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CABINET

Date and Time: Thursday 2 December 2021 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

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

In attendance: Axam, Butcher and Smith

Officers:

Patricia Hughes	Joint Chief Executive
Adam Green	Ecology and Countryside Manager
Daniel Hawes	Planning Policy and Economic Development Manager
Jenny Wood	Principal Planning Policy Manager
Gemma Watts	Strategy and Development Officer
Amy Summers	Media and Communications Manager
Joanne Rayne	Finance Manager
Ashley Grist	Contracts and Procurement Manager
Helen Vincent	Committee Services Officer

78 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minute number 76 of the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 were amended.

2. The Level Two business cases contained in Appendix One were discussed and agreed.

The updated minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

79 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies received.

80 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman announced a non-pecuniary interest to minute number 85 as he is a Member of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation.

81 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had two announcements. The first was to apologise to Councillor Forster and anyone else who may have been offended by his inappropriate reference made to a fellow Member of the Council at the previous meeting.

The second was to announce an urgent report which was presented by the Joint Chief Executive. The report requested approval for additional use of Council assets to help in the battle against Covid 19 and specifically to support the extended vaccination programme by the NHS up to March 2022.

It was explained that the exact requirements aren't know at this time, but the assets are associated with the Civic Campus area and the timescales had been requested by the NHS.

DECISION

Cabinet agreed to delegate to the Joint Chief Executives the powers to make decisions associated with the Councils Assets (including buildings and car parks) to facilitate the delivery of the Government's expanded vaccination programme up to the 31st March 2022.

82 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

None.

83 COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

This report sought Cabinet approval on the proposed Communications and Engagement Strategy alongside the proposed Content Strategy.

Members were informed that the Communications and Engagement Strategy included key messages which related to the current corporate plan and were reassured that these are flexible and represent the Council consistently.

Members praised the report content and excellent advice detailed on the Council's approach to communication contained in both strategies, and welcomed assistance offered by Members to improve the content further.

DECISION

Cabinet approved the adoption of the two strategies for the period of 2022 – 2026 and because both documents are living documents they would be reviewed regularly during their lifetime.

84 HART INTERIM PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT ON FIRST HOMES

Cabinet were presented with a report which reflected the introduction of First Homes as an affordable housing product by the Government in May 2021 and sets out a suggested approach to be applied in Hart district, through the introduction of an Interim Planning Policy Statement.

It was suggested that we use an interim policy statement instead of a full review of the Government policy to ensure that the Government guidelines are followed in setting up the First Homes policy, giving space for planning officers to gather

evidence on what works better within this planning policy allowing time for more research to be carried out on the approach made by other authorities for further learning and future review going forward.

Members had concerns around the shared ownership opportunities becoming less attractive and less sustainable and were advised that legal advice was sought to take First Homes out of the Affordable Home Ownership element of the policy. However, the Council has decided to go for the standard approach on an interim basis to allow time to gather the evidence required to ascertain accurately what is needed for a viable approach to protect the rented units better. Also, the planning team are working with a Hampshire wide working group with other local authorities for comparisons. The standard approach was considered the safer option and within the Government guidelines until such research could be concluded.

The Chairman announced that he accepts the recommendation and understands this is an untested area but supports the solution provided for the interim until the impact of this legislation on the market is evident and we can demonstrate the risk is a genuine risk.

DECISION

Cabinet agreed to adopt the First Homes Interim Planning Policy Statement at Appendix A.

85 BIODIVERSITY AND CARBON OFFSETTING DELIVERY STRATEGY

This report required Cabinet approval to provide funding for the appointment of consultants to investigate the potential for Biodiversity Net Gain and Carbon Sequestration and to prepare a report setting out projects that will form the basis of a biodiversity and carbon offsetting delivery strategy. 10% offsetting and an opportunity for us to utilise this on our own site or to enable developments to deliver their 10% net gain.

Members welcomed the biodiversity and carbon offsetting strategy especially as our district is blessed with lowland acid heaths and chalk downlands, both of which are not known for sustaining trees. This will make the scheme challenging to implement, but the Council is keen to encourage the steps to finding the solutions and use the opportunities available.

Cabinet learnt that there is a level of baseline which needs to be defined and is a key part of the project which allows offset payment to deliver the scheme. Members were advised that a future tree planting strategy will be forthcoming.

DECISION

Cabinet approved for £29k of Section 106 Biodiversity offsetting funding, collected and earmarked for the purpose, be allocated for scoping exercises,

identification of potential projects and the development of a potential biodiversity and carbon offsetting delivery strategy.

86 FUNDING FOR GREEN GRID SIGNAGE STRATEGY

Cabinet approval was sought to provide funding for the appointment of consultants to develop the branding and signage strategy to support the delivery of Harts Green Grid.

Clarification was sought on what the funds would include, and it was confirmed that this will be used to cost external resources to form the basis of what is required to be delivered across the district, but the branding strategies are independent to local authority areas. It is an opportunity for visualisation work on our Green Grid for residents. It was agreed that Councillor Clarke will be included in the tender process to help and assist framing our ambitions of providing signs that will be recognised by branding zones and areas displaying safer routes and footpaths.

DECISION

Members agreed that £28k is allocated in the council 21/22 budget to fund the consultancy costs required to prepare a wider signage strategy.

87 FROGMORE DAY CARE CENTRE

Cabinet were updated on the Frogmore Day Centre (FDC) and were asked to approve to move a proportion of the Commercialisation funds that were placed in ear marked reserves, to support the delivery of a building in a condition suitable to accommodate a new lessee (Age Concern).

Members were advised of the need to invest approximately £25k of funding to bring a district asset back into serviceable use. Members sought clarification on how quickly the work can be completed so the facility can be handed over to the new tenants and were confident to learn that the Council will endeavour to project manage the delivery of quality renovations as quickly as possible. Cabinet were advised that the new lease sets out an agreement that the new tenants are required to maintain and repair the building for the duration of their tenancy.

DECISION

1. That Cabinet agreed to invest in the maintenance of FDC so that the building can be leased to Age Concern in a safe and clean condition.
2. That Cabinet authorised the granting of a new full repairing lease to Age Concern for the building, for the period of 10 years, with break clause after 5 years, on a peppercorn rent.

Appendix 3 of this report is exempt from publication.

88 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet Work Programme was considered and amended as follows:

The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy is anticipated to come forward to Cabinet in January 2022.

The meeting closed at 8.17 pm