

## **MINUTES**

### **CABINET**

**21 OCTOBER 2014**

**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

<b>Officers:</b>	Sally Marshall	Chief Executive
	Mark Gaynor	Corporate Director, Housing and Regeneration
	James Deane	Assistant Director, Finance and Resources
	Mark Brookes	Group Manager, Legal Governance
	Jim Doyle	Group Manager, Democratic Services
	Chris Taylor	Group Manager, Strategic Planning and Regeneration
	Lesley Crisp	Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer
	Rebecca Oblein	Team Leader, Economic Wellbeing Team, Strategic Planning and Regeneration
	Pat Duff	Member Support Officer

Councillors Ayling, McKay and G Sutton also attended.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm.

#### **CA/118/14 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2014 were agreed by the members present and signed by the Chairman.

#### **CA/119/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **CA/120/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**CA/121/14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**CA/122/14 REFERRALS TO CABINET**

There were no referrals to Cabinet.

**CA/123/14 CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

**Decision**

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

25 November 2014

Hemel Evolution Programme – Access and Movement Proposals – deferred to the 16 December Cabinet meeting.

**CA/124/14 AUTHORISATION OF VIREMENTS**

**Decision**

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

Commercial Assets and Property Development.

**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.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources advised that the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability had expressed concern about the funding of car park

maintenance in the future. The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources said he had no reason to believe that anything would go wrong.

The Assistant Director, Finance and Resources, said it would not come out of the car park refurbishment fund if the Portfolio Holder was not content.

### **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

### **Consultation**

There was no consultation.

### **Voting**

None.

## **CA/125/14 HEMEL HEMPSTEAD TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY 2014-17 AND ASSOCIATED ACTION PLAN**

### **Decision**

1. That the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Strategy 2014-17, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
2. That the Town Centre Action Plan based on the new Strategy, as set out at Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

### **Reason for Decision**

To approve a new strategy for the ongoing management and development of Hemel Hempstead Town Centre

### **Implications**

#### Financial

There are no additional implications as a result of this report

#### Value for Money

The strategy sets out how Town Centre Management working with the Town Centre Partnership could move towards a Business Improvement District (BID) which will ensure there is a mechanism for generating income for works and improvements within the town centre in a sustainable way for the future. Initial estimations are that a 1% BID levy could generate around £329,000 pa for new resources into the town centre. This money would not be to replace services already being delivered in the town but could be used to enhance service levels. It would also be assumed that the role of TC management and any other staff required by the businesses would be funded through the BID levy. Progress to this stage is likely to take around two years.

## **Risk Implications**

Despite initial work there is a risk that the businesses do not engage and 'buy-in'. There is an option to explore developing a partnership with voluntary contributions (Community Interest Company or CIC) but this is not a favoured option as it can create a split between those who pay in and those who do not.

## **Corporate Objectives**

Regeneration  
Clean and Safe Environment  
Dacorum Delivers  
Community Capacity

## **Advice**

The Group Manager Strategic Planning and Regeneration summarised the report which detailed changes and increased resources going into town centre management. This strategy was the action plan for the next 3 years and was working alongside capital investment and would engage partners within the business community and other town centre stakeholders. It would culminate in the town centre attaining the status of a Business Improvement District (BID). The action plan would be led, monitored and managed by the new Town Centre Partnership who will initiate delivery of the aims and aspirations. An added inward investment strand had been added to the strategy. This was about protecting the Council's investment, enhancing the town centre and moving forward towards a self-funding model that the Council could step back from in 2 – 3 years. There would be quarterly health checks.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability asked if Community Action Dacorum was represented on the Town Centre Partnership.

The Group Manager Strategic Planning and Regeneration advised that Richard Pitt, Chief Executive of the Volunteer Centre, would be representing the voluntary sector as they were based in the town centre.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability referred to page 31 of appendix 1 which detailed use of technology, particularly the Cambridge parking credit scheme, and asked if these were just possible suggestions.

The Group Manager Strategic Planning and Regeneration said digital technology was being looked at to monitor spend and attract people to collect on line shopping in the town centre. An officer would be looking at technology being used in other town centres. Wifi would be available, smart telephone technology and car parking technology were high level ideas.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing referred to on line purchases which were currently collected from remote locations. Some towns were trying to accommodate some of the advantages of on line shopping which could make it a pleasure to shop as customers could ensure the product was in stock. In time the balance between retail floor space and the town centre would change. The best way to look forward was with a Town Centre Partnership that would not see changes as a threat but would embrace them.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability said she would like to have joined up thinking when looking at new technology and get advice on technology that was available and what would work.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing agreed. The success and overall development of the town centre rested with the Council as a whole and included parking and Clean, Safe and Green to maximise the full potential.

The Group Manager, Strategic Planning and Regeneration, said car parking experts could be invited to the project group as things developed.

Councillor McKay endorsed the strategy. It was important to see technologies as strategic commercial marketing tools to be used to enhance business as a whole.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing referred to Click and Collect which was now very important to shoppers. There was a big gap in the market for a drop off and returns facility so that people could come to town to collect on-line purchases and shop during the same visit. The Council could be the enabler for someone to provide this service.

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services said Nisa did run a Collect and Return service.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

### **Consultation**

Town Centre Partnership and Town Centre Businesses at the Conference and others through a programme of visits.

### **Voting**

None.

## **CA/126/14 OFFICE EXPANSION AT THE MAYLANDS BUSINESS CENTRE**

### **Decision**

- 1. That Council be recommended to approve the release of £32,000 from the Maylands Plus Reserve for the purpose of constructing additional office units at the Maylands Business Centre.**
2. That authority is delegated to the Assistant Director, Planning Development and Regeneration to organise the procurement and appointment of contractors to carry out the agreed work.

### **Reason for Decision**

To use Maylands Plus (MBC) reserves on adding a mezzanine floor to Unit 9, thus creating 3 additional offices for rent.

## **Implications**

### Financial

The centre now has progressed to self-fund through rental and other incomes from the businesses based there, and additional revenue comes in from virtual office clients and rental income from the board room/meeting room.

The centre is currently operating at 100% capacity and there is a waiting list for both the offices and the industrial units.

### Value for Money

Numerous economic and reputational benefits at low additional cost to the council; the additional units can be accommodated within existing management arrangements, and so the proposals demonstrate excellent value for money.

## **Risk Implications**

There is an inherent risk of having the offices vacant for any period of time. However the waiting list has been and continues to be sufficient to minimize this risk. In addition empty rates relief would be applied for a period of 6 months.

## **Corporate Objectives**

Regeneration – the expansion to the Maylands Business Centre will support the development of the local economy

Dacorum Delivers – the proposals have efficiency gains by enabling the new units to be serviced directly from the current centre management arrangements

Community Capacity – the Maylands Business Centre provides the opportunity for small businesses to become established.

## **Advice**

The Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer summarised the report which recommended the release of £32k in reserves held for use in the business centre. The Council wanted to add a mezzanine floor to add three offices for rental. There were two units in the Business Centre feasible for this type of mezzanine and the occupants were leaving at the end of October with other businesses lined up to take on the new units.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources supported this as a member of the Maylands Business Board and congratulated the people involved in enabling more small businesses to flourish.

The Group Manager, Strategic Planning and Regeneration, said parking was being organised for the new businesses.

The Leader of the Council agreed parking was a problem.

## **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

## **Consultation**

Yaqubul Islam – Directorate Accountant, Housing and Regeneration  
Mike Evans – Group Manager Commercial Assets and Property Development  
Building Control  
Maylands Business Centre Operating Board.

## **Voting**

None.

## **CA/127/14 UPDATES TO THE STRATEGIC RISK AND OPPORTUNITY REGISTER**

### **Decision**

That the following changes take effect from the start of the new municipal year, and the Monitoring Officer be instructed to make amendments to the Council's Constitution as appropriate:

- An annual review of the Strategic Risk Register, with a focus on risk identification for the future, to involve Cabinet, Leader of the Opposition and Chief Officer Group;
- Scrutiny of the SRR to be undertaken by the Audit Committee, as a standing item on the Committee agenda; and,

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive a quarterly update on the SRR, covering those risks specifically related to that committee.

### **Reason for Decision**

To amend the current Strategic Risk Register to reflect the revised approach to managing strategic risks and opportunities agreed by Cabinet on 22 July 2014.

### **Implications**

#### Financial

The effective management of strategic risks and opportunities reduces the time and associated costs of dealing with unforeseen events and increases the likelihood that the Council will be able to take advantage of opportunities to deliver its objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan and supporting strategies (e.g., medium-term financial strategy, asset management strategy).

#### Value for Money

The effective management of strategic risks and opportunities is a key tool in ensuring that services are provided as effectively, efficiently and economically as possible. By anticipating and mitigating risk, costly short term urgent actions are avoided as far as

possible in delivering services. Seeking out and taking advantage of opportunities that present themselves accelerates the pace of delivery of Corporate Plan objectives.

### **Risk Implications**

Risk Assessments are included for each item on the proposed revised Strategic Risk and Opportunity Register.

### **Corporate Objectives**

Corporate Governance.

### **Advice**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report and had nothing to add.

The Assistant Director Finance and Resources, said the recommendation was the synthesis of previous Cabinet reports with the proposal that they become active as soon as possible.

### **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

### **Consultation**

Linda Dargue, Insurance and Risk Manager  
Corporate Management Team  
Audit Committee.

### **Voting**

None.

## **CA/128/14 CONSERVATION STRATEGY 2014-2019**

### **Decision**

That the draft Conservation Strategy, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report which sets out the Borough Council's corporate approach to Conservation matters in Dacorum, be approved for consultation.

### **Reason for Decision**

To approve the proposed Conservation Strategy for the Borough of Dacorum for the purposes of consultation.



## **Implications**

### Financial

The proposed Strategy makes use of established budgets to deliver the core Conservation service and provides a platform and direction from which to consider future actions which might require non-recurring expenditure.

### Value for Money

The proposed Strategy provides a basis from which to prioritise expenditure; it provides a basis for seeking external funding, should opportunities arise; it takes a balanced approach to assessing matters of heritage value without committing the Council to excessive expenditure.

## **Risk Implications**

To be completed as part of the forthcoming Action Plan to support the Conservation Strategy.

## **Corporate Objectives**

Regeneration – the Strategy will be instrumental in helping to guide new developments where heritage considerations are important

Dacorum Delivers – the Strategy provides a corporate framework for best addressing Conservation and heritage issues across the organisation

Building Community Capacity – the successful implementation of the Strategy will be enhanced by the engagement of external organisations.

Safe and Clean Environment – the Strategy is aimed at making the best of the Borough's rich built heritage.

## **Advice**

The Group Manager, Strategic Planning and Regeneration, summarised the report. This was a pro-active strategy for the next period looking at the priorities. The next stage was to speak to officers within the conservation and strategic planning teams to develop an action plan for the next few years. The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee who wanted the introduction to come from the Portfolio Holder rather than from the Chief Executive.

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services supported the strategy and referred to page 13 of appendix 1 of the report. The Council gave £58k per year to the Dacorum Heritage Trust (DHT) and asked what level of partnership the Council had with DHT.

The Group Manager Strategic Planning and Regeneration said officers were working closely with the DHT on a range of projects (Bury and Cranstone projects). The working relationship had to be managed within the resources available.

The Corporate Director, Housing and Regeneration, said there may be an issue moving forward to get DHT to act in different ways. It was quite an old fashioned

Heritage Trust focussing on artefacts and records. The Council wanted to help them deliver their vision in other ways using digital technology etc.

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services said the issue was they were a knowledgeable organisation who knew the history and the Council had to decide how to use them to promote it without the Council doing the work.

The Leader of the Council said a lot of their expertise was with artefacts rather than listed buildings.

The Corporate Director of Housing and Regeneration said it might help them if they were looking at linking into Look No Further etc. to raise general awareness of heritage in more modern ways.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing suggested that as DHT had been going for quite a while, new people should be brought in. Sometimes people were not getting involved if it was perceived to be a close circle only interested in a museum.

The Group Manager confirmed to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability that there was no linkage with the community assets listing.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources endorsed the comments made by the Portfolio Holder for Housing. The best thing for DHT to do would be to find some new young members and the Bury project could be a catalyst in the district to get people involved.

### **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

### **Consultation**

Cllr Andrew Williams, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration;  
Corporate Management Team;  
Alex Chrusciak, Group Manager – Development Management and Planning;  
Chris Taylor, Group Manager – Strategic Planning and Regeneration;  
Fiona Webb, Assistant Team Leader – Planning, Development and Regeneration.

### **Voting**

None.

### **CA/129/14 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 the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

## **CA/130/14 UPDATE ON THE Highbarns Land Stabilisation Project**

### **Decision**

That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

### **Reason for Decision**

To provide an update on the Highbarns Land Stabilisation Project and to advise Members of the position regarding the budget for this project.

### **Implications**

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

### **Risk Implications**

Risk Assessment reviewed on 4 June 2013.

### **Corporate Objectives**

Building Community Capacity – the works will restore a community that is subject to planning blight and is at risk from further collapse of abandoned mine works.

### **Advice**

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

### **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

### **Consultation**

Consultation took place with:

The Highbarns Steering Group; and  
The Highbarns Residents Group.

### **Voting**

None.

The meeting ended at 8.05 pm.