

Council
20 JULY 2023

Present: Councillors: David Skipp (Chairman), Mark Baynham, Emma Beard, Tony Bevis, Martin Boffey, Colette Blackburn, Peter van der Borgh, James Brookes, Jon Campbell, Philip Circus, Paul Clarke, Mike Croker, Joy Dennis, Malcolm Eastwood, Len Ellis-Brown, Victoria Finnegan, Claudia Fisher, Ruth Fletcher, Chris Franke, Anthony Frankland, Nick Grant, Joan Grech, Kasia Greenwood, Warwick Hellowell, Tony Hogben, Alex Jeffery, Joanne Knowles, Lynn Lambert, Richard Landeryou, Dennis Livingstone, Nicholas Marks, Jay Mercer, John Milne, Colin Minto, Roger Noel, Jon Olson, Sam Raby, John Trollope, Belinda Walters, Mike Wood and Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: Nigel Emery, Sam Bateman, Liz Kitchen, Alan Manton, Josh Potts, Jonathan Taylor and Clive Trott

CO/30 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Item 5a Possible Purchase of Site A: Councillor Mike Croker declared that he was connected with the owner of the site, and confirmed that he would leave the meeting for the duration of the Item.

CO/31 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

CO/32 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET (ITEMS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION)**

POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF SITE A

Councillor Jon Olson, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture & Green Spaces advised that the Council had an opportunity to approve the funds that would enable the purchase of a site. The purchase of the site would allow the Council to protect public access to open green space. There was the potential to improve links with the community, and provide opportunities for volunteering, which would in turn have benefits for both physical and mental health. The Cabinet had approved the acquisition of the site.

In order to consider the information set out in the confidential appendices it was RESOLVED that members of the Press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and the public

interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Following the consideration of the confidential appendices, the meeting moved back into open session to approve the recommendations.

RESOLVED

That the allocation of funds for the acquisition of Site A be approved, subject to the limit.

REASONS

- i) To ensure the successful acquisition of Site A.
- ii) There are community and environmental benefits to acquiring Site A, in particular ensuring that a site that has become a well-used public open space, continues to operate as such.

POSSIBLE PROPERTY PURCHASE – HORSHAM

Councillor Ruth Fletcher, Cabinet Member for Local Economy & Place, advised that the opportunity to purchase a building had arisen. There was the potential for a variety of uses and the Cabinet had approved the acquisition.

In order to consider the information set out in the confidential appendices it was RESOLVED that members of the Press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Following the consideration of the confidential appendices, the meeting moved back into open session to approve the recommendations.

RESOLVED

That a capital budget of Figure 2 be allocated to the capital programme in 2023/24 for this purchase.

REASON

To allow a purchase of the property to proceed.

CO/33 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET (ITEMS NOT EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION)**

LAND CHARGES – FEES

Councillor John Milne, Cabinet Member for Planning & Infrastructure, advised that Horsham District Council had a statutory duty to maintain a Local Land Charges register. Conducting a full search requires information from West Sussex County Council, who had increased their fees since the Council set their budget in February. As such, it was recommended that the fee charged be increased by £5 plus VAT, per request, to cover the full cost of the search.

RESOLVED

That the increase in the Land Charge fee for the additional option questions from £21 (+VAT) to £26 (+VAT) be approved

REASON

To ensure that the Land Charge search fee charged by Horsham District Council fully covers the costs of undertaking the searches

HOUSING GRANTS – APPROVAL OF BUDGET

Councillor Sam Raby, Cabinet Member for Housing, Communities and Wellbeing, informed the Cabinet that the Government had allocated two grants to the Council. These grants were not known to the Council when the annual budget for the current year was set. The grants were in relation to homelessness prevention and interventions for asylum dispersal. The Housing Team were investigating options for the use of the grants, independently and in partnership with other Local Authorities.

The grants would enable the Council to further support refugees, which was a priority.

RESOLVED

- i) That the receipt and expenditure of two grants in the sum of (i) £271,911 for Homeless Prevention Grant top up, and (ii) £72,000 for Home Office Asylum Dispersal Grant be approved
- ii) That an increase in the housing team's 2023/24 revenue income and expenditure budgets of £343,911 to cater for the receipt of the two subject grants be approved

REASONS

- i) Increasing the revenue income and expenditure budgets in the Housing Service will allow the Council to receive and spend the grants offered by DLUHC
- ii) Full Council must approve an increase to the housing team's budget
- iii) To provide appropriate housing options for the cohorts specified in the grant conditions

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND ROUND 2

Councillor Mark Baynham, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, advised that Round 1 of the Local Authority Housing Fund was progressing well, and that a second round of funding had been announced. The funding would allow the Council to purchase 3 large resettlement homes and 1 home for temporary accommodation. The scheme would have social and financial benefits.

RESOLVED

- i) That the application for, and receipt of, the grant allocation for the Council to provide or facilitate the provision of 3 large resettlement homes and 1 temporary accommodation home be proceeded with
- ii) That the capital spend of £1.78m in the 2023/24 capital programme be approved.

REASONS

- i) To apply for, receive and use the grant to help purchase / provide more affordable homes for the district.
- ii) Full Council must approve the capital budget.
- iii) Subject to Council approval, to avoid the requirement to seek Cabinet's approval for the purchase by Horsham District Council of each individual property that would otherwise be required to give effect to this initiative.

The meeting closed at 7.12 pm having commenced at 6.30 pm

CHAIRMAN