

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

PRESENT: Councillor S J Conboy – Chairman.

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

APOLOGIES: None

**85. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING ALLOCATION**

With the aid of a report prepared by the Chief Planning Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet received a report inviting consideration of those recommendations relating to infrastructure projects seeking funding in whole or in part from an amount of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies received to date.

By way of background the Executive Councillor for Planning Councillor T. Sanderson reported that Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) must spend the levy on infrastructure needed to support the development of the district that helps to deliver across the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan 2023 - 2028 specifically Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations by improved housing and forward-thinking economic growth e.g. influencing delivery of infrastructure including East West Rail, A428, A141 Strategic Outline Business Case and future Transport Strategies.

Cabinet noted that the latest funding round was launched on 27th November 2023 with a closing date of 22nd January 2024. Bids received within that round for CIL funding towards infrastructure projects have been assessed by officers to reach the recommendations within this report. The outcomes of this round do not preclude applicants from submitting future applications to future rounds, and they will be considered against the adopted criteria at the time of determination.

Cabinet was advised that a review of CIL governance is underway and anticipated to be presented to Cabinet in the summer of 2024. Subsequent to the adoption, a communication strategy will be developed, ensuring that all Partners, Towns/Parish Councils are aware of the new process.

The Executive Leader, Councillor S J Conboy then advised the

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Cabinet that the intention tonight was for a detailed discussion and vote on each individual recommendation instead of considering and voting on en-bloc the recommendation as this would ensure that that for complete transparency so that the applicants would be able to see that their application gets a fair hearing. In addition, to ensure openness and transparency during tonight's meeting where Members of the Cabinet have an interest in a particular recommendation they should consider if their continued presence is incompatible with the Council's code of conduct and if appropriate disclose that interests and withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of that particular recommendation.

Members attention was drawn to the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel in particular Councillor Corney regarding why so many applications had been unsuccessful in the funding round, the Panel were advised that applications need to demonstrate the need for growth within their community. It was observed that during previous funding rounds, the Parish Forum had provided the opportunity for preliminary discussions on applications and that work would be undertaken to ensure applicants were educated about the requirements for a successful application and that applicants, upon submitting their application, should receive a confirmation confirming the submission.

Councillor Harvey had enquired about the review of the CIL process which had been discussed at a previous meeting of the Panel and why funding was ongoing during that process. The Panel heard that the review was proving to be a lengthy process and having been appraised that several applications were ready for funding, it had been decided to progress with the current round.

In response to a question from Councillor Jennings about further delays to the foot and cycleways within Riverside Park, St Neots, the Panel heard that more detailed information would be sought and relayed back to the Panel. Whilst the Panel were reassured, following a question from Councillor Harvey, that funding could be offered subject to certain qualifications being met and that this applied to both smaller and larger projects.

It was noted that the determination of CIL requests as set out in the report had been considered in accordance with the Councils adopted governance procedures for CIL, as well as ensuring compliance with the fundamentals as set out in the established legislation. This is important to ensure a fair, transparent, and lawful process, which is robust to challenge and/or complaint. Officers have undertaken the assessments on this basis.

The Cabinet agreed that it is important to be able to demonstrate how a decision has been reached, with clear

reasons, in order to uphold the integrity of the process, and ensure that the decision can be understood even if it is not agreed with as Members may reach alternative conclusions to those as recommended by this report, provided those reasons are clearly articulated and evidenced where possible.

Cabinet noted that project bids for £50,000.00 or less had been considered at a meeting on 21st March 2024, in accordance with delegated authority. Information on these bids were attached at Appendix 2 of the report, including the decisions reached.

The Cabinet then went on to review the detail on the bids submitted in response to the current round for over £50,000.00 CIL funding, which requires the approval of the Cabinet. The main points of the discussion on the recommendations may be summarised as follows.

1. **Hilton Cricket Pavilion works:** It was noted that the bid was for the Renovation of the cricket pavilion to include decoration, insulation, re-wiring, new central heating, replacement kitchen and toilets. However it was understood that (i) there was not enough supporting evidence with this application to show why this project was a local priority and what improvements this will make to the bookings for the hall, (ii) there was no evidence of research into how this project would improve the use of the pavilion, just an assumption it would, (iii) there was no evidence of community support for it beyond non-councillor members of the committee, (iv) overall given the limited local growth, lack of evidence for local support and the fact the majority of the works were maintenance did not make this project suitable for CIL Strategic funding.
2. **Sawtry Pavilion Works:** It was noted that this is a second application for this scheme. A previous application had awarded £80,000 towards the cost of an £800,000 a Pavilion Redevelopment scheme by Cabinet on 12th October 2022 (Minute 43 refers). However, this had been withdrawn due to the applicant finding a cheaper solution as outlined in this application. The Cabinet understood that: (a). the works would give Sawtry more community space and increase the number of changing rooms and toilets, also making the space more accessible, (b) the need for more community space in Sawtry is recognised in the IDP and Sawtry Neighbourhood plan recognises a priority need for the premises to be expanded. , (c) funding has been secured towards this scheme under a S106 legal agreement associated with planning permission 20/01407/OUT. The development of the site has not yet commenced and until

that happens and associated triggers within the agreement are reached, no obligations will be due to be paid. The Cabinet agreed that the high level of growth in Sawtry and amount of match funding along with the fact that CIL funding help to bring forward early delivery of this infrastructure need whilst potential future S106 receipts could repay the investment, the project is considered suitable for CIL Strategic funding at this time, based on the submission as part of this round. It was also agreed that if approved this recommendation was subject to: 1) funding being repaid upon the receipt of the S106 funds from application 20/01407/OUT and as it was not clear that the funds are going to the Parish, Cabinet agreed that this would need to be clarified, 2) confirmation that the works are permissible under the Elizabeth II Trust, 3) clarity on funding amount, the cost of project ex VAT (which can be reclaimed) is slightly less than their contribution and the £66k they are applying for and if the figure is lower than the Strategic CIL then the amount would be reduced accordingly.

3. **The Guardroom Community Hub, Bury (the Hub):** Cabinet noted that (i) the full community facility is not a priority in the Neighbourhood Plan, (ii) the building is not yet owned by the Parish, (iii) the project does not have Planning Permission, (iv) applications have not been made for other funding, apart from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), (v) this project had not mentioned in Parish comments on recent Planning Applications until this year, or in S106 discussions, (vi) it would appear this site would also be used by commercial operators, developers and may have a museum but this is unclear, (vii) whilst resident feedback about the use of the outside with community gardens it had not been not reflected in the submission, (viii) residents seemed to be concerned that footfall would be low, and as this facility would be in addition to the existing village hall and that there was no evidence to clarify this position, (ix) there is no clear evidence of current village hall footfall, prospective users, and any income from this: and (x) given the high cost of this project with high level of funding ask and lack of evidence of the need or sustainability of the building, the project was not seen to be suitable for CIL Strategic funding at this time, based on the submission as part of this round.
4. **St Neots Community Fire Station Modernisation and Extension Project:** Cabinet observed that (i) there was insufficient evidence of links to growth and the need for a bigger gym and community space, (ii) the quote provided excludes items like furniture, IT, gym equipment and based upon drawings no planning permission has been agreed and therefore may change. Therefore, the total

cost may differ, especially as this is the pre-tender cost. In addition, there was not enough evidence of this being a priority for the Fire Service within the District given the minor modifications proposed for the works, (iii) no support had been sought from the Town Council or other funding sources, (iv) there was a lack of evidence that this has links to community use beyond there being a Community Officer based there. Evidence supplied only confirmed its use for the Fire Service and there was analysis of the potential impact on community space availability currently in St. Neots; and (v) given the reasonably high level of CIL ask, the lack of supporting evidence of need and unclear cost of the project due to conflicting figures given, the project was not considered suitable for CIL Strategic funding at this time, based on the submission as part of this round.

5. **Sports Provision, Abbey College, Ramsey:** Cabinet agreed that: (i) there was a lack of evidence of links to growth and the priority need for this project, (ii) no evidence on support for this project from CCC. Although this is an Academy, CCC as the Education Authority should be consulted on it., where it sits in their priorities and capital programme and/or how this would address new school place needs from growth; (iii) there was no evidence of support from One Leisure (OL) Ramsey and no evidence of the need for this beyond school wanting, which would appear to take income potentially away from OL, (iv) the project is only at draft estimate stage with no evidence of further funding, (v) no indication of support from Ramsey or Bury T/PC Councils for this project, (vi) no sign details of the full suite of works for this site and why this one has been applied for, and (v) no plans to show works or business plan had been submitted. Finally, the Cabinet was concerned that Given the high percentage of CIL ask at 98%, the lack of any match funding from the Town Council or other funding available, including the Local Education Authority or the Academy Trust, the lack of evidence to new growth and the lack of supporting evidence for the proposed scheme, the project is not considered suitable for CIL Strategic funding at this time, based on the submission as part of this round.
6. **Folksworth Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)** the Cabinet noted that (i) links to growth had not been evidenced, (ii) the project had not been listed in the IDP or infrastructure to support growth, and (iii) no other funding sources had been applied for. In addition, considering the high percentage of CIL ask at 100% and the lack of any match funding as well as the lack of evidence to new growth, makes this project not considered to be suitable for CIL Strategic funding at this

time, based on the submission as part of this round.

