

MINUTES

CABINET

20 OCTOBER 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
Steve Baker Assistant Director Chief Executives Unit
James Doe Assistant Director Planning, Development & Regeneration
Jim Doyle Group Manager Democratic Services
Matt Rawdon Group Manager – People
Laura Wood Team Leader-Strategic Planning & Regeneration
Kevin Langley Assistant Team Leader- Strategic Planning & Regeneration
Claire Lynch Community Partnerships Team Leader
Anne Stunell Human Resources Team Leader
Heather Overhead Assistant Team Leader Strategic Planning and Regeneration
Natasha Brathwaite Strategic Housing Team Leader
Paul O'Day Corporate Health & Safety Lead Officer
Michelle Anderson Corporate Support Team Leader-Democracy

The meeting began at 7.30 pm.

CA/080/15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2015 were agreed by the members present and signed by the Chairman.

CA/081/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Griffiths.

CA/082/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Marshall declared a Personal Interest in Item 9 'Voluntary sector funding – Changes to grant arrangements for the Strategic Partners' as she is a trustee for Centre in the Park.

Councillor Marshall also declared a Personal Interest in Item 16 'Strategic Review of Sports and Leisure Facilities in Dacorum' as she is a member of Sportspace.

CA/083/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

CA/084/15 REFERRALS TO CABINET

There were no referrals to Cabinet.

CA/085/15 CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Decision

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

Add to November – Review of Scrutiny Roles and Responsibilities (Chief Executive)

Add to December – Committee Timetable 2016-2017 (Assistant Director Chief Executives Unit)

CA/086/15 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER – QUARTER 2 2015

Decision

That Cabinet note the updates to the Strategic Risk Register as at the end of Quarter 2, 2015, and identify any amendments to existing risks or areas for further consideration by Officers.

Reason for Decision

To provide Cabinet with the quarterly update on the Strategic Risk Register.

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).

Risk Implications

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

Equalities Implications

None identified.

Health And Safety Implications

Effective risk management supports the Council's Health & Safety policies. By giving careful thought to the risks inherent in projects and changes in the ways services are delivered, the health and safety of both service users and staff are better protected.

Corporate Objectives

Corporate Governance

Advice

The Portfolio Holder Finance & Resources introduced the report and noted that it was the first one following the workshop held in July.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- Cabinet
- Leader of the Opposition
- Chief Officer Group
- Linda Dargue, Insurance & Risk Manager
- Mazars (the Council's Internal Auditors)

Voting

None.

CA/087/15 ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY

Decision

That Cabinet recommend Council to approve the Alcohol Testing Policy as set out in the report to Cabinet which is intended to supplement the Council's existing Alcohol Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy.

Reason for Decision

To seek approval to an Alcohol Testing Policy.

Implications

Financial

There are costs associated with procurement of monitoring equipment as detailed in the report.

Risk Implications

Currently there is a risk that action could be taken against the Council for unfair dismissal as there is no objective testing/screening to test employees for alcohol limits whilst at work. To ensure that the final process is objective an independent accredited organisation would be employed to conduct the final alcohol test using home office approved breathalyser. Any risks are offset by the consequences of any incident or accidents caused by personnel that have excess alcohol whilst engaged in work activities or driving.

The key risks :

- Statutory non compliance
- Risk of serious accidents/fatalities
- Legal action taken against the Council (both criminal & civil)
- Reputational damage to Council

Community Impact Assessment

A Community Impact Assessment is not applicable as the drink/drive used for the purposes of this policy are set out in legislation and do not discriminate between individuals, culture, gender, disability or age etc. This policy relates to employees only.

It is proposed this policy applies to all staff across the Council. This addresses concerns from the unions that operational staff at the depot could be targeted unfairly as many of the depot staff drive or operate machinery.

Health And Safety Implications

None. Implementation of the policy will enable DBC to demonstrate they are complying with Health & Safety requirements and best practice.

Corporate Objectives

Resources and Value For Money;
Optimise Resources and Implement Best Practice.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services introduced the report and explained that currently there were no objective methods of testing, so this policy would change that. It was highlighted that the Union fully supported the proposals. The Portfolio Holder stressed that this policy would cover all staff regardless of grade, department or role.

The process would involve two stages for testing and could be carried out if there was suspicion that a member of staff was drunk, following an accident or as part of random

testing. Environmental Health staff would carry out the initial test and then if one was positive it would be passed to external testers.

The Group Manager for People added that as part of the initial random testing, fifty names would be selected from a staff database, which would be reviewed to ensure the process remained fair and consistent across the organisation.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- Unions
- Cupid Green Health & Safety Group
- Health & Safety Committee
- CMT

Voting

None.

CA/088/15 VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING – CHANGES TO GRANT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Decision

That Cabinet approve-

1. Replacing the existing core funding arrangements for the Council's Strategic Partner voluntary sector organisations with an outcome based commissioning model with effect from 2016/17.
2. the proposed financial envelope of £619,000 and the revised distribution of those funds between the services from 1 April 2016 as set out in Appendix 2.
3. the new groupings of services as set out in the Appendices.
4. the contract duration of a minimum of three years with an option to extend for up to a further 24 months based on the performance of the contract.
5. the phased implementation timetable as set out in Appendix 3.
6. the service outcomes for the Advice, Information and Advocacy Service as set out in Appendix 1a.
7. to give delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Residents and Corporate Services to make all future decisions relating to the commissioning of voluntary sector services in 2016/17. This will include decisions on the service outcomes (except for the Advice, Information and Advocacy Service), any variations or amendments to the tendering timescales and contract awards.

Reason for Decision

To seek the agreement of Cabinet for the introduction of a commissioning approach to the funding of the Council's voluntary sector Strategic Partners with effect from 2016/17 and to seek delegated authority for the Portfolio Holder for Residents and Corporate Services to make various decisions for the implementation of the commissioning process.

Financial

The overall cost to the Council for these services, which is committed until 31 March 2016 is £813,800 per annum.

£753,800 from the General fund (£627,550 per annum in grant funding , £105,500 in reduced income from full market rent and £20,750 in reduced business rates) and £60,000 from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Risk Implications

Some of the Strategic Partners may not be ready for the commissioning process but this has been mitigated by the holding of workshops, the consultation process and the phasing of the tendering exercise throughout 2016/17 to enable more preparation time.

Some of the current Strategic Partners may not be commissioned to carry out the new services and therefore may not be able to continue to operate.

Equalities Implications

Equality Impact Assessment carried out on 2 October 2015

Health And Safety Implications

None identified.

Corporate Objectives

1. Community Capacity: enabling self-help and volunteering to build communities.
2. Regeneration: developing skills and aspirations of local people.
3. Dacorum Delivers: developing more effective ways of delivering services which meet customer expectations.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services introduced the report and explained that it had been discussed by CMT, Cabinet colleagues and two Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSC), who raised some concerns around funding and lack of provision for residents.

The Assistant Director for the Chief Executives Unit explained that the Housing and Community Overview & Scrutiny committee raised a number of concerns, including, wanting reassurance there would be full consultation with the voluntary sector, ensuring the outcomes remained flexible and broad based, seeking confirmation of the tendering process, ensuring all existing providers benefited from the business rates and if the provider is changed then they needed to publicise this with local residents.

The Assistant Director for the Chief Executives Unit added that the OSC were assured that a communications plan would be requested as part of the tendering process. In general, OSC supported the change.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services referred to recommendation seven of the report and sought confirmation that it was implying that the Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services would make the final decision as to who to award the contract, based on officer advice.

The Assistant Director for the Chief Executives Unit confirmed this would be the case. The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services felt there was potential for this to be a very explosive situation which could result in large public concern. She felt that the decision maker should be Cabinet as a whole rather than an individual. Therefore she suggested altering recommendation 7 so that power was given to Cabinet and not the Portfolio Holder.

The Leader of the Council felt that in reality it would not make any difference. The outcome of the tender would be based on a set criteria. He was inclined to leave the responsibility with the Portfolio Holder, giving him the option to seek advice from Cabinet if needed.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services reiterated that as this was a sensitive area she would prefer the whole Cabinet being responsible rather than an individual.

The Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services noted that if he was presented with a winner of the tendering process based on the scoring results he would be inclined to accept, as would Cabinet if they were presented with the same results.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources supported the Leader's views and felt that if it was a group decision it could become more bureaucratic. He agreed with the recommendations that it should be considered by officers and the Portfolio Holder.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration also supported the recommendations to keep responsibility with the Portfolio Holder.

The recommendations were agreed by Cabinet, however The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services requested that the minutes record her concerns regarding recommendation seven.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- Service users - currently funded through the Strategic Partner Programme
- DBC Staff
- Strategic Partners
- Cabinet members and CMT
- Finance and Resources OSC 7 October 2015
- Housing and Community OSC 14 October 2015

Voting

None.

CA/089/15 APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME 2016

Decision

1. To approve the establishment of an Apprenticeship Scheme for 2016; and,
2. **That Cabinet recommend to Council the release of £41,522 from the Management of Change reserve in order to deliver the scheme.**

Reason for Decision

To recommend to Cabinet the establishment of a new Apprenticeship Scheme Framework to support the Council's workforce development needs and contribute to the economic regeneration of Dacorum.

Implications

Financial

The cost of establishing this scheme from January 2016 is £41,522 which will create two apprenticeship opportunities at Dacorum.

Value for Money

There will be a competitive salary package and development plan in place to ensure staff are supported and productive.

Risk Implications

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

- Risk of increasing skill gaps for the local area, which would impact on the local economy.
- Reduced employment opportunities for people in the local community.
- Not supporting the delivery of economic well being in the local community.
- Workforce issues will remain in some services

Community Impact Assessment

A Community Impact Assessment has been completed

Health And Safety Implications

All posts would be supported by the Council's Health and Safety policies.

Corporate Objectives

Regeneration and Economy

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

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services reported that in May 2012, Cabinet agreed to support and fund an Apprenticeships Scheme Framework, to

support and enable the employment of local people, and contribute to the economic regeneration of Dacorum.

The council had supported 19 apprentices since 2012 and a quarter of those had found employment with Dacorum Borough Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources felt this was a very worthwhile scheme and fully supported the recommendations.

The Leader of the Council asked when the apprentices would be with the council.

The Team Leader for Human Resources explained that the process would begin as soon as possible with the aim for them to start in January 2016.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration asked if they had looked at specific areas for their employment.

The Team Leader for Human Resources said they would look at areas where it was difficult to recruit to.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- Cllr Neil Harden
- Assistant Director – Chief Executive’s Unit
- Corporate Management Team – workforce planning paper

Voting

None.

CA/090/15 HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION INITIATIVES

Decision

- That Cabinet approve a drawdown of £50K from the Homelessness Prevention Fund to fund the initiatives set out in Section 2 of this report.
- That Cabinet also approve a drawdown of £45k from the Homelessness Prevention Fund to fund two posts in the team (Private Sector Housing Partnership Officer and Lead Officer Private Sector Housing) plus training for officers, in order to ensure that the Council has the resources needed to carry out the initiatives set out in Section 2 of this report.

Reason for Decision

To set out a proposal to Cabinet for the drawdown of funds, from grants made to the Council as ‘Homelessness Prevention Funds’, to be used by the Council’s Strategic Housing Service to fund homelessness prevention initiatives.

Implications

Financial

The Strategic Housing Service is proposing a drawdown of £50,000 from the 'Homelessness Prevention Fund', which is government grant ring-fenced to be spent on schemes to prevent homelessness.

The £50,000 is the total remaining grant not already committed to spend by the service. The grants making up this pot are not automatically re-occurring, and therefore unless the Council receives further grants, continuation of these schemes would have to be reviewed in terms of value for money and savings achieved.

Value for Money

The Council's Housing Advice and Options team provide advice and options to prevent homelessness in situations where the current home is no longer appropriate. Where possible (but only where the home is safe), officers will first seek to prevent homelessness by stabilising a household's current accommodation through mediation with family or a private landlord.

The Council's private rented sector deposit guarantee scheme 'Help to Rent' is the main homelessness prevention scheme available to officers trying to prevent homelessness in situations where the current home is no longer appropriate.

A household that becomes homeless carries a significant cost to the Council in terms of providing a temporary accommodation placement and managing the licence, investigating the homelessness case, providing welfare and support, and the clearance and void maintenance costs after move-on.

The private rented sector is very strong in Dacorum and landlords are able to set high market rents that out-price most prospective tenants on low incomes and/or in receipt of benefits.

Termination of an 'Assured Shorthold Tenancy' (AST, the standard form of tenancy used in the private sector) is increasing and is now the main reason for homeless presentations to the Council. In 2009 and 2015 this reason for homelessness accounted for 11% and 50% respectively of all homeless duties awarded by the Council.

Prevention of homelessness is value for money and the Strategic Housing Service is proposing to allocate funds as follows:

- £10,000 for a cash incentive scheme to attract landlords to work in partnership with the Council's Help to Rent scheme.
- £30,000 to be available to officers for rent in advance/bridging deposit payments;
- £5,000 to pay for travel arrangements; and
- £5,000 to cover other emergency provision.

Risk Implications

Rogue private landlords

The Council is aware that among the many good landlords with properties that they are happy to let at more affordable prices, there are those rogue landlords who purposefully target the bottom end of the market in order to exploit financially vulnerable people. The Council is committed to carrying out a 'fit and proper person' test on all prospective landlords and getting them to sign a 'fit and proper person' statement. The Help to Rent team also has a good working arrangement with the Council's Environmental Health team who will take referrals to investigate a landlord if there is evidence they are acting unlawfully.

Fraudulent homeless applications

The Council receives a high number of presentations from households either homeless or under threat of homelessness. Among these there may be those making false declarations about their circumstances in order to access assistance with housing.

The Strategic Housing Service works closely with the Corporate Anti-Fraud team to identify households that it suspects have committed fraudulent activity. This will then be investigated and may lead to criminal proceedings.

Equalities Implications

It has been identified that young people, and young lone parents in particular, struggle to access the private rented housing market in Dacorum. As part of delivering the initiatives proposed in this report the Council wants to work to mitigate some of the negative perceptions among landlords about renting to young people or people on benefits.

No reasons to expect discrimination from the service have been identified that the Council does not have processes in place to mitigate.

Health And Safety Implications

The Help to Rent service is committed to maintaining its relationship with the Council's Environmental Health service so that they are aware of the private sector properties in the scheme, and work in partnership if any health and safety concerns are raised relating to properties.

Corporate Objectives

Affordable Housing

Advice

The Assistant Director for Housing noted that the purpose of the report was to request the drawdown of funds, from grants made to the Council as 'Homelessness Prevention Funds', to be used by the Council's Strategic Housing Service to fund homelessness prevention initiatives. He explained that homelessness was increasing and more people were coming to the council to seek advice and accommodation, therefore investment was key.

Statistics were given to the committee highlighting that 127 people had sought advice during September 2014 and this had risen to 209 people during September in 2015.

In addition 38 people had sought accommodation as of September 2014 and year to date in September 2015, this had risen to 142. The trend was increasing and the Council had to manage this with its own stock and Bed and Breakfasts.

The Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services referred to section 2.1 of the report and asked what the £5,000 to pay for travel arrangements and £5,000 to cover other emergency provision included.

The Strategic Housing Team Leader explained the travel arrangements could cover train or taxi fares, which most of the time were within Hertfordshire. On occasions this could have to stretch to Birmingham or Manchester. Emergency provision could involve costs to assist a victim of flooding or fire and require one off payments for emergency items such as warm clothing.

It was noted that St Albans council were referring people to Dacorum to be placed in local Bed and Breakfasts.

The Strategic Housing Team Leader confirmed that councils were made aware if others were making placements within the local area. She knew that St Albans were currently experiencing difficulties.

The leader of the council asked if under the landlord incentive scheme, could landlords terminate the contract after 6 months and then re-sign, in order to receive the incentives.

The Strategic Housing Team Leader said this could not be done and the process would ensure it could not be exploited.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- Cllr Margaret Griffiths
- Elliott Brooks - Assistant Director for Housing
- All Housing Service Team Leaders and Group Managers

Voting

None.

CA/091/15 TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE, INCLUDING OUTDOOR TRADING

Decision

1. That the action taken to deliver the Town Centre Strategy as detailed in the report be noted.
2. Agree the approach to future Town Centre Management post March 2016
3. Agree the draft Pavement Strategy for outdoor trading as set out in this report

Reason for Decision

To update Cabinet on the work that has been undertaken on the Town Centre Strategy since it was adopted in October 2014, approve the approach to be taken to the

management of the town centre post March 2016 and to approve draft pavement strategy.

Implications

Financial

Two members of staff were revenue funded for a two year period over 2014-2016. In this time it was investigated as to how town centre management could be funded externally through the form of a BID (Business Improvement District). This is a lengthy process, and whilst steps are being taken to seek a BID for the town centre, Officers have investigated potential additional sources of revenue income. This report highlights a 'Pavement Strategy' to achieve income through consents for street trading. It is estimated that the net impact of these will generate around £38,000 of additional revenue generated.

Value for Money

This project has enhanced both how we use and maintain assets within the town centre by either prolonging the life of the assets through improved maintenance or by bringing in additional income by making better use of the assets. There have also been more events held, bringing in large numbers of people and significant increases in trade on the days of the events.

Risk Implications

With the additional funding for the town centre soon to be finished certain services/activities will have to be resourced if they are wanted to continue or will have to cease from happening.

Equalities Implications

None identified.

Health And Safety Implications

None identified.

Corporate Objectives

The regeneration of Hemel Hempstead Town Centre forms a key part of the "Regeneration" & "Dacorum Delivers" corporate objectives.

The Town Centre Strategy details the plans for the town centre until 2017. It delivers the potential to maintain and grow the economy of the town centre by enabling opportunities to come forward, attracting new inward investment, continuing and enhancing business support services and looking to maximise the financial contributions of council assets within the town centre.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration thanked the team for the excellent report. He explained that regeneration in the town was now well underway. The Clean, Safe and Green teams were involved with the town and market management. He added that part of the report focussed on the pavement strategy and monitoring

businesses conducting trade on the pavements. If this was adopted it would bring in more revenue to the borough. He felt this was a strong, robust policy which he was happy to recommend to Cabinet.

The Assistant Director for Planning, Development & Regeneration noted that resources are in place to continue working on the action plan set out in the Town Centre Strategy until March 2016. From then, and in the absence of resources from a future BID levy, there will be a need to prioritise what the Council is able to continue to provide in the town centre from established core budgets. Therefore points to note were included as part of paragraph 4 of the report to Cabinet.

The Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services referred to paragraph 5 of the report and the £38,000 which could be generated through promotional space bookings each year. He asked what the current revenue was for these space bookings.

The Assistant Team Leader for Strategic Planning & Regeneration said this was currently limited as no one was actively promoting it. He felt it could be between £5-10k. The council use a company to help promote these spaces, which it did not pay for, however received any income generated.

The Leader of the Council asked if there was anything the council could do to minimise and control the amount of people who carry out surveys etc. on the streets.

The Assistant Team Leader for Strategic Planning & Regeneration explained that they were allowed to operate in the town 2 days per week. However, they did operate outside of these times but it was hard to enforce as it was a voluntary agreement with the trade policy. The strategy being considered did not cover this area.

It was believed that there were policies that could restrict their trade, for instance Enfield Council had good examples.

The Leader of the Council asked if a by-law could be introduced to help manage the situation.

The Assistant Director for the Chief Executives Unit said the options could be explored and a by-law could be introduced to grant permissions to be in the town centre on certain days.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources referred to paragraph 7.4.2 of the report. In particular, how the Saturday market would complement the market offer in the Marlowes pedestrian area of the town centre and help to drive footfall to the Old Town High Street, supporting businesses in that area. He asked how the footfall would be increased.

The Assistant Director for Planning, Development & Regeneration said it was the intention to offer different foods, more specialised on a Saturday, which would possibly start in December.

The Leader of the Council said this would be complimentary rather than competitive.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration said that food markets in Hertfordshire were very well supported and this would therefore benefit the town.

The Assistant Team Leader for Strategic Planning & Regeneration confirmed that the Clean, Safe and Green teams were involved and were aware when the markets would be operating.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- David Austin, Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Delivery
- Craig Thorpe, Group Manager (Environmental Services)

Voting

None.

CA/092/15 DACORUM LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK: DRAFT MASTERPLANS FOR THE LOCAL ALLOCATION HOUSING SITES

Decision

1. That issues arising from comments received to the draft master plans and the impact of new advice are noted;
2. That the responses set out in Table 3 of the Consultation Report for the draft master plans and the proposed changes arising, as shown in the track change master plans attached to this report, are agreed;
3. That authority is delegated to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration, to approve any further wording changes to the draft master plans prior to submission.

Reason for Decision

1. Consider the issues raised through consultation on the draft master plans in late 2014;
2. Agree changes proposed to draft master plans arising from the consultation; and
3. Agree the process for submitting the draft master plans as supporting documents to the Site Allocations DPD when it is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

Implications

Financial

Having adopted master plans for the development of the Local Allocations will help reduce the incidence of planning appeals (and hence costs associated with these). It will be the most effective way of ensuring the planning application stage is smooth, and will speed up the decision making process. It will also ensure optimum level of developer contributions to infrastructure and in mitigation of development impacts can be achieved.

Value for money

Where possible, technical work that supports the master plans has been undertaken by landowners to ensure value for money. The costs associated with the preparation of the master plans have also been shared where possible.

Legal

Although the master plans do not form part of the Site Allocations DPD, they are Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) that will support delivery of key policies within this DPD. Attwaters Jameson and Hill Solicitors have been retained to provide external legal support for the Site Allocations. The same advisers acted for the Council through the Core Strategy Examination process and subsequent (unsuccessful) legal challenge to this document. They will support the Council's own legal team by providing any advice required regarding the implication of new Government advice; assist with responding to key representations; advise on the production of any additional evidence and support Officers through the Site Allocations Examination process, where the master plans will be considered as supporting documents.

Staff

Joint working with land owners to develop the master plans has reduced the burden on the Strategic Planning and Regeneration team. Going forward, at the planning application stage, having adopted master plans, agreed by land owners, will similarly assist the development management team.

Land

The Local Allocations support delivery of the Council's adopted Core Strategy which will play an important role in decisions regarding future land uses within the Borough.

Risk Implications

The master plans have been developed in conjunction with land owners and have been subject to public consultation, which reduces the risk of lengthy delays at the planning application stage.

Equalities Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for the Core Strategy. Equalities issues are also picked up as part of the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanies the Site Allocations document. The master plans support the delivery of the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs.

Health And Safety Implications

Implications are included in the planning issues covered by the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs.

Corporate Objectives

The master plans set out site requirements and information about the design and layout for the development of the Local Allocation housing sites. As such, they help 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. give consideration as to how the new developments can support existing communities and help address local deficiencies etc;
- *Affordable housing*: e.g. require 40% of dwellings on the sites to be affordable; which is higher than the usual policy requirement;

- *Dacorum delivers:* e.g. provides a clear framework to inform planning decisions regarding the Local Allocations; and

Regeneration: e.g. encourages high quality housing development, which will support Dacorum's vibrant economy.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration explained that this had been a long and rigorous process, which resulted in consultation and minor tweaks being made to the plan.

The Assistant Team Leader Strategic Planning and Regeneration said that Members would be aware that we consulted on the Site Allocations and masterplans last year and the feedback had previously been reported to Cabinet. The feedback received on the recent Focussed Changes consultation for the Site Allocations will be reported to members in December.

The report before members' sets out the feedback received specifically on the masterplans for the local allocations, and the Council's proposed responses, which are consistent with those given to the Site Allocations. Most responses did not raise any new issues that have not been brought previously to Members' attention either through previous reports on the Site Allocations, or relating to the Core Strategy process. Members will be aware that the masterplans are additional guidance to the Site Allocations document which sets the formal policy. They do not contain all the detail for delivery of the sites which will be finalised at the planning application stage. The masterplans will be submitted to the planning inspectorate as background evidence to the Site Allocations so they won't be subject to examination themselves.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources raised concerns around road capacity in certain areas, which he had raised previously and was opposed the strategy. He asked how much more investigation had been done to look into this.

The Assistant Team Leader Strategic Planning and Regeneration said the Transport model had been updated. Hertfordshire County Council were confident that any impacts could be mitigated and they fully supported the plan.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources noted there was a change in Government Policy recently regarding gypsy and traveller sites. He asked what the changes were.

The Assistant Team Leader Strategic Planning and Regeneration explained that there had been some changes in July and the council was meeting with its external legal advisor to consider the implications. A report would be considered by Cabinet in December as part of the Site Allocations Policy.

The Team Leader for Strategic Planning & Regeneration added that the principle change was the definition of gypsy and travellers. She was unsure how they would define this and monitor things in reality. The council was taking legal advice to see if the numbers needing accommodation would change.

The Leader of the Council was aware of the huge pressures for developments to include parking but he felt there was a desire to see better provisions made and wanted it to be included somewhere in the planning process or policies. He added that this had been an issue over the past 5-10 years as developers were keen to keep the numbers low.

The Assistant Director for Planning, Development & Regeneration said the parking issues would be addressed as part of the full local plan review. The Team Leader for Strategic Planning & Regeneration said that the transport plan identified suitable requirements.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

Formal consultation on the draft master plans took place alongside the pre-Submission Site Allocations DPD from September to November 2014.

To help inform the master plans, workshops and/or meetings with local residents and other stakeholders were held in May 2013. For LA3, this was followed by public consultation (including a manned exhibition) in July 2013, to seek feedback on development principles for the site.

Advice from key stakeholders, such as the Local Education Authority and Highway Authority, has been sought where appropriate. Feedback on the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan has also been significant in developing a clear understanding of local infrastructure needs. This advice is referred to within the relevant Background Issues Papers that form part of the Site Allocations DPD evidence base. The Consultation Reports relating to the Core Strategy (Volumes 1-7) are also relevant.

In terms of internal processes, a Task and Finish Group gave informal advice on the preparation of the master plans. A report seeking agreement for the content of the draft master plans for consultation was agreed by Cabinet in July 2014. There have also been reports to Cabinet at key stages in the preparation of the Local Planning Framework and the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder has been kept apprised of progress.

SPEOSC also considered a progress report, which highlighted key emerging issues, on 27 January 2015 (see below).

Voting

None.

CA/093/15 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 II 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). Minute CA/095/15.

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

CA/094/15 MAYLANDS URBAN REALM IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Decision

That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Reason for Decision

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Implications

Financial

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Value for Money

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Risk Implications

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Equalities Implications

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Health And Safety Implications

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Corporate Objectives

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Advice

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Voting

Full details are in the Part II minute.

CA/095/15 STRATEGIC REVIEW OF SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES IN DACORUM

Decision

That the recommendation as detailed in the report be approved.

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Reason for Decision

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Implications

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Corporate Objectives

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Advice

Full details are in the Part II minute.

Voting

Full details are in the Part II minute.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm.