

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Full Council** held in the Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, on **Wednesday, 27 September 2023 at 6.30 pm**

Members present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor Paul Ashton, Councillor Edward Back, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Seamus Bennett, Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Jan Candy, Councillor Jenny Ceresa, Councillor Dan Clery, Councillor Janet Craig, Councillor Tom Daly, Councillor Mike Deacon, Councillor Julia Ewart, Councillor John Fisher, Councillor Tess Gandy, Councillor Andree Gee, Councillor Louise Gooch, Councillor Katie Graham, Councillor Alan Green, Councillor Owen Grey, Councillor Toby Hammond, Councillor Colin Hedgley, Councillor Mark Jepson, Councillor Beth Keys-Holloway, Councillor George King, Councillor Vince Langdon-Morris, Councillor Stuart Lawson, Councillor Geoff Lynch, Councillor James Mallinder, Councillor Stephen Molyneux, Councillor Mike Ninnmey, Councillor Sally Noble, Councillor Mark Packard, Councillor Keith Patience, Councillor Malcolm Pitchers, Councillor Sarah Plummer, Councillor Lee Reeves, Councillor Craig Rivett, Councillor Sheryl Rumble, Councillor Myles Scrancher, Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte, Councillor Rosie Smithson, Councillor Anthony Specca, Councillor Jamie Starling, Councillor Ed Thompson, Councillor Caroline Topping, Councillor Geoff Wakeling, Councillor Sarah Whitelock, Councillor Tim Wilson, Councillor Kay Yule

Officers present: Chris Bally (Chief Executive), Chris Bing (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Kate Blakemore (Strategic Director), Lorraine Fitch (Democratic Services Officer), Naomi Goold (Energy Projects Manager), Phil Harris (Strategic Communications and Marketing Manager), Richard Jacobs (Port Health Manager), Andy Jarvis (Strategic Director), Nick Khan (Strategic Director), Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer), Sue Meeken (Political Group Support Officer (Labour)), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Bethany Rance (Senior Planner - Energy Projects), Philip Ridley (Head of Planning and Coastal Management), Isabel Rolfe (Political Group Support Officer (GLI)).

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dean, Folley, Parker and Robinson

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

3 Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2023 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Announcements

Chair of the Council

The Chair stated that he had attended several civic events on behalf of East Suffolk including:

7 September, the Production of Call Me John in Bungay, performed by Reflex Theatre

7 September, the Tour of Britain Stage 5, Start and Finish – in the VIP Viewing Area at Felixstowe

9 September, the Mid-Suffolk District Council Chairman's Charity Summer BBQ held at Alder Call Farm.

17 September, the RAFA Battle of Britain Parade & Service at St Michaels Church, Beccles

24 September, the Mayor of Beccles Civic Service at St Michaels Church, Beccles

Vice Chair of the Council

Councillor Fisher attended 4 events since the last Full Council meeting:

28 July, the 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment - Freedom of Woodbridge Parade and Lunch

18 August, he attended the Mayor of Ipswich Charity Evening Aboard the Sail Barge Victor

19 August, the Open Day at the Alice Grange Care Home in Kesgrave where he opened a new building extension and was asked to cut the ribbon

15 September he attended the Battle of Britain Commemoration at County Hall, Norwich

Leader of the Council

Councillor Topping advised that she had made a number of appointments, using her delegated authority as Leader of the Council and they were as follows:

With effect from the end of this meeting, Councillor Jan Candy will be the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health. There will be no Assistant Cabinet Member at present.

Also with effect from the end of this meeting, Councillor Sarah Whitelock will be the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism. Councillor Katie Graham will be the Assistant Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism.

Councillor Daly, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Energy, will no longer have an Assistant Cabinet Member to support him. However, both Councillors Sarah Whitelock and Katie Graham will provide additional support to Councillor Daly, as necessary.

Councillor Topping advised she has appointed Councillor Molyneux to the Love Woodbridge and Melton Board with affect from 29th August 2023.

Cabinet Members

Councillor Ashton and Councillor Craig visited the Ravine Bridge in Lowestoft. The bridge was currently under cover however there was lots of work taking place. There were some challenges in preserving the original structure.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) – Cabinet had been updated that on investigation there have not been any identified premises effected and it was anticipated this will remain the case. Inspections were continuing to ensure due diligence was carried out in respect of RAAC.

At the previous Full Council meeting, Councillor Rivett had posed a question regarding commercial activity in respect of Wind Farms. Councillor Ashton reported back on this to state there was a fifth round of renewable auctions and no bids for offshore wind were received. Councillor Ashton expressed disappointment about this. There were great facilities for training people in the maintenance of wind farms and other marine based activities in the district. There was a great plan for the power park and which was a sound strategy which provided what was needed for Lowestoft.

Chief Executive

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

The Chair referenced the recent sad passing of a former Waveney District Councillor, Mike Barnard. Councillor Craig Rivett, Leader of the Conservative Group, paid tribute to Mike Barnard and his hard work for the Conservative Group.

5 Questions from the Public

The following questions were submitted by the public in pursuance of Council Procedure Rule 8:

a) Question from Joan Girling to Councillor Caroline Topping, Leader of the Council

In the light of the recent policy consideration by Central Government that on shore Wind turbines may win support and possibly gain Planning Permission. Would East Suffolk Council look favourably on a proposal for a Community Wind Project such as the Bristol Community Energy Scheme?

