

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 13 February 2020

PRESENT: Councillor R Fuller – Chairman.

Councillors Mrs M L Beuttell, J A Gray, J M Palmer,
D N Keane, J Neish and K I Prentice.

53 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

54 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

55 FINAL 2020/21 REVENUE BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2021/22 TO 2024/25); INCLUDING THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

By means of a report by the Finance Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were provided with details of the Final Budget 2020/21 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25 which included the Capital Programme.

The Finance Manager drew attention to changes made to the budget since the Cabinet's previous meeting where it was noted that only two minor changes had been made. In receiving the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), the Cabinet welcomed the reduction in the budget gap at the end of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy period which was now estimated to be £0.453m. This reflected an improvement of around £1m when compared to the previous year.

Having expressed their appreciation to the Executive Councillor for Resources, Senior Officers and staff for their efforts in producing a comprehensive budget, it was

RESOLVED

that Council be recommended to approve:

- (a) the overall Final Budget 2020/21 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25 (as attached as Appendix 1 of the report now submitted, which includes the Revenue Budget at Section 2 and the Capital Programme at Section 3); and

- (b) the new “Plan on a Page” (as attached as Appendix 3 of the report now submitted).

56 2020/21 TREASURY MANAGEMENT, CAPITAL AND INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Consideration was given to a report by the Finance Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking approval of the Treasury Management, Capital, Investment and Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategies and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that Council be recommended to approve:

- (a) the Treasury Management Strategy (as attached as Appendix 1 of the report now submitted);
- (b) the Capital Strategy (as attached as Appendix 2 of the report now submitted);
- (c) the Investment Strategy (as attached as Appendix 3 of the report now submitted);
- (d) the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (as attached as Appendix 4 of the report now submitted); and
- (e) the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy (as attached as Appendix 5 of the report now submitted).

57 INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20 - QUARTER 3

With the aid of a report prepared by the Business Intelligence and Performance Manager and Finance Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were presented with details of delivery of the Corporate Plan 2018/22, and project delivery, in the context of the Council’s financial performance.

The Chief Operating Officer reported that 100% of Key Actions for 2019/20 were green or amber and drew attention to areas where progress had been made in relation to the recruitment of posts within Economic Development, the St Neots Future High Streets Fund and investments in equipment at various One Leisure sites. In respect of Corporate Indicators and Corporate Projects, it was noted that performance was on track at 88% and 89% respectively. Having been informed that there were two red rated Corporate Projects which related to shared services, it was envisaged that the appointment of the new Programme Delivery Manager would help to enhance the Council’s performance in this respect.

Attention was then drawn to the financial performance at the end of Quarter 3. The Cabinet were encouraged to note the forecast outturn of £16.588m which reflected an underspend of £0.569m. Having had their attention drawn to the summary revenue forecast variances by service area, the forecast net expenditure outturn of £4.9m, the positive contribution made by the Commercial

Investment Strategy and the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) to note progress made against the Key Actions and Corporate Indicators in the Corporate Plan and current projects, as summarised in Appendix A and detailed in Appendices B and C of the report now submitted; and
- (b) to note the Council's financial performance at the end of December 2019, as detailed in Appendix D and the register of reviews of Commercial Investment Strategy propositions at Appendix E of the report now submitted.

58 HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING - REVIEW AND STRATEGY

A report by the Housing Needs and Resources Manager was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking approval to consult widely on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping – Review and Strategy prior to its formal adoption.

By way of background, the Chairman reported that it was a statutory requirement for all housing authorities to publish a Homelessness Strategy every 5 years. However, owing to recent changes within the national policy context and having reflected on emerging local issues and pressures, a decision had been made to update the Strategy rather than to wait until 2022 when the review was originally due. Having had their attention drawn to the four priority areas and having been encouraged to note that the use of temporary and bed and breakfast accommodation was significantly down when compared to previous years, the Cabinet noted the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth). Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review and Strategy 2020 be approved as a consultation document; and
- (b) that delegated authority be given to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Executive Leader, to adopt the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review and Strategy 2020 after reviewing consultation responses.

59 PROSPECTUS' FOR GROWTH - HUNTINGDON, ST IVES AND RAMSEY

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report by the Service Manager – Growth (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the Prospectuses for Growth for Huntingdon, St Ives and Ramsey.

The Service Manager – Growth delivered background to the report where it was noted that the Prospectuses had been commissioned by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) following a recommendation by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough independent economic review (CPIER) to

create a market town transport strategy. The Prospectuses were due to be presented to the CPCA Board on 25th March 2020 and would provide a framework for delivery, as part of the CPCA's masterplan strategy which aims to ensure that all market towns in Cambridgeshire are connected to help support the region's future prosperity.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the District Council was actively engaged in conversations with the Combined Authority which would continue into the future. The Chairman then went on to confirm that a review of the governance arrangements of the Town Teams would be required and would be the subject of future discussions with the Combined Authority. In noting that the Prospectuses would remain flexible documents as projects emerged and developed within the District and having been acquainted with the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), it was

RESOLVED

that support for the Prospectuses for Growth for Huntingdon, St Ives and Ramsey, as attached as Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report now submitted, be endorsed and delegated authority to finalise the Council's final comments on these reports be given to the Service Manager – Growth, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Executive Leader, Managing Director and Corporate Director (Place).

60 FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND

By way of a report by the Service Manager – Growth (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the options being put forward for consideration by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for future funding in relation to the Future High Street Fund (FHSF).

Having been acquainted with the background to the report and the planned investment in and around St Neots over the ensuing years, the Cabinet were informed that the Fund would provide a major opportunity to help respond and adapt to the changes together with those affecting St Neots High Street. Furthermore, it was noted that the town had been chosen by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority as the first market town to go through the master planning approach.

The Cabinet noted the involvement of the St Neots Master Plan Steering Group and were informed that the Group would continue to be engaged as the Draft Business Plan was developed. In noting the timeframe for submitting the Plan to MHCLG by 15th March 2020, the Cabinet were advised that the report would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) at their 4th March 2020 meeting. Having expressed their support and extended their thanks to Officers for their hard work and efforts in developing the Draft Business Plan, it was

RESOLVED

that work to date on the draft Future High Street Fund Business Plan for St Neots be noted that delegated authority be given to the Service

Manager – Growth, after consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Executive Leader and Corporate Director – Place, to finalise the preparation and submission of the draft Future High Street Fund Business Plan for St Neots to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on behalf of the Council.

Chairman