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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 19 October 2021 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

Axam, Collins, Crookes, Davies, Dorn, Drage, Farmer, Harward, Radley, Smith, Wildsmith and Worlock (Chairman)

In attendance: Cockarill, Radley

Officers:

Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Emma Foy	Head of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Mark Jaggard	Head of Place
Daniel Hawes	Planning Policy and Economic Development Manager
Jenny Humphreys	Committee Services Office

49 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 21 September 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

52 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

53 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

None.

54 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT FEEDBACK SURVEY - RESULTS

The Joint Chief Executive reported that 10 out of 33 members responded to the survey (less than a third).

Members questioned whether future surveys like these should be done as part of group meetings to get more engagement. It was concluded that this type of

feedback is individual, but the committee will remind colleagues of the importance of taking part in similar surveys going forward.

55 PRELIMINARY DRAFT COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) CHARGING SCHEDULE

The Head of Place summarised the Preliminary Draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (PDSC) and recommended to members that they approve it for public consultation.

He continued that the council is proposing two consultations; the first would be for six weeks, ending just before Christmas. The second would be a statutory consultation needed prior to examination.

The Head of Place explained that CIL is a tariff in the form of a standard charge on most new development which helps fund the infrastructure needed to support development across the district. The council has identified three different rates based on viability: £50, £80, and £270.

Members questions and discussions included:

- The three proposed CIL rates/m² and how they were created.
- How the rates compared to neighbouring councils/areas.
- The funding gap and how it is estimated.
- How parishes will benefit from this scheme.
- Loft conversions/extensions and how this will affect CIL rates.
- There was no VAT rate on CIL.

The Head of Place reported that the proposed rates are in the mid-range compared to neighbouring authorities, but the rates must be informed and justified by local evidence, particularly on viability, which will be a key issue at examination.

He also confirmed that the council is required to identify an infrastructure funding gap which CIL receipts would contribute towards, and rates can be reviewed and altered once CIL is implemented.

DECISION

That Cabinet approve the Preliminary Draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (PDSC) for public consultation with the following recommendations for the Cabinet report:

- Point 4.7 in the report – to cover the different charge rates, not just £50.
- To show how the proposed CIL rates compare with neighbouring authorities
- In respect of Appendix 2 of the report, to clarify how the CIL receipts per dwelling are calculated.

- More clarification/explanation on the infrastructure funding gap and the role of other funding sources.

The JCX proposed a future seminar on CIL after the first consultation and this is expected to be early 2022.

The Planning Policy and Economic Development Manager to send the committee members, the CIL Viability Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and Infrastructure Funding Gap Assessment (IFG).

56 LOCAL PLAN ASSESSMENT

The JCX explained that all local planning authorities are required to review and, if necessary, update their local plan policies within five years of adoption, if not sooner. At this point it is simply an assessment of the current Local Plan to check that it is on track and if there have been any material changes in circumstances e.g. new government advice etc. The best time to carry out this initial assessment is Spring 2022 once the future 'Planning Bill' has passed through Parliament, and the Government has issued further guidance and advice to accompany the Bill. The assessment is expected therefore to be commence in Spring 2022.

Members discussions included:

- The possibility of the planning policy team doing a 'scoping' document in anticipation of government guidelines.
- The differences between Local Plan reviews (i.e. assessments as to whether the plan is up to date) and updates to the plan, if the review shows it is needed (which could be a partial update or a whole new plan).
- Timescales and any deadlines that need to be met regarding this assessment and any possible additional reviews later on.
- Housing delivery and the age of the council's evidence
- Why the Shapley Heath Garden Community surveys are continuing.
- What a 'policy off' approach means in the context of a study into the potential for settlements to accommodate future growth within existing settlement boundaries

The Head of Place explained the team has a Planning Advisory Service toolkit officers can use to undertake the review/assessment, but currently the council has an up-to-date plan adopted in April 2020 and is meeting its housing delivery targets.

The Portfolio Holder for Place and the JCX confirmed that the Shapley Heath studies have already been commissioned and will provide useful outcomes for future developments.

DECISION

The Committee recommends to Cabinet that work should begin on the assessment as soon as Government guidance is received.

57 2022/23 BUDGET & MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE

The Head of Corporate Services summarised the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and that it had been updated to incorporate the Level One savings approved at September's Cabinet meeting.

She also reiterated that there is still a budget gap due to Central Government prioritising services like the NHS and schools after the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Head of Corporate Services reported that business rates are at a safety net level but council tax collection rates in Hart have fallen due to Covid-19 (this is reflected nationally).

She confirmed the estimated budget gaps for 2022/23 are £825,000 and £1,180,000 in 2023/24.

There is currently no business case for the Senior Management restructure; this will be determined by an independent consultant-led review and reported to Cabinet in January.

Members asked if the revised MTFS reflects changes in the Leisure Centre income and the Head of Corporate Services confirmed it did not.

During the course of the discussion the Committee resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting any discussion relating to the Savings Business cases attached as Appendix 1 to the report on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of information as defined in Schedule 12A of the said Act.

DECISION

Committee noted the current position with regard to the proposed budget savings but recommended to Cabinet that Cabinet implement with immediate effect the recruitment management arrangements as detailed in paragraph 5.4 of the report.

58 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet Work Programme was noted.

Members highlighted that the Civic Quarter Regeneration meetings had restarted (18 October) and they would like to see updates at future O&S meetings.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, who is also Chairman of the Civic Quarter Regeneration working group reported that he expects updates to come before this committee from the new year.

The Chairman asked for a timeline of these future meetings

59 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme was noted.

Members questioned the KPI's for Place's five-year land supply document and the JCX confirmed that this will be published around Christmas time as part of a publicly available annual monitoring report.

The meeting closed at 10.06 pm