Response from Councillor Caroline Topping, Leader of the Council

In principle yes, however in current planning terms any applications for onshore wind would be considered against the policies contained within East Suffolk Council's Local Plans. Both Local Plans have policies (SCLP9.1 and WLP8.27) which support Neighbourhood Plans in identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy development, particularly where they relate to developments that are community-led.

The NPPF sets out that Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.

Except for applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing wind turbines, a planning application for wind energy development involving one or more turbines should not be considered acceptable unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in the development plan or a supplementary planning document; and, following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been appropriately addressed and the proposal has community support.

b) Question from Jenny Kirtley to Councillor Caroline Topping, Leader of the Council

In view of the duty of care that the CROW Act 2000 places on the Council to conserve and enhance the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and the power that section 84 of that Act gives to the Council to ensure that the attributes of the AONB are conserved and enhanced, we hope the Council share TASC's grave concerns regarding the damage already being inflicted by SZC's preliminary works on the landscape quality and biodiversity of the AONB before a Final Investment Decision for the project has been made and before a Nuclear Site Licence has been granted. Current works include the felling of over 100 acres of woodland, grubbing out miles of hedgerows, cutting reedbeds in the Sizewell Marshes SSSI, vast soil excavations and transfers, and the construction of a 2.8km temporary Highways' Standard roadway 14 metres wide that runs through the AONB.

TASC ask East Suffolk Council for confirmation that, if for any reason construction of the SZC nuclear power station does not proceed, there are adequate legal conditions in place and that SZC Co have sufficient funds, to ensure the total restoration of the AONB to enable the AONB to maintain the integrity of its designation for the benefit of future generations. Will the Council also outline its engagement with SZC Co that is designed to get them to refrain from further AONB damaging work until the financing and licencing has been agreed.

Response from Councillor Caroline Topping, Leader of the Council

The application for the Sizewell C development consent was supported by a Funding Statement which demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State that the necessary funding could be secured to acquire any land, interests in land and rights over land and the payments of compensation. In addition to this there have been several announcements recently from the Government confirming their commitment to invest in the project. For this reason, it is considered that SZC Co. would have sufficient funds at this stage for reinstatement should this be necessary. Requirements 29 and 38 secure removal and reinstatement of the Main Development Site and Associated Sites and link to the need to provide further details of the reinstatement.

The Sizewell C Development Consent Order sets out what activities and works are permitted to be undertaken during the pre-commencement phase ahead of formal commencement of the project. The activities and works permitted include the removal of hedgerows, trees and shrubs, in addition to a number of others. ESC therefore has no ability to prevent Sizewell C from undertaking works in accordance with the Development Consent Order.

c) Question from Michael Mahony Chairman, Friston Parish Council

This community has already endured applications for four nationally significant infrastructure projects, namely Sizewell C, East Anglia One North, East Anglia Two and the National Grid connection hub at Friston.

Currently National Grid is promoting three interconnector projects in this area, Sealink, Lionlink and Nautilus, all three of which are to connect at the proposed National Grid connection hub at Friston. Currently National Grid is proposing to pursue three separate planning processes for the projects despite the likelihood that the onshore elements in East Suffolk will be very similar. This means the local community will have to engage in three further processes, involving three separate consultations, three separate sets of representations and written submissions and separate hearings etc. This is oppressive not least because members of the community can only participate by giving up their own free time and at their own expense, Given such an intolerable burden, this inefficient approach will have an exclusionary effect and render the processes unfair.

It should be noted there was such a single process for Scottish Power's EA1N and EA2 projects and the National Grid connection hub.

Will the Council strongly support (writing to all relevant parties) a process whereby these three processes are conducted at the same time so that effectively there is a single process significantly reducing the burden on the local community in East Suffolk?

Response from Councillor Tom Daly - Cabinet Member for Energy and Climate Change

East Suffolk Council recognises the significant burden engaging with multiple nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) places on local communities. We fully acknowledge the benefits of coordinating the consenting process for the different NSIPs and the dis-benefits of not. ESC therefore fully supports the need to coordinate the consenting processes of the different projects, which if their timescales aligned could include support for conjoined examinations or a single examination, should this

be legally permitted. This has been discussed multiple times with the developers, highlighted within the Offshore Transmission Network Review workstreams and discussed with a representative from the Planning Inspectorate. The management of the consenting process is a matter which ESC will continue to discuss going forwards.

d) Question from Alison Downes

In light of the recent confusion following the meeting at Aldringham cum Thorpe Parish Council (4 September), when attendees were erroneously told by the Sizewell C communications team that the Sizewell Link Road was a temporary feature and would be taken up after construction, how can local people believe a word they say? In the circumstances, does the Council agree that Sizewell C's dogged refusal to reinstate the Community Forum is totally without justification?

Response from Councillor Tom Daly - Cabinet Member for Energy and Climate Change

The Community Forum was an independent group of local representatives and stakeholders which met throughout the public consultation process to discuss Sizewell C proposals. It was noted in the minutes of the last meeting that the group would only meet once more after the Sizewell C application had been submitted.

