

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, 21 April 2022

PRESENT: Councillor R Fuller – Chairman.

Councillors S Bywater, S J Criswell, J A Gray and D N Keane.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors K I Prentice and J M Palmer (Cabinet Assistant).

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor J Neish (via Zoom).

67 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

68 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

69 CAMBRIDGESHIRE HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY - EXTENSION OF SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT

(At 7:03pm, during discussion on this item, Councillor J A Gray took his seat at the meeting).

A report by the Community Resilience Manager was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing an update on the performance of Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (CHIA) and seeking authorisation to extend the shared service agreement with CHIA for a further 3 years.

The Chairman, as Executive Councillor for Housing and Economic Development introduced the report and reminded Members that the shared service agreement with South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City had now been in place for 10 years and operating successfully. Members were encouraged to note the performance levels achieved and acknowledged the number of referrals had reduced owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers & Partnerships) and having expressed their support for the extension of the agreement, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to extend the shared service agreement for a further 3 years with authority delegated to the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing and Economic Development to finalise the agreement.

(Owing to his remote attendance via Zoom, Councillor J Neish did not vote on this item).

70 PROPOSED CAMBRIDGE CONGESTION CHARGE

Consideration was given to a report by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) drawing Members' attention to the potential introduction of congestion charging by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP).

In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning acquainted the Cabinet with the background to the proposals reminding Members of the GCP's efforts to promote significantly enhanced bus services around Greater Cambridge, which extended into Huntingdonshire along with walking and cycling infrastructure enhancements with the aim of reducing congestion and resultant carbon dioxide emissions and air pollution within Cambridge. He then went on to report the implication of the proposals upon Huntingdonshire's residents; namely, the lack of easy access to proposed transport alternatives and the impact upon businesses needing to make quick and frequent trips into Cambridge. The Cabinet's attention was then drawn to Appendix 2 which outlined the content of a letter formally responding to the proposals.

Cabinet Members expressed their support for the content of Appendix 2 and acknowledged the impact of the proposals upon residents in rural localities within the District which did not have regular or frequent bus services and/or alternative reliable options to the private car. Concerns were expressed that the proposals appeared to target the working population at a time when the cost of living was already increasing. The Cabinet concurred that they wished to see an improvement in public transport and better services but that the proposals for raising the required funding to deliver this aim targeted motorists and was not appropriate for Huntingdonshire's residents. Furthermore, the impact upon the wider population had not been fully considered. The example referred to at the meeting was a patient receiving treatment at Addenbrooke's Hospital for a terminally ill disease who may not wish to use public transport options.

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

RESOLVED

to endorse the concerns raised in the report on behalf of Huntingdonshire residents and businesses and agreed to submit a formal response to the Greater Cambridge Partnership as outlined in Appendix 2 (of the report now submitted).

(Owing to his remote attendance via Zoom, Councillor J Neish did not vote on this item).

71 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MARKET TOWNS TASK AND FINISH STUDY

This item was withdrawn from the agenda and would be considered at the Cabinet's June 2022 meeting.

72 HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK JOINT GROUP

The Cabinet received and noted the Minutes of the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group held on 18th March 2022.

The Executive Councillor for Strategic Finance commented upon the planned future development proposals at the Country Park which was welcomed by the Cabinet. Members noted that a report to this effect would be submitted to the Cabinet at its June 2022 meeting.

73 VOTE OF THANKS

In acknowledging that this would be the last Cabinet meeting of the current administration before the May 2022 elections, the Chairman placed on record his thanks to Cabinet Members and the Managing Director and her team for the support and guidance provided over the last two and a half years. He stated that he felt proud for what the Cabinet had achieved and delivered over the last few years, all to the benefit Huntingdonshire's residents.

In turn, the Executive Councillor for Strategic Finance paid tribute to the Chairman and expressed his sincere and personal thanks for the leadership, time, effort and commitment given by the Chairman in fulfilling his duties as Leader of the Council, which was echoed by Executive Members.

Chairman