

MINUTES

CABINET

21 JULY 2020

Councillors: Williams (Leader)
Griffiths (Deputy
Leader)
Elliot
G Sutton
Anderson
Banks

Officers:	James Deane	Corporate Director - Finance and Operations
	James Doe	Assistant Director - Planning, Development and Regeneration
	Mark Gaynor	Corporate Director - Housing & Regeneration
	Sally Marshall	Chief Executive
	Katie Mogan	Corporate and Democratic Support Lead Officer
	Linda Roberts	Assistant Director - Performance, People and Innovation
	Alex Robinson	Strategic Planning Manager

Also in Attendance:

Councillor John Birnie
Councillor Ron Tindall

The meeting began at 6.30 pm

CA/60/20 MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020 were agreed by Members present.

CA/61/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

CA/62/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

CA/63/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation

CA/64/20 REFERRALS TO CABINET

There were no referrals to Cabinet

CA/65/20 CABINET FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan was noted with no changes.

CA/66/20 GARAGE PROGRAMME UPDATE

Decision

That the progress of the programme and the impact of COVID-19 on the garage programme be noted.

Corporate objectives

Building strong and vibrant communities and ensuring economic growth and prosperity

Deputy Monitoring Officer comments:

There are no legal implications to this report.

Deputy S151 Officer comments:

There are no financial implications to this report.

Advice

L Roberts introduced the report to members and gave an update on the programme. Since lockdown started, there have been 386 requests for garages, 189 offers made and 108 offers confirmed so the team have not seen a decrease in demand for garages which is surprising as it was thought that lockdown may affect household income and therefore the demand on garages. It is still early days but will continue to monitor the situation.

Councillor Birnie referred to the 6,855 garages stated in the report and asked if this was the total number of garages or the number due to be surveyed.

L Roberts said it was the number of garages due to be surveyed as 756 had already been done by council staff. There are approximately 7,500 garages in total across Dacorum.

Recommendations agreed.

CA/67/20 PRIVATE SECTOR ASSISTANCE POLICY

Decision

That the draft Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy as set out in the Appendix to the Cabinet report be approved.

Corporate objectives

The Private Sector assistance policy contributes to following corporate objectives:

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
- Delivering an efficient modern council

Deputy Monitoring Officer comments:

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 provides that that local authorities may for the purpose of improving living conditions provide to its residents any form of assistance, either directly or indirectly, to enable them to improve their homes.

In order to use these powers, local housing authorities must have adopted a policy setting out the assistance to be provided.

Deputy S151 Officer comments:

This policy is funded through the disabled facilities grant and hence the criteria is outlined in the grant conditions.

Advice

Councillor Griffiths introduced the report to members and said that this policy replaces the one adopted in 2013 and includes grants available for the private sector that were not available before. The majority of these grants will be allocated for the mandatory disabled grant. Previously, there had been a low level take up of these loans and when the team moved under Housing, it provided an opportunity to review the policy to include current central government funding and be able to provide broader assistance to people who want to stay in their homes. The policy was developed in consultation with Herts County Council Adult Care Services and the Clinical Commissioning Group who are aware of the grant funding. The policy went to Housing & Community OSC and they had no additional comments.

Councillor Birnie asked for clarification that this funding was only available for private sector.

M Gaynor said the mandatory disabled grant was for private sector homes as adaptations could be done with the council's housing stock.

Councillor Tindall asked how the funding would be allocated – first come first serve or would it be allocated on a case by case basis.

Councillor Griffiths said every application would be looked at individually to see what grant could be given and the possibility of it being paid back.

Councillor Tindall asked if this money could be carried over into a new financial year.

Councillor Griffiths said the winter allowance top up that was introduced two years ago had not been spent by the end of the financial year so the department contacted MHCLG to ask if they wanted the money back and they allowed us to carry it over as long as it could be spent in the first quarter.

Recommendations agreed

CA/68/20 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Decision

That the justification for an additional consultation under Regulation 18 be noted, and approve it being incorporated into the revised timetable for the Local Plan and other updates to the Local Development Scheme appended to this report and delegate authority to the Assistant Director- Planning, Development and Regeneration to make any final minor editorial and typographical revisions to the document including any necessary to reflect the Cabinet's discussions and decision.

Corporate objectives

The Council's Local Plan helps 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. provide a framework for local communities to prepare area-specific guidance such as Neighbourhood Plans, Town / Village Plans etc.;
- *Affordable housing:* e.g. sets the Borough's overall housing target and the proportion of new homes that must be affordable;
- *Dacorum delivers:* e.g. provides a clear framework upon which planning decisions can be made; and
- *Regeneration:* e.g. sets the planning framework for key regeneration projects, such as Hemel Hempstead town centre and the Maylands Business Park.

Deputy Monitoring Officer:

Further to section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 local planning authorities must prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme which must set out the documents that the Council will prepare as local development documents and the timetable for their preparation. Publishing a revised LDS as proposed in this report will satisfy this duty.

Deputy S.151 Officer

The changes to the local plan completion proposed are not expected to have a financial implication, and the local plan will be delivered within the existing funding envelope provided.

Advice

Councillor G Sutton introduced the report to members and said the purpose of the report was to consider the revised local development scheme including a revised timetable for the preparation of a new local plan. The progress of submitting a new local plan has not been smooth and has been difficult at times and so the department have sought counsel's advice.

J Doe said the team are learning lessons from other council's and regulation 18 should help to make the process more robust.

Councillor Birnie referred to page 41, paragraph 10 and the infrastructure shortcomings. He asked what these shortcomings are and said this information should be made available to the Local Plan Task and Finish Group and SPAE OSC. J Doe said there was a shortfall in the information needed to understand the requirement. Further information is required from HCC on education and there is additional transport work to be completed. The whole notion of this report is to make sure that when we reach the publication stage in early summer 2021, the work is complete and robust. He said he was confident that enough information will be available for members to consider the draft local plan in November. The task and finish group are being kept updated on the progress of the infrastructure delivery plan which must be ready at the time of publication in June 2021.

Councillor Birnie sought assurance that the SPAE OSC would be kept up to date. J Doe confirmed that a draft plan will go to SPAE OSC at their September meeting and then to Cabinet in October.

Councillor Williams commented that he accepted the need for the additional revision of the timetable and the insertion of regulation 18 but expressed his concern about the length of the process. His previous experience made him slightly nervous that there could be limited time between regulation 18 and regulation 19 consultations. He asked officers if they were confident they could meet these deadlines and said he would be disappointed if weren't able to keep to the timetable.

J Doe said he understood his concerns. The issues and options consultation asked the community for their opinions on the borough and produced a wide range of views. There will be a specific set of proposals in the draft local plan so the consultation will be more focussed. There will be a large level of public interest and the team have learnt lessons on how to process the comments received. He said he was confident that the work can be turned around in the timescales provided.

Recommendations agreed.

CA/69/20 PAVEMENT LICENSING

Decision

1. That responsibility for granting, refusal and revocation of licences, including the setting of conditions, be delegated to the Assistant Director – Corporate and Contracted Services and the Group Manager, Legal and Corporate Services
2. That the fees will be set at the maximum permitted level of £100 in order to recover as much of the cost of issuing licences as possible be approved.
3. That the duration of licences will be to 30th September 2021, unless revoked be approved.

Corporate objectives

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
- Building strong and vibrant communities
- Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
- Delivering an efficient and modern council

Deputy Monitoring Officer Comments

The Business and Planning Bill 2020 introduces a new legal framework for issuing pavement licences by local authorities. The framework supersedes the existing framework for pavement licensing set out in the Highways Act 1980.

Deputy S151 Officer Comments

There are no direct financial consequences of this policy change.

Advice

Councillor Williams introduced the report to members. He said this was a new piece of legislation due to be made law in a few weeks and he welcomed the ability of premises to make use of outdoor space.

F Hussain added that the legislation was going through the House of Lords at the moment and some amendments have been proposed. If anything is fundamentally changed, the Licensing committee will be kept updated. This report is asking Cabinet to delegate decisions on licenses to the Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted

Services) and the Group Manager (Legal and Corporate Services) as there is a short timescale of 14 days to determine these applications.

Councillor Tindall asked if the Highways Act 1980 would come back into law at the end of September 2021 unless there are any further regulations.

F Hussain confirmed this would be the case. She said some amendments proposed in the Lords deal with aspects of being able to extend the law if necessary.

Councillor Williams suggested it would likely to be made permanent if it was successful.

Councillor Birnie asked if the license is only valid for one year, do applicants have to pay £100 every year.

F Hussain confirmed this would be the case.

Councillor Griffiths asked if the license was granted for maximum of a year but minimum of three months, would the last time the council could grant licences be in June 2021.

F Hussain confirmed this.

Recommendations agreed.

The Meeting ended at 6.55 pm