

CABINET

Date and Time: Thursday 4 January 2024 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

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

In attendance: Axam

Officers:

Daryl Phillips, Chief Executive

Mark Jaggard, Executive Director - Place

Kirsty Jenkins, Executive Director - Community

Matthew Harris, Planning Policy Officer

Daniel Hawes, Planning Policy and Economic Development Manager

Liz Vango-Smith, Sustainability & Climate Change Officer

Rachael Wilkinson, Community Safety Coordinator

Sharon Black, Committee and Member Services Manager

68 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 7 December 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Proposed by Cllr Neighbour; Seconded by Cllr Quarterman and agreed unanimously.

69 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Collins.

(Cllr Axam arrived 7:03pm)

70 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

71 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements.

72 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

There were none.

73 PROJECT RESOURCE TO SUPPORT THE REMODELLING OF HEATHLANDS COURT

This paper sought agreement to release £80k to fund technical, specialist resources to support scoping of options for Heathlands Court's remodelling.

Councillors heard:

- That Heathlands Court was the Council's facility for those at risk of being made homeless
- The facility had been built in the 1980s and was in need of significant renovation
- The layout of the building was not ideal, particularly for families; and there was also a need to improve energy efficiency
- The sum requested was to provide technical support, from which a further report would be made to Cabinet with a recommended plan and cost

Councillors questioned:

- Whether the costs would be taken from the housing capital reserve
- Whether the resource would be an external consultant

Proposed by Cllr Bailey; Seconded by Cllr Neighbour

Councillors were pleased to see the work proposed for this very important facility, and hoped that when proposals were put forward these would include both timescales and proposals for mitigation to minimise the disruption to those who were already in residence. It was also noted that there was an ambition to improve the EPC rating, which fitted with the Council's climate change emergency.

Decision

Cabinet unanimously agreed to release £80k to fund the procurement of technical, specialist resources to support work on scoping of options for Heathlands Court's remodelling.

74 BUTTERWOOD HOMES REPORT FROM SCRUTINY PANEL

This report provided an update of Butterwood Homes' performance to Cabinet, which had been reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny at their December 2023 meeting. The Scrutiny Panel for Butterwood Homes issued the report.

Councillors were reminded:

- Butterwood was an arms-length Company wholly owned by the Council run by two directors and a Chairman
- The Scrutiny panel report showed that the company was stable and that the financial performance was solid. The Scrutiny panel was satisfied that the Company was achieving the desired aims for the Council

- The report of the Scrutiny panel had been discussed at the last Overview & Scrutiny meeting

Thanks were given to the members of the Scrutiny panel for their thorough report, which was noted.

75 SETTLEMENT CAPACITY AND INTENSIFICATION STUDY

This report was to present the findings of the ‘Settlement Capacity and Intensification Study’ (SICS) and to consider the continued use of digital software to support the Council’s planning policy function.

Councillors heard:

- That the software had been used over the past few months to conduct a high level study which could provide evidence to demonstrate urban capacity in light of the government’s aim to focus primarily on increasing the intensification and densification of development in urban areas.
- The cost of using the software was significantly less than having to use consultants whenever there was a need to produce plans
- The use of the software would also assist in streamlining processes, and was very adaptable, being able to produce alternative options quickly and efficiently

Councillors questioned:

- Whether the outcomes of the study in fact answered the question previously asked relating to density studies and alternative options to urban extensions or possible a new and settlement to meet future government proposed new housing targets.
- How the scenarios were arrived at, why these particular areas had been chosen, and whether they were “set in stone”

Councillors noted:

- That the study was not a land availability study but a high level theoretical approach to looking at where there was potential capacity for building additional housing
- That the software would assist the Council in providing evidence when showing options for future plans
- The use of the software in allowing quick and easy changes to modelling for plans in the future
- There was an error in the consultant’s report, and the figures in the table on paragraph 68 were the correct ones. The report would be corrected before final publication.

Proposed by Cllr Cockarill; Seconded by Cllr Radley

Councillors discussed:

- The study demonstrated that unless a balanced option to spatially deliver development was explored, simply focussing all new development within

urban areas could result in significant harm to the character and appearance of our towns and villages

- Unlike a possible new settlement option, meeting future housing need all within urban areas would not link the delivery of new homes to local community infrastructure such as open space, schools, medical or community facilities
- There would be a need to create balanced communities rather than simply large scale delivery on 1 or 2 bedroom flats.

(Cllr Axam left 7:55pm)

Decision

Cabinet unanimously agreed to:

- Note the findings of the three different scenarios illustrated in the Settlement Capacity and Intensification Study (SCIS). The study will be published on the council's website.
- Approve, subject to compliance with the Council's procurement rules, the ongoing use of digital software to support the Council Planning Policy function should be supported, and appropriate provisions should be made in the 2024/25 budget.

76 REVIEW OF CCTV SERVICE

This report shared with Cabinet Members the outcomes and action plan from the recently undertaken CCTV Review, for Members to note. Members were also asked to approve the request for capital and revenue budget allocations.

