

Cabinet

Date and Time: Thursday 5 December 2024 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

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

In attendance: Worlock

Officers:

Daryl Phillips, Chief Executive

Mark Jaggard, Executive Director - Place

Joanne Rayne, Finance & Property Manager

Mark Berry, Business Development Manager - Place

Matt Saunders, Business Support, Facilities & Data Manager

Sharon Black, Committee and Member Services Manager

51 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

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

Proposed by: Cllr Neighbour; Seconded by: Cllr Clarke; Unanimously agreed by those who had been present at the meeting

52 Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

53 Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

54 Chair's Announcements

The Chair had no announcements.

55 Public Participation (Items Pertaining to the Agenda)

There was none.

56 Butterwood Homes Scrutiny Panel Report

This report provided an update of Butterwood Homes' performance to Cabinet, following consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Members heard:

- The O&S minutes captured the discussions held at that meeting very accurately
- The risk register had been well scrutinised by the Scrutiny Panel
- The few amendments requested by the Scrutiny Panel had been completed the following day

Members discussed subjects including:

- The period for the repairs/maintenance information given
- The short period of time taken to fill vacancies in properties
- Resident feedback

Decision

Cabinet:

1. Noted the current mid-year status, occupancy, and financial updates. Noted that further comments relevant to the shareholder role and terms of reference would be forwarded to the company directors.

57 Fly Tipping Options Appraisal

This report was for Cabinet to consider the proposed reinforcement of the Council's ability to educate and enforce against fly tipping.

Members heard:

- That this report built on the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Task and Finish Group
- This focussed the way in which the Council would target fly tipping using a 2 year pilot scheme to look at what options would work best across the District
- A review of how fly tipped waste was collected would also be undertaken
- That this is a pilot and that officers will come back with evidence to support the best way forward at the end of the pilot period

Proposed by: Cllr Wildsmith; Seconded by: Cllr Neighbour

Officers were thanked for the work that they had put into producing the practical suggestions in the report.

Unanimously agreed.

Decision

Cabinet:

- a) approved a 2-year pilot to increase capacity in the team to be able to educate and enforce against fly-tipping as set out in this report, at a total

cost of £90k funded from the overall forecast net underspend in the 2024/25 budget, and

- b) agreed to a review of the current arrangement for the collection of fly-tipped waste with Street Care and Grounds Maintenance contract Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council following the initial wider review of the contract by the Council's Countryside team.

58 Renewal of the Shared Building Control Service

This report was to consider the renewal of the Shared Building Control Partnership between Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council, extending it by five years to 31 March 2030.

Members heard:

- This was a very successful partnership with Rushmoor Borough Council that had been in place since 2010
- The service was self funding, with no cost to the Council
- That a review of the reporting mechanism would also be undertaken so that it would be possible to evidence performance of the Service. This would be included in the Deed update

Proposed by: Cllr Oliver; Seconded by: Cllr Neighbour

Members expressed appreciation of the service and thanked the officers for ensuring that an excellent level of service continued.

Unanimously agreed.

Decision

Cabinet:

- a) agreed, in principle, the renewal of the Shared Building Control Partnership between Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council to discharge the statutory building control functions for both areas for a further five year period until 31 March 2030, unless terminated earlier in accordance with the provisions of the agreed Deed; and
- b) delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Development Management to finalise the terms and conditions and then sign the new Deed (the legal agreement between Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council) before the existing agreement comes to an end.

59 MTFS Emerging Pressures and Budget Strategy

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the annual budget-setting process are important decisions for the Council. This report offered an interim assessment of the MTFS and highlighted several high-level actions aimed at

supporting the budget-setting process for the next three years. However, it did not provide specific plans to address any anticipated budget shortfalls, as such an approach would currently be premature based on the available information. However, once the government provided greater clarity on its local government financing stance the necessary plans would be brought forward and included in future reports.

Members heard:

- That Government funding may become targeted on more deprived areas in future
- Increased costs, due to items such as inflation and salary increases, would make for more challenging years ahead
- There was a provisional settlement date of 19 December 2024 for funding from the Government this year, so until that time we would be working with estimates
- Three-year settlements were due to be introduced in 2025
- Recommendation B was looking to earmark funds to assist with future projects whilst funds were available this year

Proposed by: Cllr Radley; Seconded by: Cllr Neighbour

Members discussed subjects including:

- The general state of Local Government funding
- The potential longer term strategy of the Council
- The impact of the change of central Government
- Ways in which the Council could improve and expand its revenue streams
- The different options that the Council would need to consider when looking at the budgets for 2025/26 and beyond

Unanimously agreed.

Decision

Cabinet

- a) noted the MTFS forecast, agreed the headline budget strategy identified in Appendix 1 and asked officers to identify and model options for closing the residual budget gap in 2025/26 and report these to O&S Committee in January for scrutiny ahead of Cabinet and Council approval; and
- b) approved the use of the current balance on the local plan reserve, up to £63k, for spend on consultancy and software costs in 2024/25, and earmarked a £1m of the forecast 2024/25 net underspend for the local plan reserve, with details and a recommendation to Council to be included in the main budget report in January 2025

60 Upgrading the Audiovisual Capabilities in the Council Chamber

This report requested access to the Council Chamber Audio Reserve to fund upgrading the Council Chamber's audiovisual capabilities and environment. Such an upgrade would be essential for maintaining meeting broadcast capabilities.

Members heard:

- the current system was installed around 3.5 years ago
- the current Teams Room Audio Visual system is based on Windows 10, support for which ends in October 2025
- there have been some problems with the system in the past six months with system failures
- the current system is not thought to be compatible with Windows 11

Members discussed subjects including:

- Remote voting and voice recognition
- The Government's consultation on hybrid meetings and proxy voting
- Future proofing of the new system
- That the cameras themselves will not need to be changed
- A support contract for 3.5years is included with the installation of the new system
- That having a stable hybrid system would support the Council's climate change agenda

Proposed by: Cllr Clarke; Seconded by: Cllr Neighbour

Unanimously agreed.

Decision

Cabinet authorised the release of up to £15K from the Council Chamber audio reserve, to enable the upgrading of the Council's audiovisual capabilities in the Council Chamber.

61 Cabinet Work Programme

Cabinet considered the Cabinet Work Programme, and commented as follows:

- The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) that is going to O&S in December does not come to Cabinet but would be circulated for information
- There may be a request to bring forward the Housing Allocations Policy, currently scheduled for March 2025. This will be discussed further offline
- The date for the March 2025 meeting should be 6 March, not 3 March

The meeting closed at 8.03pm