

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of **Full Council** held in the **Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Melton** on **Thursday 22 March 2018** at **7.00pm**

Members present:

J Bidwell, S Bird, C Block, C Blundell, S Burroughes, A Cooper, M Deacon, D Dean, P Dunnett, J Fisher, A Fryatt, S Gallant, S Harvey, T-J Haworth-Culf, C Hedgley, R Herring, G Holdcroft, C Hudson, M Jones, J Kelso, R Kerry, G Lynch, D McCallum, S Mower, M Newton, C Poulter, I Pratt, P Rous, A Smith, N Yeo

Officers present:

K Abbott (Democratic Services Business Manager), S Baker (Chief Executive), C Bing (Deputy Monitoring Officer), M Sims (Food & Safety Manager), S Taylor (Finance Manager)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Amoss, Councillor Bloomfield, Councillor Bond, Councillor Catchpole, Councillor Coleman, Councillor Green, Councillor Harding, Councillor Lawson, Councillor Mulcahy, Councillor Savage and Councillor Whiting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 February 2018 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Announcements

The Chairman invited, in turn, the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Members and the Chief Executive to make any announcements to Full Council.

The Leader of the Council referred all Councillors to the internal Briefing by senior representatives of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to be held on Tuesday 3 April 2018 at East Suffolk House. The briefing to Members would include the process for a formal electoral review and be an opportunity to raise any questions.

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health was pleased to announce that the Innovation Category within the recent Local Government Chronicle's annual awards event had been won by the Port Health Interactive Live Information System (PHILIS) developed by Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority for handling imports at the Port of Felixstowe. The Cabinet

Member congratulated all those involved in the development of the system and was delighted their exceptional work had been so recognised.

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing was pleased to announce that the East Suffolk Universal Credit Support Partnership had won Silver at the iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards in the Reinventing Public Services Category for its work in promoting and developing 'systems' to support customers and communities with the roll-out of a full Universal Credit service. The Cabinet Member recorded his personal thanks to the Head of Customer Services and his team for their excellent work in this regard.

Both awards were applauded by Full Council.

5. Written Questions

There were no Written Questions.

6. Notices of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion.

7. Annual Update from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk

The Chairman invited Mr Tim Passmore, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk, to provide his annual update.

Mr Passmore referred to the 6.8% increase to the policing element of Council Tax (the precept) and which, he said, would provide an additional £2.9m to the Constabulary's budget in the 2018/19 financial year (the overall budget being £125m). Mr Passmore said the additional income would create more financial stability and help to maintain police visibility on the roads, investment in technology to tackle the changing profile of criminality and to further improve the proactive work of the Constabulary in, for example, combatting drug misuse and youth gang violence. Mr Passmore continued that the increased precept had been financially necessary to ensure key services were maintained and public expectations met. He added that, despite the improved financial position, the need for further changes and restructuring remained necessary to achieve further financial savings and to retain capital investment aims.

Mr Passmore outlined his personal views on the Home Office's funding formula regime and expressed his disappointment that this had not been reviewed by central Government; Mr Passmore considered the funding formula to be unfavourable to larger rural counties and that a more equitable settlement for Suffolk was increasingly important. Mr Passmore added that if Suffolk was to receive similar funding to Norfolk it would result in an additional £3.5m per annum to address areas of increased demand, for example, domestic abuse crimes, serious sexual offences, cyber enabled crime etc.

With reference to telephone calls to the police non-emergency service (101), Mr Passmore said the average wait for such calls to be answered was four minutes. He advised that new technology to help triage the prioritisation of 101 calls had, unfortunately, been delayed until summer 2018.

Mr Passmore said the Rural Policing Strategy, introduced last year, was proceeding well. The Strategy recognised that the impact of crime could be higher in rural or remote areas where residents might feel more vulnerable or additionally concerned. The Strategy supported the Police and Crime Plan's priorities to protect vulnerable people; focus on prevention and intervention; to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour; to improve victim care, and to support the rural economy. He also referred to the Constabulary's important role in securing the coastline in terms of anti-terrorism and illegal immigration.

With reference to Safer Neighbourhood Teams, Mr Passmore said it was proposed to introduce an Engagement Officer within each Team as a dedicated resource focussed on public engagement and ensuring local communities and partners were kept informed and updated on local policing issues.

Mr Passmore referred to funding secured via, for example, the crime reduction grant and the victim services grant, and also to continued collaborative work with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service on estate proposals to achieve improvements and savings. Mr Passmore highlighted the success of the *Stay Safe Online* campaign, aimed at 9 to 14 year olds. He emphasised the need for increased partnership working and collaboration between organisations within the public sector, as well as the voluntary and charitable sectors, in support of valuable and successful campaigns such as *Stay Safe Online*.

In conclusion, Mr Passmore referred to the need to address reoffending rates, including prison reform objectives, the offering of improved training to repeat offenders and thereby the creation of improved opportunities for employment upon release from prison, as important priorities.

The Chairman thanked Mr Passmore for his annual update to Council and invited questions.

Councillor Hedgley asked how changes to policing would be effectively communicated so that vital public confidence was maintained. Mr Passmore referred to a multi-media approach which included written pieces for use by the media, social media, visits to partner organisations and key groups, and public meetings in several locations etc. Mr Passmore acknowledged that increased and more "mainstream" communication by the Constabulary was required.

Councillor Gallant referred to the proposed key changes to the Constabulary's structure in response to changing demands, challenges and the financial situation. These changes included a move to a model for localised delivery of community safety to be both responsive to, and aligned with, local needs and demands; a reduction in the number of business and administrative support posts; and the full civilianisation of a key Unit. Councillor Gallant also referred to the minutes of the Council meeting in 2017 also attended by Mr Passmore and proposals, at that time, for further joined-up working supported by increased numbers of central staff and outlined his own experience of response times to a 101 call. In asking Mr Passmore to comment, Councillor Gallant also queried if the proposed new Engagement Officer within the Safer Neighbourhood Teams was an additional member of staff or an existing member of staff with an additional role.

Mr Passmore said he very much regretted that the issues with the 101 system discussed at the meeting last year were not yet fully resolved and wished to reassure Council that the need for an improved service was a key priority. He reiterated that new technology to facilitate improved prioritisation of 101 calls was in the last phases of testing and implementation was scheduled for

the summer. Mr Passmore confirmed that the Engagement Officers were not additional resources but a redeployment to ensure communication and engagement with local communities and partners was improved. Mr Passmore added that the Chief Constable had reviewed the delivery of policing across the county, including current structures and working practices, to identify where additional savings to ease budgetary pressures might be possible.

Councillor McCallum referred to the earlier discussion of the impact of domestic violence crime on victims and their wider families at the Council meeting in May 2017; she asked for an update on how the Constabulary was addressing the increased numbers of reported cases of domestic violence (an increase of 42%) within existing budgets. Mr Passmore said it was encouraging that victims of domestic violence had confidence to report offences; he also referred to the increased numbers of dedicated staff in place to support victims and that some £68,000 had been utilised to provide training to all police officers in identifying the signs of domestic violence and how best to respond at incidents. Mr Passmore added that the use of body-worn video cameras had contributed positively to the collation of evidence. Mr Passmore emphasised the desirability of all partners contributing resources in response to domestic violence crimes particularly if the levels of confidence of victims to report such offences were to be maintained.

Councillor Fryatt referred to crime in rural and isolated areas and suggested the results of investigations and prosecutions be reported to local communities to ease concerns. Councillor Fryatt also asked for an update on actions being taken to address drug use in schools. Mr Passmore acknowledged that more detailed and timely communication with communities was needed, as a priority, on crime within their locality. Mr Passmore stated that drugs-related issues were a serious short-term threat to the county and referred to increased incidents of knife-related crime directly attributable to youth gangs and drugs. Mr Passmore said Suffolk's Public Sector Leaders had agreed an allocation of funding to facilitate further cross-agency working in this regard; he emphasised that addressing such issues was the responsibility of all those in the public sector, communities and the voluntary and charitable sectors and would be most successfully tackled in a coordinated way. Councillor Fryatt said there was a shortage of information for parents trying to advise their children on drugs or crime issues; he said this was an essential preventative measure. Mr Passmore responded that this was the responsibility of Public Health at Suffolk County Council.

Councillor Kerry referred to recent crime statistics for burglary offences quoted in the national media and noted the data for Suffolk which had been included; he asked what was being done to address this. Mr Passmore said the statistics which had been quoted in the media had been equalised by head of population. Mr Passmore added that Suffolk's police officers had one of the highest case loads in the country, according to HM Inspector of Constabulary's figures, and this was another reason why he considered the Home Office's funding formula to be in need of review so that a more equitable allocation of funds could be directed at such issues.

Councillor Burroughes noted Mr Passmore's remark that one of the reasons for the 6.8% increase in the precept was to help maintain police visibility on the roads and asked if there were similar intentions to improve visibility in rural locations in order to improve public confidence in police response times and support to vulnerable people. Mr Passmore referred again to the continued pressure on financial resources; he added that the newly appointed Engagement Officers would help to keep all communities better informed. Mr Passmore said statistics indicated that the public's trust and confidence in the police service remained steady and that

newsletters, social media and Police Connect (a free messaging service providing the very latest policing news in an area via e-mail, text or phone) were already available.

Councillor Burroughes, in noting Mr Passmore comments that more could be done in the provision of several aspects of police services, asked if Mr Passmore considered the role of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCCs) to be delivering what had been intended when first introduced in 2012. Mr Passmore said that, in his personal opinion, the introduction of PCCs had achieved considerable financial savings particularly when compared to the cost of Police Authorities. Mr Passmore said the role of the PCC continued to evolve but, in his opinion, made a worthwhile difference and acted as an incisive catalyst for reform and improvement.

Councillor Bird noted Mr Passmore comments, during the meeting, related to the need for other partners, notably the County Council, to utilise some of its resources and budgets in increased support of partnership working on areas such as domestic violence crime, safety online, anti-social behaviour initiatives etc.; Councillor Bird asked Mr Passmore to explain how he justified that expectation when the County Council also faced budgetary pressures and the need to achieve financial savings. Mr Passmore acknowledged that the public sector faced financial challenges but he considered the County Council should justify or explain some of its decisions and priorities. He added that he sought increased partnership working and pooled resources as a more positive and productive model which considered the wider picture and saw all partners “do their share”.

Councillor Deacon referred to his personal experience of response times to a 101 call and considered the average response time of four minutes to be inaccurate. Councillor Deacon suggested that it would be useful, in future, if Mr Passmore and the Chief Constable attended together. In response, Mr Passmore invited Councillors to attend the public meeting of the Accountability and Performance Panel which met to hold the Chief Constable to account; the next meeting was on 27 April 2018 at Martlesham Police Headquarters.

Councillor Lynch asked about current levels of recruitment and retention. Mr Passmore provided the details of current numbers of both Police Community Support Officer and Police Officer vacancies; extra resources were in place for recruitment and training purposes. Mr Passmore also advised Council of the recruitment of direct entry Detective Constables.

Councillor Gallant said that, in his Cabinet Member role, he worked closely with the County Council’s Crime Reduction Unit and had found it to be proactive and effective in a wide range of partnership arena. Councillor Gallant said he personally found it frustrating to hear that, because of financial pressures, the delivery of item A would mean the cessation of item B; he suggested this need not be the case. Councillor Gallant accepted that some aspects of some services might need to be reduced because of budgetary pressures, but not stopped. He added that the Constabulary must continue to deliver all services through more effectively prioritising and using resources to best effect – as an example, he questioned why cold case reviews were undertaken when perhaps the priority might be seen, by the public, to be the current level of burglary offences.

Mr Passmore said operational matters were the responsibility of the Chief Constable. He concluded by acknowledging the need for services to be delivered with increased efficiency and that projects needed to be delivered on time and with fewer delays.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked Mr Passmore for attending the meeting and for providing Council with a comprehensive update.

Councillor Haworth-Culf, Councillor Hudson and Councillor Kerry left the meeting (8.25pm)

8. Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2018/19

Council received report **CL 08/18** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources. The report was introduced by the Leader of the Council, in the absence of the Cabinet Member for Resources. The report set out the Council's Treasury Management Strategy (at Appendix A) and the Prudential Indicators for 2018/19 (at Appendix B). The Leader of the Council referred to the requirement by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) for the Council to review and approve its Strategy Statement, which governed day-to-day treasury management objectives, on an annual basis. The Leader of the Council stated that the report had been considered and reviewed by both the Audit and Governance Committee and Cabinet and both had recommended its approval by Full Council. It was also noted that members of the Audit and Governance Committee had received a briefing by the Council's external Treasury Advisors.

The Chairman invited questions.

Councillor Block, with reference to the Borrowing Strategy detailed on pages 11 and 12 of the report CL 08/18 and the statement that the Council's expectation was it would not borrow against its authorised limit "in the immediate future", asked if that included the full period up to the implementation of the new Council in May 2019. The Leader of the Council said this referred to the financial year 2018/19 and confirmed there was no expectation of any borrowing in that period but, should that change, an authorised limit of £11m was available to the Council.

There being no further questions or matters raised for debate, it was proposed by Councillor Herring, seconded by Councillor Lynch and unanimously

RESOLVED:

That Full Council approved the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2018/19 and the Prudential Indicators for 2018/19 (at Appendix A and B to report CL 08/18, respectively)

9. Appointment of a Proper Officer for Communicable Disease Control and Associated Matters

Council received report **CL 09/18** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health. The Cabinet Member presented the report which sought Council's approval of the appointment of a Proper Officer for various functions concerned with communicable disease control and associated matters under the provisions of the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010 and the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984. The Cabinet Member advised that, following a reorganisation of Public Health England's Health Protection Teams, it was necessary to update the Council's formal appointment of a Proper Officer for the purposes of the relevant regulations and legislation. The Cabinet Member explained that there were no financial implications associated with the proposal as the services of a Proper Officer were provided free of charge to local authorities.

There being no questions or matters raised for debate, it was proposed by Councillor Gallant, seconded by Councillor McCallum, and unanimously

RESOLVED:

1. That Full Council approved the appointment of any person employed for the time being as a Consultant in Communicable Disease Control or Consultant in Health Protection at the East of England Health Protection Team as Proper Officer for the Council for the purposes of:
 - (a) Regulations 2, 3 and 6 the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010 and
 - (b) Section 48 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 as amended.
2. That Full Council delegated authority to the Head of Environmental Services & Port Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Health, to make any necessary changes to the appointment of the Proper Officer should it be necessary in the future.

10. Cabinet Members' Reports and Outside Bodies Representatives' Reports

Council received report **CL 10/18**.

The Chairman stated that the reports would be taken as read, unless Cabinet Members or Outside Bodies representatives wished to provide further updates. The Chairman also invited Council to question Cabinet Members and Outside Bodies representatives on their reports.

Councillor Holdcroft – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development

Councillor Holdcroft highlighted the main points within his report to Council. With regard to the Business Showcase and Meet the Buyers Trade Show held on 27 February 2018, the Cabinet Member wished to pay tribute to those exhibitors and visitors who had attended despite the severe bad weather and related travel disruptions. Councillor Holdcroft also wished to record his personal thanks to the Council's Economic Development and Regeneration Officers for their hard work in advance of the Trade Show, and on the day, to make it a successful event.

Councillor Fryatt – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning

Councillor Fryatt referred Council to the major revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and to the key proposals likely to have a significant impact on the Council (as listed on page 33 of report CL 10/18). The changes remained out for consultation until 10 May 2018. Councillor Block asked that the significance of the revisions to the NPPF be highlighted to the Town and Parish Councils.

Councillor Fryatt advised that both Martlesham and Wenhaston Parish Councils had had their Neighbourhood Plans accepted by the Planning Inspector; the next stage was a referendum on each Plan.

Councillor Block referred to planning pre-application discussions and asked where authority to set the related fees lay. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Council set the scale of such fees. Councillor Block asked if it was possible to review the level of charges paid by charitable organisations. The Cabinet Member said he would investigate what was possible in this regard.

Councillor Burroughes asked if pre-application fees could be refunded if the final application was subsequently refused. The Cabinet Member said this was not possible; he emphasised that Planning Officers gave the best pre-application advice and guidance possible but there was no guarantee an application would be ultimately successful.

Councillor Gallant – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health

There was nothing to add to the published report.

With regard to the cyber security exercise undertaken in early February, Councillor Dean asked if the Council was confident it was prepared for the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations (from 25 May 2018) which the European Commission had proposed to strengthen and unify data protection for individuals within the European Union (EU), as well as the export of personal data outside the EU. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Council was prepared for the introduction of the new Regulations.

Councillor Holdcroft – Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum (NuLeAF)

Councillor Holdcroft, in summarising the main points within his report, highlighted the update on the recently launched consultation with communities around land use planning as part of the Geological Disposal Facility siting process. The consultation, which would be underway until mid-April, would include workshops in five locations across England together with a technical event on the planning consultation.

Councillor Cooper – Annual Report - Association of Suffolk Museums

There was nothing to add to the published report.

Councillor Hedgley – East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board

There was nothing to add to the published report.

Councillor Savage – Merchant Navy Welfare Board: Port Welfare Committee

There was nothing to add to the published report.

The Meeting concluded at 8.45pm