

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held virtually via **Microsoft Teams** live remote meeting platform on on **Tuesday 6 October 2020** at **6.00 pm**

Present

Councillors

Chair John Griffiths (Leader of the Council)

Vice Chair Sara Mildmay-White (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Sarah Broughton

Carol Bull

Andy Drummond

Robert Everitt

Susan Glossop

Joanna Rayner

David Roach

Peter Stevens

In attendance

Mike Chester

Chair of the West Suffolk Rural Taskforce

(speaking on agenda item 6)

Diane Hind

Leader of the Labour Group

(observer – attendance by viewing the live broadcast only)

Ian Shipp

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

(observer – attendance by viewing the live broadcast only)

Cliff Waterman

(given notice to speak under the Open Forum)

165. Welcome and meeting facilitation

The Chair formally opened the meeting and welcomed all persons present including those that were viewing the meeting externally via the live broadcast.

The Chair set out housekeeping matters and guidance as to how the meeting would operate within the virtual setting. Leah Mickleborough, Service Manager (Democratic Services), was acting as facilitator for the meeting where support was felt necessary, and upon being invited to do so, assisted the Chair in detailing how the electronic voting procedure would operate.

166. **Apologies for absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

167. **Declarations of interest**

Members' declarations of interest are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

168. **Open forum**

The following non-Cabinet member spoke under this item:

1. **Councillor Cliff Waterman**, member for Eastgate ward, Bury St Edmunds drew attention to residents' parking zones and Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) in Bury St Edmunds.

Councillor Waterman explained that in response to a number of complaints received from residents about difficulties with parking in the vicinity of their homes, a survey was carried out with local residents by Bury St Edmunds Town Council to specifically ascertain the concerns raised. Generally, those that had responded had difficulties parking adjacent to their homes within their residents' parking zone; and since CPE came into force in April 2020, many residents that been unable to find a suitable parking space had been issued with tickets for parking illegally.

Councillor Waterman made suggestions for alleviating some of the problems currently being experienced and also considered it appropriate that a fundamental review should be undertaken of the scheme.

In response, Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council, stated that following the introduction of CPE, it was inevitable that issues and concerns would occur, not only in Bury St Edmunds but across West Suffolk. It had been announced earlier that day that a review of all residents' parking zones (RPZ) in Bury St Edmunds would be carried out before the end of the financial year as part of assessing the impact of CPE on the town.

In addition, Councillor Peter Stevens, Portfolio Holder for Operations, stated that the Council was aware of the issues some residents across West Suffolk were having in respect of parking difficulties, and as such procedures were in place to start the process of introducing a new RPZ in Newmarket. As part of the review of RPZs in Bury St Edmunds, engagement would take place with residents to ascertain whether a new zone/s could be created; however, due to large parts of the town being arranged within its mediaeval street pattern, this posed its own difficulties. In an age of multiple-car families, Councillor Stevens explained there was presently insufficient spaces to accommodate all, and as the Council had declared an environment and climate emergency, it was an opportunity to promote use of 'greener' alternatives to the motor vehicle, such as active travel and public transport. He added that there was no leniency on observing the CPE regulations. An appeal process was in place; however, drivers that had received a fine had been deemed to be parking illegally.

Councillor Stevens welcomed the findings of the survey and hoped a suitable solution could be achieved for all concerned.

169. Public participation

No members of the public viewing the live broadcast had registered to speak.

170. Report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 15 September 2020 (Report number: CAB/WS/20/060)

The Cabinet received and noted this report, which informed members of the following substantive items discussed by the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee at its meeting held on 15 September 2020:

1. Performance and Service Updates;
2. Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) Forecast Financial Performance 2020-2021;
3. Covid-19 Response Report;
4. Welfare Reform Update; and
5. Forthcoming Issues.

Councillor Sarah Broughton, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, drew relevant issues to the attention of Cabinet, including highlighting a typographical error in paragraph 2.2.2 of the report, where the quoted figure of '£93,0000' should be amended to read '£93,000'.

In response to a question regarding ARP's plans to mitigate the current budget gap that had been caused as a result of the impacts of Covid-19, Councillor Broughton stated that work was being undertaken to bridge the gap but it was likely that some pressure would fall to each of the partner authorities. This had been factored into West Suffolk Council's forecasts.

171. West Suffolk Rural Taskforce: Review of Action Plan (Report number: CAB/WS/20/061)

The Cabinet considered this report, which presented progress made to date against the West Suffolk Rural Taskforce's action plan.

On 14 January 2020, Cabinet approved the final recommendations of the West Suffolk Rural Taskforce which included agreeing a list of actions and carrying out a review on progress against those actions. This review had now been completed.

Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Council, drew relevant issues to the attention of Cabinet, including highlighting positive developments achieved, as set out in paragraph 1.6.8 of the report, particularly in respect of the work undertaken by volunteers, community groups and parish councils in the rural areas.

Members also noted the existing strengths of, and challenges facing, rural areas, many of which were summarised in paragraph 1.6.2. This included the rural community response to Covid-19, further details of which were set out in paragraph 1.6.4.

Councillor Mike Chester, Chair of the West Suffolk Rural Taskforce was in attendance and was invited to speak on progress made against the action plan. He made positive comments on progress to date and drew attention to specific actions that were ongoing or were yet to start, which were largely dependent on working in partnership with others. He also sought clarification on arrangements for the forthcoming virtual Parish Forum.

Cabinet accepted that progress made in implementing the actions since January 2020 had been inevitably slower than anticipated (for example, on transport initiatives) due to the coronavirus pandemic, but in some areas (for example, communities initiatives), progress had been accelerated due to initiatives that had been developed in rural areas in response to Covid-19. No changes to the proposed activities were made.

Given that further work was required, Cabinet considered the recommendation to receive a further one-year progress report in spring 2021 was acceptable. At this point, it was anticipated that most of the actions would have been completed, except for those which related to the West Suffolk Local Plan, which needed to await the appropriate phase of local plan development.

Resolved:

That:

1. following progress being reviewed against the West Suffolk Rural Taskforce action plan, as set out in Appendix A to Report number: CAB/WS/20/061, no changes to the proposed activities be made; and
2. a one-year progress report in spring 2021 be received, at which point, it is anticipated that most of the actions will have been completed, except for those which relate to the West Suffolk Local Plan, which need to await the appropriate phase of local plan development.

172. Decisions Plan: 1 October 2020 to 31 May 2021 (Report number: CAB/WS/20/062)

The Cabinet considered this report which was the Cabinet Decisions Plan covering the period 1 October 2020 to 31 May 2021.

Members took the opportunity to review the intended forthcoming decisions of the Cabinet; however, no further information or amendments were requested on this occasion.

173. Brandon Leisure Centre Investment (Report number: CAB/WS/20/063)

The Cabinet considered this report, which sought approval for a significant allocation of capital spending from previously approved budgets for investment in Brandon Leisure Centre.

Councillor Joanna Rayner, Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet. She provided an outline of the proposed scheme, together with details of the outcomes of previously approved cost certainty work that had been undertaken, and the impact Covid-19 had had on the facility-based leisure activity sector. Reports and consumer opinion had indicated the sector would see a strong recovery and the West Suffolk Alliance for health and social care remained committed to the creation of new leisure and health clubs. This development would take the opportunity to create treatment rooms that could be used by health partners and strengthen the development of this integrated model.

One of the Council's three strategic priorities was to promote 'Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active'. As part of meeting this priority, the Council had adopted its own sports and physical activity framework. A financial evaluation of the proposed scheme had been conducted and this was outlined in exempt Appendix B. The proposal had been examined in the context of the sports and physical activity framework and identified that the proposal sat within the 'Enable' stream where there was an organisation that provided opportunities for sport and physical activity and were looking to expand. In addition, paragraph 2.6 of the report demonstrated how the proposal met the outcomes of the framework.

Having considered the proposal in detail, including assessing the impact Covid-19 was currently having on the facility-based leisure sector, the Cabinet was confident that investment in the Council's leisure facilities remained acceptable. Members were aware of the complexities and challenges faced in Brandon and felt the town very much needed support. This support would be acknowledged through investment in the leisure centre which would have a positive impact on the health and well-being of Brandon's residents.

Resolved:

That:

1. capital spending of £1,673,889 from the Leisure Strategic Investment Fund that was agreed in November 2016 (CAB/FH/16/049), be approved to deliver the improvements to Brandon Leisure Centre outlined in Report number: CAB/WS/20/063; and
2. capital spending of £302,111 from the Investment in Growth Fund that was agreed in November 2018 (CAB/SE/17/020), be approved to develop rentable space within Brandon Leisure Centre, as detailed in section 5 of Report number: CAB/WS/20/063.

174. Exclusion of press and public

See minute 175. below.

175. **Exempt Appendix: Brandon Leisure Centre Investment (paragraph 3)
(Report number: CAB/WS/20/063)**

The Cabinet considered the exempt Appendix to this report. However, no reference was made to specific detail and, therefore, this item was not held in private session.

176. **Conclusion**

On conclusion of the meeting, the Chair thanked all present for their attendance at this virtual meeting. The live broadcast subsequently ended at this point.

The meeting concluded at 6.40 pm

Signed by:

Chair