The importance and need for Sizewell C Co. to continue this engagement with representatives of local town and parish councils post consent was however recognised within the Deed of Obligation, agreed during the Sizewell C examination. Schedule 17 of the Deed requires Sizewell C Co. to establish the Sizewell C Forum on or before commencement, the forum will comprise one elected councillor or clerk from each of the parish and town councils within East Suffolk in addition to other stakeholders, as set out in the Deed. The Sizewell C Forum effectively takes over the role post commencement and during construction of the project which the Community Forum held during the pre-application phase.

ESC therefore fully understands and supports the need for this engagement and supports the establishment of the Sizewell C Forum in accordance with the obligations set out in the Deed.

The Chair thanked the attending members of the public who put forward their questions.

6 Questions from Members

The following question(s) from Members were submitted in pursuance of Council Procedure Rule 9:

a) Question from Councillor Janet Craig to Councillor Caroline Topping, Leader of the Council

In response to a Labour Motion from November 2022, the Chair wrote to both Anglian Water and Therese Coffey MP about the raw sewage discharge occurring in our rivers and coastal waters.

We received a very thorough letter from Peter Simpson, the Chief Executive Officer at Anglian Water, in January 2023 and a much less informative reply from Rebecca Pow MP, Minister for Environmental Quality and Resilience.

Can you advise if the Council took up the offer from Anglian Water to discuss the issues raised, and given that we are still recording sewage discharge along our coast can we have an update on what has been achieved?

Response from Councillor Caroline Topping, Leader of the Council

As a District Council, East Suffolk Council is not the lead authority on matters related to sewerage discharges – it is the responsibility of the Environment Agency to hold water companies to account where there are breaches. The Council can however play a key role in raising residents’ concerns to the relevant organisations, as happened in this instance.

Following the Motion passed on 23rd November 2022, the East Suffolk Council Chair wrote to The Rt Hon Therese Coffey MP, Secretary of State for the Environment and Peter Simpson, CEO of Anglian Water. Responses were received on 25th and 27th January 2023 respectively. The responses were circulated to all Members by the Environment Portfolio Holder and Chair of the Environment Task Group. Anglian Water offered to organise a visit for Councillors to a water recycling site to talk through the process.

Due to the proximity to the pre-election period and the May 2023 elections, it was decided that it would be prudent wait and for Members in the new administration to take up Anglian Water’s offer if they would like to do so.

The new administration met with Anglian Water at informal Cabinet on the 7th August to discuss inclusions in the Anglian Water 2025-2030 Business Plan. Councillors raised with Anglian Water that sewerage overflow is one of the main areas of concern for their constituents, in particular around the Waveney, Deben and Orwell and indeed flagged up some data on Anglian Waters presentation that said that they thought sewerage overflow was a low priority for residents. The Business Plan provides target figures but more detail was identified as being required as well as an end date for when this practice will cease.

A roundtable was also held by the Environment Secretary and Water Minister in Woodbridge on the 10 August 2023 to drive forward improvements in the River Deben which included key stakeholders in river water quality including the Environment Agency, Anglian Water, Natural England and East Suffolk council Officers. It is a shame that no member of the Cabinet was invited to attend and the Leader was not even informed the meeting was taking place.

Officers continue to keep up the momentum on the concerns raised in the Motion via regular engagement with Anglian Water thorough our Planning function and issuing detailed responses to the series of Water Resource Planning consultations that took place over the summer (the Anglian Water Resource Management Plan, Essex & Suffolk Water Resource Management Plan and Water Resources East Regional Water Resource Management Plan).

The Environment Taskgroup will be taking this issue forward on their work programme.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Craig

Could water quality signs be displayed across beaches so people know if it safe to swim?

Response from Councillor Topping

Councillor Topping responded that she uses an app which outlines when sewage has entered the waters and believed this information can be accessed digitally. Councillor Topping will see if there are any other means to display warnings. However, adding physical signage can be detrimental to blue flag status

b) Question from Councillor Jenny Ceresa to Councillor David Beavan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing

During my time as Chairman, I regularly promoted “debate not hate”.

It was regrettable that a report was brought to Full Council on 15 March 2023, by the Audit and Governance Committee and further to independent lawyer investigation, they determined that Cllr Beavan had breached the Code of Conduct. In his email of 30 May 2022, he publicly accused officers in the Housing Team of ‘fiddling the figures’. At that full council meeting it was reported that the requested apology had not been given.

Has Councillor Beavan since given that apology to the Housing officers?

Response from Councillor David Beavan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing

Thank you, Councillor Ceresa for your question but, as you already know, this all happened six months ago.

I hope you are not just using this as an opportunity for another personal attack.

I am all in favour of “debate not hate” and I certainly don’t hate my housing department. I love them.

In four months, our mutual passion for housing has forged a great working relationship that I am sure will not be dented by political jibes. If you refuse to believe me, why don’t you ask them?

I am passionate about addressing the challenges we have with young working families homeless on the street of my ward evicted by a housing crisis that is geared for private greed not public need.

I know that it has been a difficult year for you and your colleagues.

You must be still grieving the devastating loss of most of your councillors in the May elections.

It is a sad fact that we politicians always end up less popular than when we started.

But isn't it about time we put the election behind us and got on with our job – a shared mission for East Suffolk.

There is more that unites us, than divides us.

This new council is open and inclusive. We want to work with you. It's time to stop hating and start debating.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Ceresa

Why did it take so long to apologise when the email was sent in May 2022?

Response from Councillor Beavan

It was the second apology as I had apologised before. Does it really matter? Can we not move on and work together going forward?

c) Question from Councillor Craig Rivett to Councillor Topping, Leader of the Council

I'm aware of several instances where residents and fellow councillors have contacted Members of the Cabinet with queries / requests, and they have been subjected to lengthy waiting times for responses and in some instances, no response at all.

What timeframe does the leader think would be reasonable to wait for a response?

Response from Councillor Caroline Topping, Leader of the Council

There are no minimum standards laid down in the Constitution regarding response times.

My new Cabinet consists of dedicated and hard-working Members. Since forming the Cabinet we have worked hard to understand the wide range of service areas that fall within each portfolio area, build relationships with officers and stakeholders alongside refocussing the strategic direction of this Council, whilst still listening to and responding to the needs of our own residents within the various wards and parishes we serve and indeed other Members.

Each Cabinet Member has taken on this challenge with enthusiasm and dedication to do the best they can for the residents of East Suffolk Council. I can therefore assure everybody that none of my Cabinet has deliberately not responded to any queries and are working hard to accommodate everything that is being asked of them. I would like to point out that there are no minimum standards laid down in our constitution regarding response times and it would be unfair to all concerned to add a response

time. It can in fact be quite challenging to meet everybody's expectations and you will have experienced this challenge yourself.

Therefore, can you please resend any outstanding queries you are aware of to the relevant Cabinet Member and copy me into any outstanding issues outside of this meeting, as we will be more than happy to follow up and resolve these queries.

Of course, we want to respond in a timely way to all queries and requests and will continue to try and do this.

Councillor Topping asked for any instances where responses were outstanding to be forwarded to her for review.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Rivett

I will say that some Members of the Cabinet have been very prompt. It was interesting that the Leader said all of the Cabinet are dedicated as some Cabinet Members have been open about their disinterest in the areas of work they are responsible for and have directed people to go to officers.

Response from Councillor Topping

Any Member of the Council who is unhappy with the responses they have received to emails, this will be reviewed. If there are any outstanding queries that require a response, Members should go back to the Portfolio Holder and copy Councillor Topping in.

7 Petitions

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

8 Notices of Motion

Before the consideration of motions several Councillors declared they were members of different organisations which might require them to declare an interest before discussing the motion, these included Greenpeace and groups which oppose the development of Sizewell and nuclear energy.

The Monitoring Officer advised that membership of the groups mentioned were Other Registerable Interests.

Councillor Gandy enquired whether she had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest through her partner's employment. The Monitoring Officer advised that her partner's employment was a Pecuniary Interest she needed to register but only one she needed to declare if the interest directly related to the motion.

The Chair reported that 2 Notices of Motion were accepted prior to the meeting.

A) Motion submitted by Councillor Tom Daly

The Chair invited Councillor Daly to read out his motion.

"That this Council believes:

That truly renewable energy, such as offshore and onshore wind, solar, community energy schemes and micro generation, alongside the reduction of energy use and better design provide a better long term answer to the energy security of and carbon reduction future of the UK rather than Sizewell C.

That offshore options for connecting offshore renewables into an existing brownfield location have not been sufficiently investigated and provide a better long-term more cost effective and sustainable solution to the UK's energy supply and security challenges.

That the Council resolves:

(a) that should the construction at Sizewell C proceed, we will strongly represent our East Suffolk communities to maximise the benefits and minimise the impacts and that development should only commence once long-term solutions to the issues below have been identified by Sizewell C Ltd in conjunction with all stakeholders.

- Water supply;*
- Sea defences, coastal dynamics;*
- Long term local storage of highly radioactive spent fuel;*
- Marine biosphere impacts;*
- Satisfactory confirmation of the size of the development site with associated impacts on Minsmere and other precious habitats.*

(b) To write to the SoS with these views and ask government :

- To carry out a full cost-benefit analysis of options for connecting all electricity generation to users in the UK rather than the current piecemeal approach*
- To mandate a direct community compensation scheme for those directly impacted by hosting the energy infrastructure as a matter of urgency as per their recent consultation in addition to provisions in the DCO process."*

Councillor Daly summarised the motion and stated that the idea was to bring debate all these issues, which are important to the community. After approval has been given for the Development Consent Orders (DCOs) these cannot be revoked. The previous administration took a neutral position. The new administration would have taken a different position.

With regard to strategic planning work, members of the GLI group will engage with their duties and conduct constructive engagement whilst remaining explicit in opposition to the development of Sizewell C. The group will do their utmost to promote best possible communication and rapid responses with the Sizewell C team. This will not be an approval of the Sizewell C and offshore wind work.

There was promise of community benefits and jobs opportunities which the group will continue to monitor with the understanding these benefits in no way negate the risks associated with the project.

Councillor Daly outlined the concerns of the council in regard to the unresolved issues in the development programme of Sizewell C, including sea defences, water supply and marine biosphere impacts.

With regard to the Friston connection programme substantial work has not yet started and there are mechanisms where Scottish Power could be incentivised to embrace change.

Councillor Daly moved the Motion and encouraged Members to vote unanimously on the motion and send a message to national government, that East Suffolk Council will not be silenced on the discussed.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Whitelock who spoke to the motion as a resident and councillor for Aldeburgh and Leiston ward.

Councillor Whitelock was first asked to look into the Friston Energy Mega hub in 2020 and Sizewell C in 2021 as a voluntary committee member for the Local Business Association. Councillor Whitelock stated that she had felt misled by Scottish Power in the information provided.

The project would not generate one single long-term job. Councillor Whitelock outlined the development challenges on Hinkley Point, being two years behind schedule and over budget with expected costs at 26 billion pounds compared to the originally projected 18 billion pounds.

UK Government is expected to be the majority shareholder if Sizewell C by the end of 2023. 1 billion pounds has already been spent. Councillor Whitelock questioned how many solar panels and heat pumps could have been purchased for residents in comparison.

Councillor Whitelock stated that Sizewell C would be worse compared to Hinkley Point as the site is smaller, with less water supply, inadequate road networks and protected wildlife.

The Chair therefore proposed that the Motion be discussed this evening, which was seconded and upon being put to the vote the proposal was **CARRIED**.

Councillor Rivett began the debate and outlined that the project was examined by the Examining Authority that took evidence from experts and other interested parties. Regarding sea defences and coastal dynamics it was concluded that there were no

matters which would weight for or against the order being made. Long term storage has been carried out for decades with Sizewell B. With regard to sea life it was concluded there were no matters weighing for or against the order.

Councillor Rivett stated that to replace Sizewell C with offshore wind it would require 90,000 hectares, compared to Sizewell C which requires 33 hectares.

Councillor Byatt outlined his amendment to the motion which was provided on screen for members to view. The amendment was as follows (changes indicated in bold):

"That this Council believes:

*That truly renewable energy, such as offshore and onshore wind, solar, community energy schemes and micro generation, alongside the reduction of energy use and better design **have the potential** to provide a better long term answer to the energy security of and carbon reduction future of the UK rather than Sizewell C.*

However we recognise that there are concerns about the time-scale of developing offshore wind-farms, given the recent problems with a complete lack of bidding for new areas for development in the North Sea, the failure of the Vattenfall Project, the increasing cost of construction of new turbines , the availability of land for on-shore wind and solar farms and a recent report into issues related to sub-sea cabling failures.

In addition, there are still ongoing concerns related to the plans for connecting offshore renewables into an existing brownfield location. We believe that these have not been sufficiently investigated and alternatives could provide a better long-term, more cost effective and sustainable solution to the UK's energy supply and security challenges.

That the Council resolves:

(a) that should the construction at Sizewell C proceed, we will strongly represent our East Suffolk communities to maximise the benefits and minimise the impacts and that development should only commence once long-term solutions to the issues below have been identified by Sizewell C Ltd in conjunction with all stakeholders.

- water supply;*
- sea defences, coastal dynamics;*
- long term local storage of highly radioactive spent fuel;*
- marine biosphere impacts;*
- satisfactory confirmation of the size of the development site with associated impacts on Minsmere and other precious habitats.*

(b) To write to the SoS with these views and ask government:

- ***To intervene to bring long-term stability and security for future plans for all off and on-shore energy generation***
- *To carry out a full cost-benefit analysis of options for connecting all electricity generation to users in the UK rather than the current piecemeal approach*
- *To mandate a direct community compensation scheme for those directly impacted by hosting the energy infrastructure as a matter of urgency as per their recent consultation in addition to provisions in the DCO process."*

Councillor Byatt stated that he recognised that the majority see renewables as the way forward in the longer-term future. There were concerns about the ability to provide the wind farms as desired. There have been 5 wind farm areas not bid on and a recent commercial project lost.

Councillor Byatt stated that the issues identified with underwater cabling need to be resolved and there needed to be 100% confidence in the cables being fit for purpose. Councillor Byatt stated his opposition to the Friston site. He welcomed the spirit of the motion, but remained concerned about the speed in which wind farms can be developed.

Councillor Byatt outlined that there needed to be a back-up, which might be Sizewell C or smaller nuclear reactors and that the motion seemed to dismiss Sizewell C out of hand.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Pitchers who reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Rivett thanked Councillor Byatt for his amendment which he felt attempted to make sense of the motion brought before Full Council. He stated that the amendment was a step in the right direction, however a better motion should be formed.

Councillor Pitchers stated he was in favour of renewables and felt that unfortunately Sizewell C is the way forward. He supported the amendment put forward.

Councillor Byatt stated that his intention with the amendment was to make it so there is some common ground and respected what the administration was attempting to do.

At the conclusion of the debate The Chair asked Members to vote upon the amendment. Upon being put to the vote it was **NOT CARRIED**.

The debate continued regarding the original motion put forward:

Councillor Beavan stated that he was not completely against nuclear energy however he believed that the Sizewell C proposal was wrong regarding many factors, including economic technical and environmental.

Councillor Beavan reported that another problem was the LionLink proposal which will have cables, trenches inland, the Friston development and pylons which would lead to London.

He also believed this will be the start of bigger issue, as each windfarm will have to land its own cable to shore, impacting on the issue of coastal erosion, countryside and habitats.

