, was being presented to Council for adoption.

Councillor Ritchie reported that the Local Plan set out an ambitious vision, which aligned with the vision for the Council, and contained aspirations to ensure a diverse, strong and prosperous economy; provision of sufficient homes of the right types and tenures to meet needs, including addressing needs for younger and older people; active and healthy communities; protecting, maintaining and enhancing the high quality, built historic and natural environment; and mitigating and adapting to climate change.

It was noted that spatially, the Local Plan sought to deliver two new Garden Neighbourhoods (at North Felixstowe and South Saxmundham) and new employment growth based around key transport corridors, strategies for market towns to reflect and strengthen their roles and appropriate growth in rural areas, including through site allocations, to sustain existing communities.

The North Felixstowe Garden Neighbourhood was identified as a leisure led development which would comprise a new leisure centre, green infrastructure, community facilities and employment land alongside residential development of up to 2,000 homes. It was recognised that the integration with the existing community would be critical to its success and the garden neighbourhood would be expected to come forward through a master-planned approach informed by community engagement.

The South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood provided an opportunity for new primary school provision, green infrastructure, recreational facilities and other community facilities, in addition to approximately 800 homes and employment land. It was noted that, as with North Felixstowe, the garden neighbourhood was expected to come forward through a master-planned approach, informed by community engagement. Whilst alternative options around Saxmundham had been considered throughout the production of the Plan, bringing the development forward on one site was considered to provide benefits in relation to the comprehensive delivery of the

development and infrastructure.

Councillor Ritchie stated that, in order to provide confidence in maintaining sufficient housing supply, should any sites not come forward or be delayed, the amount of housing planned for included a contingency of around 25% (including an allowance for some development to come forward as windfall, in accordance with other policies in the Plan).

Councillor Ritchie stated that the Local Plan also set out a number of topic based policies for use in determining planning applications, including in relation to economic uses, housing (including Gypsies and Travellers), tourism, transport, community facilities and assets, climate change and coastal change, the natural environment, the built and historic environment and infrastructure.

Councillor Ritchie reported that following publication of the Inspector's Report, a significant amount of correspondence had been received in relation to the housing allocation at Land West of Chapel Road, Grundisburgh (Policy SCLP12.51). It was noted that the matters raised had been considered by the Inspector in arriving at his conclusions on the Local Plan. The representations received on the Final Draft Local Plan and on the Main Modifications were all available to view on the Council's website.

It was noted that correspondence had also been received in relation to the housing allocation at Land adjacent to the Farthings, Peasenhall (Policy SCLP12.59), in particular, raising matters around the site not being available for development. It was clarified that the site would only come forward for development should the landowners bring it forward. It was noted that the Plan contained a contingency by planning for a number above the housing requirement, to acknowledge that some sites may be delayed or not come forward.

Councillor Ritchie advised that the final Local Plan was contained in Appendix C to this report. The final Local Plan incorporated all of the Inspector's Main Modifications, noting that all of the Inspector's conclusions must be taken on board. The adoption of the Local Plan was imperative in ensuring a plan-led approach to development and provided certainty to communities as to where development could come forward. Having an up to date plan in place provided a clear policy framework for facilitating economic growth and delivering housing to meet identified needs. The importance of having a Plan in place was further emphasised in relation to the current pandemic and ensuring a positive and planned approach was in place to support economic recovery. Councillor Ritchie took the opportunity to thank the Planning Officers involved in the development of this Local Plan and then he moved the recommendations contained within the report, which were then seconded by Councillor Gee.

The Chairman then invited questions.

The Leader stated that he would like to reserve his right to speak.

Councillor Hedgley commented that he would support the recommendations, as he felt that it would be a serious misstep not to do so, as it would leave the Suffolk Coastal

area vulnerable. Although he had concerns about some elements of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, he was reassured that any applications would need to be brought before the Planning Committee South for consideration and the Committee would ensure that any development proposals were appropriate for the local area. He then thanked the Planning Officers for all of their hard work in respect of this Local Plan.

Councillor Deacon stated that he had raised concerns throughout the process of developing this plan. He felt that brownfield sites should always be used prior to developing greenfield sites and that development should be shared across the whole area, not just focussed in a few places. He felt that some villages needed development and others did not, and that any development needed to be appropriate to its location. There was a need for more housing to help the younger generations stay in the area, however Councillor Deacon was particularly concerned that 4,000 new homes were planned for Felixstowe, which would cause a population increase of around 8,000, which would have a significant impact on the population, which was currently 28,000. He was also concerned about the impact to agricultural land, as the UK might need to grow more crops for food in future, due to the impacts of Covid-19 and also Brexit.

