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CABINET

Date and Time: Thursday 1 December 2022 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

Neighbour (Leader), Bailey, Clarke, Cockarill, Collins, Oliver, Quarterman and Radley (remote)

In attendance: Axam, Butcher, Dorn (remote), Farmer, Forster, Kennett

Officers:

Daryl Phillips	Chief Executive
Graeme Clark	Executive Director, Corporate and S151 Officer
Adam Green	Countryside Manager
Daniel Hawes	Planning Policy and Economic Development Manager
Leigh Wallace	Visitor Services Manager - Leisure & Countryside
Gabrielle Ellen	Corporate Projects Officer
Sharon Black	Committee Services Manager

72 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 3 November were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

73 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies had been received.

Cllr Radley joined the meeting remotely and therefore would be unable to vote during the meeting.

74 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that he would be reordering the agenda during the meeting.

75 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Forster declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 10 as a Hampshire County Councillor, as HCC had responsibility for the library.

76 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

Cllr Angela McFarlane from Odiham Parish Council would be participating in agenda item 9, Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

The statements from Cllr McFarlane, and Cllr Williams from Winchfield Parish are attached at Appendix A.

Cllr Adrian Page from Surrey Heath Borough Council was in attendance to speak during agenda item 7 relating to SANGS.

Statements from Cllrs McFarlane and Williams

77 2023/24 EMERGING BUDGET & MEDIUM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Cllr Farmer declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as Chair of Hart Swimming Club

Councillors were given the background to the 2023/24 emerging budget and noted:

- There was uncertainty at this stage about government funding for local governments this year
- Future inflation rates were also uncertain
- There was no indication whether retained business rates or new homes funding would be rolled forward
- That the January Overview & Scrutiny meeting had been put back to 17th January to allow final figures to be included in the budget report
- The Council presently had a budget gap that needed to be addressed before the final budget was presented
- Council tax increases for 2023/24 were to be capped at 3%

Councillors discussed

- Income from the leisure centre and potential increases in membership rates
- The budget gap and how this may be addressed
- Whether it was likely that the government funding figures mentioned in the presentation were likely to be over ambitious
- The effect of the 2023 pay increase, and what this was likely to be
- The updated MTFS and options for bridging budget gaps in future years
- The Council's position in comparison to other local government positions

DECISION

Cabinet noted:

- the emerging Medium Term Financial Strategy and recognised the challenges in preparation of the main budget setting process.

78 UPDATE ON SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE NATURAL GREENSPACE (SANG)

The purpose of this report was to update Cabinet on the amount of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) available in Hart, to consider how it should best be used to meet Hart's and its neighbour's needs and ensure that sufficient funding was provided so that no financial burden fell on Hart.

Cllr Page from Surrey Heath Borough Council thanked Cabinet for considering the paper and explained the background to the request for continued support by the Council with SANG provision.

Cabinet considered:

- The fact that it was unlikely there would be much change to Government policy in the near future around duty to co-operate
- The reasons why we should continue to help neighbouring councils provide SANGs for future developments
- The timeframe for the 625 homes to be built by SHBC near Camberley town centre
- That Rushmoor Borough Council had not yet agreed to the arrangements;
- With the blocking of SANGS space for 1500 Rushmoor homes (the number the Council is holding for them under the original agreement), there is underfunding for Bramshot Park which will be an issue
- The need for updating the Memorandum of Agreement with Rushmoor to maintain a reduced SANG capacity and to consider ongoing revenue funding implications for Hart
- The need to update the Memorandum of Agreement with Surrey Heath Borough Council and to consider ongoing revenue funding implications for Hart

DECISION

Cabinet

- a) Noted the SANG monitoring figures at Appendix 1 of the report.
- b) Authorised the Chief Executive
 - i. to invoke Clause 9.1 of the 2017 Memorandum of Agreement between Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council and authorised the Chief Executive to agree a revised Memorandum of Agreement with Rushmoor which, subject to agreement over mitigating the ongoing cost to Hart of maintaining reserved SANG capacity, makes SANG capacity available to deliver approximately 325 homes (780 persons) within Rushmoor.
 - ii. to agree a Memorandum of Agreement with Surrey Heath Borough Council which, subject to agreement over mitigating the ongoing cost to Hart of maintaining reserved SANG capacity, makes

available SANG capacity to deliver approximately 850 homes (2,125 persons) within Surrey Heath

- c) Authorised the Executive Director - Place to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with both Rushmoor Borough Council and Surrey Heath Brough Council to jointly look at cross boundary issue associated with jointly procuring future SANG capacity.

79 FLEET POND GREEN CORRIDOR AND HARTLAND PARK MITIGATION WORKS UPDATE

This report was to update Cabinet on expenditure and work completed to date on delivery of the Fleet Pond Green Corridor and Fleet Pond Mitigation Works for the Hartland Park Development; and to obtain approval for additions/amendment to the programme budget.

Cabinet noted:

- The update to the programme budget, including the increase in budget works for delivery of the Cove Road crossing
- That a fully costed strategy for the next phase of the works will be brought back to Cabinet in the new year
- The audit had been finished which showed that the project was completed on time and came in within budget
- The apparent discrepancies in some of the figures included in the report spreadsheet; some of which appeared to show significant underspend. A review of the figures, particularly the S106 figures, would be undertaken and a written update provided to Cabinet members.

Cabinet considered:

- Whether the inclusion of “promotion” in the budget line for “professional and project fees” was an error; and also what the breakdown between internal and external was for the £178k spend. These issues would be checked and a written response given to Cabinet members.
- Whether LEP need to come back to check how we had spent the £1.4m grant we had received
- Whether there was any data available yet to show the number of people using the area

DECISION

Cabinet noted the programme structure chart and budget allocations at Appendix A and approved the following amendments/additions to the programme budget:

- Inclusion of a £65k budget and release of earmarked reserves to deliver the Green Grid Ancillary Works.

- Increase of budget allocation from £150k- £255k and release of earmarked reserves to deliver A3013 Cove Road Crossing.
- Inclusion of a £178k budget and release of earmarked reserves for project management, promotion, professional fees and legal charges for the Fleet Pond Mitigation works.
- Inclusion of a £10k budget and release of earmarked reserves for Green Grid/digital and Interpretation.
- Inclusion of a £125k budget and release of earmarked reserves to deliver the Fleet Pond Mitigation Works Strategy.
- Earmarking of a £843k budget to fund implementation of the Fleet Pond Mitigation Works Strategy once this has been approved.

80 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Cabinet was reminded that this item was an update addressing an area of concern raised when originally agreeing the Odiham Common Management Plan. However, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan was only a generic framework approach for all sites, not just Odiham Common. It would need to be tailored in discussion with the Parish Council's for individual sites.

Cabinet noted:

- The aim of the Plan was to positively and proactively engage with those Parish Councils whom had Council owned or administered green space in their area
- Each Parish would require a different approach with discussions tailored to each Parish Council dependant upon the type(s) of green space(s) they have in their Parish
- There was concern from some of the Parish Councils that there had been no consultation with them when the Plan had been developed
- There was also concern from the Parishes that they would become a buffer between residents and Hart but that they had no resources or authority to take any action
- That the proposed Plan related to land already managed by the Council

Cabinet discussed:

- Whether anyone could be appointed as the "representative" of a Parish Council
- Whether the Plan would apply to all Parishes who had green space
- That the Plan was a framework for discussions to take place individually with Parishes to agree a mutually beneficial way forward
- Who should be included in the list of Stakeholders
- Whether there would be channels for stakeholder engagement
- The question from Winchfield Parish regarding which wards certain locations fell into (AG to clarify and provide a written answer)

DECISION

Cabinet:

- approved the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

81 CIVIC REGENERATION PROJECT

This report was to update Cabinet with regards to the work being undertaken by the Civic Quarter Regeneration Work Group and to seek Cabinet's approval to further funding for a financial report to determine viability of the scheme.

Cabinet noted:

- That there were regular meetings of the Civic Regen Group
- Discussion had taken place at the last meeting about whether it was prudent to move to the next phase but this would cost in the region of £300-£500k
- It had been decided by the Group that an assessment of the viability of the project should be undertaken in light of the current economic situation
- The cost of the assessment would be in the region of £15k

Cabinet discussed:

- The amount of public support for the project; details of the exact numbers who attended the engagement settings would be circulated via a written response
- The challenges being faced for rejuvenating the Harlington site
- That the report would allow a smaller number of options to be identified for further investigation
- What the original cost of the work was. This information to be provided as a written answer.

DECISION

Cabinet agreed:

- That 15K be allocated in the Council 22/23 budget, to fund consultancy costs, to refresh the viability report and produce a detailed cost projection to determine viability of the Civic Quarter Regeneration scheme.

82 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme, as circulated with the agenda was discussed and updated as follows:

- The potential for a Shared Chief Executive with Rushmoor would be put back to June 2023 due to additional work required and the impact of budget setting and elections
- Climate change action plan to be deferred to March 2023, going to O&S in February

83 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Cabinet discussed:

- The reasons why the items were being discussed in exempt session

DECISION

Cabinet agreed there was public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information for the following item.

It was therefore agreed that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to for the next item, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

84 REPRESENTATION ON HART HOUSING MAINTENANCE COMPANY BOARD

This item was dealt with as a Part II Exempt item.

SUMMARY DECISION

Cabinet agreed to amend the representation on the Board of the Hart Housing Maintenance Company to remove Patricia Hughes and Joanne Rayne, and replace them with Kirsty Jenkins and Neil Hince.

85 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

DECISION

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of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

86 THE SWAN INN, NORTH WARNBOROUGH

This item was dealt with as a Part II Exempt item.

SUMMARY DECISION

Cabinet agreed to put the Swan Inn, North Warnborough up for sale, for development, with the caveat that prospective purchasers were reminded that the building was a Grade II listed building.

87 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

DECISION

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88 FUNDING FOR POTENTIAL ACQUISITION OF 42 APARTMENTS FOR AFFORDABLE MARKET RENT

This item was dealt with as a Part II Exempt item.

SUMMARY DECISION

Cabinet agreed that a business case would be produced to agree funding mechanisms for the potential purchase of 42 apartments for affordable market rent.

Exempt Minutes

The meeting closed at 11.16 pm

Statement by Cllr Angela McFarlane, Odiham Parish Council Chair

Agenda Item 9

I would like to draw Cabinet's attention to the emails from myself on behalf of Odiham Parish Council and the Chair of Winchfield Parish Council. These express concerns on the proposed structure whereby the Parish Councils effectively become a buffer between residents and Hart officers on matters relating to management of common land, with no powers or resource to affect outcomes. We ask Cabinet to consider this matter carefully before adopting the engagement plan before any consultation with the PCs.

Agenda Item 15

The Swan Public House in North Warnborough.

We are pleased to see this is on your agenda although obviously we recognise the matter is exempt at this time.

Local residents have lived with the ruined building for over 10 years. There is a shortage of 2 and 3 bedroom homes for sale or rent in the Parish. We therefore ask if Hart can expedite the development of this site and provide the smaller homes the area requires.

Statement from Meyrick Williams, Winchfield Parish Council

Agenda Item 9

Winchfield Parish Council requests that our comments with regard to Item 9, Stakeholder Engagement Plan, are raised on our behalf at the Cabinet meeting on 1 Dec.

We welcome the proposal of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for Odiham Common but we are disappointed that the Parish Council was not consulted before it was to be presented to Cabinet. The document has been written to address all 16 sites in the District and notes that each site has its own peculiarities. You will recall our conversation following the recent meeting in the Council offices with myself and Councillor Angela McFarlane of Odiham Parish Council regarding the proposed plan and the specific issues that are unique to Odiham Common. Totalling 115 hectares this is one of the few examples of wood pasture outside the New Forest.

The first observation is that Table 1, which lists the countryside sites in the parish they are within, is incorrect. Parts of Odiham Common lie within Winchfield parish. I have attached the map which illustrates the relationship between Odiham Common and the Winchfield parish boundary and it is evident that two other SSSIs, one in Bagwell Green and the other at Bailey's Farm are directly linked to the Odiham Common SSSI. This is further affirmed in that when the common land was designated as an SSSI in 1992 it was declared to be joined with Bagwell Green and Shaw SSSI which used to form part of Winchfield Common. The two Commons run side-by-side lining the route to Wilkes Water. Winchfield should therefore be declared as a joint parish area in Table 1 of the Plan along with Odiham.

We welcome the statement that “the area site ranger will formally meet with representatives from the parish council to discuss present and future works on site”. However there is an inherent danger that if these meetings are allowed to be less frequent than every quarter the whole process can begin to unravel. The dialogue will fail if both parties are not formally required to meet on a regular basis. We do not agree with the statement “We aim for these meetings to take place every quarter as a maximum but may be less if both parties agree”

Most importantly, the Plan makes no reference to how any actions that are decided by the District Council that impact the SSSI are debated and agreed with the Parish Councils. It is not satisfactory to publish the Engagement Plan without also preparing a Management Plan which specifies not only the District and Parish Council representations but also those specialist agencies that have a direct interest and a responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the SSSI and the terms of reference of such a forum. An Odiham Common Management plan should be published concurrently with the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

We request that our comments are shared with all members of the Cabinet, copied in the minutes of the meeting, and that due weight is applied to our observations at the meeting.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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