Councillors heard:

- That the service had been transferred to Runnymede around six months ago
- This review had been undertaken to look at performance over the last six months and whether objectives had been fulfilled
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had formed a Task and Finish Group to also look at CCTV provision
- Most of the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group were aligned with the report's recommendations
- There was no fundamental issues with the CCTV service as a whole
- The Police had confirmed that they saw the service as helpful when looking for evidence and as a significant deterrent against ASB/major crime
- The location of the CCTV cameras had been aligned with Hart's hotspots – although these were few and far between as Hart was at the bottom of the crime statistics table for Hampshire for 2022/23.
- That the offer recommendations included developments for the next six months, including continuing the review of the positioning of cameras with the Police to ensure optimum siting

- There was an officer recommendation relating to financial allocation to ensure that the system remained fully operational, well maintained and that older cameras were replaced where possible. This proposed funding had been included in the 2024/25 budget.

Proposed by Cllr Oliver; Seconded by Cllr Neighbour

Councillors discussed:

- That the service had maintained a good level following the move to Runnymede
- That a significant amount of work had been undertaken in moving the service from Rushmoor to Runnymede, and thanks were given to the Executive Director, Community and the Community Safety Team for their work on this
- That an access terminal for the Police had been installed at Rushmoor Borough Council Offices, and once a police station was established in Fleet, a further access terminal would be provided by Hart District Council to be installed there for Police use.

Recommendation

Cabinet unanimously agreed:

- That a budget of £75k be allocated to the council's capital programme over a 5-year period commencing in 2024/25 to fund the continuing replacement of the Council's CCTV camera stock.
- That the actions outlined in the CCTV Review (Appendix A – Section 7) were noted and agreed and a revenue budget of £10k be allocated for any follow-on work required, particularly in relation to possible relocation of any existing camera assets.
- That approval be given to extend the contract currently in place with the Safer Runnymede by a further 5 years, subject to procurement processes.
- That a budget of £6k be allocated to the council's capital programme to purchase a deployable CCTV camera asset, subject to officers' evaluation and finding, and agreeing consent from the Portfolio Holder.
- That £3.5k of annual revenue be allocated to cover costs associated for any additional call-out fees, which fall outside of the Routine Planned Maintenance (RPM). This will be utilised for identified Hot Spot cameras on the fixed CCTV network (£1.5k) and to cover the data connectivity (£1k) and installation/deinstallation costs incurred (£1k) for a deployable asset.

77 WEIGHT GIVEN TO THE COUNCIL'S DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY IN PLANNING DECISIONS RELATING TO HERITAGE MATTERS

The purpose of this report was to address the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in relation to heritage assets. Recent planning appeal decisions had

raised questions about the Council's position. Therefore, this report aimed to clarify the Council's stance while emphasising that each application will be assessed individually based on its merits.

Councillors heard:

- There was a need so that changes to heritage assets (listed buildings) could be allowed, so that they take into account climate change emergency issues, particularly around the use of renewable power, insulation etc
- There was also a need to look at dwellings within conservation areas, and whether it was possible to assist residents in overcoming the challenges that they faced when wanting to make changes

Councillors noted:

- The report did cover dwellings within conservation areas
- That it would be possible to draft a local development order (LDO) which would allow the council to grant permission for alterations to non-listed buildings in conservation areas

Councillors discussed:

- Whether drafting an LDO would duplicate processes being developed by central Government, but as there were no timescales set against the latter, it was agreed that it would be beneficial for the Council to draw up their own LDO.
- If there was likely to be any further action as a result of the consultation with Historic England undertaken during 2023

It was therefore agreed to add a fifth recommendation, in that Officers would look to begin developing a Local Development Order, and brief Cabinet in due course.

Decision

Cabinet unanimously agreed the following:

- there is a public benefit to energy efficiency and renewable or low carbon energy measures which, even in a small way, assist the Council's commitment to making Hart district carbon neutral by 2040
- that significant weight will be given to the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in all planning decisions, including those relating to heritage matters
- that the weight given to the conservation of the heritage asset will depend on the importance of the heritage asset
- where a development proposal would give rise to some harm to the significance of a heritage asset, the level of harm needs to be assessed and weighed against the public benefits of the proposal
- Officers would look to begin developing a Local Development Order, and report back to Cabinet in due course.

78 CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE

This report updated Members on the progress made with the Climate Action Plan between June-November 2023 and highlighted current progress and identified risks for delivery 2.

The report also made recommendations for the next set of priorities to support the delivery of the adopted approved action plan and requested further budget approvals for identified projects to support the plan.

Councillors noted:

- This was the first six-monthly update following the launch of the programme in June 2023
- The report had been before Overview and Scrutiny in December and the Portfolio Holder would also mention it at the next full Council meeting at the end of January.
- There had been good progress on a range of issues during the six month period

Councillors discussed:

- Whether the climate action score card was an annual event
- Whether the leisure centres project was still on target to report back in March

Proposed by Cllr Quarterman; Seconded by Cllr Oliver

Agreed unanimously

Decision

Cabinet:

- Reviewed and noted the climate change programme update
- Reviewed and approved the proposed projects list and associated cost allocations set out in paragraph 39 of the report, to be funded from the approved 2023/24 climate budget.

79 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet reviewed and noted the January 2024 Cabinet Work Programme.

Amendments were made as follows:

- The item on Butterwood Homes was deferred until March due to resource issues

Remove the item on Hartley Wintney Conservation Area Appraisal as no date for the report was yet available. This would be added back to the Work Programme when a date was identified.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm