

Minutes of the Suffolk County Council Meeting held on 9 February 2017 at 2.00 pm in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, Ipswich.

Present: Councillors Colin Spence, (Chairman of the County Council), Jenny Antill, Helen Armitage, Nick Barber, Sonia Barker, Trevor Beckwith, Mark Bee, Peter Beer, Michael Bond, Tony Brown, John Burns, Stephen Burroughes, David Busby, Peter Byatt, Kim Clements, Terry Clements, Janet Craig, James Crossley, Mark Ereira, Mary Evans, John Field, James Finch, Jessica Fleming, Julian Flood, Sandra Gage, Peter Gardiner, Mandy Gaylard, Tony Goldson, John Goodwin, Michael Gower, Gary Green, Matthew Hicks, Beccy Hopfensperger, Christopher Hudson, David Hudson, Len Jacklin, Gordon Jones, Michael Ladd, Inga Lockington, Sandy Martin, Guy McGregor, Robin Millar, Bill Mountford, Graham Newman, Colin Noble, Patricia O'Brien, Penny Otton, Caroline Page, Keith Patience, Bert Poole, Chris Punt, Bill Quinton, Andrew Reid, David Ritchie, Bryony Rudkin, John Sayers, Trevor Sheldrick, Reg Silvester, Richard Smith MVO, Joanna Spicer, Sarah Stamp, Jane Storey, Andrew Stringer, Julia Truelove, Robin Vickery, James Waters, Paul West, and Robert Whiting.

53. Thought for the Day

Council received a thought for the day from Mr William Kendall DL, The High Sheriff of Suffolk.

54. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed people to the meeting and thanked Mr William Kendall for giving his thought for the day.

Senior Staff Leaving

The Chairman announced that David Shiner, a child protection barrister who had worked for Suffolk Legal for over twenty years had recently left the Council. The Chairman paid tribute to David being an accomplished barrister, his successful career and his excellent skills as a Judge. The Chairman reported that David had been offered a significant increase in judicial work, particularly in the area of immigration, and it was in that context that he was leaving the Council.

The Chairman also reported that Pauline Martin, the Council's Customer Care Manager and leader of the Customer Rights Team would be leaving the Council on 10 February after 24 years of service. The Chairman paid tribute to Pauline's tireless service to ensure customer feedback was managed effectively and her sound advice and judgement which had been relied upon by councillors and officers.

Director of Public Health's 2016 Annual report

The Chairman informed members that the Health and Wellbeing Board had launched the Director of Public Health's 2016 Annual report which focussed on mental health and a short version, the evidence base and a video were available on the Healthy Suffolk website.

Children's Social Worker of the Year Award

The Chairman was delighted to inform Council that Emily Tipleady-Ead had been named as Children's Social Worker of the Year 2016. The award recognised her outstanding work with children and families and her ability to manage complex caseloads to improve outcomes for children. The Chairman paid tribute to Emily's inspiration and support to colleagues who had found her social work practice and decision making to be safe, innovative, non-discriminatory and well researched.

55. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Richard Kemp, David Nettleton, Stephen Searle and David Wood.

56. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

The following declaration of interest was received:

Councillor Sandra Gage declared a local non pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 7 Revenue Budget 2017-18 and Capital Programme 2017-20 by virtue of her position as a Trustee of Lighthouse Women's Aid.

57. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Council meeting on 8 December 2016 were agreed as a correct record and were subsequently signed by the Chairman.

58. Public Questions

In accordance with Rule 28.2 of the Council's Rules of Procedure (Part 2 of the Constitution), the Chairman reported that two public questions had been received. Both members of the public had been provided with a written response to their question and were able to ask their question and a supplementary question arising from the response at the meeting. A copy of the questions and responses can be found at Appendix 1 to these minutes.