Councillor Deacon also stated that the number of houses within the Local Plan had been based upon anticipated need and circumstances had changed significantly in recent months. The Ipswich Northern Bypass scheme had been abandoned and the predicted growth from that scheme would not now take place. Also, due to Covid-19, 12,000 residents in the district had been furloughed and the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) had stated that up to 50% of furloughed jobs could ultimately be lost. Therefore, he felt that the original estimations and data contained within the Local Plan needed to be reviewed, as many circumstances had changed significantly. Councillor Deacon asked that the recommendation within the report be amended and that the adoption of the Local Plan be paused, to allow for the data to be re-evaluated. He then stated that he would like to have a recorded vote for this item and he called for a seconder.

Councillor Ritchie raised a point of order. He stated that the Local Plan had been through all of the required stages and the only option for Full Council to consider at this meeting was whether to accept or reject the Local Plan. The Council was not able to amend the Local Plan, the version under consideration was the final version. If the Local Plan was rejected, the Council would need to start work again from the beginning of the process. The Local Plan could not be paused. Councillor Ritchie then invited Mrs Slater, the Monitoring Officer, to give her view on Councillor Deacon's request.

Mrs Slater, the Monitoring Officer, confirmed that Councillor Ritchie was correct. The only option for the Council was to adopt or reject the Local Plan this evening. Any other proposals, such as to pause the adoption, would negate the recommendations within the report. Therefore, Councillors had to decide whether to adopt or reject the Local Plan under consideration.

Councillor Deacon reported that he was disappointed, as he did not feel that his proposal to pause would negate the recommendations contained within the report. He had only wanted some of the information upon which the Local Plan was based to be re-evaluated, due to the recent changes in circumstances. He stated that

he felt very strongly about this matter and was very disappointed by the advice given with regard to the recommendations.

Councillor Smith-Lyte commented that she would be brief and would not reiterate the issues raised by Councillor Deacon. However, she was extremely concerned about the possibility of over development and the use of agricultural land for development. She felt that there was a real need to increase the amount of food produced in the UK, due to Covid-19 and Brexit, and also to reduce the amount of food miles.

Mr Ridley, Head of Planning and Coastal Management noted that Members had some concerns about the adoption of the Local Plan. However, the concerns raised by Members had already been considered and addressed by the Planning Inspector. Mr Ridley reported that the Council would be in a much stronger position if it had a Local Plan in place, as it would help to ensure that only good, high quality developments were allowed. All planning applications would still need to be considered by the Council and taken forward to the Planning Committees, as required. The Local Plan would protect the area and the Local Plan could be reviewed or updated when needed.

Councillor Kerry reported that he did have some concerns about the Local Plan, however he felt that additional homes were needed and there were currently over 500 people on the Council's waiting list for housing. He felt that brownfield sites should be used first, rather than greenfield sites, such as Innocence Farm.

Councillor Burroughes reported that he had some concerns about the sites for development in the Peasenhall area, however there would be mechanisms in place to address them. He felt that the Council would be vulnerable without having a Local Plan in place, so he was broadly supportive of this Local Plan.

Councillor Ashdown confirmed that he supported the Local Plan. He felt that as Chairman of Planning Committee North, the adoption of the Waveney Local Plan had made it easier when considering applications at Committee meetings.

Councillor Gooch felt that she was in a difficult position, as there had been a number of comments about concerns regarding the Local Plan. She also had concerns about the impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit upon the District, therefore she felt that it was a difficult choice to make.

Councillor Mallinder took the opportunity to thank Councillor Ritchie and Officers for all of their hard work in the creation of the Local Plan. He noted that the need to maintain a pleasant and healthy environment for future generations was a key theme throughout the Plan, therefore he was happy to support the recommendations within the report.

Councillor Byatt stated that he was in a quandary and fully understood the concerns of Councillor Deacon, as he was also unconvinced that so many homes were needed. He also had concerns about agricultural land being used for homes, when there might be issues about food security in the future, therefore he had some reservations about approving the Local Plan.

Councillor Elliott reported that the adoption of the Local Plan was a difficult

decision. However, he had been a Member of the Local Plan Working Group for many years and he felt that should the Council not adopt the Local Plan, it would leave the area at greater risk. Without a Local Plan, applicants would be able to submit building applications across the whole of the area and there would be fewer substantive reasons that could be used to refuse those applications. He did raise concerns about how the need for housing was measured, as the Council was required to use the government's formulae and he felt it would be better if Councils were able to measure and finalise their own housing need. He reiterated that the Council would be in a much safer position, if the Local Plan was adopted.

Councillor Yule stated that she did have some concerns, however planning applications would still need to be submitted in the same way. Therefore Councillors would still be able to have input into future developments to ensure the best outcomes for their Wards. She noted that some people may assume that all planning applications were approved without checks, however she reported that applications were robustly reviewed and considered, to ensure the best outcome for the District.

Councillor Deacon reported that Members were aware of and involved with the early stages of the development of the Local Plan, however nobody foresaw a world-wide pandemic or Brexit and these two issues alone had significantly changed the data upon which the Local Plan was based. He was very concerned that high quality agricultural land could be lost forever to build homes that people no longer needed or wanted. He felt that the Local Plan had been based upon out of date information, due to the recent impact of Covid-19 and Brexit and that the Local Plan should be paused and then the data could be reviewed.

The Leader reported that he was very fond of Felixstowe and had noted that more people commuted into the town than out of it, on a daily basis. Therefore, the proposed development of a garden neighbourhood would mean that more people would be able to live near their place of work, reducing congestion. It was natural that more housing was needed for a town that was the 4th largest in Suffolk and growth should be viewed as positive. However, there did need to be a balance regarding the use of land. The Leader noted that Councillor Deacon was disappointed by the way the discussions were heading. However, there was ultimately a single choice to be made, which was to adopt or reject the Local Plan, pausing the adoption was not an option that could be considered.

Councillor Kerry reported that over 500 people were on the Council's waiting list for housing and the Council had a duty to try and provide the housing that was required. He noted that there were significant dangers in not adopting the Local Plan. Having the Local Plan in place meant that the Council had more control over proposed development in the area and future applications would be considered thoroughly by the Planning Committees.

Councillor Ritchie commented that it would not be appropriate to delay the adoption of the Local Plan. He welcomed the fact that both the Conservative and Labour Groups had acknowledged that there was a housing crisis. He reported that the Council had no leeway in terms of the number of homes to be provided, due to the government's formulae that had to be used. However, the Council would be very mindful of the land being used for the developments and the environment generally. Unfortunately, there

was insufficient brownfield land on which to build additional housing, therefore some agricultural land would need to be used. Councillor Ritchie mentioned that many people were focussing upon planting more trees and while this was a positive step, some trees were being planted on agricultural land too, which added additional pressure to the amount of agricultural land available. He felt that there needed to be a balance between food production and housing and the Council would take great care in that respect. It was noted that there had been a 3 year detailed consultation process with all interested parties, including Natural England, regarding the Local Plan and the Council would have a difficult future if it did not adopt the Local Plan, as it would be harder to reject planning applications.

Mrs Slater, the Monitoring Officer, sought clarification from Councillor Deacon regarding his earlier request for a recorded vote. Councillor Deacon stated that following the earlier discussions, he wished to withdraw his request for a recorded vote.

Upon being put to the electronic vote, it was

RESOLVED

1. That the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, as contained in Appendix C, be adopted.
2. That the Policies Map be updated to reflect the adopted Local Plan.
3. That necessary adoption statements be published, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 2012 and the Statement of Community Involvement, where possible.
4. That the Temporary Suspension of Parts of the Statement of Community Involvement for Planning Policy Purposes – Adoption of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, as contained in Appendix D, be approved.

14 Treasury Management Outturn 2019/20 and Mid Year Report 2020/21

The Council received report **ES/0489** from 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 Full Council.

The report reviewed the performance of the treasury management function of East Suffolk Council, for the financial year 2019/20 and then considered the first half of the year (2020/21).

The 2019/20 Summary was as follows:

- Investments totalled £109.68m as at 31st March 2020, which was made up of £84m of short-term investments, £18.68m of long-term investments and £7m of liquidity investments.
- Interest received during the year totalled £1.46m which exceeded the planned

budget of £750k.

- Borrowing totalled £77.41m as at 31st March 2020 of which £71.17m related to the Housing Revenue Account and £6.24m related to the General Fund.

The 2020/21 Summary to date was as follows:

- Investments totalled £160.28m as at 31st August 2020, which was made up of £68.6m of short-term investments, £24.86m of long-term investments and £68m of liquidity investments.
- Interest received to 31st August 2019 totalled £330k.
- The Council received £101.5m of Covid-19 grant money from MHCLG in April 2020 for distribution to eligible employers.

In conclusion, Councillor Cook reported that he was satisfied that the Council had operated its Treasury Management function within the prescribed Treasury Management Policy and Prudential Indicators for 2019/20 and for the first half of 2020/21. He then invited any questions on the report.

Councillor Topping queried the £101.5m of Covid-19 grant money the Council had received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for distribution in April 2020. She noted that £65.7m of that grant money had been distributed and queried why the rest of the money could not be distributed? Councillor Cook reported that the Covid-19 grant scheme had closed on 28 August 2020 and the Council was now required to undertake a reconciliation of the grant money. He reported that the situation regarding Covid-19 was changing on a regular basis however, the current situation was that the unspent grant money would be returned to the government. Should the situation with Covid-19 change significantly again, the Council would seek advice from government and would do whatever was necessary.

Councillor Blundell queried how the Council was ensuring its investments were not negatively affected by a drop in market value due to Covid-19? Councillor Cook reported that all investments were made in line with the Council's own policies and guidelines. He stated that the Council had a good spread of investments, so that it was not over-exposed in one financial area. The security of the Council's investments was the highest priority when investing and it was acknowledged that interest rates might change over the coming months, however at this stage, it was too early to predict exactly what would happen in the coming months.

Councillor Byatt thanked Councillor Cook for his thorough and detailed report. He queried whether the Council's investments were ethical, as he felt that the Council should take great care regarding the areas in which it invested. He sought assurance that the Council was not investing in the tobacco or pharmaceutical industries, as he felt that there would be ethical concerns in that respect. Councillor Cook reported that a respected financial company was investing the Council's money on its behalf and they worked hard to ensure that the Council received the best return available. A full list of the Council's investments was not currently available at this time, however Councillor Cook would look into this matter further, in due course, once further detailed information was received.

Councillor Byatt then asked if the Council would consider investing in local green

electricity generation projects, as this had been done in other areas and had proved to be popular. Councillor Cook reported that he had spoken to Councillor Mallinder, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for the Environment, about this matter and further discussions would be taking place in due course.

Councillor Gooch sought reassurance that the Council would be able to monitor the investments that the Council made, to ensure that they were all ethical. Councillor Cook reported that this would be raised with ArlingClose, who invested on behalf of the Council, and he would see what could be done.

There being no further questions, Councillor Cook then moved the recommendations contained within the report and this was seconded by Councillor Lynch.

Councillor Lynch, Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, took the opportunity to state that this report had also been considered by the Committee the previous evening. The Committee had scrutinised the Council's finances and investments and he commented that the security of the Council's investments was of paramount importance. He felt reassured that there was a broad spread of investments made by the Council. Councillor Lynch had been very impressed that the amount of interest received during 2019/20 had been almost double the amount estimated, which was very pleasing and a testament to the hard work of ArlingClose and their investments. He reported that Covid-19 would undoubtedly have an effect on finances and interest rates were likely to be very low for some time, however the Council was in a strong position and had its finances in order.

There being no further questions or debate, it was then put to the electronic vote and it was

RESOLVED

1. That the Annual Report on the Council's Treasury Management activity for 2019/20 incorporating the Mid-Year review for 2020/21 be noted.
2. That the Prudential Indicators Outturn position for 2019/20 in Appendix A be noted.
3. That the revised Counterparty limits for 2020/21 in Appendix B be approved.

15 Temporary Appointments to Parish Councils

The Council received report **ES/0490** from the Leader of the Council. He reported that Section 85 (s85) of the Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 1972) provided that Councillors automatically vacated their office if they failed to attend meetings of the Council for six consecutive months, unless their absence was excused by way of a report to Council, before the six months' time limit was reached. If the absence was not excused, then, s85 applied automatically, and the Councillor ceased to be a member of the Council as soon as the deadline was reached. The Council had to declare that the vacancy had arisen and it could then be advertised as a casual vacancy, in the usual way.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ensuing lockdown, which began on 23 March 2020, Local Authorities were not able to meet in person. Therefore, the Government made Regulations which allowed Councils to meet remotely. The Regulation 5 provided that being at remote meetings counted as “attendance” for the purposes of the six months’ rule. Confirmation was provided that no changes were made to s85 of the LGA 1972, to say that the six months’ rule did not apply during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Leader reported that Knodishall Parish Council (KPC) had advised that they had not held any meetings, remotely or face to face, since 18 February 2020. KPC were unable to arrange remote meetings, mainly because several of their Councillors were not email/internet users. Therefore, the members of KPC vacated office after 18 August 2020, due to their absence from meetings.

Members noted that Sutton Parish Council (SPC) had also advised that they had not held any meetings, remotely or face to face, since 15 January 2020. Due to poor broadband connections and Members not having the necessary IT equipment, it was not possible for SPC to have remote meetings. Therefore, the members of SPC vacated their office due to their absence from meetings after 15 July 2020. Clarification was provided that there was an error in paragraph 2.2 of the report and it was confirmed that SPC vacated their office after 15 July 2020, not August 2020 as stated within the report.

The Leader reported there were “so many vacancies in the office of parish or community councillor that the parish or community councils were unable to act”, then, under s91 of the LGA 1972, “the district council may by order appoint persons to fill all or any of the vacancies until other councillors are elected and take up office”. Any order made under s91 LGA 1972 must be copied to the Secretary of State. Therefore, there was a need for East Suffolk Council to make temporary appointments under s91 of the LGA 1972, so that Knodishall Parish Council and Sutton Parish Council were quorate and could transact business.

The Leader then took the opportunity to propose an additional recommendation, as it might be possible that other Parish Councils would find themselves in a similar position and need temporary appointments to be made. He stated that it would be useful for the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, to be given delegated authority to make the necessary orders under s91 of the LGA 1972 and s39(4) of the Representation of the People Act, to allow for temporary appointments to be made. This would save having to wait for a future Council meeting to approve the making of these orders.

Councillor Cook commented that he supported the new fifth recommendation, as he was aware of a further Parish Council that had not met for some time, which might need temporary appointments in due course.

There being no questions or debate, an electronic vote was undertaken and it was

RESOLVED

1. That the making of an Order under s91 of the Local Government Act 1972 to

appoint temporarily the following persons to Knodishall Parish Council, namely, Nigel Black, Elizabeth Hayward, Jason Mayhew, John Read, Malcolm Smith, John Staff and Anthony Wigg be approved.

2. That the making of an Order under s91 of the Local Government Act 1972 to appoint temporarily the following persons to Sutton Parish Council, namely, Nigel Albertini, Susan Collins, Jacki Schafer and Alan McManus be approved.

3. That the subsequent making of an Order under s39(4) of the Representation of the People Act 1883 in respect of Knodishall Parish Council, calling for an election to be held as soon as possible, which is likely to be on 6 May 2021 be approved.

4. That the subsequent making of an Order under s39(4) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 in respect of Sutton Parish Council, calling for an election to be held as soon as possible, which is likely to be on 6 May 2021 be approved.

5. That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, acting in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and the Leader of the Council, be given Delegated Authority to make the necessary orders under s91 of the Local Government Act 1972 and s39(4) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, should it transpire that other Town or Parish Councils find that they have so many vacancies that they are unable to act, and need to appoint persons temporarily until others are elected to serve.

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

The Leader of the Council presented report **ES/0363**, which provided individual Cabinet Members' reports, as well as reports by Outside Bodies' representatives. The Leader stated that the written reports would be taken as read and he invited questions on their contents.

Councillor Byatt sought clarification regarding St Peters Court. He was pleased to note that the cladding to the outside of the building was going to be replaced, however he was concerned that the upcoming replacement meant that the cladding was unsafe and that residents were in danger. Councillor Kerry, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Housing, reported that the cladding was not dangerous and he provided reassurance that residents were not at risk. He reported that work was underway to replace the windows, however during their replacement, it was noted that the joins between the cladding and the windows was not satisfactory. Therefore, as the scaffolding was already in place to replace the windows, it had been decided that the cladding would be replaced at the same time, which would save money overall and would provide better conditions for tenants.

The Leader took the opportunity to move the recommendation contained within the report and this was seconded by Councillor Rivett.

Councillor Topping offered her congratulations to Councillor Kerry and the Housing Team for accommodating 38 rough sleepers in 48 hours at the beginning of lockdown in March. She was also pleased to note that 31 of those rough sleepers had been found long term accommodation and work was continuing with the remaining 7 rough

sleepers to find suitable accommodation for them. Councillor Topping felt that this was an excellent achievement and that the Council should be proud. Councillor Kerry thanked Councillor Topping for her comments and he reported that he would pass her comments on to the Housing Team. He reported that the 38 rough sleepers had been put into void properties, which was preferable to using Bed and Breakfast accommodation. He was very pleased that long term accommodation had been found for the majority of the rough sleepers, however a small minority preferred to be homeless and, however difficult that may be to accept, their wishes would be respected. Reassurance was provided that those people who preferred to remain homeless would still retain their case worker and the Council would stay in touch with them, to check on their wellbeing and would offer further help as the winter months approached.

Councillor Patience also took the opportunity to thank Councillor Kerry and his Housing Team for all of their hard work. He reported that he had been involved with the ongoing works at St Peters Court and the residents for many years and he stated that he could not fault the work undertaken by the former Waveney District Council or the current East Suffolk Council. The building was safe and residents were very happy and content to live there.

Councillor Byatt stated that he agreed with everything that Councillor Patience had said and he had a very good relationship with the residents of St Peters Court. Councillor Byatt asked if Councillor Cloke, who was the Council's representative on the Health Scrutiny Committee, would continue to raise the need for mental health services for the residents of the District, many of whom were struggling with several issues, which were being made much worse by the various impacts of Covid-19.

There being no further questions or date, an electronic vote was undertaken and it was

RESOLVED

That the report be received.

N.B. Mrs Slater, Monitoring Officer, at this point in proceedings, took the opportunity to explain that there had been a minor administrative error in relation to the tally of votes for Item 4 - Notice of Motion. Clarification was provided that the original vote was counted as 46 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions. The correct information should have been 44 for, 0 against and 1 abstention. She apologised for any confusion caused by this earlier error.

Reconvened Annual Council Meeting

N.B. The Annual Council meeting was reconvened at 8.53pm, after the main Full Council meeting had been concluded. Members then continued with the debate on the Appointments to Working Groups item.

The Chairman reported that Members were now asked to vote upon the recommendations contained within the report. Following a query from Councillor Topping, Mrs Slater clarified that if there were further queries regarding the recommendations within the report, they needed to be addressed prior to taking a vote. Mrs Slater asked if there was a counter proposal or amendments to those recommendations within the report?

Councillor Elliott confirmed that he wished to hand over the position of GLI Group Leader to Councillor Topping, at this point in the meeting.

Councillor Topping then stated that the GLI could like to propose Councillor Smith-Lyte to join the Housing Benefits and Tenant Services Consultation Group and replace the Labour representative on that Group. Mr Baker clarified the proposed amendment and this was duly seconded by Councillor Beavan.

Councillor Byatt reported that Councillor Patience was the Labour Group Member and in whom he had complete confidence, as he was very knowledgeable about housing matters. Councillor Kerry, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing, reported that Councillor Patience had been a Member of the Housing Benefits and Tenant Services Consultation Group for many years and he brought with him a wealth of knowledge and experience. He had unrivalled knowledge, particularly of housing matters involving the previous Waveney District Council, and he would not want to lose Councillor Patience from this Group.

Mr Baker, in response to some concerns raised, then provided some clarification regarding the three hour rule and reassured Members that, as the Annual Meeting had been adjourned and reconvened, the clock had been set back to zero and a vote on continuing past 3 hours would not now need to take place.

There being no further debate, an electronic vote took place for Councillor Topping's amendment that Councillor Smith-Lyte replace Councillor Patience on the Housing Benefits and Tenant Services Consultation Group. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was **LOST**.

The Chairman advised that the amendment had fallen and Members were asked to consider the original recommendations, as contained within the report.

An electronic vote was then undertaken for the recommendations contained within the report. Upon being put to the electronic vote it was

RESOLVED

1. That the membership of Working Groups for the 2020/21 Municipal Year, as nominated by the Political Group Leaders and detailed at Appendix A, be appointed.
2. That the Leader be granted Delegated Authority to make any necessary changes to the membership of the Working Groups for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year, in consultation with the other Group Leaders.

The Chairman then thanked everyone for their patience and participation at these two meetings.

The meeting concluded at 9.07pm

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Chairman