

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held as a Remote Meeting via Zoom on Thursday, 11 February 2021

PRESENT: Councillor R Fuller – Chairman.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors J M Palmer and S J Corney.

51 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2021 were approved as a correct record.

52 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor S Bywater declared a disclosable pecuniary interest under Minute No 20/53 as Chairman of Cambridgeshire County Council's Children and Young People Committee.

53 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPEND ALLOCATION

With the aid of a report prepared by the Service Manager (Growth) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were invited to consider and agree infrastructure projects as outlined in paragraph 10.2 to be funded in whole or in part by an amount of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies received to date.

By way of background, the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning advised that the latest funding round had been launched on 10th November 2020 with around £28 million of CIL receipts now currently available for spend on infrastructure projects. Attention was drawn to a number of planned strategic transport projects which included the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements, A141 Huntingdon, A14 Improvement Scheme, A1 Improvement Scheme, East West Rail Bedford to Cambridge opportunities and Edison Bell Way link road and the potential for future financial support being requested for these schemes. Finally, it was reported that Appendix 3 of the report outlined project bids under £50,000 which had been determined in accordance with delegated authority given to the Corporate Director (Place) and the Service Manager (Growth) in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning.

Councillor S J Corney, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), presented the outcome of the Panel's discussions at its meeting on 3rd February 2021 drawing particular attention to the Buckden to Huntingdon Safe Cycling and Walking Route, Cricket Pavilion, King George V Playing Field and Special School (Alconbury Weald) schemes. The Cabinet

concurred with the comments of the Panel in respect of Cambridgeshire County Council making a greater contribution to the Buckden to Huntingdon Safe Cycling and Walking scheme and noted the comments which had been made regarding the Cricket Pavilion at King George V Playing Field which was considered to be a desirable scheme rather than essential or critical.

Following debate on each of the schemes outlined in paragraph 10.2 of the report, the Cabinet expressed their support and approval for three of the five schemes, namely Special School (Alconbury Weald), The Valley land management programme and Swimming Pool Changing at One Leisure St Ives. Whilst supportive of the principle of the Buckden-Huntingdon Safe Cycling and Walking Route, it was agreed not to approve the scheme at this stage as the Cabinet would like to see what contribution, if any, would be made by Cambridgeshire County Council towards the cost of the project.

Having regard to the Cricket Pavilion, King George V playing field, in response to questions raised by a Member, it was clarified that the scheme would seek to replace and improve the current facilities provided on the site. Following discussions, and whilst being mindful of the budget available, Members concurred that CIL funding in the Huntingdon area should be prioritised for future major infrastructure projects and agreed not to approve the scheme. Whereupon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) to note the information on projects already in receipt of funding commitments and the updates on their delivery;
- (b) to note the funding bids submitted for £50,000 or less and the approvals in line with delegated authority agreed at the Cabinet’s meeting on 22 October 2020 (Minute No 20/33 refers);
- (c) to determine funding for projects detailed in paragraph 10.2 of the report now submitted as follows:

Scheme	Decision
Special School (Alconbury Weald) (Cambridgeshire County Council)	Approved in principle
Buckden-Huntingdon Safe Cycling and Walking Route (Buckden Parish Council)	Not approved
The Valley land management programme (Buckden Village Hall Trust)	Approved in principle
Cricket pavilion, King George V playing field (Huntingdon Town Council)	Not approved
Swimming pool changing (phase 2) (One Leisure St Ives)	Approved

- (d) to delegate authority to the Corporate Director (Place) and Service Manager (Growth), in consultation with the Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning, to make final agreements for

contracts to be issued on projects allocated CIL monies in principle, subject to provision of necessary evidence, with the exception of the Special School at Alconbury Weald which, due to the scale of funding offered, will be reported back to Cabinet for its final sign off.

54 FINAL 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2022/23 to 2025/26) INCLUDING THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

By means of a report by the Chief Finance Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were provided with details of the Final Budget 2021/22 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 to 2025/26 which included the Capital Programme.

In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources reported that whilst the budget had not gone through the full draft budget process, this had been a good decision to make as a number of uncertainties had now become clearer. He then went on to report that the proposed budget for 2021/22 of £20,686,000 had increased by 17% when compared to the previous year's original budget. The Cabinet's attention was drawn to the New Homes Bonus, the level and use of reserves held by the Council and the focus which would be placed upon Economic Development in 2021/22. In his concluding remarks, the Cabinet were encouraged to note the proposal to freeze Council Tax in 2021/22 owing to the uncertainties which continued to exist around the impact of COVID-19 and the need to continue to protect the District's most vulnerable residents.

The Chief Finance Officer then drew attention to the key risk areas within the budget which included the scrutiny of Medium Term Plan bids, the Council's Minimum Revenue position, NNDR growth assumptions, the Council's Commercial Investments and the robustness of reserves.

Having expressed their appreciation to the Chief Finance Officer, Service Managers and staff for their efforts in producing a comprehensive budget and in noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth), it was

RESOLVED

that Council be recommended to approve:

- (a) the overall Final Budget 2021/22 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 to 2025/26 as outlined in 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 "Plan-on-a-Page" as outlined in Appendix 2 of the report now submitted.

55 2021/22 TREASURY MANAGEMENT, CAPITAL AND INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Consideration was given to a report by the Chief Finance Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking approval of the Treasury Management

Strategy, Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Statement. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the 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); and
- (d) the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (as attached as Appendix 4 of the report now submitted).

56 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Consideration was given to a report prepared by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking to amend the recommendations of the Council's Off-Street Parking Strategy 2018-2023, which, in 2018, had been decided not to progress the civil enforcement of on-street parking offences in Huntingdonshire.

In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment reminded the Cabinet that at the time the original decision was made, it had not been financially viable to implement civil parking enforcement within the District. Having drawn attention to the projected costs of the proposals together with the timetable for implementation and the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers and Partnerships), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) to update the Off-Street Parking Strategy 2018-2023 to enable the progression of Civil Parking Enforcement of On-Street Parking in Huntingdonshire;
- (b) to approve the two-year project 'Civil Parking Enforcement' in Huntingdonshire to be started from 1st April 2021 utilising the budget provision already made for the project with associated revenue implications; and
- (c) to authorise Officers to seek an emergency agreement with the Highways Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council, in line with recommendations (a) and (b) above and their commitment to support the required application to the Department for Transport.

57 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

With the aid of a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a proposal to enable the delivery of Electric Vehicle charging points within Huntingdonshire in line with the Council's Off Street Car Parking Strategy 2018-2023.

In noting that the project would be delivered in two phases concluding at the end of July 2021 and in noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers and Partnerships), the Cabinet expressed their support for the proposals. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet approve:

- (a) the locations proposed and phasing of the installation of Electric Vehicle charging points;
- (b) the type and number of charging points at a given site; and
- (c) a fee from the options presented, or alternative based on the evidence presented.

58 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21, QUARTER 3

With the aid of a report prepared by the Business Intelligence & Performance Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered progress made against the Key Actions and Corporate Indicators listed in the Council's Corporate Plan 2018/22 for the period 1st October to 31st December 2020. The report also incorporated progress on the current projects being undertaken by the Council.

The Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning summarised the progress made in delivering the Key Actions for 2020/21 over the reporting period and the Cabinet were advised that 69% of these were on track, with 31% being classified as being within the acceptable variance. In doing so, Cabinet's attention was drawn to those areas where positive progress had been achieved, as set out in section 3.4 of the report submitted.

In terms of performance against the Council's Corporate Indicators, Cabinet were pleased to note that the majority of these were on track at the end of Quarter 3 with only five being classified as "red" because performance was below an acceptable variance.

Having been apprised with the status of corporate projects at the end of December 2020 and in noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to note the 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.

59 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21, QUARTER 3

A report by the Chief Finance officer was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) presenting details of the Council's financial performance to the end of December 2020.

The Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources drew the Cabinet's attention to the highlights within the report, specifically the forecast revenue outturn overspend of £0.799m and capital outturn underspend of £11.890m. Reference was also made to the Commercial Investment Strategy and the benefits this was achieving for the Council, namely the protection of services for the residents of Huntingdonshire.

Having welcomed the report and in noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet note the Council's financial performance at the end of December 2020 and the register of reviews of Commercial Investment Strategy propositions as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report now submitted.

Chairman