59. Revenue Budget 2017-2018 and Capital Programme 2017-2020

Council considered a report at Agenda Item 7 by the Director of Resource Management on the Revenue Budget 2017-18 and the Capital Programme 2017-2020 together with Appendices A, B and C from the budget report submitted to Cabinet on 24 January 2017. The report identified the level of council tax to be raised from people living in Suffolk to deliver the Council's services and presented the recommendations from Cabinet on 24 January 2017 Agenda Item 9.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Richard Smith, Cabinet Member for Finance, made reference to the Government spending more than it raised in revenue and

the National Debt continuing to grow both affecting the kind of budget for Council to consider. He stated that Suffolk people should pay the minimum needed to maintain the services this Council provided and this would be the guiding principle in forthcoming years. He commented that the Council had delivered services more efficiently and had a 'right first time' attitude together with prioritising statutory services to those who most needed the Council's help. Last year's budget had delivered on supporting frail elderly people and young people at risk and that accounted for two thirds of all spending, he commented that their budgets had increased. Councillor Smith was proud to honour and continue that commitment and the proposed budget for adult care and children and young people's services would go up. He added that with extra funding from the Social Care precept the ACS spending would cope with continuing financial pressures caused by the welcome rise in the national living wage and the Council would increase the rates it paid for places in care homes in Suffolk and thereby strengthen the care sector.

Councillor Smith continued by saying that children's services had seen particular pressure through demand which had been difficult to forecast, both in numbers and the complexity of cases, giving an overspend this year and anticipated it being difficult to contain in the next few years. He made reference to the 'Good' rating last year from the Ofsted review of county children's services and expressed the need to work hard to retain the rating given to only one in four relevant local authorities. The proposed budget included an additional £5 million from reserves to cope with the demand pressures.

With regard to the use of reserves, Councillor Smith referred to their use to address the overspend in the children and young people's budget, resulting in the CYP reserves almost entirely being used up. He added that another £8.5m more reserves would have to be used to balance the 2017-18 budget. He stressed the importance of understanding the various parts of reserves of around £160m reducing to under £140m next year. Most of this money was intended to cover anticipated and known costs of building new schools, constructing new roads such as south of Beccles, east of Bury St Edmunds and the forthcoming Ipswich northern relief road as well as repairing existing roads and highways infrastructure and Upper Orwell Crossings in Ipswich and a crossing at Lake Lothing in Lowestoft. Councillor Smith stated that these last two projects required a County Council contribution of £40m as matched funding to be added to the government grant of £151m to ensure the projects would be delivered and he referred to the Capital Budget for 2017-2020 detailed in the budget papers.

Councillor Smith emphasised that present times were difficult, with little sign for local government that the financial pressure would lessen over the next 3-4 years, necessitating tough decisions to be made, giving a commitment to the protection of the frail elderly and young people at risk in Suffolk. He thanked the finance team for their hard work on the budget proposals and praised Tracey Woods, Louise Ainsley, Aidan Dunn and Geoff Dobson for their sound advice.

Councillor Noble seconded the Motion and referred to his leadership of a listening Council, with the budget being available to the public for the previous 3 - 4 months, and Cabinet members having been out and about and talking to the public, a relatively unique approach in local government. He spoke of three tests of a sound budget – deliverability, proportionality and sustainability supported by

quarterly monitoring reports, officers delivering the budgets set and Cabinet debates about allocation of money to deliver child protection services, highways maintenance and care services and being mindful that it was not the Council's money, but the people's money. He concluded by saying that there was nothing that suggested that local government finance would get better in the next four years and therefore the reserves would be needed to protect services.

Councillor Sandy Martin, seconded by Councillor Len Jacklin, moved a Notice of Amendment to the Revenue Budget 2017-18 and Capital Programme 2017-20 on behalf of the Labour Group. The amendment was not accepted by Councillors Smith or Noble as proposer and seconder of the original motion.

Speaking on the amendment, Councillor Martin referred to the Council existing to make the lives of residents better and do what cannot be done elsewhere. He referred to the consequences seen of the Council not fulfilling its role; potholed roads, slower response times to fire and other emergencies, children taken into care, residential care homes closed down or rated inadequate and elderly people being stuck in hospital, and he warned of the Council potentially failing in its statutory responsibilities or writing an unrealistic budget. Councillor Martin proposed that the amendment to increase spending by another £16m was still financially viable by using reserves, and could be repeated over four years. He advocated managing demand down to a lower level of intervention and reversing cuts made by the Council. Councillor Martin then referred to a National Audit Office report that the Better Care Fund had not delivered the target of savings from integrating social care and health and whilst he supported integration he advocated a change in approach starting with investment and long term commitment he emphasised that investment needed to happen before savings were taken across a range of services.

In support of the amendment a councillor referred to the high level of reserves, including those set aside for projects that had not come to fruition or not been applied for the purposes for which they were held. Some councillors commented on the administration's commitment to keep Council Tax increases to zero and spoke of the cumulative negative impact on the budget caused. Concerns were expressed about vulnerable people not getting the help they need and of waste and patients waiting because people who were medically fit were unable to return home and free up hospital beds. Support was also expressed for increasing investment in health and wellbeing in schools and actions to support teacher recruitment and retention and sharing of expertise.

Other councillors commented on specific items referred to in the amendment including additional financial support to the county's library service, to highways and passenger transport and further highways capital investment, home to school transport and discretionary travel, especially for young people and provision of early years help and enhanced diagnostic services for ADHD.

One councillor referred to a petition signed by 1200 local people of all ages and backgrounds in Woodbridge, urging the Council not to make further cuts to the library service.

A councillor made reference to a report which supported the value of children's centres as cost effective in areas such as truancy, school exclusion, special educational needs, youth and adult crime and mental health problems and welfare benefits and positive impact on higher educational attainment and future

earnings for children and their parents. A councillor made reference to respite care for families on the edge of care and questioned where this appeared in the budget following the Council's commitment agreeing that it would be investigated. Reference was also made to the family assessment support team and of the number of social worker posts vacant.

Councillors also expressed concern over the impact of cuts on the voluntary sector, increased requests from organisations to provide funding from councillor's locality budgets and highlighted the benefits of preventative and inspection work done by fulltime firefighter crews, trading standards officers and Citizen's Advice Bureaux in supporting vulnerable people.

One councillor commented that private care homes were charging more to private funders to compensate for the Council keeping its budget low and another expressed concerns that the Lowestoft third crossing would only be achievable by 2022 if a shortfall in funding of £20m was addressed.

A point of order was raised and affirmation was given that the Lowestoft third crossing project would be built on time and under budget and that there was no shortfall in budget.

Speaking against the amendment, councillors referred to the administration's commitment to invest in future generations and protect older people using Saving Lives Connecting Communities and other transformation programmes to divert demand and reduce long term care needs, investing in high quality care, providing new money for front line services and targeting support to suppliers where they may not be sustainable. Councillors questioned the future financial sustainability of the Council if the amendment were passed and the cuts were reversed and that the amendment being unaffordable as it would clear out reserves within two years. Reference was also made to the Council's Chief Finance Officer's statement in the report that the reserves were adequate but that the financial challenge not sustainable without realistic deliverable savings plans to bring budget back to balance.

Councillors made reference to how savings previously agreed for the fire and protection service had come about in relation to staff retirements, gave reassurance of the high quality of on-call day crews and the need for good preventative work. Reference was also made to the fact that having a full time fire crew, working Monday to Friday, would not have made a difference to the tragic fire in Sudbury, which took place on a Sunday and that the proposal relating to organic waste was not a matter for this authority.

Speaking against the amendment councillors commended the voluntary sector and referred to the Council commissioning services such as Suffolk libraries, the support to adults leading chaotic lifestyles to live independently, home care and domiciliary care and mental health services and services for children and families having been redesigned to deliver more joined up with health services to more families with improved outcomes and services providing quality support targeted to where the demand is.

Councillors commented on the value of the Council's divested services including Vertas, Concertus and OPUS, which provided good, efficient services, local jobs and dividends to this Council. Support was also given to new ways of doing

things, using better technology and different ways of working and for libraries being valuable social hubs which had freedom to develop, with greater engagement in the community and offered a range of services to meet local needs. One councillor expressed interest in hearing from, and meeting with, Suffolk Libraries Board, another councillor urged further involvement of CCG's in signposting children and families to support and ensuring that pathways were right.

Councillors also emphasised the need to invest in major schemes, bringing economic development to the county, including the third crossing at Lowestoft, the three bridges in Ipswich and the heritage centre on the waterfront in Ipswich

On a vote being taken, 20 councillors voted in favour of the amendment and 40 councillors voted against, there were 7 abstentions. Therefore the amendment was defeated. A record of the vote is available on the Council's website at

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/council-and-democracy/the-council-and-its-committees/votes/2017-02-09-Votes-at-Council-Agenda-Item-7-Amendment-to-the-2017-18-Budget.pdf>

Councillor Graham Newman proposed and a councillor seconded a motion to move to the vote. This was agreed by the Chairman following general affirmation of Council.

On a call of names, a vote was taken on the recommendations in the report, 39 Councillors voted in favour and 26 councillors voted against, there were 4 abstentions. Therefore vote was carried. A record of the vote is available on the Council's website at

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/council-and-democracy/the-council-and-its-committees/votes/2017-02-09-Votes-at-Council-Agenda-Item-7-Revenue-Budget-2017-2018.pdf>

Decision:

The Council **agreed:**

- a) The Cabinet recommendations on the Revenue Budget 2017-18 and Capital Programme 2017-20 (**Appendix C**), having regard to Scrutiny Committee's recommendations and subsequent responses (**Appendix A**) and the report by the Director of Resource Management on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves (**Appendix B**)
- b) the budget proposals attached to the report, including savings of £31.3m (detailed in paragraphs 20 to 22) leading to a 2017-18 budget requirement of £436,355,298;
- c) a freeze in general council tax for 2017-18 so that the Band D council tax for County Services remains at £1,126.53p (paragraph 34).
- d) an increase in the Social Care Precept that is ring-fenced to help fund Adult Social Care. This increase is equivalent to 3% of the total Band D council tax. Therefore the 2017-18 Band D Social Care Precept will be £56.97 (paragraphs 32 to 35).

- e) a council tax requirement/total precept on the collection funds of District and Borough Councils of £289,151,087 which includes the precept to fund Adult Social Care of £13,918,832 (paragraph 36);
- f) a capital programme for 2017-18 totalling £97.7m as detailed in paragraphs 37 to 39 of the report;
- g) the revised policy on Minimum Revenue Provision and Capital Prudential Indicators (**Appendix C, Section B, Paragraphs 23-37**)
- h) the Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Prudential Indicators (**Appendix C, Section C**).

(Any changes due to the final Local Government Finance Settlement for Suffolk and/or District and Borough Councils finalising their council tax and business rates tax-bases will be adjusted within the funding from the contingency reserve figure. The final settlement was expected in early February).

Reason for decision: It is the County Council's statutory responsibility to set a budget and precept for 2018-18 by 1 March 2017.

Alternative options: In accordance with Rule 3.4 of Part 2 of the Constitution one notice of amendment had been lodged.

Labour Amendment

Councillor Sandy Martin, seconded by Councillor Len Jacklin, moved the following Notice of Amendment to the Revenue Budget 2017-18 and Capital Programme 2017-20.

This Council will pursue a financial plan that best ensures the wellbeing, safety and economic vibrancy of the residents of Suffolk. We will continue to support this Council's services and will invest in necessary improvements, especially where they will enhance efficiency and reduce dependency.

Despite the acute financial constraints that have been forced upon it by Central Government, this Council notes that the overall level of its reserves (excluding schools) rose from £77.8m on April 1st 2010 (County Council, 17-02-2011, App B, P60) to £191.2m on 31st March 2016 (Cabinet, 24-01-2017, p.173, Table 1). The non-schools non-capital reserves rose from £140.5m on 31-03-15 to £148.8m on 31-03-16.

Although prudential guidelines require the minimum balance on the County Fund General Reserve to be around 1% of the net budget – or £5m – the Council understands the necessity of retaining a greater level in the current difficult financial climate. This Council also accepts that Rate Support Grant funding from Government through the Local Government Settlement will be reduced from £68.2m (2016-17) to £45.2m (2017-18) and that financial prudence is required during this challenging financial period.

However, this Council believes that a higher level of the overall reserves can be spent down safely to invest in preventative services that will save on more expensive statutory costs, avoid an increased future outlay by maintaining already cost effective services, and by prioritising care above cuts, ensure that the most vulnerable in society are not adversely effected in this time of financial difficulty.

To that end, this Council resolves to make the following alterations to the Revenue Budget 2017-18 and the Capital Programme:

Adult and Community Services (Annex C1a)

1. Supporting Lives Connecting Communities (SLCC) (Annex D. ACS1) £5.50m

Reversal of Proposed Cut: To ensure adequate funding for care recipients by reversing proposed cuts to care purchasing and the workforce training and numbers, but leave in place efficiency savings made from IT transformation programme

2. Voluntary Sector Grants (Annex D. ACS2) £0.42m

Revenue Enhancement: To reverse the cuts of £0.29m to voluntary sector organisations proposed in 17/18 budget and add an additional £0.13m to reverse cuts made in 16/17 budget

3. Care Home Training Programme £0.20m

Revenue Enhancement: To fund a new Training Programme for Care Home staff to ensure improved and sustained standards among Suffolk Care Homes

4. Housing Related Support (Annex D. ACS3) £1.40m

Reversal of Proposed Cut: To ensure adequate funding for domiciliary care throughout the County, and to enable transfers from hospital to home

5. Library Service & Archives (Annex D. ACS4) £0.28m

Reversal of Proposed Cut: To reverse the proposed cuts to Library & Archive services in order to carry out the more sustainable financial plan proposed by Suffolk Libraries

6. Culture, Heritage & Sport Services (Annex D. ACS5) £0.23m

Revenue Enhancement: To reverse the proposed £0.13m cuts made to Culture, Heritage & Sport service for this year's budget. In addition, £0.1m to be made available for development of culture & heritage services in Lowestoft

Amendments Subtotal for Adult and Community Services £8.03m

Children and Young People Services (Annex C2a)

7. Teacher Recruitment £0.20m

Revenue Enhancement: To enhance the resources and support budget to enable a more effective level of teacher recruitment

8. Early Years Help and Specialist Services

a. CYP Inclusive Services fund for Autism & ADHD £0.25m

Revenue Enhancement: To compensate for the cut made in 15/16. To provide an enhanced diagnostic service for families of children and young people with ADHD and Autism and to enable them to access the services they need

b. Children's Centres Premises £0.10m

Revenue Enhancement: To reverse the £0.1m cut in the 15/16 budget, in order to provide more sustainable funding for the range of Children's Centres

