

CABINET

Date and Time: Thursday 2 March 2023 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

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

In attendance: Farmer, Forster and Smith

Officers:

Graeme Clark	Executive Director, Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Kirsty Jenkins	Executive Director Communities
Ashley Grist	Contracts & Procurement Manager
Christine Tetlow	Programme Manager
Gemma Watts	Strategy & Development Officer
Sharon Black	Committee Services Manager
Emma Evans	Committee Services Officer

111 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 2 February 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Proposed by Cllr Neighbour; seconded by Cllr Quarterman

112 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

113 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

114 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements.

115 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

There was no public participation.

116 Q3 FORECAST 2022/23 CAPITAL AND REVENUE OUTTURN

Cllr Farmer declared an interest in this item as voluntary Chairman of Hart Swimming Club, which hired facilities at the Leisure Centre

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the item by informing Members that the Council was on track to meet the projected revenue outturn this year.

The S151 Officer gave further details for Members, who noted:

- There was an underspend on SANGs schemes due to S106 projects being paused pending a reserves review
- Tier 2 savings were broadly on track although the £15k savings for internal audit would not be achieved this year as the new arrangements would not take effect until the next financial year
- There was a lower than expected planning income, which was being reported and monitored through the Place Service Panel
- Technical and Environmental Service Area would cease to exist in the budget from the new financial year, with just the 3 current Service Areas continuing

Councillors questioned:

- Whether there was anything that had happened since the report was finalised that was likely to impact on year end outturn
- Whether the additional funding allocated to the leisure centre was in line with that previously agreed by Cabinet and whether all reserves had now been exhausted
- Whether there would be a need to resource the economic development role given that the UKSPF project had an element of economic development
- Whether the Council had a good working relationship with Everyone Active and they were able to offer good value for money to the public

Proposed by Cllr Radley; Seconded by Cllr Neighbour

DECISION

Cabinet:

1. Noted the projected outturn
2. Noted the capital overview

117 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

Members were reminded that as part of the levelling up agenda, UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding was made available to improve outcomes for less fortunate residents. Hart had been successful in their bid and had been awarded a grant of £1m.

The paper before Cabinet explained the proposed governance of the scheme and how the funding was split. Members noted:

- That the work was backloaded with most taking place in the 3rd year to coincide with the funding being received
- Year 1 was mainly administration costs
- Year 2 work related to investigation and planning
 - The project would report regularly to O&S and Cabinet on scoping, finance and timescales
- That each project would have a named individual who would then be held accountable for their project

Councillors questioned:

- Whether the changes proposed at the last O&S meeting regarding governance had been incorporated into the paper
- Whether there was a Cabinet member responsible for the project? It was noted that there would be multiple projects that cut across different portfolio holders. The Leader sat on Project Board and would act as liaison for the overall project
- Whether the project plan, with portfolio holders noted against each project would be reported to Cabinet on a regular basis. This was confirmed
- Whether consideration had been given to the requirement for an economic development officer. It was noted that discussions were ongoing with Rushmoor Borough Council to see whether there was the possibility of working together to find this resource to work across both councils
- Whether the UKSPF work would also look at developing the offering of premises for small and medium enterprises to attract investment into the District; and whether the existing economic strategy would be refreshed

Proposed by Cllr Neighbour; Seconded by Cllr Oliver

Members agreed that this was an important piece of work to ensure that the Council took advantage of using the Government funding to make a real difference. Members thanked Officers for putting this proposal forward.

DECISION

Cabinet:

- noted the successful bid and award of funding under the UKSPF to deliver the approved Local Investment Plan
- approved the spending proposals for 2022/23 and 2023/24 set out in Appendix 1 - Financial Plan and note the indicative plan for 2024/25 that will be subject to a further Cabinet report later in 2023
- noted the potential shortfall in the administrative grant compared to resources required and request officers to report to Cabinet with a more detailed impact assessment when this has been fully assessed
- agreed the proposed governance arrangements for the delivery of the UKSPF programme, with Project Board having corporate oversight and the 'Here for Hart' forum being the advisory panel for operational and stakeholder matters.

118 CLIMATE CHANGE STAFFING ACTION PLAN

Members noted that the Sustainability Officer left Hart in January 2023, and since then the climate change action plan had not moved on as quickly as planned. The Executive Director, Corporate's paper outlined the long-term staffing action plan to ensure full resourcing.

Members noted:

- the EV points/solar panels projects were progressing well
- the possibility of resource sharing with other Councils had been explored but had not proven possible
- the proposals being considered would mean that an element of the operational budget would need to switch to staffing, although it was proposed that the new Officer would have a focus on generating external funding that should offset this
- negotiations were ongoing with an external delivery partner to take forward the action plan following the Eunomia report
- advertising for the Sustainability Officer role would take place very soon

Members questioned:

- whether the proposed vacancies equalled 1.5 FTE
- how long it would usually take to recruit to this type of vacancy
- whether the action plan would be worked on in parallel to the vacancies being advertised. This was confirmed.

Proposed by Cllr Neighbour; Seconded by Cllr Radley

DECISION

Cabinet approved the resource proposals set out in the climate change resourcing report.

119 PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND PROGRAMME FOR ACCOMMODATION FOR UKRANIAN AND AFGHAN GUESTS

The Portfolio Holder for Community introduced this item by reminding Members that there was a need to provide accommodation for Ukrainian and Afghan guest in the District. In December, the Government had announced funding for the acquisition of affordable homes for these guests. Hart had obtained in principle £1.5m for 9 homes.

Members noted:

- as a Council without housing stock we would need to work with a registered provider (RP) and other Councils
- there was a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed which we were unable to change
- that this would be only one housing option for this cohort

- once the guests had returned to their homeland, the housing would be available for local residents

Members queried:

- whether there was any limit on the length of the tenancy? It was confirmed that this was not the case.
- Whether there was a timeframe by which we needed to spend the funding? It was noted that the Council needed to have entered into a contract for the houses by the end of November, although it was possible there may be some flexibility from Government on this
- Whether it was felt that this timescale was achievable. It was confirmed that Officers felt that it was, particularly as we would be working with an RP who would be undertaking most of the work
- Whether it would be possible to purchase 9 homes for £1.5m in Hart. It was confirmed that this only represented part of the cost, there was matched funding from the RP, which was not explicit in the report
- Whether any due diligence checks had been done on prospective RPs? Officers confirmed they were happy with the proposed RP. One member had concerns, and would raise these separately.
- What would happen if we could only secure a lower number of homes? Officers confirmed that the equivalent funding for the outstanding homes would need to be returned to DLUHC.
- Whether the properties would belong to the RP once the guests had left? Officers confirmed this was the case although the Council would have nomination rights for tenants
- Whether it was planned that the accommodation would be spread across the district or in clusters? Officers confirmed it was likely that they would be clustered.

DECISION

Cabinet:

Approved the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding which will secure the funding for the procurement of properties for refugees.

120 Q3 PERFORMANCE PLAN REVIEW

Members noted:

- this information had previously been presented to O&S, and gave a summary of performance for Q3, ending December 2022.
- that since the O&S meeting in February, the report from Serco had been received, giving an indication of performance on the waste and recycling contract. These figures were now being reviewed and ratified.
- CCTV statistics were still absent, but that with the transfer to Runnymede on 1 March 2023 it was hoped to include these in future

A member raised the issue of the CCTV figures for downtime in Q1 and Q2, which they felt were very poor. It was questioned whether the radio service that the old CCTV control room had been used at Runnymede and whether there had been a handover and/or transfer of Rushmoor staff. A visit to the new facility had been arranged and the Portfolio Holder for Community would provide a written answer to all Councillors on the questions raised at the previous week's Council meeting.

DECISION

The performance report for Quarter 3 2022/23 was noted.

121 SHAPLEY HEATH GARDEN COMMUNITY REPORT - INTERNAL MEMBER REVIEW AND REFLECTION REPORT

Members noted:

- That a representative from the LGA had undertaken a review with Cabinet members and members of the Opportunity Board
- The recommendations from his report were broadly in line with the recommendations from the Staffing Committee
- All recommendations would be sent to Audit Committee, who would consider them at their meeting on 28 March

A member queried whether the Leader, on behalf of the Cabinet, accepted the findings and recommendations of the report. The Leader confirmed he did. It was agreed that this had been a constructive process which had led to a set of informed recommendations.

Proposed by Cllr Neighbour; Seconded by Cllr Radley

DECISION

Cabinet:

1. Will confirmed to Audit Committee that all the key learning points and recommendations identified in the independent Shapley Heath Garden Community Project - Internal member review and reflection report prepared by Emanuel J Gatt will be followed and implemented with immediate effect.
2. Will ensure that all recommendations from Staffing Committee to Audit Committee are implemented with immediate effect.

122 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Members discussed:

- The reasons why there was no date for the climate change action plan item

- That the outside bodies item should read “appointment of representatives to outside bodies” and the description amended accordingly

It was agreed to add an item for a review of CCTV following the transfer to Runnymede. A date for this report would be confirmed at the April meeting by the Portfolio Holder for Community. It was requested that this report also encompass a review of parish/community CCTV and to get feedback from other stakeholders such as the police. Members noted that in October 2020 it was agreed that a sum of £45k be set aside for maintenance of CCTV cameras.

The meeting closed at 8.46 pm