

## **CABINET REFERRALS**

**15 October 2019**

### **8.1 CA/096/19 Tring Conservation Area Review**

#### **Decision**

#### **Resolved to recommend:**

- 1) the Tring Conservation Area: Character Appraisal and Management Proposals be adopted as:
  - a) Technical guidance for use in development management and to inform the Dacorum Borough Local Plan.
  - b) A material planning consideration for use in the determination of planning applications.
- 2) Delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Planning, Development & Regeneration to undertake all steps required for the completion of the 'Locally Listed Buildings' section of the Appraisal, to be attached as an Appendix. This includes the assessment, consultation and adoption of this Appendix.

#### **Corporate objectives**

Creating a clean tidy and safe environment.

Informing and consulting our communities and stakeholders on local issues.

Promoting civic pride and an active community.

Committing to excellence and best conservation practice.

#### **Monitoring Officer:**

No comments to add to the report.

#### **Deputy S.151 Officer**

The implementation of the Tring conservation area and the support required to deliver the appraisal of this concept are to be funded from within approved budgets.

#### **Advice**

Councillor G Sutton introduced the report and said this was part of ongoing conservation review process across the borough. This has followed a full consultation process and an exhibition in Tring Town Council last year and Historic England has been impressed with the work.

J Doe said if this is adopted by council, it will become a material planning consideration. The other recommendation is to delegate authority to the Assistant Director to complete a "Locally Listed Building" appendix.

Recommendations agreed.

## **8.2 CA/097/19 HRA Business Plan**

### **Decision**

#### **Resolved to recommend:**

- 1) The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan be approved**
- 2) revised development programme budgets as set out in Section 8.3 of the Cabinet report be approved Corporate objectives**

### **Corporate objectives**

Delivering Affordable Housing

#### **Deputy Monitoring Officer:**

A local housing authority must maintain a housing revenue account in accordance with section 74 of the Local Government Act 1989.

Further to section 76 of the 1989 Act, local housing authorities must formulate and implement proposals to ensure that for each financial year the Housing Revenue Account does not show a debit balance.

The annual review provides a robust mechanism to monitor the business plan to ensure that it takes account of changes in government policy, law and the economy and therefore meets the Council's statutory requirements

#### **S.151 Officer:**

There are a number of inflationary assumptions inherent within the Business Plan which are liable to change over the planning period, and which could therefore pose a risk to delivery. These assumptions are kept under constant review, and in the event of any significant changes the model will be updated and the implications reported to Members. An updated report is presented to Members at least annually.

Further borrowing to deliver the programme outlined in this report is not required until 2020/21. The way in which the Council structures its borrowing will influence the amount of funding available in future years, and the borrowing options, together with any implications for the programme, will be presented to Members in advance.

### **Advice**

Councillor Griffiths introduced the report and said the HRA Business Plan is a five year plan that is reviewed annually. She ran through key highlights of the report and said that DBC have a good record of improving homes and have a decent homes standard. On page 163, it states that we only have 96 properties identified as 'non-decent'. The five year plan for the building programme has been impacted by the 1% rent reduction. This will be finishing this year and rents will increase from April.

F Williamson said the business plan takes into account the additional borrowing capacity. There is a desire to continue to deliver more social rent properties.

J Deane added that the majority of public borrowing comes from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and can be accessed at a low rate. PWLB have increased borrowing rates to local authorities by 1% and the government is approaching its cap on borrowing, currently set at £85 billion. Borrowing will become more expensive in the future and there could be a problem with the HRA plan if PWLB borrowing rates go over 4%.

Councillor Elliot asked if the 1% borrowing increase was to stop councils from borrowing for the wrong reasons.

J Deane said this announcements was made last week with no advance notice which could have cause a rush on extra borrowing. They do not look at a business case when lending money.

M Gaynor said the risk factor in developing new build council houses is non-existent. The homes are developed, rent is received on the homes, and building an asset.

Recommendations agreed.

## **12 November 2019**

### **8.3 CA/105/19 Budget Monitoring Q2 Report**

#### **Decision**

#### **Resolved to recommend:**

**2. The approval of the revised capital programme to move £3.1m slippage identified at Quarter 2 into financial year 2020/21 as detailed in Appendix C;**

**3. The approval of a supplementary revenue budget funded from reserves:**

- Supplementary budget of £30k in the Garage service, funded from the Invest to Save reserve, to fund a specialist project manager to lead on improvements to the garage letting process**

**4. The approval of supplementary capital budgets required to deliver several service changes as set out below:**

- A capital budget of £25k to fund payment kiosks in the Customer Services Unit.**
- Additional capital budget of £400k to deliver the Bunkers Farm project.**
- Supplementary budget of £161k in the HRA capital budget Strategic Acquisitions, to fund buy-back of a leasehold property.**

#### **Corporate objectives**

Delivering an efficient and modern council

**Deputy Section 151 Officer**

Comments included within the body of this report.

### **Monitoring Officer**

No comments to add to the report.

### **Advice**

Councillor Elliot introduced the item which highlights the council's current financial position. The report includes the recruitment of a specialist project manager for improvements to the garage lettings project. There is also a list of virements for transfers between budgets.

J Deane added that overall the end of year forecast is a pressure of £120k. This is a relatively healthy figure and efforts will continue to bring this in line by the end of the financial year.

Councillor Birnie referred to page 18, paragraph 5.2 and asked when the garage project report could be expected.

Councillor Williams said it would be presented at the joint budget meeting in February.

Recommendations agreed.

## **12 November 2019**

### **8.4 CA/106/19 Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21**

#### **Decision**

#### **Resolved to recommend:**

**To not revise or replace the current Council Tax Support scheme for 2020/21.**

#### **Corporate objectives**

Effective management of the Council's finances supports the Council's vision and all five of its corporate objectives.

#### **Monitoring Officer**

No comments to add to the report.

#### **Deputy S.151 Officer**

Deputy S151 officer report, comments included in the body of the report.

#### **Advice**

Councillor Elliot introduced the report and said this was introduced in 2013 under the Localism Act. The scheme helps those in need with their council tax. The proposal is to keep the scheme as it is.

Councillor Williams added that this scheme had worked well for the last six years.

Councillor Anderson said he understood that scheme would be phased out over ten years.

C Baker said there were no timescales for this scheme.

J Deane said Councillor Anderson may be thinking of the link with parish funding.

Recommendations agreed.

## **12 November 2019**

### **8.5 CA/109/19 Review of Commissioning and Procurement Standing Orders and Strategy**

#### **Decision**

#### **Resolved to recommend:**

**To agree the Commissioning & Procurement Strategy (appendix 1) and the revised Commissioning and Procurement Standing Orders (appendix 3)**

#### **Corporate objectives**

Dacorum Delivers: The proposed changes will ensure that all commissioning and procurement activities of the Council will align with the vision and priorities as stated in the Corporate Plan and national best practice.

#### **Monitoring Officer**

The Strategy and Standing Orders help to regulate the Council's procurement and commissioning activities and ensure that the Council complies with relevant procurement legislation and guidance and internal constitutional procedures. They also aim to deliver value for money and deliver other 'social value' objectives which benefit the borough as a whole.

#### **Deputy S.151 Officer**

The Commissioning and procurement standing orders support the financial regulations to ensure that, financial stewardship and financial authorisation related to procurement is maintained. The Council's finance systems and processes support the Procurement standing orders.

#### **Advice**

Councillor Williams introduced the report and said this had been discussed at Overview and Scrutiny. He asked for one amendment to the report on page 80, the title of the portfolio holder needs to be changed.

B Hosier said there was a healthy discussion at OSC and the points raised at that meeting have now been answered. The Local Government National Procurement Strategy was developed when the climate emergency was not declared so this a shortfall they are working on.

Councillor Griffiths said it was difficult to strike the balance by doing everything by committee but ensuring the democratic process has taken place but felt this did strike that balance.

Recommendations agreed.

**12 November 2019**

**8.6 CA/110/19 New Normal Technology Pilot Projects**

**Decision**

**Resolved to recommend:**

**The approval to release £93,495 from the Management of Change reserve to fund this work.**

The use of the techniques delivered in the pilot projects will enable the identification of

**Corporate objectives**

Delivering an efficient and modern Council

process inefficiencies in the Council. This will enable remediation to be identified, planned and executed to deliver savings. These may or may not make use of robotic process automation software.

**Monitoring Officer**

Officers must ensure that the preferred suppliers agree to an appropriate service contract or terms and conditions prior to commencement of the contract.

**Deputy S.151 Officer**

The contracts have been procured following the standard DBC procurement process and the evaluation criteria included a value for money assessment.

**Advice**

Councillor Williams introduced the report which was to take pilot projects forward to judge its effectiveness.

L Roberts said this approach has been taken to minimise the risk to the council and work in partnership with these companies to make sure it works in the long run.

Councillor Griffiths said she was pleased to see the council trying something new.

Recommendations agreed.