

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) held in the Remote Meeting via Zoom on Wednesday, 3 March 2021

PRESENT: Councillor S J Corney – Chairman.

Councillors E R Butler, B S Chapman, D B Dew,  
I D Gardener, Dr P L R Gaskin, M S Grice, J P Morris,  
A Roberts, T D Sanderson and S Wakeford.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor D J Wells.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor R Fuller and J Neish.

### 66 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 3rd February 2021 and 23rd February 2021 were approved as a correct record by the Panel.

### 67 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor S J Corney declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 72 by virtue of being the Mayor of Ramsey and having participated in discussions in relation to the Covid-19 recovery projects in Ramsey.

Councillor T D Sanderson declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 69 by virtue of being a Member of Huntingdon Town Council.

### 68 NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st March 2021 to 30th June 2021.

### 69 CALL-IN - COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPEND ALLOCATION

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Call-In in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy Spend Allocation was presented to the Panel. Members were reminded that the reason for the Call-In was the decision relating to the Cricket Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, which was not approved by Cabinet at their meeting on 11th February 2021. During his introduction, the Chairman outlined the Call-In process and the options available to the Panel.

The Members who Called-In the item were invited to address the Panel and outline their reasons for doing so.

Councillor Chapman stated that he believed that the facility would be beneficial in supporting the Cancer Care Network, as well as accommodating sports which currently are not accommodated in Huntingdon

Councillor Morris stated that he believed Cabinet had misunderstood the scheme. He added that Huntingdon is lacking in certain facilities and that the scheme would provide a place for wheelchair cricket, as well as meeting space for the Cancer Care Network.

Councillor Wakeford stated that he had Called-In the decision for procedural reasons. He explained that the scheme had been through the process and had received approval from Officers, only for the Cabinet to not approve the scheme. He questioned that were the reasons for not approving the scheme clear and could they have been identified at an earlier stage of the process.

At this stage, the Chairman clarified to Members that he had attended the Cabinet meeting at which the decision was taken and that he had accurately presented the Panel's comments on the report to the Cabinet.

The Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning, Councillor Jon Neish, addressed the Panel and explained the reasoning behind Cabinet's decision. He explained that the Council had £28m of CIL receipts to spend on various infrastructure projects and that there is a need to achieve a balance financially. He added that the Cabinet viewed the scheme as desirable but not essential and that it did not significantly contribute to improving infrastructure in the Huntingdon area.

Councillor Wakeford asked whether the documentation for the invitation of bids should be amended to reflect the need for a scheme to significantly contribute to improving infrastructure. In response, the Executive Councillor explained that the Council has only a finite amount of CIL receipts and that the Council would have to be mindful of balancing competing priorities.

Following on, Councillor Morris asked for more guidance and clarification on what is considered an essential infrastructure project. In addition, he added how much would the Council want to contribute to the major infrastructure schemes from the CIL fund and wouldn't this preclude investment in other schemes. In response, the Executive Councillor explained that the Council is not only funding major projects and CIL will fund a wide variety of schemes.

Councillor Roberts explained that, according to his understanding, there are two reasons why a decision is Called-In. They are that either, the process wasn't followed or the decision was unreasonable or uninformed. Councillor Roberts then went on to explain that he believed neither was the case with the decision before them and that the avenue available to Huntingdon Town Council was to submit a new application.

Following on, Councillor Dew explained that in the format the application was received the Cabinet made the correct decision.

Councillor Sanderson explained that he believed that too much emphasis was placed on the cricketing element of the scheme and not enough on the cancer care network element. He asked if the scheme would have been approved if the

amount requested was reduced but it was explained that Huntingdon Town Council would have to resubmit their application if there was a material change.

A comment was made, by Councillor Butler, on whether funding could be applied for from an alternative source.

The Panel,

RESOLVED

that the decision is not referred back to the Cabinet for reconsideration and therefore the decision shall take effect from the date of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting.

*(At 7.08pm, during the consideration of the item, Councillor E R Butler entered the meeting.)*

**70 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPEND ALLOCATION - BUCKDEN-HUNTINGDON SAFE CYCLING AND WALKING ROUTE**

By means of a report by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Community Infrastructure Levy Spend Allocation, Buckden to Huntingdon Safe Cycling and Walking Route was presented to the Panel.

Following the introduction, Councillor Roberts stated that although there are some elements that are not completely satisfactory, the benefits of the scheme outweigh any negatives.

Councillor Morris stated that it was pleasing to see this scheme return for consideration, particularly as he considered it to be a potentially lifesaving scheme. Councillor Morris thanked everyone involved in making the reconsideration possible and expediting the process.

Following a question, from Councillor Wakeford, on whether it was the intention to bring the scheme back for consideration, it was confirmed that following a communication exchange between the Council, Brampton Parish Council and Buckden Parish Council it was possible to bring the scheme back for reconsideration sooner than anticipated.

Councillor Gardener expressed his support for the bid but stated that the maximum that the District Council should contribute was £80k. The Panel,

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommended to approve the allocation of £100,000 of CIL towards the scheme, subject to the conditions as outlined in the recommendations.

**71 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPEND ALLOCATION - B1040 WHEATSHEAF ROAD/SOMERSHAM ROAD, ST IVES ACCIDENT REDUCTION SCHEME**

By means of a report by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Community Infrastructure Levy Spend Allocation, the B1040 Wheatsheaf Road/Somersham Road St Ives Accident Reduction Scheme was presented to the Panel. In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning stated that the scheme is required particularly as there have been fatalities at the junction in the past. Members were reminded that the application is for £500,000 of CIL and that Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) will match fund 58.33% of the project's anticipated cost.

Councillor Chapman praised the scheme and asked if the Parish Councils were contributing any funding, even it was only a fraction of the amount required. In response, it was confirmed that the funding would be provided by HDC and CCC and that none would come from Parish Councils.

The Panel expressed support for the scheme and

**RESOLVED**

that the Cabinet be recommended to approve in principle the allocation of up to £500,000 of CIL funding to the scheme, subject to the conditions as outlined in the recommendations.

## **72 ACCELERATED COVID-19 TOWNS PROGRAMME**

With the aid of a report by the Interim Corporate Director (Delivery) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Accelerated Covid-19 Towns Programme was presented to the Panel. The Executive Councillor for Housing and Economic Development appraised Members of background to the report.

Following a question by Councillor Morris, regarding the split of funds, it was clarified that the remaining Master Planning work would be used to bring the allocation, as close as possible, to an even split.

Councillor Chapman thanked the Executive Councillor and Officers for attempting to acquired additional funding from the Combined Authority for St Neots. It was clarified that there was no further funding available beyond the £3.1m that St Neots had already received from the Combined Authority for the Future High Street Bid.

The Panel were supportive of the scheme and

**RESOLVED**

that the Cabinet be encouraged to endorse the recommendations within the report.

## **73 COMBINED AUTHORITY'S A141 CONSULTATION**

The Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and the Service Growth Manager gave the Panel a verbal update on the Combined Authority's A141 Consultation. It was explained that, from a HDC perspective, a new link road is crucial to unlock growth. The Combined Authority have outlined six options and launched a

consultation on 22nd February, which will run until 15th March. The Panel was informed that the Council would prefer either options one, two or three but that an official Council response would require Cabinet endorsement.

Councillor Morris asked if the Combined Authority could tweak the questionnaire so that residents are able to better understand the options presented. In response, the Panel was informed that Councillor Morris' concerns would be forwarded to the Combined Authority but that the consultation was already live.

#### **74 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

In response to a question by Councillor Chapman, in relation to whether the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment had provided an update regarding parking charges, the Panel was informed that there had not been a response.

#### **75 MR A GREEN**

In noting that Mr A Green would be leaving the District Council, the Panel expressed its gratitude for the support and assistance he had provided and extended their best wishes to him for the future.

Chairman