

MINUTES

CABINET

17 OCTOBER 2023

Present:

Councillors: Tindall (Leader)
Bromham
Dhyani
England (Deputy Leader)
Wilkie

Also attended: Councillor Douris, Williams, Anderson, Pringle, Capozzi and
C Hobson

Officers:	M Brookes	Assistant Director Legal and Democratic
	N Howcutt	Chief Finance Officer (S151)
	S Whelan	Hemel Place Strategy Programme Manager
	J Doe	Strategic Director Place
	C Hamilton	Chief Executive
	R Leydon	Strategic Planning and Regeneration Assistant Manager
	L Wood	South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan Lead
	L Fowell	Democratic Services

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

CA/80/21 **MINUTES**

Cabinet agreed the minutes of the previous meeting.

CA/81/21 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies from Cllr Symington and Cllr Weston

Cllr Tindall explained that Cllr Symington has stepped down from Cabinet, Cllr Tindall will deputise in her absence.

CA/82/21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

CA/83/21 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

CA/84/21 **REFERRALS TO CABINET**

There were no referrals to Cabinet.

CA/85/21 CABINET FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan was noted.

CA/86/21 ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT

Decision

Cabinet **resolved to recommend that Council** approve the contents of the report on Treasury Management performance and the Prudential Indicators for 2022/23.

Corporate Priorities

Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

This report is a statutory requirement under the Local Government Act 2003 and is an important part of the Council's financial governance to enable officers and Members to review the Council's financial position

Deputy S151 Officer:

This is a S151 Officer report

Advice

Cllr Tindall introduced the report and welcomed questions, there were none.

Recommendation agreed.

CA/87/21 MID TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Decision

1. Approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2027/28 as set out in Appendix A to the report;
2. Note four year General Fund savings requirement of £4.4m for the duration of the MTFS.
3. Note that the Chief Finance Officer will work with the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet to identify and deliver options that will achieve the medium term saving targets identified within the strategy;
4. Endorse the Financial Planning Framework to support the budget-setting process for 2024/25;

5. Agree that the Chief Finance Officer be requested to revise the Medium Term Financial Strategy and re-present to Cabinet and Council for approval if material changes to forecasts are required following future Government announcements.
6. Note that, as part of the annual CFO statement in the budget report in February 2023, the Chief Finance Officer (S151) was required to report on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. At that point in time the CFO confirmed that the level of reserves and balances were adequate to mitigate the foreseeable risks. Note that, at this point in time the position, as reported, is unchanged.

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
Building strong and vibrant communities
Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
Climate and ecological emergency

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

No comments to add to the report

Deputy S151 Officer:

This is a S151 Officer report, and recommendations and comments are included in the body of the report.

Advice

Cllr Tindall introduced the reports and welcomed any questions.

Cllr Williams referred to page 31 and wanted to be clear and confirm; the report states that the current review would deliver £600,000 of additional income to balance the budget?

Cllr Tindall confirmed this was correct however said that he would question this himself as he was surprised to see that figure as he was under the impression that the figure would be around £400,000.

N Howcutt said that in the medium term the revised parking strategy was expected to achieve circa £600,000 over the period of the medium term financial strategy. He said that it was an assumption at this point dependant on decisions yet to be made by Cabinet, nothing is written in stone. He explained they have a list of assumptions on the MTFA that maybe tweaked over time.

Cllr Williams wanted to press the point as the report does say £500k in 2024/2025.

N Howcutt said that the figure was assumed at the moment in the medium term with additional income expected in 2025/2026.

Recommendations agreed.

CA/88/21 LEASE VARIATION

Decision

To support the request to submit an application to the First Tier Tribunal (FTT) to vary DBC's leases.

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
Building strong and vibrant communities
Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

The approach recommended in this report will ensure that the lease accurately reflects the applied practice for billing service charges and therefore minimise the risk of legal challenge

Deputy S151 Officer:

The proposal to change the current leases in regards to service charge arrangements and to introduce a billing cycle that supports those lease changes will reduce the existing risk in regards to a non-compliant lease and recharge process.

The proposed process is in line with good practice, is more efficient and will support more effective financial monitoring.

Advice

Cllr Dhyani introduced the report and was happy to take questions; there were none.

Recommendations agreed.

CA/89/21 THE LOCAL PLAN

Decision

1. **Cabinet resolved to recommend to Council** that the Revised Strategy for Growth (Appendix 1) be published for consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

2. Cabinet approved the revised timetable for the Local Plan as detailed in the Local Development Scheme (Appendix 2) and delegates authority to the Strategic Director (Place) to make any final minor editorial and typographical revisions to the document including any necessary to reflect the Cabinet's discussions and decision.
3. Agreed that Cabinet considers the views of Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and officer response (Appendix 4) and sets out any changes to be made to the consultation document.
4. **Cabinet resolved to recommend that Council** delegates authority to make changes to the Revised Strategy for Growth, including any necessary to reflect the Cabinet's and/or Council discussions and decision, to the Strategic Director – Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Place.

Corporate Priorities

The Dacorum Local Plan 2024-2040 promotes the achievement of all the corporate priorities as set out below:

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
- Building strong and vibrant communities
- Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
- Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
- Climate and ecological emergency

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

The statutory procedure to be followed for the Local Plan is set out in the statute and regulations noted in section 6 of this report and the Council will follow the procedures through to formal adoption. There are no further legal implications at this stage and any issues arising will be reviewed as the plan progresses to adoption.

S151 Officer:

The delivery of the Local Plan consultation paper has no direct financial impact on the Council and has been delivered within approved budgets.

The strategic financial importance to Dacorum of the delivery and implementation of a long term Local Plan cannot be underestimated; the plan enables and supports wider growth in infrastructure, the local economy and businesses.

Advice

Cllr Wilkie introduced the report and was happy to take questions.

Cllr Williams referred to the chart on page 57, and the column relating to the 2023 plan, he said that each settlement had a figure for windfall with the exception of Berkhamstead, which shows as a percentage. If that is correct he asked what that was a percentage of. His 2nd question referred to the same chart on page 58, he said that he could not make sense of the numbers in the final box.

S Whelan confirmed that the chart on page 57 had now been amended, as the figure for Berkhamstead was a typographical error that had now been amended. She said that there was an amended version in appendix 4 of the cabinet papers.

R Leydon confirmed that the chart was not lined up properly on page 58 and the figure of 5500 quotes should be against Hemel Hempstead, the numbers on the column titled previous draft strategy 2020 were the total number of homes proposed 3 years ago. The second column, which is Revised Strategy and the one they will be consulting on shortly sets out the number of homes they were now proposing as developing on land identified as the green belt.

Recommendations agreed.

CA/90/21 SOUTH WEST HERTS JOINT STRATEGIC VISION

Decision

1. Note the feedback received on the SW Herts Joint Strategic Plan Regulation 18 consultation;
2. Endorse the revised Vision and Objectives for the Plan, incorporating changes recommended as a result of the consultation responses (see Appendix 3);
3. Agree the recommended changes to the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (see Appendix 4); and
4. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director - Place, in consultation with the Leader of the Council/Portfolio Holder for Place to agree any non-substantive changes, finalise and publish:
 - (a) a document setting out the revised Vision and Objectives; and
 - (b) an updated Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

Corporate Priorities

A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
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Climate and ecological emergency

Statutory Officer Comments:

Monitoring Officer:

No comments to add to the report.

S151 Officer:

No further comments to add.

Advice

Cllr Wilkie introduced the report and welcomed questions; there were none.

Recommendations agreed.

CA/91/21 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To consider passing a resolution in the following terms:

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.

Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, paragraph 3 & 5

CA/92/21 INTERIM CONTRACT STRATEGY

Please see Part 2 Minutes

The Meeting ended at 7.57 pm