

MINUTES

CABINET

26 MAY 2015

Present:

Members:

Councillors:

Graeme Elliot	Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources
Neil Harden	Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services
Janice Marshall	Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services
Graham Sutton	Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration
Andrew Williams (Chairman)	Leader of the Council

Officers:

Sally Marshall	Chief Executive
James Deane	Corporate Director Finance and Operations
Mark Gaynor	Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration
Elliott Brooks	Assistant Director Housing
James Doe	Assistant Director Planning & Regeneration
Mark Brookes	Group Manager Legal Governance
Julia Hedger	Group Manager Strategic Housing
Sarah Pickering	Lead Officer Housing Development
Catriona Lawson	Team Leader Democratic Services
Emily-Rae Maxwell	Corporate Graduate

The meeting began at 7.31 pm.

CA/031/15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2015 were agreed by the members present and signed by the Chairman.

CA/032/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Mrs Griffiths.

CA/033/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CA/034/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

CA/035/15 REFERRALS TO CABINET

There were no referrals to Cabinet.

CA/036/15 CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Decision

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

29 June 2015

10. Process for Disciplinary Action of Senior Officers to be removed and merged with Amendment of Standing Orders Regarding Disciplinary Action.

21 July 2015

17. Pavement Strategy to be removed and merged with Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Policy for Use of Outdoor Trading Areas, which will now be called Town Centre Management update including the Business Improvement District and the Outdoor Trading areas.

CA/037/15 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CHILTERN AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN 2014 - 2019

Decision

To endorse the AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019 as a material consideration in the exercise of the Council's planning powers.

Reason for Decision

To seek endorsement of the new Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2014-2019.

Implications

Financial

None specifically in relation to the Management Plan although the Council does support the work of the Chilterns Conservation Board, via an annual grant.

Value for Money

By working together with other local planning authorities with land within the AONB, and with the Conservation Board itself in preparing planning guidance and advice for the AONB, the Council is achieving value for money.

Risk Implications

Failure to endorse the AONB Management Plan would mean it has less weight in the consideration of planning applications and the use of the Chiltern Buildings Design Guide in assessing applications could be limited as a result.

Failure to take account of the management Plan in relevant planning decisions would also mean the Council had failed to take account of a statutory planning document.

Corporate Objectives

This report reflects the Council's objectives of a 'Clean and Safe Environment' whilst facilitating rural 'regeneration' and the delivery of 'Affordable Housing' of an appropriate scale and in appropriate locations within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in order to support rural communities and the rural economy.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability noted that the revised HS2 plans appear to be taking a more pragmatic approach but enquired as to what precisely had changed from the old plan.

The Assistant Director Planning & Regeneration advised that he felt it was the Chilterns conference making a statement that it was not entirely certain on the route through some parts.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration clarified the wording on the second bullet point of paragraph 3, should read *Inclusion of text and a policy principle opposing the development of High Speed 2 (HS2) rail link, which would have a **serious** impact on a large area of the Chilterns AONB, and not a **series** impact as stated.*

The Assistant Director Planning & Regeneration confirmed this was correct

Consultation

There was no consultation.

Voting

None.

CA/038/15 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2014/15

Decision

1. Consider the provisional outturn position for each of the above accounts; and
2. Recommend to Council approval of the reserve movements outlined in Section 9

Reason for Decision

To provide details of the provisional outturn position for the:

- General Fund
- Housing Revenue Account
- Capital Programme

To provide details of the proposed transfers to and from earmarked reserves.

Implications

Financial and Value for Money implications are included within the body of the report.

Risk Implications

Risk implications are included within the body of the report.

Corporate Objectives

Corporate Governance

Advice

The Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) introduced the report highlighting the following points:

- The General Fund has a controllable variance of £454,000, which means we have spent less than intended by that amount. This is against the original budget and not a revised budget which has been the case in previous years.
- Paragraph 9.1 refers to a contribution of £564,000 approved by Council in February 2015, but should state that this was allocated to the Dacorum Development Reserve.
- Recommended a contribution of £150,000 be transferred to the Management of Change Reserve to bring into line with the position expected.
- HRA has a provisional outturn surplus of £177,000, as expected when budgets were set. This can be transferred to the Capital Programme for further investment.
- Capital General Funds has potential slippage of £1.8 million which is approximately 10 % of budget.
- HRA has approximately 25% slippage, which is largely due to 3 or 4 key items.

The Portfolio Holder for Resident & Corporate Services enquired as to where discussion had taken place with regards to the amounts of money placed into the Reserves.

The Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) advised this formed part of the Budget Report that was delivered in February and that at Year End this would be looked at again.

Consultation

There was no consultation.

Voting

None

CA/039/15 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY REVIEW**Decision**

1. That Cabinet recommend Council to approve the amendments to the Housing Allocations Policy as set out in paragraph 3 of the report.
2. That Cabinet approve the content of the proposed communications strategy regarding the Housing Allocations Policy.

Reason for Decision

To update Cabinet on the Housing Allocations Policy review and all proposed policy amendments.

To update Cabinet on the content of a proposed communications strategy relating to the policy.

ImplicationsFinancial

No financial implications as the proposed policy changes do not require further software development

Value for Money

Carrying out a full review of this policy has clear value for money implications:

- If the policy does not comply with legislation then the Council could be vulnerable to legal challenge, which could be very costly.
- Lack of clarity in the policy will lead to an unnecessary increase in communication coming into the housing department from residents.
- If the policy can assist the Council to reduce letting times this will result in savings to the Council.
- By better matching suitable residents to properties with, or suitable for, adaptations, the Council will save money on very expensive installations.

Risk Implications

The main risks associated with policy amendments relate to communication of changes to residents and the Council's partners. Clarity in the policy will assist the Council if the policy is fully and properly understood by those who have to use it on a

day-to-day basis either as applicants, or as the Council's partners who are supporting housing applicants.

In addition, procedural changes must be implemented effectively by Council officers to result in improved operations.

Corporate Objectives

Affordable Housing

Group Manager Strategic Housing introduced the report highlighting the following points:

- The current policy has been in situ since November 2013 and there had always been an undertaking to review it after one year due to the significant changes that had been introduced.
- The review has provided useful data analysis which confirms the Policy has been working as the Council had intended it to.
- It also provided recognition that there is a need to communicate more with applicants to advise that they can influence their chance of being housed by changing their bidding patterns which has brought about the Communications Plan.
- Clarification that 4.3 of the Report relating to Local Connections the third bullet point should read: *Currently in permanent employment within the Borough boundary, consisting of 16 hours or more a week, and which has been continuous for the last 24 months*
- A new section has been added to the Policy – 14. New Right to Move.
- Guidance was issued by the Government in April that has meant we can propose the recommendations as part of these changes. We have recommended the absolute minimum the Council can do in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and that will also be reviewed within a year.
- Communication Strategy is to be implemented as soon as possible with staff and Members scheduled to be trained in Autumn

Portfolio Holder for Environmental Sustainability and Regulatory Services noted that this Report had previously been to Housing & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee where it had been welcomed with some changes recommended and noted that they had been implemented.

Consultation

There was no consultation.

Voting

None

CA/040/15 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 is 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 and business affairs of the Council and third party companies/organisations.

CA/041/15 DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Decision

1. That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.
2. That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.
3. That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.
4. That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.

Full details are in the part 2 minute.

Reason for Decision

Full details are in the Part 2 minutes.

Implications

Full details are in the Part 2 minutes.

Risk Implications

Full details are in the Part 2 minutes.

Corporate Objectives

Affordable Housing.

Advice

Full details are in the Part 2 minutes.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

There was no consultation.

Voting

None.

The meeting ended at 7.52 pm.