- 7. Workshop with storage for Warboys New Parish Centre** The Cabinet observed (i) a lack of evidence for links to the need for a new workshop and growth, (ii) that the workshop is not in the IDP or infrastructure needed to support the growth in the area, (iii) that the CIL ask is for 100% with no other funding resourced from elsewhere, and (iv) that this is a separate project to the Village Hall project. Finally given the above-mentioned together with the lack of any match funding, the lack of previous maintenance planning for the existing facility or medium-long term plan sink funding as well as the lack of evidence to new growth for this type of infrastructure, the project was not viewed as suitable for CIL Strategic funding at this time, based on the submission as part of this round.
- 8. King George V Pavilion works, Huntingdon** The Cabinet understood that (i) an application had been submitted before in regard to this in 2021 for CIL funding but it had not been supported at Cabinet, (ii) another application scaled down from the first had then been submitted in early 2023 which did not include, as per the first application, the indoor cricket nets or an indoor facility to all of an 8-a-side cricket pitch for training and tournaments, which would also cater for wheelchair cricket as the whole facility would be accessible. This application had also been declined by Cabinet, (iii) the latest application has reduced the application further to a single storey building with the previous additional indoor sports facility excluded; (iv) there was a lack of evidence of the need for this and any links to growth, (v) there was evidence of community support for this as an infrastructure priority, (vi) no links had been provided to infrastructure priority in Neighbourhood Plan, (vii) no evidence had been provided of both the current usage and improved usage, (viii) the state of repair of the existing building indicates it has not been fully maintained, (ix) it is not clear if there has been a survey into the need for asbestos removal before any demolition. No evidence regarding the full project planning and financing, (x) no other funding sources have been applied for, especially sports and/or community funds. Therefore, given the reasonably high level of CIL ask, the lack of clarity over other funding available, the lack of supporting evidence of need particularly the exclusion of provision of additional indoor sports facilities, the project was not considered suitable for CIL Strategic funding at this time, based on the submission as part of this round.
- 9. Extension to the footpath, Colne** the Cabinet noted the (i) lack of evidence that this is related to growth, (ii)

project was not in IDP or linked to supporting new growth, (iii) questions over the works being on private property, (iv) high level of CIL ask and lack of funding from other sources, (v) lack of evidence for community support. Therefore, given the high percentage of CIL, the lack of evidence to new growth and concerns of the deliverability and cost of the scheme, the project was not considered suitable for CIL Strategic funding at this time, based on the submission as part of this round.

- 10. Community Centre Extension, Ramsey the Cabinet observed that** (i) match funding was in place and number of supporting applications made, (ii) community involvement had evidenced (iii) there was strong links to growth and evidence of need for the infrastructure, and (iv) there were good levels of growth locally. Accordingly given the level of growth in Ramsey, the (potential) amount of match funding, the evidence of community engagement and need for the additional infrastructure, the project is considered suitable for CIL Strategic funding. In light of the need to await decisions on the match funding applications to support the application for the CIL funding, it was agreed that if approved, this would be for 12 months to enable the funding applications to be fully considered.

The discussion concluded after detailed consideration of the report and the Chair Moved and it was:

**Noted** the updates on delivery in relation to the projects previously allocated or in receipt of CIL funding commitments (Appendix 1 as appended to the report refers).

- A. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.2 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for Hilton Pavilion.
- B. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.3 of the report **APPROVE** funding for Sawtry Pavilion.
- C. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.4 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for The Guardroom community hub, Bury.
- D. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.5 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for St Neots Community Fire Station Modernisation and Extension Project.
- E. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.6 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for Sports Provision, Abbey College, Ramsey.
- F. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.7 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for Folks worth Multi

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Use Games Area (MUGA).

- G. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.8 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for a new workshop with storage for War boys New Parish Centre.
- H. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.9 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for King George V Pavilion works, Huntingdon.
- I. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.10 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for an extension to a footpath in Colne.
- J. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.11 of the report to **APPROVE** funding for a Community Centre Extension, Ramsey; and
- K. Agreed officer recommendations at Paragraph 4.12 of the report to **DECLINE** funding for MAGPAS internal re-fit and purchase of an aviation tank.