

MINUTES

CABINET

17 SEPTEMBER 2013

Present:

Members:

Councillors:

Margaret Griffiths	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Neil Harden	Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services
Julie Laws	Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Sustainability
Nick Tiley	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources
Andrew Williams (Chairman)	Leader of the Council/Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration

Officers:

Daniel Zammit	Chief Executive
Mark Gaynor	Corporate Director (Housing and Regeneration)
Sally Marshall	Corporate Director (Finance and Governance)
Elliott Brooks	Assistant Director (Housing Landlord)
James Deane	Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)
James Doe	Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration)
Shane Flynn	Assistant Director (Project Governance)
Mark Brookes	Group Manager (Legal Governance)
Matt Rawdon	Group Manager (People)
Chris Troy	Group Manager (Regulatory Services)
Jack Burnham	Team Leader (Strategy and Development)
Linda Dargue	Insurance and Risk Manager
Lisa Devaya	Learning and Skills Officer
Nick Egerton	Team Leader (Environmental Protection and Housing)
Ross Hill	Team Leader (Licensing)
Natalie Webb	Team Leader (Partnerships, Policy and Innovations)
Francis Whittaker	Planning Officer
Pat Duff	Member Support Officer

Councillor Douris also attended.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm.

CA/109/13 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2013 were agreed by the members present and signed by the Chairman.

CA/110/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

CA/111/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CA/112/13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

CA/113/13 REFERRALS TO CABINET

That the referral be considered with item 9 on the agenda (minute CA/117/13).

CA/114/13 CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Decision

That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted, subject to the following amendments:

22 October 2013

1. Car Parking Review – new report.
2. Sports Activation Fund – new report.
3. Changes to the Health in Dacorum Committee – new report.

CA/115/13 AUTHORISATION OF VIREMENTS

Decision

That the virements from the Service Area as listed below and detailed in the report be noted:

1. Regulatory Services.
2. Legal Governance.
3. Customer Services Unit.
4. Development Management and Planning.
5. Finance and Operations.
6. Chief Executive's Unit.
7. Facilitating Change Budget.
8. Revenues and Benefits.

Reason for Decision

To secure the approval of virements for the purposes specified in the Forms (A), as appended to the report.

Implications

Financial

The Scheme of Virements is part of the Council's financial management.

Risk Implications

There are no risk implications.

Corporate Objectives

To standardise documentation and authorisation requirements for all virements.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report which he said was self-explanatory.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

There was no consultation.

Voting

None.

CA/116/13 APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

Decision

1. That the establishment of an Apprenticeships Scheme for 2013 be approved.
2. **That Council be recommended to approve the release of £126,728 from the Management of Change reserve in order to deliver the scheme.**

Reason for Decision

To enable an Apprenticeship Scheme Framework to be established.

Implications

Financial

The cost of establishing this scheme for 2013 is £126,728 which will create four apprenticeship opportunities at Dacorum, along with an incentive grant for local employers to hire apprentices (up to 40)..

Value for Money

By making these opportunities available with partner organisations, we will be supporting the delivery of economic well-being in the local community. The

appointment of apprentice posts also supports the delivery of the Council's Workforce Plan.

Risk Implications

If the Council decided not implement this programme the following risks have been identified:

- Falling further behind the Government's apprentice targets of 1 to 5, currently DBC is 1 in 16.
- Reduces employment opportunities for young people in the local community.
- Not supporting the delivery of economic well being in the local community.

Corporate Objectives

Regeneration and Economy

Working with those offering skills, training and apprenticeships needed for local jobs

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services introduced the report. Last year 10 apprentices were recruited and some had found employment with the Council. This year a different scheme was being operated. The Council would be recruiting 4 apprentices and setting up a scheme for local businesses, offering them a grant from the Council if they recruited apprentices. This was aimed at promoting the borough's economic vibrancy.

The Group Manager (People) said Central Government had set a target to have 1 in 5 young people employed in an apprenticeship scheme by 2020. Currently Dacorum had 1 in 16. This scheme was about supporting local businesses and the local economy, as well as taking on more apprentices.

The Leader of the Council said there had been positive comments from last year's intake of apprentices who seemed to have enjoyed the experience and had put it to good use.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

Councillor Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services; Dacorum Borough Council Assistant Directors and Group Managers; and Local Businesses.

Voting

None.

CA/117/13 RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS – QUARTER 1

Decision

That the report be noted.

Reason for Decision

To monitor the risk management process.

Implications

Financial

None identified

Value for Money

Risk management is closely linked to the Council's commitment to ensure that all resources are used efficiently and forms part of effective financial planning. The Council also needs to ensure that adequate provisions are in place to address anticipated risks but that these are no greater than necessary so that maximum resources are applied to services as required. To this end the Council sets minimum target working balances for both the general fund and HRA and at the date of this report this minimum balances are secured. Budget exercises for 2012/13 have ensured that the minimum balance requirements will also be met for the next financial year.

Risk Implications

Effective risk management is an important factor in all policymaking, planning and decision making.

Failure to manage risk effectively could have serious consequences for the Council leading to increased costs, wasted resources, prosecution and criticism under external assessments

Corporate Objectives

Dacorum Delivers – Risk management is an essential part of ensuring that the Council meets all of its objectives

Advice

The Leader of the Council asked that the referral from the Finance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee be considered with the report.,

The Insurance and Risk Manager said this was a standard report for Quarter 1. Risk management was under review and a revised strategy and strategic risk register would be brought to Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with the Corporate Management Team and the Finance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Voting

None.

CA/118/13 EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

Decision

That the Regulatory Service, Environmental Health - Empty Homes Strategy, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be approved.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Empty Homes Strategy to be implemented.

Implications

Financial

All officer costs would be met within existing budgets. This however will limit the amount of action this authority is able to take.

If an Empty Dwelling Management Order is put in place the local authority becomes responsible for the management of the property, including outstanding debts etc. However this power is discretionary and therefore it is not proposed that this action is taken where there may be significant cost implications for this authority.

Value for Money

It is anticipated that a reduction in empty homes in the borough will lead to an increase in the amount of money received by this authority in the way of New Homes Bonus. This strategy should therefore have a positive financial benefit and offer value for money.

Risk Implications

The most significant risk is identified above in the financial implications.

Corporate Objectives

To produce a robust and sustainable Empty Homes Strategy in line with current best practice and one that provides value for money and most economical use of resources.

Affordable Housing

Action will be targeted at those properties in the worse condition and also in areas of highest housing need. There is a possibility of linking the work under this strategy with a private sector leasing scheme which would enable additional affordable housing.

Safe and Clean Environment.

Empty properties left vacant for a long period of time are wasteful as well as being a potential problem for residents in nearby properties, either from possible vandalism, the property falling in to disrepair, gardens becoming overgrown or used for dumping rubbish, etc. This strategy, together with the Environmental Health - Housing Assistance Policy, will help remove these properties and therefore improve and maintain a clean and safe environment.

Building Community Capacity

To work with local communities, partnerships and other agencies to improve the standard of private sector housing within the borough. Reducing the number of Empty Properties should lead to improvements in all wards and particularly wards in the lowest quartile of the indices of deprivation.

To support the local economy by providing employment opportunities from improvement measures carried out within the Borough.

Regeneration

Financial assistance for empty properties (under the Environmental Health - Housing Assistance Policy) and Private Sector Leasing Schemes will help improve the standard of housing within the borough and remove unused buildings attracting investment into the borough.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services introduced the report which detailed proposals to bring empty homes back in use. The focus was on homes that had been empty for 6 months or more. This would reduce the need to build new homes and would help reduce crime and disorder. This dealt with encouraging owners to take action, through to formal intervention.

The Corporate Director (Housing and Regeneration) said there was a great need for accommodation in the Borough. This was an important strategy. As social landlords, the Council took the issue of empty property very seriously and it was good to the strategy being taken forward within the private sector as well.

The Leader of the Council said property in Dacorum was expensive and there was high demand for housing. Page 4 of appendix A of the report showed the national trend over the last three years had been a reduction in the number of empty properties. In Dacorum there had been an increase and the Portfolio Holder asked the reason for this and what could be done to reverse the trend.

The Team Leader (Environmental Protection and Housing) said resources had not been allocated to this project before as it had not previously been considered to be an issue.

The Leader of the Council said he hoped this would reverse the trend.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

Councillor Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services;
Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director (Housing and Regeneration);
Sally Marshall, Corporate Director (Finance and Governance); and
James Doe, Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration).

Voting

None.

CA/119/13 IMPLEMENTATION OF SCRAP METAL DEALERS ACT 2013

Decision

1. That the exercise of functions under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 be delegated to officers, as shown at Annex A to the report.
2. That, under paragraph 6 of schedule 1 to the Act, the fees payable in connection with applications for scrap metal licences be set, for the period from 1st October 2013 to 31st March 2015, as shown in paragraph 3.5 of the report.
3. That the application form shown at Annex B to this report for use in paper applications made for licences be noted; and, under paragraph 4 of schedule 1 to the Act, any information requested within that form not otherwise required under paragraph 2 to the schedule is required to be provided with all such applications.
4. That under paragraph 4 of schedule 1 to the Act, all applicants, or partners of a partnership applicant, or directors of a limited company applicant; and any site manager named in an application, be required to submit with the application a Basic Disclosure certificate, issued no earlier than 3 months prior to the date of application and in the name of the relevant individual (on variation applications, this requirement to apply only to site managers not currently named on the licence).
5. That under paragraph 7(8) of schedule 1 to the Act, the Assistant Director (Chief Executive's Unit) and the Group Manager (Legal Governance) be appointed for the purposes of hearing oral representations.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Council to comply with new legislation regarding scrap metal dealers.

Implications

Financial

Application fees will be chargeable for the first time in this area of regulation. If application fees are set at the levels proposed within, it is envisaged that the authority's revenue from application fees will be around £3,370 in the first year. A similar sum will be receivable in each subsequent three-year period, assuming licence numbers remain stable.

Value for Money

Application fees are expected to be set at a level intended to ensure cost recovery in respect of the administrative and compliance work undertaken by the Council. Fees must exclude the cost of enforcement work against unlicensed businesses, which will be undertaken by licensing enforcement officers provided from within existing resources.

Risk Implications

This report relates to the implementation of new regulatory legislation. Failure to implement the new legislation correctly or in accordance with the statutory timetable could have adverse reputational implications for the Council, or lead to legal action.

Corporate Objectives

Safe and Clean Environment; and
Maintain a clean and safe environment.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services introduced the report. The Government had merged two previous legislations and this was the Council's implementation of that Act.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing asked for the definition of a scrap metal dealer.

The Team Leader (Licensing) defined a scrap metal dealer as anyone who was buying or selling old metal items. There was an exception for businesses where it was a minority part of the business. There was specific legislation for mobile collectors.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources referred to paragraph 3.5 of the report that set out the fees and asked for confirmation that the Council was allowed to cover its costs but no more than that.

The Team Leader (Licensing) confirmed that was the case.

The Leader of the Council said it was difficult to see what the cost would be tracking down those who would not apply with the legislation.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

There was no consultation.

Voting

None.

CA/120/13 DESTINATION DACORUM (PERFORMANCE REWARD GRANT)

Decision

That approval of further draw downs from the earmarked Performance Reward Grant reserve for revenue and capital expenditure be delegated to the Section 151 Officer/Deputy Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

Reason for Decision

To make the Performance Reward Grant balances accessible to the Destination Dacorum Board to spend on projects supporting the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Implications

Financial

PRG funds spent.

Value for Money

Working strategically with key organisations/sectors in Dacorum will help us to spend this money while delivering best possible value for money to our community.

Risk Implications

Dacorum Borough Council has a statutory requirement to have a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS): The Destination Dacorum Plan is our SCS. PRG has already been ring fenced for the delivery of the SCS and as the SCS was approved in 2012.

Corporate Objectives

The Council's core vision is: *Working in partnership, to create a borough which enables the communities of Dacorum to thrive and prosper* – the Destination Dacorum Plan is the strategic method of achieving this. The Destination Dacorum Board intend to use outstanding PRG balances to support delivery of the Plan

Advice

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and said currently Destination Dacorum had to get Cabinet approval to spend from their budget. The report recommended that this decision be delegated to the S101 officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council. Destination Dacorum was happy with the recommendation.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

David Gill, Group Manager (Partnerships and Citizen Insight);
Shane Flynn, Assistant Director (Project Governance), Financial Services; and
Richard Baker, Team Leader (Regulatory and Financial Accounting).

Voting

None.

CA/121/13 DACORUM LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK: ADOPTION OF CORE STRATEGY

Decision

That Council be recommended to approve:

- 1. Adoption of the Pre-Submission Core Strategy, incorporating main and minor modifications, in accordance with Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012;**
- 2. That the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration be authorised to:**
 - (a) Make any necessary minor and non-consequential changes to the Core Strategy and associated Proposals Map prior to publication;**
 - (b) Publish the Adoption Statement for the Core Strategy in accordance with the planning regulations;**
 - (c) Agree the final version of the Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement, in accordance with environmental protection legislation.**
- 3. The response to comments received on the minor modifications consultation, as set out in Annex 4 of the report.**
- 4. Adoption of the updated Affordable Housing Guidance (Annex 6 of the report) as a supplementary planning document (SPD).**
- 5. Adoption of the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan (Annex 7 of the report) as a supplementary planning document (SPD).**
- 6. That the updated Chilterns Buildings Design Guide (Annex 8 of the report) be adopted as supplementary planning guidance (SPG).**
- 7. That the existing supplementary planning documents, supplementary planning guidance and advice notes, appendices and proposals schedules in the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 (listed in Annex**

2 of the report) be retained for use in planning decisions until specifically reviewed and/or superseded.

- 8. That the provisional timetable in Annex 3 of the report be agreed, as the basis for future work programming, until formalised through a review of the Local Development Scheme.**

Reason for Decision

To adopt the Core Strategy and associated documents in order to provide a clear and up-to-date basis upon which to make planning decisions within the borough.

Implications

The process of preparing the Core Strategy as part of the Local Planning Framework (LPF) has financial implications. The Council has created a 'Local Development Framework' earmarked reserve to support expenditure. Money is drawn down from this reserve to provide an annual budget to support LPF-related work.

Having an up to date planning policy framework helps reduce the incidence of planning appeals (and thus costs associated with those). It will also be the most effective way of ensuring the optimum level of developer contributions to infrastructure and in mitigation of development impacts can be achieved.

Any legal challenge(s) to the Core Strategy following its adoption will have financial implications. The scale of these implications will depend upon the nature and number of these challenges (see section 8 of main report).

Risk Implications

A full risk assessment has been carried out as part of the PID for the Local Planning Framework. These risks are reviewed monthly through CORVU and reported each year through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Identified risks include failure of external agencies or consultants to deliver on time, change in Government policy and team capacity. If the Council were to decide not to accept the findings of the Inspector's Report and not to adopt the Core Strategy, significant additional risks would arise. These would relate to a lack of an up-to-date framework upon which to base planning decisions within the Borough, and the likelihood of a significant increase in speculative planning applications (and potentially appeals), particularly for housing development in the Green Belt, which would prove hard to defend. There would also be financial implications i.e. extra costs associated with planning appeals and inquiries.

Corporate Objectives

The scope of the Core Strategy means that it helps support all 5 corporate objectives:

- *Safe and clean environment*: e.g. contains policies relating to the design and layout of new development that promote security and safe access.
- *Community Capacity*: e.g. provide a framework for local communities to prepare area-specific guidance such as Neighbourhood Plans, Town / Village Plans etc.

- *Affordable housing*: e.g. sets the Borough's overall housing target and the proportion of new homes that must be affordable.
- *Dacorum delivers*: e.g. provides a clear framework upon which planning decisions can be made.
- *Regeneration*: e.g. sets the planning framework for key regeneration projects, such as Hemel Hempstead town centre and the Maylands Business Park.

Advice

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and advised that an additional paper had been circulated regarding notice of possible legal challenge under Section 113 of the Planning Act 2004. This should be considered as part of the report.

The Core Strategy had been developed over several years and had been subject to public examination in October 2012. The Inspector's report found it to be sound, subject to proposed modifications.

The Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) summarised the report. Work had started on it in 2005 to replace the Borough Local Plan. Following the public examination, the Inspector issued an initial findings paper in November 2012 which expressed some concerns over the level of housing proposed, and options available to the Council to address these and make the plan sound. In December 2012, Cabinet decided to opt for a partial review of the Plan to address some of the shortcomings identified by the Inspector.

The Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) advised that there had been a minor error in one of the modifications (ref MM4) to Policy CS5 (Green Belt), due to a small omission from the Inspector's report. A supplementary report was circulated to cover this; this provided the necessary correction and explained that the Inspector had confirmed that the wording should be added into the modified policy. The effect of the correction is to confirm that there will be a general review of the green belt as part of the partial review of the Core Strategy.

The Council was now in a position to adopt the Core Strategy with the modifications. The only other course of action would be not to adopt the Core Strategy. If the Council did not adopt the Core Strategy, the risks would be very high. There would be no up to date Development Strategy for the borough and it would affect the regeneration of Hemel Hempstead, the building of affordable housing and delivery of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

There would be a number of existing planning policy documents and schedules that would be retained and these were shown in Annex 2 of the report. Where there was any conflict between those documents, the Core Strategy would take precedence.

Council will be invited to approve the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document and the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Master Plan. These were vital documents.

Section 8 of the report dealt with the potential for legal challenge and set out where the Inspector felt the shortcomings could be made good through modifications to the plan. The Council was aware there was a potential for legal challenge as developers had raised this through the consultation process.

A supplementary report circulated contained a copy of a letter from a solicitor acting on behalf of Grand Union Investments Limited who were promoting major development to the south of Berkhamsted, and threatening to challenge the lawfulness of the Core Strategy.

The Council had already taken specialist advice from a planning lawyer that had been backed up by Counsel who was content with the recommended response from Officers in the supplementary report, that the Council should adopt the Core Strategy, subject to the modifications set out.

Returning to the main report, the West Hemel Action Group (WHAG) may be considering a legal challenge. A legal challenge could only be made once the Plan had been adopted.

Section 9 of the report outlined the extent of the partial review process and gave details of the Green Belt Review.

Annex 3 of the report set out the provisional timetable. The Planning Inspector was keen for the Partial Review to be completed quickly and this issue was being addressed.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources asked if the potential legal challenge should be brought into the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

The Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) said this had always been noted in the Risk Register. The risk rate had reduced since the Inspector's report had been received.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources asked that this be pursued.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability referred to Annex 1 of the report and asked when the Conservation Area Appraisals for Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead would be available and if they would be automatically considered.

The Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) said there was a lot of consultation to be done in Berkhamsted regarding listed buildings. These reports would be put on the Cabinet Forward Plan as soon as possible.

The Leader of the Council said this was a very important report because of its long term implications and how the borough would be developed over the next 20 years. 11,300 homes was a sustainable level of development and was manageable within the borough's boundaries. This was right for Dacorum.

The release of Green Belt land was never popular but the Council did not want a free for all by developers across the borough. A reasonable balance was being struck across the period of the Plan. It was not much different from the Council's historic building rate of 370 units per annum. This would be 440 units per annum. There was an extensive demand for housing and the Leader of the Council was comfortable recommending that Cabinet agree this and recommend Council to adopt it. The Core Strategy gave the Borough a sound basis for the next 20 years and there had been a lot of consultation behind it.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation on the Core Strategy has been carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), adopted by the Council in June 2006, following independent examination by a Planning Inspector.

The nature and scope of this consultation is set out within the Report of Consultation and Report of Representations which were submitted for examination alongside the Core Strategy and considered by the Inspector as part of this examination process.

In terms of internal processes, Development Plans Task and Finish Group advised on the preparation of the Core Strategy. There have been reports to Cabinet at key stages and the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder has been kept apprised of progress.

Corporate Management Team has also considered progress and key issues at appropriate stages and strongly recommends the adoption of the Core Strategy.

Voting

None.

CA/122/13 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2012/13

Decision

That Council be recommended to accept the report on Treasury Management performance in 2012/13 and the Prudential Indicators 2012/13 actuals.

Reason for Decision

To monitor the performance outturn for fund management in 2012/13.

Implications

Financial

In accordance with Central Government Guidance on Local Government Investments, and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, the order of the Council's investment priorities is 1. Security; 2. Liquidity; and, 3. Return. This may result in the Council achieving a lower rate of return than an organisation operating a more aggressive investment strategy in a less regulated sector.

Risk Implications

Good corporate governance encompasses risk management and making sure that the Council makes decisions with the full knowledge of the associated risks and

opportunities. The risk of not reviewing and updating our corporate governance arrangements have been addressed by this report.

Corporate Objectives

Optimising investment income for General Fund and Housing Revenue budgets whilst managing investment risk is fundamental to achieving the corporate objectives.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report and drew attention to paragraph 2.2 of the report which said that interest rates on the Council's investments had fallen sharply after the Government introduced the Funding for Lending Scheme. It was anticipated that these low interest rates would have an adverse effect on Council investments for 2013/14.

The Council had an average balance of £76.1m internally managed earning an average rate of return of 1.02% which compared favourably with the budget assumption of average investment balances of £57.1m at 0.93% investment return. The officers had done a good job.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with the Sector Treasury Advisors.

Voting

None.

CA/123/13 PERFORMANCE AND BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 1

Decision

1. That the Quarter 1 report on targets and performance and progress towards the achievement of the Council's Priorities and Vision be noted.
2. That the Forecast outturn position be noted.

Reason for Decision

To monitor the performance and forecast outturn position as at the end of quarter 1 2013/14.

Implications

Financial

A summary of the Council's financial position for quarter 1 2013/14 is included at Part B of the report.

Value for Money

In order to achieve 'value for money' services must demonstrate economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Performance information enables members to review how effectively services are performing.

Risk Implications

Failure to meet corporate objectives and performance targets would have an adverse effect on the Council's performance management objectives and the Council's reputation.

Corporate Objectives

Effective service and financial performance supports all five of the Council's strategic objectives.

Advice

The Assistant Director (Finance and Resources) introduced the report. Paragraph 2.4 of the report showed the forecast outturn position as £314k over budget over the first quarter. There had been changes to the budget since then, particularly regarding CSU, giving a net cost outturn of £500k.

Regarding Appendix E, Housing Revenue Account, there is £400k of budget due to repairs and maintenance around voids. That was now forecast to be around £1m.

Regarding capital, the forecast on the General Fund side was £2m under budget. Efforts would be made to stop any slippage.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability referred to page 6, paragraph 4.2 of the report regarding income over achievement and asked that the figures for car parking be treated with caution.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing referred to PP01 – percentage of dwellings with a valid Gas Safety Certificate. The Portfolio Holder thanked staff for their work on this, bearing in mind the issues last year with the gas.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services;
The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources;
The Chief Executive, Directors, Assistant Directors, Group Managers and Budget Holders.

Voting

None.

CA/124/13 COUNCIL NEW BUILD PROGRAMME

Decision

1. That the final specification of 41 bedrooms (including 3 bedrooms for disabled users) for The Elms homeless hostel be approved, and it be noted the increased cost, detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, will be funded from previously approved budgets.
2. That the award of the main contract in connection with the construction of the 41 bedroom homeless hostel at The Elms be approved (further details of the tender evaluation will be provided prior to the Cabinet meeting).
3. That authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, in consultation with the Corporate Director (Housing) and the Corporate Director (Finance and Governance) to award all further contracts in relation to New Build Project Phases 1 and 2, up to a maximum individual contract value of £4.5m (and within the total budget for the project previously approved by Council).
4. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director (Housing & Regeneration), in consultation with the Corporate Director (Finance & Governance) and the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to appoint consultants and sub-contractors to undertake work related to Phases 1 and 2 of the New Build project, providing the total cumulative costs do not exceed the budget previously approved by Council.
5. **That the indicative development plans for the site at Queen Street, Tring, be approved and Council be recommended to approve the appropriation of the site to the HRA from the General Fund for £290,000; under s122 Local Government Act 1972.**
6. **That the indicative development plans for the site at Able House, Hemel Hempstead, be approved and Council be recommended to approve the acquisition of the site by the HRA for a maximum of the amount shown in Appendix 3 of the report.**
7. **That the indicative development plans for the shared ownership dwelling at the White House, Wigginton, be approved and Council be recommended to approve acquisition of the site by the HRA for a maximum of the amount shown in Appendix 3 of the report.**
8. **That the indicative development plans for the land at the Papermill, Apsley, be approved and Council be recommended to approve acquisition of the site by the HRA for a maximum of the amount shown in Appendix 3 of the report.**
9. **That Council be recommended to approve the establishment of a consultancy budget of £50,000 to fund work on a planning application for development of the land at the Papermill, Apsley.**

10. That procurement standing orders be set aside to revise Chambers Goodwin & Partners' appointment as Architects and Employers Agents for the development of 9 Passivhaus homes at Galley Hill to include detailed design to RIBA stage L for £55k.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Council to award the main contracts in respect of some development sites and to implement Phase II of the New Build Programme.

Implications

Financial

The financial budget for phase one was agreed at the 23rd October 2012 Cabinet meeting. The additional costs for the hostel are set out in the appendix, and will be funded from existing capital funding from within the Affordable Housing Development Fund. The additional capital outlay will be partly offset by the increased revenue generated from the additional bedrooms (+8) within the building.

The financial budget for the Strategic Land Acquisition Reserve was approved as part of the New Build Business Plan at the 30th April 2013 Cabinet meeting. This report seeks authority to spend this capital for its originally intended purpose of acquiring land for future development.

Value for Money

The financial budget for phase one was agreed at the 23rd October 2012 Cabinet meeting. Farm Place, London Road and Galley Hill are all still within budget. The hostel will cost more than originally estimated, but this is due abnormal drainage costs, in addition to the development of an expanded building which now has 41 bedrooms rather than 33 bedrooms.

Risk Implications

A Risk Assessment was completed within the New Build PID.

Corporate Objectives

Affordable housing.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Housing introduced the report which gave an update on the New Build Programme. Phase 1 was proceeding as planned.

The proposals for the new homeless hostel would be determined by the Development Control Committee on 26 September. This would provide 41 high quality rooms for vulnerable members of the community. The Council would be able to claim half of the Homes and Communities Grant Funding for the scheme if planning was approved and the contract signed by the end of September as planned. The physical work would start in 2013.

The tendering process for Farm Place had concluded, with a recommendation to delegate the authority to sign the contract at Portfolio Holder level.

With phase 1 progressing well, officers had been identifying potential opportunities for the second phase of the development programme. Four sites had been identified for acquisition as part of phase 2; Able House, the Papermill, the White House and Tring Depot.

The progress made to date and the Council's future development plans highlighted the Council's commitment to affordable housing and the delivery of new Council homes.

The Housing Development Manager said a Part II addendum had been circulated evaluating the tenders.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources congratulated the officers on getting affordable housing moving with a new momentum. It was in a healthy situation compared with two or three years ago. The new team had done a great job.

The Leader of the Council said the Council had been pushing this and it was good to see these sites coming forward. Feedback from the public had been good.

The Leader of the Council said the recommendation asked for approval to award a contract and asked members if they had considered the details contained in the Part II appendix.

Members said they had considered the Part II appendix and were happy with the recommendation.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing said she had wanted to get as much information in the public domain as possible.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

The New Build Project Group, including:
Corporate Director (Housing and Regeneration)
Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)
Assistant Director (Housing)
Group Manager (Strategic Housing)
Group Manager (Commissioning Procurement and Compliance)
Group Manager (Commercial Assets and Property)
Group Manager (Estates)
Team Leader (Commissioning Procurement and Compliance)
Lead Officer (Housing Development and Delivery)
Housing Revenue Accountant.

Voting

None.

CA/125/13 GADE ZONE REGENERATION AND PUBLIC SERVICE QUARTER PROCUREMENT UPDATE

Decision

1. That the revised timetable for procurement be agreed.
2. That the Risk Assessment and control measures be agreed.

Reason for Decision

To enable procurement of a Development Partner for the Gade Zone Regeneration project (including the Public Service Quarter).

Implications

Financial

The only update on the financial side is the clarification that the indicative target cost for the PSQ, taking into account fees, clarification on requirements and additional client needs – this is detailed in Part 2 of this report.

Value for Money

Provision has been made in the budget for 2013/14 of £500,000 for professional, legal, procurement and consultancy support for the procurement exercise and overall project management.

Risk Implications

These are set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

Corporate Objectives

Dacorum Delivers: Maximising the value of Council Assets and providing Value for Money. The PSQ will be a more cost efficient building to operate than the Civic Centre.

Regeneration. The Gade Zone Regeneration project is aimed primarily to deliver significant regeneration in the town centre. It facilitates the creation of a modern college campus, a new large food store adding greater choice for local people and in a town centre location, a new community focused building housing public sector and voluntary sector partners, a new commercial leisure facility developing more family friendly and evening attractions into the town centre and much needed new homes. The overall private sector investment should top £100M.

Affordable Housing. Any new housing created will include affordable housing.

Advice

The Corporate Director (Housing and Regeneration) introduced the report and said the part 1 report set out the objective of the overall approach and looked at progress with the inter dependant projects.

The Development Control Committee was likely to make a decision in November rather than October. Progress was being made on the use of the Market Square and relocation of the Bus Station.

The Dacorum Anywhere Project was underway and work was now focussing on the document imaging side. As a critical part of the negotiations, the Hertfordshire County Council site had been agreed.

The Police position was now clearer and they had indicated their desire to take space for the Safer Neighbourhood Team. They would work with the Council and move out of the town centre whilst keeping a presence in the Public Service Quarter. The Council had a potential alternative should they be required to speed this up.

Clarification was required from the Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust that they need 2k square metres of space. The voluntary sector partners had confirmed their requirements from the new building.

The report detailed the procurement process. The PQQ stage had been completed and the dialogue stage was under way. This would be done in three separate sessions with each of the bidders, to be concluded by 17 October.

The timetable was set out in paragraph 2.28 of the report. The contract award was scheduled for March 2014.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

The Corporate Management Team;
Ben Hosier, Group Manager (Commissioning, Procurement and Compliance); and
Mark Brookes, Group Manager (Legal Governance).

Voting

None.

CA/126/13 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Decision

That, under s.100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A Part 1 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during the items in Part 2 of the Agenda for this meeting, because

it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that, if members of the public were present during those items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information relating to:

1. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). Minute CA/127/13.
Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, paragraph 3.
2. Information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and third party companies/organisations. Minute CA/128/13.

Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, paragraph 3.
3. Information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and private companies. Minute CA/129/13..

Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, paragraph 3.

CA/127/13 COUNCIL'S NEW BUILD PROGRAMME – APPENDICES 1 - 3

Decision

See minute CA/124/13.

Advice

The Team Leader (Strategy and Development) gave a verbal update.

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

CA/128/13 GADE ZONE REGENERATION AND PUBLIC SERVICE QUARTER PROCUREMENT UPDATE

Decision

That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Council to procure a Development Partner for the Gade Zone Regeneration project (including the Public Sector Quarter).

Implications

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

Risk Implications

These are set out in appendix 2 of the report.

Corporate Objectives

Dacorum Delivers: Maximising the value of Council Assets and providing Value for Money. The PSQ will be a more cost efficient building to operate than the Civic Centre.

Regeneration. The Gade Zone Regeneration project is aimed primarily to deliver significant regeneration in the town centre..

Affordable Housing. Any new housing created will include affordable housing.

Safe and Clean Environment. The PSQ will be built to 'BREEAM excellent' standard and the design of all new town centre development will be guided by the Town Centre Masterplan which sets out high sustainability requirements.

Advice

The Corporate Director (Housing and Regeneration) introduced the report.

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

The Corporate Management Team;
Ben Hosier, Group Manager (Commissioning, Procurement and Compliance); and
Mark Brookes, Group Manager (Legal Governance).

Voting

None.

CA/129/13 PROPOSAL TO APPPOINT A COMPANY TO ASSIST THE COUNCIL IN THE PROCUREMENT OF A DEVELOPMENT PARTNER TO DELIVER NEW HOMES ON SELECTED GARAGE SITES

Decision

That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

Reason for Decision

To enable development of selected sites within the Council's garage stock.

Implications

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

Risk Implications

A Risk Assessment has been completed and will be reviewed as the project moves forward. In addition the consultant will produce project and site specific risk assessments.

Corporate Objectives

Regeneration:

- Drive value from Council-owned assets

Safe and Clean Environment:

- Maintain a clean and safe environment
- Protect our green spaces

Building Community Capacity:

- Empower local community action and delivery

Dacorum Delivers:

- Efficiencies
- VFM
- Performance excellence
- Reputation and profile delivery

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report.

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

Councillor N Tiley, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Sally Marshall, Corporate Director (Finance and Governance), James Deane, Assistant Director (Finance and Resources), Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director (Housing and Regeneration), Adriana Livingstone, Team Leader for Estates and Valuation.

Voting

None.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm.