

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 17 March 2022

PRESENT: Councillor R Fuller – Chairman.

Councillors J A Gray, D N Keane, J Neish and K I Prentice.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Bywater and S J Criswell and J M Palmer (Cabinet Assistant).

59 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

60 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

61 PARKING: AGENCY AGREEMENT FOR CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Further to Minute No. 20/56, consideration was given to a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were provided with details of the draft Agency Agreement between the District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council required for the District Council to undertake the enforcement of on-street offences once parking within the District boundary had been decriminalised.

It was noted that the draft Agreement had been reviewed by 3C Legal Services and was awaiting any further comments back by the County Council, with further clarification awaited on the position for the District Council should they wish to terminate the Agreement early.

Members welcomed progress with the Agreement and attention was drawn to specific concerns raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers and Partnerships) on a consistent acceptable standard of all signage and road markings, whereby it was identified that the on-going maintenance would be undertaken by the County Council through a Service Level Agreement to ensure that any faults are rectified through a robust mechanism that formed part of the ongoing highways maintenance as opposed to the matter being raised by the District Council. Whereupon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that, subject to the final amendments being presented following the review being undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council Officers and Councillors required as part of County Council endorsement, the contents of the proposed Agency Agreement for Civil Parking Enforcement in Huntingdonshire be endorsed.

62 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPEND ALLOCATION

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

The Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning reminded Members that this was the second of two funding rounds for 2021/22 that was launched on 9th December 2021 with a closing date of 21st January 2022. Members noted the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) and responses provided and the Executive Councillor for Strategic Finance questioned the communication method for unsuccessful applicants and potential disparity of understanding of applicants in the process. In response the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning reassured Members that each individual was provided with a full response and outcome, as well as support available as required.

In noting the extension of time for the CIL allocation previously agreed in principle for the Wheatsheaf junction project, attention was drawn to the delays in project implementation that was outside of the District Council's control that had resulted in a longer delivery time and significantly higher costs.

In expressing their disappointment with the delays to the Wheatsheaf junction project given the critical safety concerns but overall support for the projects, the Cabinet has

RESOLVED

- (a) that the information on projects previously allocated or in receipt of funding commitments and the updates on their delivery (as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report now submitted) be noted;
- (b) that Officer recommendations for projects submitted in this round for over £50,000 Community Infrastructure Levy funding as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report now submitted be approved;
- (c) that the bids submitted in this round for £50,000 or less Community Infrastructure Levy funding and the approvals in line with delegated authority (as outlined in Appendix 3 of the report now submitted) be noted;
- (d) that an extension of time of the Community Infrastructure Levy allocation until 24th March 2024 for B1040 Wheatsheaf Road/Somersham Road, St Ives Accident Reduction Scheme be approved; and
- (e) that the Deputy Leader be requested to write to Cambridgeshire County Council in respect of the scheme outlined in recommendation (d) above expressing support for the scheme but also to place on record disappointment with the significant delay to this project given the ongoing safety concerns surrounding the site location.

63 COVID RECOVERY - SHAPING THE FUTURE

The Cabinet considered a report by the Assistant Director Recovery and Recovery Programme Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached the “Shaping the Future – our approach to recovery from COVID 19” document which outlined how the Council would continue to prioritise work with communities and partners to ensure residents and businesses could access the right support to meet the challenges faced emerging from the Coronavirus pandemic.

Members’ attention was drawn to the original Community Impact Assessment and Recovery Programme established to mitigate potential risks as the pandemic continued and the further Impact Assessment that was undertaken to identify where the impacts of COVID had been the most significant.

In noting the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers and Partnerships) particular attention was drawn to interest in the Recovery Programme projects associated with the promotion and supporting of jobs through the Job Club and the successful Kickstart scheme. Whereupon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the “Shaping the Future – our approach to recovery from COVID-19” document be adopted as the foundation for the Council’s approach and way of working to ensure it takes the lead with its partners, communities and its services to ensure residents and businesses can get the right support, at the right time, in the right way to recover and deliver the Vision for Huntingdonshire that:

- Supports a safe and healthy environment;
- Delivers economic growth;
- Provides value for money services; and
- Creates opportunities for the people of Huntingdonshire.

64 LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Members were acquainted with a report by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that had been developed to update and expand upon the Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD adopted in 2007. The revised SPD would support the delivery of Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan.

The Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning referred Members to the consultation on the document that had been undertaken between 15th October and 10th December 2021 and the issues raised during this process that resulted in significant amendments and minor changes. In referring to the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) the Cabinet noted that the comments by Councillor B S Chapman had been reported incorrectly and Councillor Chapman had referred to his disappointment with the level of

community engagement and responses to the consultation, not the consultation process itself.

In noting that the SPD had been drafted to bring it inline with current legislative requirements and improved detail to support Officers in making their decisions, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the proposed Landscape and Townscape as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be approved and by doing so supersede the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD (2007); and
- (b) that the comments from the Consultation Statement, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Reports and Equality Impact Assessment be noted.

65 MARKET TOWNS PROGRAMME - SPRING UPDATE

The Cabinet received and noted a report by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on progress made to date on the Market Towns Programme (MTP) and associated work streams of the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF), Phase 1 - Accelerated Towns Programme and Phase 2 – Longer Term Programme.

Members welcomed the content of the update that assisted in providing clarification on the status of projects and avoidance of misinterpretation. The Executive Leader explained that he had been working with the Communications Manager in the provision of further communications on the Programme to be published and it was noted that a further update and associated decisions to enable ongoing delivery of the programme would be brought to Cabinet in the Summer Update.

66 NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY - REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report by the Revenues and Benefits Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the introduction of a new Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) policy that would form part of the Council's overall Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

The Executive Councillor for Corporate Services outlined the background to the CARF that had been designed to support businesses that had been impacted by the COVID pandemic but not eligible for other rate relief schemes and further highlighted the eligibility criteria as set out in guidance by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

In noting the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) and the communications plan for raising awareness across the District, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the inclusion of the Covid Additional Relief Fund policy into the existing National Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Policy be approved with effect from 1st April 2022.

Chairman