

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Full Council** held in the Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, on **Wednesday, 23 March 2022 at 6:30 PM**

Members present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Edward Back, Councillor Stuart Bird, Councillor Chris Blundell, Councillor Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw, Councillor Norman Brooks, Councillor Stephen Burroughes, Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Maurice Cook, Councillor Tony Cooper, Councillor Linda Coulam, Councillor Janet Craig, Councillor Mike Deacon, Councillor John Fisher, Councillor Lydia Freeman, Councillor Tony Fryatt, Councillor Steve Gallant, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Louise Gooch, Councillor Tracey Green, Councillor Colin Hedgley, Councillor Stuart Lawson, Councillor Geoff Lynch, Councillor James Mallinder, Councillor Debbie McCallum, Councillor Keith Patience, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Sarah Plummer, Councillor Carol Poulter, Councillor David Ritchie, Councillor Craig Rivett, Councillor Keith Robinson, Councillor Mary Rudd, Councillor Letitia Smith, Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte, Councillor Ed Thompson, Councillor Caroline Topping, Councillor Kay Yule

Officers present: Stephen Baker (Chief Executive), Chris Bing (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Andy Jarvis (Strategic Director), Sue Meeken (Political Group Support Officer (Labour)), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Alli Stone (Democratic Services Officer), Karla Supple (Senior Communications and Marketing Officer), Nicola Wotton (Deputy Democratic Services Manager)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors D Beavan, A Cackett, J Ceresa, J Cloke, T Daly, T Gandy, T Goldson, M Jepson, R Kerry, F Mortimer, T Mortimer, M Newton, R Rainger, M Richardson and S Wiles.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3 Announcements

Announcements

Ukraine

Chairman of the Council

The Chairman of the Council reported that he wished to make a statement regarding the situation in Ukraine. He would then invite the 3 Group Leaders to say a few words, in respect of his statement.

The Chairman stated that East Suffolk Council utterly condemned Vladimir Putin's senseless and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine. The mass casualties caused to the civilian population and the ever-increasing humanitarian crisis was at odds with any civilized behaviour and the way the Ukrainian people were fighting this unwarranted aggression could only be admired. It was also recognised that the actions of Putin did not reflect the position of Russian individuals living in East Suffolk.

The Chairman stated that this Council was ready, along with other District Councils and the County Council, the voluntary sector, the Suffolk Resilience Forum, Suffolk Refugee Support and the Suffolk MPs, to provide support to refugees in East Suffolk, in any way the government requested, that was within the power of the Council. He advised that anyone who wished to help with money or items, should donate to an accredited organisation, for example the International Red Cross, The UN Refugee Agency or the Disasters Emergency Appeal Fund.

The Chairman then invited the Group Leaders to speak.

Leader of the Council

The Leader reported that he spoke on behalf of the Conservative Group and he whole heartedly and unreservedly supported the content and sentiment of the Chairman's statement. The residents of East Suffolk were fortunate to live in a safe and secure part of a free and democratic nation. The images and stories that had been shared on the media channels reminded everyone of how lucky we were to enjoy such freedoms. Many people were keen to offer whatever aid and support they could, to try to minimise the levels of harm and suffering of the people of Ukraine.

East Suffolk Council had always prided itself in seeking to provide practical support, rather than just consolatory words. It was important to look at all opportunities to fully engage and support the governments ambitions, in respect of the refugee sponsorship. At this time, over 150,000 offers of sponsorship had been recorded on the GOV.Uk website. The logistics of delivering this were currently being worked through, at speed. The Leader commented that we also needed to ensure that those residents who identified as either Ukrainian or Russian, were fully supported through this crisis. The latest census information recorded 40 residents who identified as Ukrainian and 80 who identified as Russian.

The Leader reported that it was very likely that a number of refugees would come to East Suffolk and those individuals and families may have extreme and complex needs, as a result of what they had been through. Many would have family and friends still in direct danger. It was important to offer all the practical support that this Council and the residents of East Suffolk could give.

The Leader then announced the creation of a new Assistant Cabinet Member position, with responsibility for Refugee Support. This new role would report directly to the

Leader and would seek to pull together the various areas of the other Cabinet Portfolios which were likely to be impacted upon, namely Communities, Health and Housing. The new post holder would become the 'go to' person who would maintain an up-to-date overview of the response required and be a single point of contact for Members with questions.

The Leader stated that he was very pleased to report that Councillor Judy Cloke had been offered and duly accepted this role. Councillor Cloke had a proven track record in delivering for her local community and she had a wealth of experience in working with civil servants, across a number of complex and challenging areas. Although she could not be present this evening, Councillor Cloke was ready and willing to do all she could to support the refugee process and aid community cohesion. Her new post would take effect from the 1 April 2022.

Councillor Topping, Leader of the GLI Group

Councillor Topping reported that she was very pleased and was supportive of Councillor Cloke's appointment as the new Assistant Cabinet Member for Refugee Support.

Councillor Topping stated that it was difficult for people to express what they felt about Ukraine, as it was so inconsequential when compared to the enormity of what was happening to the Ukrainian people on a daily basis. She stated that there were some Ukrainian people who lived in her Ward and one of them had travelled to Poland to collect some family members who had travelled there to safety. They had found it extremely difficult to get the required visas for their family members to travel to the UK and she was very concerned about this and queried how people would manage to get to the UK if they had no family living there.

Councillor Topping had also met a Ukrainian lady, who lived in Beccles, who had been moved to tears when she had seen the Ukrainian flag flying from the bell tower and she had stopped and taken a photo of the flag, using her mobile phone. She had then sent the photo to her Ukrainian father and her family in Ukraine to show the support being shown in Beccles.

Councillor Topping then took the opportunity to thank everyone who had done something, no matter how small, in support of Ukraine.

Councillor Byatt, Leader of the Labour Group

Councillor Byatt congratulated Councillor Cloke on her appointment and he stated that he supported having a single point of contact for the Council to deal with refugee support.

Councillor Byatt reported that this was a time for unity, of all fair-minded people, to say to Putin and those who supported him, that his invasion of Ukraine was grossly unacceptable and that the lies being told to try to justify his actions were unfounded. He stated that there was no excuse for the invasion and occupation of Ukraine, and he condemned those who contrived to justify Putin's cowardly and unjustified attack on a sovereign country.

Councillor Byatt stated that, as with the Covid pandemic, the Labour Group committed itself to supporting any actions taken by East Suffolk Council, other tiers of Council, statutory bodies and the many voluntary organisations across East Suffolk, in support of refugees from Ukraine. The Labour Group would also engage with any initiatives in their wards.

The Chairman thanked the Group Leaders and then advised that he would continue with the usual announcements.

The Chairman of the Council:

The Chairman reported that he had attended the Treebilee Ceremony at Woods Meadow, Oulton, Lowestoft on Tuesday 15 March 2022.

The Leader of the Council:

Sentinel Leisure Trust

The Leader took the opportunity to make a statement regarding the news that Sentinel Leisure Trust (SLT) had ceased trading. He reported that the Council was saddened and disappointed that SLT had taken the decision to cease trading and our thoughts were with all those who had been affected as a result.

SLT had previously managed leisure facilities on behalf of East Suffolk Council, until the decision was taken in October 2019, which was prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, to review and seek applications for the future management of the council's leisure services in the north of the district. This was undertaken, as per the agreed terms of the contract, to ensure the council had secured the best possible value for money, and quality of service, for local taxpayers and communities.

SLT had been entitled to bid, however, they had chosen not to. Everyone Active were appointed to manage the council's facilities and staff had transferred their employment, by TUPE regulations, to the new provider.

In October 2021, SLT also confirmed it would no longer be operating Bradwell's Phoenix Pool and Gym, nor the Marina Centre in the Great Yarmouth Borough, after again deciding not to bid for the new operational contract to run these sites.

Following their decision to cease trading, representatives of SLT chose to speak with the media, to present their views in relation to financial settlements with the two councils. The Leader commented that these were not matters which he believed should be debated in the press. However, he confirmed that discussions with SLT were ongoing. The council did not believe that SLT were owed the amount of money that they were seeking and, as protectors of the public purse, the council simply could not pay out money that it did not believe to be due.

Additionally, SLT's representatives were aware, as part of these discussions, that the council would be pursuing recompense for money which the council considered to be owed, by SLT, to the council.

This matter had not been resolved prior to the SLT's announcement, however, a 'without prejudice' meeting was being arranged, to include the recently-appointed insolvency practitioner. It was now hoped that these discussions would bring this matter to a conclusion.

Finally, the Leader repeated his thoughts and sympathy for those who had lost their jobs, as a result of SLT's decision to close. It was noted that this was clearly a worrying time for them, and he confirmed, that where vacancies arose within facilities managed by the council's providers, applications from former SLT staff would be welcomed.

Citizens Advice Outside Body

The Leader stated that this council appointed to a number of Outside Bodies each year and Members then provided reports to Full Council on a regular basis. There were currently 3 separate Citizens Advice organisations, which covered the East Suffolk District. They were:

Citizens Advice: Leiston, Saxmundham and District – supported by Councillor Tony Cooper

Citizens Advice: Felixstowe and District – supported by Councillor Mark Jepson

Citizens Advice: North East Suffolk – also supported by Councillor Tony Cooper

The Leader reported that he had been advised that, from 31 March 2022, all 3 Citizens Advice organisations would merge into one organisation for the whole of East Suffolk. Therefore, he needed to appoint 1 Councillor to support the new Citizens Advice for East Suffolk. Using his Delegated Authority and following discussions with the affected Councillors, Councillor Tony Cooper had been appointed to this Outside Body for the remainder of the 2021/22 municipal year.

PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee Outside Body

The Leader reported that he had been advised of a new Outside Body that needed to be appointed to, which was the PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee Outside Body.

As this Outside Body related to transport matters, the Leader reported that he had appointed Councillor Norman Brooks, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport, with immediate effect, using his Delegated Authority for the remainder of the 2021/22 municipal year.

Community Governance Review Working Group

The Leader reported that Members would be aware that this council was carrying out a Community Governance Review (CGR) and, as such, he needed to appoint to a Community Governance Review Working Group.

The working group would consist of 5 Members and it would be politically balanced. Therefore, there would be 3 Conservatives, which included the Leader, 1 GLI

Member and 1 Labour Member. A named substitute for each political group was also required.

Following discussions with the Group Leaders, the following appointments had been agreed:

Conservatives: Councillor Gallant (Leader), Councillor Cooper and Councillor Fryatt. The named substitute was Councillor Blundell.

GLI: Councillor Fisher. The named substitute was Councillor Beavan.

Labour: Councillor Byatt. The named substitute was Councillor Deacon.

It was confirmed that these appointments would take place with immediate effect and meetings of the Community Governance Review Working Group would be convened shortly.

The Deputy Leader of the Council:

There was no update on this occasion.

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Cook, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources

Hardship Fund Campaigns

Councillor Cook reported that during February 2022, Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) had run two targeted take up campaigns to help spend the remaining Council Tax Hardship pot from 2020/21, which had been carried forward into this year as an exceptional hardship fund.

The campaigns had targeted:

- * those who have already demonstrated hardship this year by claiming Discretionary Hardship Payments or Exceptional Hardship payments, and who had Council Tax arrears in this financial year, and
- * those who had fallen into arrears with their Council Tax this financial year but had no historic arrears (so showed signs of having additional financial pressure this year).

On 27 February 2022 there was just over £122,000 of the fund remaining and by running these two campaigns and introducing a very quick claim process, the ARP had now awarded a total of nearly £111,000, which had provided much needed financial support to 374 households.

Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) Business Rate Reliefs

Councillor Cook reported that invitations to apply for this relief had been issued this week. The issue of subsidy control for a major ratepayer had been resolved, which meant that the council should be able to provide a greater degree of support than originally envisaged, to over 2,000 businesses from its allocation of government

funding of over £7.9 million.

Council Tax Energy Rebates

Councillor Cook advised that the Council Tax Rebate scheme announced by the government would mean that most households in bands A - D would receive a £150 non-repayable rebate. Discretionary funding was also being provided to billing authorities, to support households who were in need but who were not eligible under the main scheme, or to top up main scheme payments. Any unspent funding as at 30 November 2022 would need to be repaid to government, but in the event of an overspend, no additional funding would be provided.

Main Scheme

-
- . Councils were expected to make direct payments to eligible households who pay their Council Tax by direct debit by late April/early May.
- . Where there was no direct debit instructions held for an eligible household, the Council was expected to make all reasonable efforts to contact the household as early as possible to invite them to make a claim.
- . Councils should include an option for residents who were digitally excluded in their claim process.
- . Councils could offer a direct credit to the Council Tax account, for those who request it via the claim route, or who do not make a claim within a set timescale.

Discretionary Scheme

-
- . Councils could determine locally how to make use of this funding, but it could include households in band E-H on a low income
- . Discretionary payments could exceed £150
- . The fund could also be used to top up the £150 main scheme payments for those suffering financial hardship or on a low income

Current position

- . Statutory wording and leaflets had been included with council tax bills and website had been updated.
- . Details of the main scheme were being discussed and finalised by all ARP authorities.
- . Options were being considered to make maximum use of the discretionary funds and ensure we target those most in need of the additional financial help.
- . Alternative payment methods were being looked at to help us reach the most vulnerable customers, and we were keen to make direct credits to Council Tax accounts for those who request it or who do not engage in the claim process.
- . ARP would administer the payments and provide a dedicated customer phone line for all partners and provide pre and post payment assurance checks.
- . ARP's software provider was aiming to provide functionality to administer the scheme and commence payments by late-April.

Councillor Brooks, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transport

Councillor Brooks reported that he had been appointed to Transport East. He had attended a meeting, where a bid had been submitted for £3 million of funding for transport in Suffolk. He would keep Members apprised of any developments.

Councillor Rudd, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health

Councillor Rudd updated Members on the prevalence of Avian Flu in the District, which was currently low. She advised that the Environmental Health Team were assisting Suffolk County Council colleagues, as required.

The Chief Executive of the Council:

There was no announcement on this occasion.

Councillor Byatt queried if it was possible to ask questions regarding any announcements made during this meeting? The Leader confirmed that it was not possible. However, Members could email any questions they had directly to the appropriate Councillor or officer and they would receive a response outside of the meeting.

4 Questions from the Public

No questions have been submitted by the electorate as provided by Council Procedure Rule 8.

5 Questions from Members

No questions from Members have been received as provided by Council Procedure Rule 9.

6 Petitions

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

7 Notices of Motion

Motion submitted by Councillor Topping

Ukraine

This Council notes that:

1. In addition to the UK's obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention, The Prime Minister has recently announced plans for a new scheme for Ukrainians with no ties to the UK to come here. An uncapped sponsored humanitarian visa route will allow sponsors including local authorities to provide housing and integration support for Ukrainian people.
2. The Government aims to "ensure that those who want to sponsor an individual or family can volunteer and be matched quickly with Ukrainians in need".

This Council resolves to:

1. Reaffirm and publicly state tonight our support for the Ukrainian people's struggle and resistance against a dictator.
2. Ask officers to assess how many families and individuals East Suffolk Council could undertake to sponsor.
3. Write to the Home Secretary expressing our wish to act as a sponsor and asking to be kept informed of the progress of the uncapped sponsored humanitarian visa route, so that steps can be taken to aid people seeking to come to the UK from Ukraine as soon as possible.

Councillor Topping stated that she wished to withdraw her Motion, as a result of the announcements made earlier in the meeting.

8 Adoption of Local Government Association Model Code of Conduct for Councillors

Full Council received report **ES/1099** from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Gallant, regarding the adoption of the Local Government Association Model Code of Conduct for Councillors from 1 May 2022. It was noted that the Model Code did not differ significantly in content from the Local Code already in operation in East Suffolk, although some of the language used was different. However, it did provide additional clarification and guidance to assist Members. It also included the forms and types of communication that were within its scope, which included:

- (a) at face-to-face meetings;
- (b) online or telephone meetings;
- (c) written communication;
- (d) verbal and non-verbal communication;
- (e) electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

Councillor Gallant reported that there were also new commitments to co-operate with any investigation, should a complaint be received, and to comply with any sanctions that may be imposed if a breach was proven. It was noted that these were important to protect the integrity of the process.

Councillor Gallant advised that the Audit and Governance Committee had met on 14 March 2022 to consider this new Code and any recommendations from that meeting would be reported verbally to Full Council by Councillor Lynch, Chairman of the Committee.

Members noted that currently, Suffolk County Council, the 5 district councils in Suffolk and all the Town and Parish Councils in Suffolk had adopted the existing Suffolk Code of Conduct, which was attached at Appendix A to the report. Councillors currently agreed to abide by the Suffolk Code of Conduct, upon signing their declaration of office.

It was noted that all 5 Monitoring Officers in Suffolk were now recommending that their Council adopted this new Code, so that there was a consistent approach to standards across Suffolk and so that Members who were both District and County Councillors were subject to the same Code. The Monitoring Officers would also be encouraging any Parish Councils in their area to adopt the new Code of Conduct,

however, the adoption of the new Code was ultimately a matter for each individual Parish Council in Suffolk to consider and determine.

Councillor Gallant then invited Councillor Lynch, Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, to say a few words.

Councillor Lynch reported that the Audit and Governance Committee had recommended that Full Council adopts the LGA Model Code of Conduct for Councillors. He stated that it would be much simpler for the Code to be adopted Suffolk-wide, in order that there was a consistent approach for all Councils and especially for those Councillors who were double or triple hatters. The Model Code was supported by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

Councillor Lynch commented that the old Code needed to be updated and a national review of the Code had taken place by the LGA. The sanctions included with the Code would be confirmed by law in due course and a review of the new Code would take place at the end of 2022. It was important to have a new Code that was adopted by all Town, Parish, District and County Councils in Suffolk.

The Chairman invited questions from Members.

Councillor Pitchers commented that clarity was key and the new Code provided a number of useful examples, to assist Members.

Councillor Byatt commented that the Audit and Governance Committee had discussed the matter in great detail at their meeting. The guidance for the Code was extensive, at over 100 pages, and Councillor Byatt stated that he looked forward to the Code being adopted throughout Suffolk.

There being no further questions or debate, the recommendation was moved by Councillor Gallant and it was seconded by Councillor Lynch. Upon being put to the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That the LGA Model Code of Conduct is adopted with effect from 1 May 2022.

9 Proposed Changes to the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution

Full Council received report **ES/1100** from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Gallant, regarding proposed changes to the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution. It was noted that the proposed changes were not considered by the Monitoring Officer to be “minor amendments” therefore they needed to be considered by the Audit and Governance Committee and, if endorsed, be recommended to Full Council for approval.

Members noted that the Audit and Governance Committee had met on 14 March 2022 and its recommendations would be reported verbally by Councillor Lynch.

Councillor Gallant reported that the Council must have a written Constitution which had to include its Standing Orders, Code of Conduct and such other documents as the Council considered to be appropriate (S37 of the Local Government Act 2000). A new Constitution had been drafted when East Suffolk Council was created. The Constitution was approved by the Shadow Council for East Suffolk at its meeting on Monday, 28 January 2019.

Members noted that the Constitution was regularly reviewed by the Monitoring Officer, with the assistance of the Democratic Services Team, to ensure that the Constitution remained fit for purpose and up to date. The proposed changes would address those matters which had been identified and would ensure that the Constitution reflected the Council's needs, working practices and procedures.

Councillor Gallant then invited Councillor Lynch to say a few words, as Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Councillor Lynch reported that it had been an interesting start for East Suffolk Council since it was created in 2019. Due to Covid, the council had needed to adapt quickly and meetings had taken place virtually, rather than in person. In accordance with the legislation, meetings were now taking place in person again and it was important for the Council Procedure Rules to be working well and meeting the needs of the council.

It was noted that the proposed changes included a standard form for submitting Member Questions and Motions, as well as a limit of 100 words for Member Questions and 250 words for Motions. A flow chart had been developed, which helped explain the process for debating Motions. It was anticipated that the changes would simplify the way Full Council meetings operated. However, if the proposed changes did not improve the way that the council worked, then they could be reviewed again and amended as required. As such, the Audit and Governance Committee had included an additional recommendation for Full Council: That the changes to the Constitution be reviewed in May 2023, to ensure that they were suitable.

The Chairman invited questions from Members.

Councillor Smith-Lyte stated that she welcomed the proposed changes, however, she felt that there needed to be more clarity regarding the reasons for which Motions and Questions may be rejected. She was concerned that some of the reasons were open to interpretation and pressure may be put onto officers to reject them. Councillor Gallant stated that the accusation that a Member may put pressure on an officer, to get them to reject a Motion or Question, was offensive. The Monitoring Officer was responsible for deciding if they should be rejected or not. The position of Monitoring Officer was independent and unbiased and the post holder was required to be fair and to ensure that democracy could take place.

Councillor Patience commented that while there was a proposed word limit on submitting Questions and Motions, would there also be a limit on the length of responses being provided, as some were very short and whilst others were extensive? Councillor Gallant reported that it was not the appropriate time to put forward an amendment to the recommendations. An amendment could be proposed later in the meeting, when the recommendations had been moved.

Councillor Deacon drew Members' attention to page 122, paragraph 9.4, which stated that 'No Member will be permitted to read out another Member's question.' He commented that this may be unfair, as a Member could be present at the meeting and have laryngitis and not be able to speak, which would be unfair. Councillor Gallant reported that the Audit and Governance Committee could consider this point, during their next review of the Constitution. Mr Bing, Monitoring Officer, reported that this section had been adopted from the previous council's Constitutions and it had not been challenged before. He confirmed that it could be taken forward for consideration by the Audit and Governance Committee in due course. The Chairman reported that the main issue was in relation to the Supplementary Question that the Member could ask, in relation to their original question, and he confirmed further debate on this matter was appropriate.

As there were no further questions, Councillor Gallant moved the recommendations included within the report and added in the additional recommendation from the Audit and Governance Committee regarding reviewing the changes to the Council Procedure Rules in May 2023. This was duly seconded by Councillor Lynch.

The Chairman then invited Member to debate.

Councillor Bird stated that there was a typo in the Motions Guidance and Template, in respect of the reasons that a Motion could be rejected. He stated that a Motion could not be both vague and unequivocal at the same time. Councillor Gallant thanked Councillor Bird for his observation and advised that the Monitoring Officer would be able to make a minor typographical change to this, using his Delegated Authority.

Councillor Craig raised concerns that there was currently no feedback provided to Members on the progress of Motions. She asked if there could be an update report for Full Council, to inform Members what had happened to the Motions and she then proposed an amendment to the recommendations to reflect this. Councillor Gallant reported that there already was a process in place, because if a Motion was referred to Cabinet or a Committee of the Council, an update would have to be brought to a future Full Council meeting, to inform Members on what had been decided. Councillor Craig then took the opportunity to withdraw her proposed amendment.

Councillor Byatt advised that he had attended the Audit and Governance Committee meeting, where this report had been debated. He stated that he was concerned that some Motions which had been submitted, had been referred to Cabinet or a Committee of the Council because there was insufficient information for Members to debate the Motion at Full Council. Other Motions had also been referred to Cabinet or a Committee of the Council as they had been too long and detailed. He stated it was very difficult to include the correct amount of information, as per page 133, step 2 of the Motions process.

As a result of this difficulty, Councillor Byatt suggested that a Member could include further information, in the form of background information or an appendix, to accompany the Motion, and this information would be published as part of the agenda papers for the meeting. He stated that when he had raised this previously, he had

been told it was not possible, as the information contained within the accompanying information would need to be fact checked by officers, prior to publication. He took the opportunity to challenge this, as the Political Group Assistants, who supported each political group, were employees of the council, therefore the information contained within the accompanying information would have been checked by an officer. Councillor Byatt stated that including the additional information would enable more Motions to be discussed by Full Council, as Members would be sufficiently informed to take part in the discussions.

Councillor Byatt therefore proposed an additional recommendation that when Motions were submitted, a supplementary document could also be included as an appendix or background document, to inform Members of the background or of additional detail, to allow a debate at Full Council. This was duly seconded by Councillor Deacon.

Councillor Gallant reported that while he had some sympathy with Councillor Byatt, he asked if Councillor Byatt would be content to receive a report from the Conservative Political Group Assistant, which she had fact checked but not shared with anyone else? Councillor Gallant did not believe that Councillor Byatt would accept that, because the report could be too political.

Councillor Gallant reported that he had been reviewing the Motions submitted by other district councils and those in other tiers of local government. He felt that many Motions that had been considered by other councils were more like statements, they were not asking to the council to take any form of action.

Councillor Gallant confirmed that all Members were able to submit a Motion, if they so wished. However, he encouraged Members to contact Cabinet Members or officers with any ideas or queries they may have, outside of Full Council. He supported Motions or queries being sent to other appropriate groups, rather than just to Full Council. For example, Members could contact the Environment Task Group, as they had the time, experience and expertise to deal with queries regarding the environment. Councillor Gallant commented that he would not be able to support the amendment, as proposed by Councillor Byatt, this evening.

Councillor Lynch reported that the Council would try out the proposed changes to the Council Procedure Rules, to see how they worked and they would then be reviewed in May 2023. He was content to add this to the work programme for the Audit and Governance Committee and they would then consider if further changes were needed. He stated that Democracy was very important, however, it was important to make small changes over time, rather than multiple significant changes, to the Constitution.

Councillor Gooch raised a query regarding paragraph 14.1 and previous Motions. Councillor Gallant raised a point of order at this time and it was confirmed that the meeting was currently in debate, not questions.

Councillor Byatt reported that he was content to withdraw his proposed amendment, if he could be assured that the Audit and Governance Committee would consider the changes to the Council Procedure Rules at their meeting in May 2023 and this assurance was duly provided. Upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED

1. That Full Council instructs the Monitoring Officer to amend the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution:
 - a. To require members to submit their questions to Democratic Services on the Question template form and to limit member's written questions to no more than 100 words.
 - b. To require members to submit their motions to Democratic Services on the Motions template form and to limit member's written motions to no more than 250 words.
 - c. To incorporate Appendices B, C, D and E of this report into East Suffolk Council's Constitution.
2. That Full Council instructs the Monitoring Officer to convene a meeting of the Chairman and the group leaders to discuss, and seek to agree, the venue for each submitted motion for Council after the deadline for motions to be submitted for Full Council has passed and before the date of the meeting of Full Council, pursuant to CPR 11.4.
3. That Full Council instructs the Monitoring Officer to incorporate the motions and report flowcharts (Appendices C and D) into the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.
4. That Full Council instructs the Monitoring Officer to amend the Council Procedure Rules to require members to read their questions and motions out aloud at Full Council.
5. That Full Council instructs the Monitoring Officer to amend paragraph 11 of the Committee Procedure Rules to require that at least half the members of a committee present need to request a recorded vote for there to be a recorded vote.
6. That the changes to the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution be reviewed in May 2023 by the Audit and Governance Committee.

10 Cabinet Members' Report and Outside Bodies Representatives' Reports to Council

Full Council received report **ES/1098** of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Gallant, which contained updates from Cabinet Members on their areas of responsibility, as well as updates from those Members appointed to represent the Council on Outside Bodies. Councillor Gallant stated that the written reports would be taken as read and he invited relevant questions on their contents.

Councillor Deacon asked Councillor Rivett, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, for further information on the East Suffolk Click It Local scheme. He asked if there had been increased buy in, how many businesses were involved and how many were interested in the scheme? Councillor Rivett reported that Click It Local was an ethical alternative to Amazon, which enabled shoppers to buy from any independent shop from the local high street or local business, all in one place, with one payment and their purchases would be delivered straight to their door. The scheme had been launched in December 2021 and as of February 2022, there were 35 live stores, plus an additional 23 stores signed up and waiting to go live. At that time, there had been a total of 433 orders, with total revenue of £8,304 generated for local businesses. Since then, it had become apparent that the scheme was not sustainable in the longer term and as a result it had been temporarily paused. It was hoped that the scheme would continue again in the near future and Councillor Rivett stated he

would provide Councillor Deacon with further information outside of the meeting.

Councillor Byatt asked about the Renaissance of the East Anglian Fisheries (REAF) and he queried who was the East Suffolk Council representative who sat on that external body? Councillor Rivett reported that he was the Council's representative and the initiative had been created by the former Waveney District Council. The group was meeting regularly, was seeking additional funding after Brexit and covered the coastline from Kings Lynn to Felixstowe. Councillor Byatt commented that he welcomed the work of REAF and that they were adding great value to the local area.

Councillor Craig asked Councillor Back about his update on the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee, in particular, page 146, paragraphs b and c. She asked how they planned to raise awareness of the different qualified professionals involved in providing health services and how they could assist with the medical issues experienced by the public. Councillor Back asked Councillor Craig to email him with her detailed questions and he would respond outside of the meeting.

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

There are no Exempt or Confidential items for this Agenda.

The meeting concluded at 7.46 pm.

.....
Chairman