

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 16 January 2024

PRESENT: Councillor S J Conboy – Chair.

Councillors L Davenport-Ray, S W Ferguson, M A Hassall, B A Mickelburgh, B M Pitt, T D Sanderson, S L Taylor and S Wakeford.

61 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

62 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

63 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

The Cabinet considered a report from the Assistant Director (Strategic Insight and Delivery) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing an update in relation to the delivery timescales of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) within Huntingdonshire and appraisal of the approach prior to “go live” including both “Stakeholder” briefings and updates.

The Executive Councillor for Leisure, Waste and Street Scene reported that CPE was the outcome of a process that decriminalised a number of on-street parking offences enabling them to be enforced as a civil matter by a Local Authority. Which denoted a substantial modification to the existing situation whereby these offences may only be enforced by the Police and until the transition to Civil Parking Enforcement takes effect, the enforcement of on-street parking matters will remain a function of the Police as the District Council are not able to support enforcement due to legislative restrictions.

The Cabinet noted that the process being undertaken will see the establishment of a Civil Enforcement Area (CEA) in Huntingdonshire. This is a statutory process that will see the Highways Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council) make an application to the Department for Transport (DfT) for the CEA. Following a DfT review, the application will then be laid before Parliament for approval.

The District Council will then undertake the ongoing on-street enforcement of Civil Parking including charge notice progression. The annual anticipated budget deficit created by the operation of Civil Parking is within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and takes into consideration a number of changes including an increased number of enforcement staff and the on-street

remedial works costs required to uplift the current standard of 'signs and lines' associated with on-street parking restrictions.

It was noted that Cambridgeshire County Council will retain all other responsibilities as the Highways Authority. As such, responsibility for new on-street parking restrictions and scheme implementations, as well as the ongoing maintenance of 'sign and lines' when the operation of Civil Parking Enforcement commences. Whilst the Police will still retain enforcement powers for dangerous and obstructive parking, vehicles parked on pedestrian crossings and zig zag lines and moving traffic offences.

Following deliberation, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- a) that the work undertaken to date and the preparedness of HDC and CCC to apply for Decriminalisation of Parking in Huntingdonshire against the previously approved timescales be noted;
- b) that the new expected go live date as determined by the Department for Transport's capacity constraints outside of the control of both CCC and HDC be noted;
- c) that the proposal as set out in Section 4.4 of the report now submitted for 'Go Live & Warning Notice Approach' be approved;
- d) that the proposal as set out in Section 4.5 of the report now submitted for 'CPE Stakeholder Briefing & Update Approach' be approved; and
- e) that the signing of the PATROL agreement as set out in Section 4.6 of the report now submitted be approved.

64 BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIC SITES

The Cabinet considered a report by the Open Spaces Project Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) that outlined the proposed plan to deliver biodiversity enhancement works on the Council's strategic sites through the Biodiversity for All project.

The Executive Councillor for Climate and Environment reported that this work plan was essential to meet the Council's obligation to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain under the Environment Act 2021. It was further noted that the project directly linked to the action in the Corporate Plan, which committed to delivering the Plan for Nature and contributing to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to guide greater biodiversity and nature restoration in the District.

The Cabinet also noted that the project linked to the Council's Climate Strategy, through the delivery of good quality and accessible open spaces and play facilities that has a direct impact on improving the quality of life for local people specifically improving happiness and wellbeing of residents and creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations specifically lower carbon emissions.

The Cabinet agreed on the importance of enabling residents and businesses to thrive by listening and working with them as outlined in the corporate plan, opportunities to collaborate in the effective and efficient delivery of open spaces and nature-based activities to best meet the needs and wants of Council communities and influencing partner organisations and stakeholders by creating

a shared vision benefiting Huntingdonshire. Through the provision of evidence and sharing opportunity the Council can, in conjunction with local communities and partner agencies, influence the provision of the right open spaces and play facilities.

The Cabinet was informed that the Strategic Sites work plan was part of the broader Biodiversity for All programme and focuses on the sites the Council either owns or is leased. This work plan, as set out in the report, is entirely separate to the Biodiversity for All Community Grant Scheme which is a distinct element of the overall project and will be accessible to external landowners.

The Cabinet was advised that they were being asked to approve the schedule of biodiversity improvement, leading to March 2025 and beyond, on Council strategic sites. The report also sought endorsement of the commissioning of a delivery partner to progress works on the strategic sites.

Accordingly, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- a) that the following delivery schedule for planned biodiversity enhancement work for HDC strategic sites be approved:

Short-term (Tranche 1) – 1 - 2 Years

- Hill Rise Park, St Ives
- Priory Park, St Neots
- Spring Common, Huntingdon

Medium-term (Tranche 2) – 3 – 5 Years

- Barford Road Pocket Park, St Neots
- Stukeley Meadows Nature Reserve, Huntingdon
- Sapley Playing Fields, Huntingdon

Long-term (Tranche 3) – 5 – 10 Years

- Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Huntingdon
- Riverside Park, St Neots
- Oxmoor Urban Park, Huntingdon
- Berman Park, St Ives
- Paxton Pits, Little Paxton
- The Thicket, St Ives
- Holt Island, St Ives

- b) that the decision to commission a delivery partner to lead on the design, consultation, and delivery of the work be approved.

Chair