c. Children's Centres Staff	£0.15m
<i>Revenue Enhancement: To reverse cuts made in 15/16. To increase staff budget, with any efficiency savings found during 15/16 reinvested in the provision of further services</i>	
d. Children's Centre Welfare Rights Officers	£0.10m
<i>Revenue Enhancement: To reverse the cut made in 15/16 and restore the Welfare Rights service to Children's Centres</i>	
9. Making Every Intervention Count (MEIC) (Annex D. CYP1)	£0.40m
<i>Reversal of Proposed Cut: To reverse the proposed cut to workforce development</i>	
10. Further Savings from Staff (Annex D. CYP5)	£0.85m
<i>Reversal of Proposed Cut: To reverse the planned cut of 20 to 25 CYP posts</i>	
11. Reduction in Workforce Development Grant	£0.03m
<i>Revenue Enhancement: Replacement for the Workforce Development Grant</i>	
12. Reduction in Troubled Families Grant	£0.05m
<i>Revenue Enhancement: Replacement of the Troubled Families Grant</i>	
13. Short Breaks Programme	£0.60m
<i>Revenue Enhancement: To facilitate the implementation of the Short Breaks programme to provide respite and crisis care for children and families</i>	
14. Home to School transport	
a. Travel (Annex D. CYP2)	£0.55m
<i>Reversal of Proposed Cut: Provision for inflationary costs (£0.09m), reversal of proposed reduction in services and increase in passenger charges (£0.455m)</i>	
b. Discretionary Post-16 Transport	£0.20m
<i>Revenue Enhancement: To compensate for the £0.2m cut in 16/17, to ensure that charges for discretionary travel and to low income families do not limit the opportunities available for young people to further their studies due to rural isolation</i>	
<u>Amendments Subtotal for Children and Young People Services</u>	
	<u>£3.48m</u>
<u>Public Health and Protection (Annex C3a)</u>	
15. Public Protection Organisation Design (Annex PHP1)	£1.45m
<i>Revenue Enhancement: To reverse cut to Fire Service, Trading Standards and CAB fund proposed in 2017/18 budget, and add £0.3m to compensate for cuts to the Fire Service made in 2016/17</i>	
16. Fire Service Day Crews	£0.60m
<i>Revenue Enhancement: To fund new full-time day crews in Sudbury and Felixstowe</i>	
<u>Amendments Subtotal for Public Health and Protection</u>	
	<u>£2.05m</u>
<u>Resource Management (Annex C4a)</u>	

17. Waste and Infrastructure

a. Organic Waste Collection **£0.30m**

Revenue Enhancement: To reinstate the County Council's financial support for District Council's organic waste collection that was cut in 2016/17 budget

18. Highways

a. Hedge & Verge Cutting **£0.20m**

Revenue Enhancement: To increase funding available for the cutting of hedges and verges in sensitive areas

19. Passenger Transport

a. Travel (Annex D. RM1)

i. Inflationary Savings **£0.06m**

Reversal of Proposed Cut: Reversal of the proposed cut to inflationary provision

ii. Park & Ride **£0.64m**

Revenue Enhancement: To maintain Park & Ride services during transition period

iii. Concessionary Fares Support **£0.40m**

Reversal of Proposed Cut: Reversal of proposed cut to Concessionary Fares Support

iv. Community Transport **£0.44m**

Revenue Enhancement: To reverse the £0.3m cut made in 2016/17 and the proposed cut of £0.14m in the 2017/18 budget, ensuring that rural transport is not limited or cut due to changes in the "New Model"

v. The Provision of Printed Timetables **£0.06m**

Revenue Enhancement: To ensure information available to non-website users

Amendments Subtotal for Resource Management **£2.10m**

Total Additional Revenue Spend **£15.66m**

Administration's Proposed Revenue Budget 17/18 **£487.86m**

Proposed Amended Revenue Net Budget 17/18 **£503.52m**

Proposed Additional Funding from Contingency Reserve **£15.66m**

Proposed Capital Enhancement

20. Ipswich/Lowestoft/Bury St Edmunds Highways Capital Programme

£0.74m

a. *For the design of toilets at Ipswich Cattlemarket Bus Station* £0.10m

b. *Investigate and develop additional funding sources and marketing of Ipswich Park and Ride* £0.01m

c. *Introduce on-line improvements to Ipswich Park and Ride routes (Year one of two years' work to meet bus operator's needs)* £0.20m

- d. Measures to address hospital parking issues in the vicinity of Ipswich & West Suffolk £0.01m
- e. Raised bus stops for routes where these are missing in all three towns, to aid disabled access £0.05m
- f. New bus shelters in all three towns £0.10m
- g. Cycle and pedestrian safety measures (£0.08m/town) £0.24m
- h. Additional RTP1 screen strategic location £0.03m

Total: £0.74m Funded from Earmarked On-Street Parking Reserve

21. Highways and Transport

- a. **Highways Capital Maintenance** £2.00m

Capital Enhancement: To enhance the Capital Maintenance Budget to adequately address the increasing shortfall and maintain Suffolk's highways to an acceptable standard

22. Business Development

- a. **First Time Entrepreneur Fund** £0.50m

Capital Enhancement: In order to provide grants for first time entrepreneurs

23. Short Breaks Programme

- a. **Short Breaks Conversion Fund** £1.00m

Capital Enhancement: To provide funding for any building conversion costs required for the Short Breaks programme

Total £3.50m Funded from Capital Reserve

Proposed Changes	£ Millions
<u>Adult and Community Services</u>	
Supporting Lives Connecting Communities (SLCC)	£5.50m
Voluntary Sector Grants	£0.42m
Care Staff Training Programme	£0.20m
Housing Related Support	£1.40m
Library Service & Archives	£0.28m
Culture, Heritage & Sport Services	£0.23m
<u>Children and Young People Services</u>	
Teacher Recruitment	£0.20m
CYP Inclusive Services fund for Autism & ADHD	£0.25m
Children's Centres Premises	£0.10m
Children's Centres Staff	£0.15m
Children's Centre Welfare Officers	£0.10m
Making Every Intervention Count (MEIC)	£0.40m
Further Savings from Staff	£0.85m
Reduction in Workforce Development Grant	£0.03m
Reduction in Troubled Families Grant	£0.05m
Short Breaks Programme	£0.60m
Travel	£0.55m
Discretionary Post-16 Transport	£0.20m
<u>Public Health and Protection</u>	
Public Protection Organisation Design (Fire Service)	£1.45m

<i>Fire Service Day Crews</i>	<i>£0.60m</i>
<u><i>Resource Management</i></u>	
<i>Organic Waste Collection</i>	<i>£0.30m</i>
<i>Hedge & Verge Cutting</i>	<i>£0.20m</i>
<i>Inflationary Savings</i>	<i>£0.06m</i>
<i>Park & Ride</i>	<i>£0.64m</i>
<i>Concessionary Fare Support</i>	<i>£0.40m</i>
<i>Community Transport</i>	<i>£0.44m</i>
<i>Printed Timetables</i>	<i>£0.06m</i>
<i>TOTAL REVENUE</i>	<u><i>£15.66m</i></u>
<u><i>Capital Enhancement</i></u>	
<i>On Street Parking Account</i>	<i>£0.74m</i>
<i>Highways Capital Maintenance</i>	<i>£2.00m</i>
<i>First Time Entrepreneur Fund</i>	<i>£0.50m</i>
<i>Short Breaks Conversion Fund</i>	<i>£1.00m</i>
<i>TOTAL CAPITAL</i>	<u><i>£4.24m</i></u>

Declarations of interest: As referred to in Minute 56 above.

Dispensations: None were required.

The meeting closed at 5:13 p.m.

Chairman

Suffolk County Council 9 February 2017

Agenda Item 6 – Public Questions

Question 1 - from Ali Matthews to Councillor Matthew Hicks

“Why is SCC allowing travellers horses out of control breeding on their public footpath on and around Papermill Lane, Bramford? These horses are regularly getting off their tether onto the main road!”

Answer from Councillor Matthew Hicks

“The land at Papermill Lane is private land. There is a public right of way across the land and the Council has a responsibility to keep the public right of way clear and available for use by the public. There are no horses kept on the line of the path and the Council’s Rights of Way Team monitor to ensure that there is no infringement. Agencies however are supporting the landowner and the owner of the horses to come to a formal arrangement which would mean that the horses will be secured within fencing and will not require a tether.”

Supplementary Question

“I do have to disagree with you because there are horses tethered on the footpath (I regularly walk my dogs down there) and they are breeding obviously, the foals are being bred, they are being chained as well. There has been an accident before and it was a fatal accident, and they have been getting out a lot and we have had ten horses seized from Papermill Lane by different agencies so there is a very big problem. We feel that a lot more could be done by yourselves and how often do you check the horses on Papermill Lane and also the footpaths are overgrown. Alex Weston who is here at the moment had put several complaints regarding this and she still has not had an answer back from the highways department and they have no record of it?”

Answer from Councillor Matthew Hicks

“There are two aspects I would just like to touch on, first of all, it is an offence for horses to stray on, lay on, or lay at the side of a highway, but this does not apply to highways which cross common ground, waste or unenclosed ground either. The police do have the power to remove horses if they stray onto the highway and they have been exercising their duty. As far as the County Council is concerned we do not have any rights over what happens to the horses which are kept on private land unless the breaches themselves affect the legal welfare of the horses. Despite this however, the Council has with, the support of the RSPCA and Redwings throughout the time, continued to take their advice and judgement on the welfare of the horses and I do not

consider it necessary, or really appropriate, for the Council to dispute their professional judgement on this.”

Question 2 – from Ms Levi Clucas for Councillor Matthew Hicks

“I would like to ask what action the Council is taking regarding environmental issues at West Meadows, including the disposal of remains of horses in a ditch on SCC land which is an offence, the allowing of horses tethered on site at West Meadows including horses tied in horse boxes as this is also a breach of the tenancy agreement, and ensuring the Animal Welfare Act is implemented for horses owned by SCC tenants?”

Answer from Councillor Matthew Hicks

“The Council’s Trading Standards team received a report of a horse carcass which had been discovered on land belonging to the Council at West Meadows. It is the responsibility of the horse owner to dispose of the horse appropriately and with the consent of the landowner. This was not the case. Trading Standards has an enforcement responsibility for the improper disposal of such animal by-products, therefore officers investigated this matter and could not determine the owner of the horse and also discovered the carcass of a second horse. As landowner, the responsibility for ensuring the appropriate disposal of the horse passed to the Council and officers immediately made arrangements for the carcasses to be removed and disposed of appropriately. At the request of Norfolk and Suffolk Gypsy Traveller Service, who manage West Meadows on behalf of the Council, the Council is tolerating horses on land adjacent to pitches of two residents. The first resident will be moving his horses to the land on Papermill Lane once the appropriate agreement and fencing is in place. The second will be entering into a formal agreement with the Council and will be erecting fencing to prohibit the need for tethering. The Council took the decision to tolerate on the basis that we did not want to exacerbate the situation on adjacent land, and that the horses are subject to regular welfare checks from the RSPCA and Redwings Charity, and that any welfare concerns raised are dealt with immediately. The RSPCA and Redwings have not indicated any concerns in respect of these horses.”

Supplementary question

“The response we received today is pretty much identical to the response we received in September, that’s obviously five months ago and since then nothing has changed on the site, other than ten horses have been seized by charities and on numerous occasions horses have escaped onto public roads which is obviously quite dangerous and did actually result in a fatality in 2014, I am sure you will remember to both humans and horses. When does the Council expect to have the fencing that is promised erected to avoid potential fatalities to humans and horses in the future?”

Answer from Councillor Matthew Hicks

“I do appreciate the concerns and that a solution was agreed some months ago to bring forward a formal agreement between the private land owner and the horse owners at Papermill Lane and it has not yet been delivered. But I am absolutely assured by the various agencies and parties involved that are continuing to work on this and actively pursuing to come to an agreement and reach an acceptable conclusion for everyone. I am also assured that all parties have the best interests of horses at the forefront of their decision making process. I don't have a specific date but I will be very happy to give you a date in the coming weeks and let you know a specific date when we hope the matter will be resolved.”