

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 Thursday, 16 June 2022

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.

8 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

9 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

10 JOINT ADMINISTRATION AGREEMENT

With the aid of a report by the Managing Director (a copy of which is in the Minute Book), the Cabinet noted the terms of the Joint Administration Agreement established between the HDC Independent, Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green Groups which had been signed by Group Leaders on 17th May 2022. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the content of the Joint Administration Agreement as attached at Appendix 1 of the report now submitted be received and noted.

11 MARKET TOWNS PROGRAMME - SUMMER UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report by the Corporate Director (Place) providing an update on activity across the strands of the Market Towns Programme, in particular, the activity on the St Neots Fund Future High Street highways related projects, the planned wider engagement in the draft masterplans for St Ives, Ramsey and Huntingdon and the imminent external funding opportunities.

In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy and Housing drew attention to the recommendations proposed within the report, the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) and made reference to the fact that this work had been inherited from the previous administration. He then went on to report that engagement would be enhanced over the summer period to enable stakeholders' further opportunity to engage with the programme and summarised the points raised by the Overview

and Scrutiny Panel relating to the challenges around ambition, speed, deliverability and finances of the proposals.

In response to a question raised by the Executive Councillor for Community and Health, the Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy and Housing responded that expectations would need to be managed across all projects, including St Neots, and whilst being mindful of the funds available, account would need to be taken of inflation and rising costs.

In noting the progress made to date of the Market Towns Programme, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) to delegate authority to the Corporate Director (Place) and the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Place, Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy & Housing and Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources to submit, accept and sign the associated funding agreement for the Ramsey Local Growth Fund bid enabling the delivery of a new produce hub and public realm improvements;
- (b) to delegate authority to the Corporate Director (Place) and the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Place, Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy & Housing and Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources the submission of a funding bid in respect of a second round of the Levelling Up Fund;
- (c) to delegate authority to the Corporate Director (Place), the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal Practice in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Place, Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy & Housing and Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources to enter into all relevant and necessary contracts for the successful design, development, construction and delivery of the Market Towns Programme;
- (d) to reflect the change in operational responsibility for the Market Towns Programme, authorised the Corporate Director (Place) to exercise the above delegations in line with statutory procurement, standing orders and the Council Constitution; and
- (e) to note that update reports will be brought back to Cabinet on a quarterly basis outlining any contracts that have been entered into under the above delegation within the period reported.

12 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT, 2021/22 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 period 1st January to 30th April 2022. The report also incorporated progress on the current projects being undertaken by the Council.

The Executive Councillor for Customer Services summarised the progress made in delivering the Key Actions for 2021/22 over the reporting period where the Cabinet were pleased to note that in respect of Corporate Indicators, 86% of these were either on track or within an acceptable variance. He then went on to report that whilst the pandemic had less impact on performance for most services compared to the previous year, it continued to be a factor in customers ability to pay Council Tax this year. Across the board, 8 indicators remained “red” but this remained low when compared to previous years. In his concluding remarks and in response to the comments which had been made by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth), it was reported that the new administration would be refreshing the Corporate Plan in the coming months progressing it towards a fairer and greener Huntingdonshire.

In thanking Officers and the previous administration for the performance levels achieved and the targets reached to date, it was

RESOLVED

that Cabinet 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 HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK JOINT GROUP

RESOLVED

that Councillor S Taylor be appointed on to the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group in her capacity as Executive Member for the Country Park in place of Councillor T D Sanderson.

14 REPRESENTATION ON ORGANISATIONS

The Cabinet considered a report prepared by the Democratic Services Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the Council's representation on a variety of organisations/partnerships. An updated Appendix had also been circulated earlier that day (a copy of which is also appended in the Minute Book) to take into account minor changes which had been made since agenda publication.

The Democratic Services Officer explained that the appointments would be in place for a four year term until May 2026 and that a full review had been undertaken in March/April 2022 seeking views from external organisations, District Council appointed representatives and Officers on whether the Council should continue to appoint, how they contributed to the Council and its corporate objectives and whether there was any scope to nominate non-HDC Councillors to these groups, for example, a former District Councillor, an Officer or another local/community representative (table 2.4 of the report refers). The review highlighted the complex and differing governance arrangements relating to Internal Drainage Boards and the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) have agreed to include this within their work programme, appointing Councillors S Cawley, S Corney, I D Gardener and S Howell on to a working group for this purpose.

Having had their attention drawn to table 2.5 which outlined those organisations proposed to be deleted from the list of appointments and having agreed to make a minor change to the appointment relating to the East West Rail – Huntingdonshire South Cambridgeshire Local Representatives Group, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) to appoint to the organisations and partnerships referred to in the updated Appendix 1 of the report now submitted, subject to a minor change in one appointment relating to the East West Rail – Huntingdonshire South Cambridgeshire Local Representatives Group;
- (b) to agree not to appoint to those organisations and partnerships as indicated in the updated Appendix 1 of the report now submitted;
- (c) to request the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth) to undertake a review of the governance arrangements in place for the various Internal Drainage Boards to which the Council appoints to; and
- (d) that in the event that changes or new appointments are required to the District Council's representation during the course of the four year term, the Elections and Democratic Services Manager be delegated, after consultation with the Executive Leader, Deputy Executive Leader and Assistant Leader, to nominate and authorise alternative representatives as necessary.

15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

16 DISPOSAL OF SMALL PARCEL OF LAND TO MEMBER OF STAFF

The Cabinet gave consideration to an exempt report by the Interim Commercial Estates Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) on the disposal of a small parcel of land to a member of staff.

In receiving an introduction from the Interim Commercial Estates Manager, the Cabinet were acquainted with the background to the report, the reasons why a decision was required by the Cabinet and details of consultations undertaken to date. Having responded to questions raised by Executive Members at the meeting, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet endorse the recommendation contained within the exempt report now submitted.

17 MATERIAL RECYCLING FACILITY (MRF) CONTRACT EXTENSION

An exempt report by the General Operations Manager was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) on the Materials Recycling Facility Contract Extension.

The Executive Councillor for Leisure, Waste and Street Scene provided detailed background to the report and drew attention to the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth). In her introduction reference was made to market forces, the current levels of financial and operational performance, indicative gate fees and future contract options beyond 2024.

Having commended the service for the exemplar performance standards achieved and having thanked Officers and the previous administration for their hard work and efforts to date, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet approve the recommendation contained within the exempt report now submitted.

Chair