

CABINET

Date and Time: Thursday 4 April 2024 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

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

In attendance:

Officers:

Daryl Phillips, Chief Executive

Mark Jaggard, Executive Director - Place

Graeme Clark, Executive Director – Corporate and S151 Officer

Kirsty Jenkins, Executive Director – Community

Jackie Chan, Senior Environmental Health Technical Officer

Sharon Black, Committee and Member Services Manager

1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 7 March 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Proposed by Cllr Neighbour; Seconded by Cllr Quarterman. Unanimously agreed.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Clarke.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

None.

6 FLY TIPPING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A task and finish group, comprising four members, Cllrs Butler, Smith, Engstrom and Butcher had been set up and asked to gain an understanding of current fly

tipping processes within Hart District Council and make recommendations for improvements. Cllr Collins had also been kept apprised as Portfolio Holder.

Members heard:

- Other local councils had been approached to find out what approach they took on fly tipping
- A number of ideas had been suggested in the group's paper, but it had been recognised that these would need to be prioritised dependent on available finances
- That there was a strong recommendation that all aspects of fly tipping be brought under one head of service

Members questioned:

- Whether it was felt that Hart had more or less of a problem than neighbouring authorities
- Whether Hart's issues were due to perception of a more liberal regime or because of more rural areas and easy access from motorways and major roads
- Whether it was felt that there was any correlation with inflexibility on tip access and that this would worsen if the Hartley Wintney tip was to close
- Whether there was merit in looking more at recovering costs from fly tippers so that all prosecutions were self funding

Members agreed:

- There was a need for an action plan to be developed by officers to prioritise the suggestions put forward by the task and finish group
- That there was a need for cross-function discussion when developing the action plan, as different teams were already working on different areas that could be brought together

Proposed by Cllr Collins; seconded by Cllr Neighbour. Agreed unanimously.

Cabinet Members thanked the task and finish group for the work they had undertaken on this issue and looked forward to seeing the scoping report at the June Cabinet meeting.

Decision

Cabinet agreed:

- a) that a paper be brought back to the June 2024 meeting exploring the various options and costs associated with these
- b) an options appraisal document be brought to the October meeting to allow funding to be built into the 25/26 budget book
- c) the project would sit within Place Service

7 DRAFT SERVICE PLANS 2024/25

This report set out the draft service plans for 2024/25, and it was agreed to look at each service separately.

Members heard:

- The service plans contained projects that were additional to business as usual
- There would be a need for resourcing of any project to be looked at carefully given the lean structure of the Council, to ensure that deadlines and KPIs were appropriate
- Whether a review of what had been achieved against last year's service plans would be appropriate
- That KPIs would be monitored by Overview & Scrutiny

Place:

- The service plan had been kept short as the service area was busy with normal business
- Additional KPIs had been included for development management, including appeals performance
- It was asked whether the appeals KPIs would be better targeted at those appeals where we were awarded costs

Community:

- Plan was kept short and focussed, based around project work
- The target date for the follow on actions on CCTV review (item 3) was amended to read June 2024

Corporate:

- Work would be ongoing during the year to look at the projected budget shortfall for 2025/26 onwards
- There would be a lot of activity on contracts and procurement as a number of large contracts were due to end over the next two years
- It was agreed the target date for item 6 should be changed to March 2025
- It was further agreed that it would not be possible to develop a fully costed plan for climate change works at this stage as work was continually developing and grant funding was always being sought
- There was some concern expressed about the ability of shared legal services to support Hart in future contract negotiations, but this was not shared by Officers at this time

Proposed by Cllr Neighbour; seconded by Cllr Radley. Agreed unanimously

Members thanked all officers for the work they had done to produce the service plans.

Decision

Cabinet approved the Service Plans for 2024/25

8 CAPITAL CARRY FORWARD REQUESTS

This paper was to approve the procurement outcome for new financial systems and review requests for carrying forward capital budgets for ongoing or committed projects from 2023/24

Members heard:

- The scheme to install PV panels at Hart Leisure Centre was being funded by money awarded by the Government. This was solely for new PV panels and came from funding aimed at helping to keep swimming pools open post-Covid
- The solar panel project in the car park for the data centre at the Leisure Centre was still progressing albeit very slowly due to huge oversubscription of the consultants

Proposed by Cllr Radley; seconded by Cllr Neighbour. Agreed unanimously

Decision

Cabinet:

- a) approved the requests to carry forward capital/project budgets to 2024/25, as detailed in Table 1 of the report
- b) noted the outcome of the procurement process for new financial systems and the Director of Corporate Services proposal to award to the highest-ranked supplier, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance
- c) approved a new capital scheme of £201k to install PV panels at Hart Leisure Centre, funded by the Government's Swimming Pool fund grant

9 FOOD SAFETY PLAN

This report was to approve the Food Safety Plan 2024-2027.

Members heard:

- This was now a 3 year plan and was based on the Government recommended template
- That it was not possible to make a business display their food rating clearly. It was only possible to encourage them to do so

Proposed by Cllr Collins; seconded by Cllr Neighbour. Agreed unanimously.

Thanks were given to the Environmental Health team for their work on producing the Plan and in ensuring that the standard of food outlets we had in the District remained high.

Decision

Cabinet:

- a) approved the Food Safety Plan 2024-2027
- b) authorised the Executive Director – Place to make minor alterations and typographical corrections to the document before publication

10 HART PROPERTY MAINTENANCE COMPANY: GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The purpose of this report was to review the governance arrangements associated with the management of Hart Housing Property Management Company Limited (trading as Butterwood Homes) (the Company).

Members heard:

- there was a recommendation to no longer have an Independent Person on the Board and to have a financial director appointed in their place
- this would reflect the fact that the company was now focussed on property maintenance rather than investing in further properties
- if further investment was felt appropriate, then it would be possible to buy in expertise as and when required

Members discussed:

- whether there would be a potential conflict of interest if only Hart staff were on the Board

Proposed by: Cllr Quartermann; seconded by Cllr Neighbour. Unanimously agreed.

Decision

Cabinet agreed:

- a) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Corporate Services, was authorised to replace the independent layperson with an officer appointed from the Council's Finance team, as a Company director
- b) the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Corporate Services would be an observer and invited to attend scrutiny meetings between the Company and the Scrutiny Panel
- c) unless otherwise agreed upon between the Company and the Scrutiny Panel, only a single annual meeting would be needed

11 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet reviewed the work programme. It was noted that now the service plans had been agreed, items from these would need to be added where appropriate.

The meeting closed at 8.08 pm