

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, CAMBS, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 17 June 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: Councillor J M Palmer.

8 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th May 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

10 A428 BLACK CAT TO CAXTON GIBBETT IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME

Consideration was given to a report prepared by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing an update on the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements Scheme Development Consent Order (A428 DC0) application and the next stage as the programme moves into the pre-examination stage and Examination in Public.

Following a brief introduction by the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and having had their attention drawn to the addendum to the report (a copy of which is also appended in the Minute Book) together with the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) to note the update on the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements Scheme Development Consent Order application to the Planning Inspectorate and the next stages and timescales in the process;
- (b) to note the emerging principles of concern identified from the technical analysis and provide member direction and comment on the key issues as outlined in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the report now submitted and any other areas for consideration;
- (c) to confirm the Council's continued support of the A428 Scheme, subject to reaching agreement on identified issues with Highways England; and

- (d) to delegate authority to the Executive Leader and the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning in consultation with the Managing Director and the Strategic Growth Manager to finalise the preparation and submission of the documents required from the Council as part of the legal Development Consent Order process, including the joint response with Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council including the Local Impact Report, the Statement of Common Ground and Relevant and Written Representations.

11 EAST WEST RAIL - MAKING MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS NON-STATUTORY CONSULTATION

A report by the Strategic Growth Manager was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing an outline of the details set out in the non-statutory consultation on the East West Rail (EWR) proposals.

By way of background, the Cabinet noted that the proposals sought to address the connectivity opportunities identified in the Oxford to Cambridge (OxCam) Arc Economic Prospectus. Matters that were discussed included the absence of detail from the proposals, where it was acknowledged that further information would follow at a later date. Additionally, the Cabinet place on record their continuous support for the proposals and noted the impact they would have upon residents in and around the St Neots area.

Having been apprised with the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) to note the information provided in relation to the current consultation regarding potential route alignment;
- (b) to consider the key elements noted to be referenced in the Council's response following consultation with specialist officers and provide direction or comment;
- (c) to confirm the Council's continued support of the East West Rail scheme including a new station to the south of St Neots; and
- (d) to delegate authority to the Executive Leader and the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning in consultation with the Managing Director and Strategic Growth Manager to complete and finalise the Council response to the consultation following ongoing discussions.

12 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21 (QUARTER 4)

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 2020/21 financial year. The report also incorporated progress on the current projects being undertaken by the Council.

In noting the performance levels achieved, particular reference was made to the action undertaken by the Council to prevent homelessness, the recovery plan in place for One Leisure and Active Lifestyles, the reduction in staff sickness absence levels and the range of work undertaken by the Council in respect of mental health.

Having been apprised with the status of projects at the end of the 2020/21 financial year and in noting the view of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) the Cabinet commended the Council's Senior Leadership Team and all Officers for the high performance levels achieved during the very difficult and challenging year. The Managing Director was requested to cascade this message down to all Officers. Whereupon, it was

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.

13 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21 (QUARTER 4)

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 at the end of the 2020/21 financial year. Attention was also drawn to an addendum to the report (a copy of which is also appended in the Minute Book) where an updated covering report and Appendix 1 had been circulated.

The Executive Councillor for Strategic Finance drew the Cabinet's attention to the highlights within the report, specifically the estimated revenue outturn underspend of £0.064m and estimated capital outturn underspend of £13.415m. Attention was drawn to the summary revenue variances by service as outlined in the table shown at paragraph 3.2 of the updated report together with the main reasons for variances in the capital programme as outlined in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

Having commended the Chief Finance Officer and her team for the production of a comprehensive report and the Executive Councillor for Strategic Finance for his stewardship over the years, and in noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet has:

- (a) considered and commented upon the financial performance at the end of March 2021 and the register of reviews of Commercial Investment Strategy propositions as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report;
- (b) considered and approved the proposed budget carry forwards for the revenue outturn as detailed in Appendix 3; and

(c) considered and approved the proposed budget carry forwards for the capital outturn as detailed in Appendix 1.

14 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 6 MONTH PERFORMANCE REVIEW

With the aid of a report prepared by Chief Finance Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were updated on the Council's treasury management activity for the second 6 months of the year, including investment and borrowing activity and treasury performance.

Having had their attention drawn to the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) and in noting that activity had been slow to progress over the reporting period, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet note the treasury management performance for the second 6 months of 2020/21 and recommend the report to Council for consideration.

15 HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK JOINT GROUP

The Cabinet received and noted the Minutes of the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group held on 12th March 2021. In doing so, the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment was pleased to report that the site had played a crucial part during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic enabling members of the public a safe place to undertake their daily exercise, the café continues to generate high levels of income despite the pandemic and that volunteers were returning to resume their duties at the Country Park.

Following a suggestion, the Democratic Services Officer undertook to make contact with the Leader of the HDC Independent Group with a view to prompting him to reconsider membership of the Group owing to the low attendance levels achieved.

Chairman