It was further debated that the cables could be run straight to London where the electricity was needed. The recent auction of windfarm sites was not successful with the government's contract for difference price not reflecting inflation.

Councillor Beavan concluded that some windfarms are queuing to join the national grid and an offshore grid was needed to connect them to London. He urged Members to support the motion.

Councillor Lynch stated he could not support the motion. Whilst he utilised green and renewable energy as much as possible there was a need to have other sources of power.

He outlined concerns regarding underground seabed cabling. There have been issues locally when cables have been damaged by fishing activity causing power outages.

Councillor Gooch added to the debate that there was a need to go further in considering lifestyle changes, flying less, looking at the working week, long service leave and other options taken by other countries. Councillor Gooch recognised the sentiments of the motion and returned to early points of nuclear energy not being clean, green or sustainable.

Councillor Topping added that the group were intending for everyone in East Suffolk Council to feel involved and supported by the administration. This was why the motion had been brought to Full Council and decisions had not taken behind closed doors. Councillor Topping stated that there was understanding there were things that cannot be changed, however there was a desire to protect the local environment and community.

Councillor Jepson echoed the point raised earlier that had every if Councillor had voted against the proposal 2 years ago it would have gone ahead anyway. The previous administration had tried to introduce a number of green policies during their time. Being Conservatives does not mean that individuals are not supportive of being 'green'. It was projected that 1/3 UK energy will be transported through the district. Councillor Jepson stated he would have liked to have seen information regarding cost included in the motion.

Councillor Jepson stated that the motion was about writing a letter and lots of debate on this issue has taken place already and he did not believe it needed to come to Full Council and Councillor Daly did not need a vote in Full Council to write a letter.

Councillor Jepson embraced the principle of the motion, however stated that he was not sure that Full Council was the place to bring the debate.

Councillor Byatt stated that Sizewell C will continue to be a contentious issue and suggested that without the amendment being agreed then it would be difficult to vote in favour as the motion concedes that Sizewell C could go ahead. Therefore, those who were wholeheartedly against could not vote in favour.

Councillor Ninnmey stated there were a number of areas which have been lost to the sea. He raised concern regarding sea defences and the impact of the development. Councillor Ninnmey's ward being situated some distance from Sizewell C still impacts the community. Another issue which had not been worked out or realised was that East Anglia was one of the driest parts of the country and requires its own water supply. It was understood there would be a need for tankers travelling through inadequate roads frequently until suitable infrastructure was completed.

Councillor Ninnmey spoke to Councillor Rivett's earlier speech regarding a presentation attended last winter at Holbrook School. This was delivered by Conservative MPs. They were surprised to know there was a proposal to run lines of pylons from Norfolk through Suffolk and Essex. There was ongoing discussion to move this to a sea route. It was noted that he had a presentation and would be happy to share.

In the 1970's Councillor Ninnmey recalled his mother-in-law was told she resided just outside the area of where iodine tablets would be delivered to residents. Councillor Ninnmey concluded that the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority had previously said that Sizewell A would not be touched until around 2096 and would cost £1 billion to the tax payer as the money set aside was used elsewhere.

Councillor Ninnmey stated he supported the motion.

Councillor Graham stated that it was a pivotal moment and there should be an aim to reach an outcome of least destruction to the environment and communities. The priority should be to reduce energy and improve energy efficiency. This should then be followed by moving away from fossil fuels. Most people support the need for a move away from fossil fuels.

It was stated there are other ways to reach the ambitions of being net zero that are cheaper less resource intensive and more humane. Regarding energy efficiency Councillor Graham highlighted that that 1/3 of energy is lost through building leakage with higher bills for people to pay.

Councillor Graham highlighted the need for the council to be part of the growing movement for sharing energy efficiency information and community engagement.

Councillor Smith-Lyte responded to Councillor Lynch's earlier point and thanked the councillor for his words. Councillor Smith-Lyte stated that it was surprising there were any fish left around the coastline and it would be wonderful to ban trawling in the local area.

Councillor Daly stated that the purpose of the motion was not to write a letter but to open up the debate for all; the public, campaign groups and members to talk openly. Coordination starts now and looks at the real efficiencies and when in consultation

with companies be forthcoming about wanting positive change. Councillor Daly believes there was flexibility in the system to make changes.

Councillor Daly stated he was surprised that some members did not vote to debate and urged those to 'come on board' with the new council and work together to do the best for the local community.

Councillor Ninnmey requested a recorded vote, this was seconded by Councillor Grey and upon being put to the vote, there were more than 7 members in agreement.

The Chair invited the Monitoring Officer to undertake the Recorded Vote for this item. Upon being put to a Recorded Vote, the Motion was **CARRIED**.

The results of the Recorded Vote are shown below:

For the Motion:

Councillors Ashton, Beavan, Bennett, Byatt, Candy, Clery, Craig, Daly, Deacon, Ewart, Fisher, Gooch, Graham, Green, Grey, Hammond, Keys-Holloway, King, Langdon-Morris, Molyneux, Ninnmey, Noble, Packard, Pitchers, Plummer, Reeves, Rumble, Smith-Lyte, Smithson, Specca, Thompson, Topping, Wakeling, Whitelock, Wilson, Yule.

Against the Motion:

Councillors Ashdown, Back, Ceresa, Gee, Hedgley, Jepson, Lawson, Lynch, Mallinder, Patience, Rivett, Scrancher, Starling.

Abstained from voting about the Motion:

Councillor Gandy.

B) Motion submitted by Councillor Peter Byatt

The Chair invited Councillor Byatt to read out his motion.

"This Council recognises that there has been concern for some time about the generally shabby state of some parts of East Suffolk.

This is the culmination of factors that includes frequent fly-tipping (on public and private land); littering in public spaces (streets and parks); dog-fouling; weeds growing out of every possible crevice; overgrown shrubbery ; potholes of every size and shape; dirty, unreadable road signs and gull excrement etc. Together, these have created a general feeling of untidiness and a lack of care in a significant number of areas in the District.

This is unacceptable as East Suffolk should be clean and inviting for all.

Although we welcome the formation of East Suffolk Services Ltd (ESSL) with its new Strategic Waste and Contract Management Team, we believe improved liaison is

required with other tiers of Council and interested bodies to achieve a satisfactory outcome of acceptable standards of cleanliness for our residents and visitors alike.

Improvement in our surroundings cannot be achieved by East Suffolk Council alone. This has to involve those other bodies and requires closer, more formal partnership working with them.

To achieve this, this Council will establish a time-limited Task and Finish Group that will:

Facilitate a more effective working partnership with all organisations concerned with our public spaces

Create a plan of action to deal with this embarrassing situation and

Ensure East Suffolk never reaches this state of dilapidation again."

Councillor Byatt summarised the motion and stated it spoke for itself. Photographs were circulated prior to the meeting by email, these highlighted the issues being raised in the community. Several of the images were taken within 100 metres of the Councillor's home address. Councillor Byatt talked to each image. These included poorly repaired paving, overflowing public waste bins, broken highway signage and overgrown areas of the highway / covering hydrants.

Councillor Byatt highlighted that this work might require the public to become involved in a planned way with a view to a Spring Clean in 2024 and moved the motion.

Councillor Deacon seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

The Chair therefore proposed that the Motion be discussed this evening, which was seconded and upon being put to the vote the proposal was **CARRIED**.

Councillor Beavan offered his support to the motion.

Councillor Mallinder stated that civic pride was important, and the previous administration had supported and introduced several carbon footprint reduction initiatives. Working in partnership with other areas to manage bins, there was the Love East Suffolk annual litter pick, encouraging residents to take ownership along with several projects supporting the bee population which now has over 100 sites where grass is cut less. There was a lot of landscaping working around the Melton offices including insect houses, tree planting and wildflowers outside the offices. Councillor Mallinder stated his disappointment in the current condition of the wildflower landscaping.

Councillor Mallinder offered his support for the inclusive motion and encouraged everyone to do the same.

Councillor King advised that that many residents have made contact and most of their concerns were regarding the maintenance of their local area. It was not ideal when they were advised to report it to the other authority. East Suffolk should be a beacon for progress on this matter.

Councillor Patience stated he believed that the issues have become worse under the new administration. Councillor Topping offered and accepted an invite to go and have a look at the areas of concern. He stated that two residents recently cleaned a local car park which he did not believe was their job to do. Councillor Patience raised an issue of getting industrial bins removed.

Councillor Topping thanked Councillor Byatt for the photos. 3 weeks ago there was a walk around Beccles with East Suffolk Services Ltd and Suffolk County Council Highways officers. During this visit there was discussion around who holds responsibility for which parts of the highway in context of weeds and overgrown areas.

Councillor Topping added East Suffolk Services Ltd, which came into operation in July 2023 is currently working their way around the district. It was recognised that this needed to be addressed and they were also working with Suffolk Council. Community engagement was also a part of the bigger picture, asking people to clear outside their own property and place of work would help matters. Suffolk County Council offer a Community Self Help Initiative, which Councillor Topping can provide further information on.

Councillor Topping supported the motion and she would be asking Councillor Paul Ashton to chair the proposed group.

Councillor Pitchers reported a no right turn sign issue in Lowestoft, where vegetation was covering the sign which motorists cannot clearly see.

Councillor Jepson wished to welcome the motion and discussed the 'Broken Window effect' research from New York. There was a need to work strategically with partners to make a difference.

Councillor Ashton agreed with Councillor Jepson's comments and the importance of a strategic approach. Councillor Ashton discussed an issue with a Suffolk County Council road sign in Wangford which has rusted, fallen off and had been propped up at the base. When reported with images the feedback was that remedial action was not required.

Councillor Ashton also stated that customer service was very important and a plan for improvements in this area was underway. Councillor Ashton looked forward to working on this going forward.

Councillor Gooch agreed this subject could be debated all evening and highlighted there was a wider national problem, when compared to countries such as Australia and Canada, where civic pride appeared to be so much higher than here. It was stated a

small number of people cause issues and everyone needs to step forward to challenge littering behaviour. Over 40 years this had not been adequately addressed and we need to look at education, action and engagement.

Councillor Gooch noted the issue where strimmers were used across highways. Litter gets caught in the strimmer and then shredded and spread across the highway.

Councillor Hedgley offered support to the motion and the points raised by Councillor Gooch. Councillor Hedgley took issue with it being said it was the job of other people to have civic pride and urged Members to consider if they were doing their part in their local areas.

Councillor Deacon read out a constituent's email detailing how they love Felixstowe but feel the authority does not. The roads need clearing of weeds, the drains were blocked and comments were received regarding the state of pavements. Pride was needed in local communities. There was a question about public cleaning roads, which could be dangerous.

It was stated this was a legacy problem and Felixstowe was mirrored across the district. There were some improvements thanks to local efforts. However, surface water flooding from blocked gutters cannot be solved by this council alone. He encouraged everyone to support the motion.

Councillor Byatt summarised the motion and that people look to us to solve a problem. There needed to be a time limited task group and this work should be implemented soon so when people come to this beautiful part of the country, we want to be welcoming.

There being no further debate, the motion was put to the vote and it was unanimously **CARRIED**.

9 CIL Reporting and Governance

Councillor Yule, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, presented report **ES/1666** and reported that in June 2023 the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule report was adopted and discussed by the Cabinet and it was agreed to bring the report to Full Council.

Councillor Yule stated that all Councillors should be aware of the developer contributions received and spent in the East Suffolk area and should understand the projects that have been provided and supported through CIL Funding, together with proposed projects listed in the Infrastructure List of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2022-23.

The Infrastructure Funding Statement was a statutory document which must be produced and published annually by 31 December. This was agreed by Cabinet every autumn before being finalised for publication.

Councillor Yule requested that members utilise the report to engage with their local communities to raise awareness about CIL and engaging people in conversation about how to use CIL funding.

There was an interactive database showing CIL charges which was updated regularly. This was the beginning of the conversations to get this rolling and the importance of engaging with parishes and towns in this process was noted.

This funding was to be spent in the communities on community projects.

Councillor Ninnmey raised a question regarding page 110 which referred to Bungay Medical Practice and a local Integrated Care Board. Councillor Ninnmey had been working on getting appropriate care in the peninsula. At what point can money be raised out of CIL to extend the provision of health care in the peninsula?

Councillor Yule responded that with agreement she would take this question and report back outside of the meeting, so a full and proper response can be provided.

Councillor Byatt enquired if it would be possible to interrogate information down in to ward area. Councillor Yule answered that the database mentioned earlier will provide a parish-by-parish overview.

Councillor Yule moved the recommendation, which was duly seconded and upon being put to the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED

That the contents of the developer contributions papers and the updated CIL Spending Strategy approved by Cabinet be noted, to further aid councillors' understanding and knowledge of Developer Contributions.

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

Full Council received report **ES/1664**, which was presented by Councillor Topping, Leader of the Council, and provided individual Cabinet Members' reports on their areas of responsibility, as well as reports from those Members appointed to represent East Suffolk Council on Outside Bodies. The Leader stated that the written reports could be taken as read and he invited relevant questions on their contents.

Councillor Mallinder asked Councillor Smith-Lyte if there could be some investigation to whether a temporary bin could be taken out to more rural communities rather than encouraging car use to go to recycling facilities.

Councillor Smith-Lyte responded that there was work on-going in this respect and further updates will be provided in due course.

Councillor Deacon referenced the recent Tour of Britain and stated it was a stunning event for our area and offered thanks to Sarah Shinnie and her team on delivering a very successful event. The question posed was how to capitalise on this success for longer term benefits.

Councillor Graham responded to echo the thanks and praise of Sarah Shinnie and the team involved in putting the Tour together. There was work around engagement, working with shops to advertise, families were able to take part in watching the event and there was a lot of positive feeling about how East Suffolk looked and agreed the momentum to continue this work was needed.

Councillor Deacon asked if the beach hut element of the Felixstowe Beach village will be completed by the end of the month? Completion was due earlier in the year, what has been the delay and how many beach huts have been sold?

Councillor Graham responded to state that she was aware the beach huts have not been selling as well as hoped and this was under review.

Councillor Pitcher asked Councillor Yule what the % increase in planning application fees would be for April 2024.

Councillor Yule responded to say that she would find out this information and report back.

Councillor Patience commented to Councillor Hammond that he was surprised to see this document come through and have no mention of Lowestoft and the parking issues experienced. Councillor Patience offered to meet and discuss this matter.

Councillor Hammond stated that parking was a difficult area and the parking team were launching a series of parking reviews across the region, which will also come to Lowestoft. They were provisionally looking at on street parking but inevitably will consider off street as well. There will be an opportunity for all stakeholders in the town to have their say in more bespoke parking arrangements in consultation, this will be with Suffolk County Council and wider parking work.

Councillor Hammond apologised for any confusion and was happy to follow up with Councillor Patience.

Councillor Byatt stated to Councillor Langdon-Morris that there had been 11 beach huts sold so far and he wondered why they were not being marketed by East Suffolk and how much commission was being paid?

A point of order was raised regarding questions being posed directly from the report. Councillor Byatt apologised.

There was no recommendation in relation to this report, it was just for information.

11 Exempt/Confidential Items

On the proposition of Councillor Specca, seconded by Councillor Topping it was by a unanimous vote

RESOLVED

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

12 Port Health and Implementation of Border Target Operating Model Requirements

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

The meeting concluded at 9.30 pm.

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Chair