

Cabinet
22 NOVEMBER 2018

Present: Councillors: Ray Dawe (Leader) (Leader), Jonathan Chowen (Deputy Leader and Leisure and Culture) (Deputy Leader), Philip Circus (Waste, Recycling and Cleansing), Brian Donnelly (Finance and Assets), Gordon Lindsay (Local Economy), Claire Vickers (Planning and Development) and Tricia Youtan (Community and Wellbeing)

Also Present: Councillors: Leonard Crosbie, Nigel Jupp and Jim Sanson

EX/32 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20th September 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

EX/33 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

EX/34 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

EX/35 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No questions had been received.

EX/36 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets reported that the review of the Financial Strategy, as part of the budget setting process, enabled a balanced financial position to be projected by including an affordable level of Council Tax. This would allow delivery of the corporate priorities and policies of the Council and the continued enhancement of value for money and satisfaction with services for the residents of the District.

The 2018/19 Budget had been approved in February 2018 and small budget surpluses were projected for 2018/19 and 2019/20, with projected deficits in 2020/21 and 2021/22. Since then, the Council had been working further on income generation, continuing the business transformation journey to the next stage and other efficiency measures to mitigate against cost pressures that continued to rise.

The report set out the proposed strategy for the period 2019/20 to 2022/23 to establish the context for the Council's budget and medium term financial planning scenarios and assumptions. This had been done in the context of high

levels of uncertainty for the future in respect of business rates and the Fair Funding Review.

The Finance and Assets Policy Development Advisory Group had considered and supported the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy and the assumptions used in its preparation.

Cabinet Members supported the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy, noting that the proposals were prudent and preserved the continued delivery of services valued by residents.

The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised that, overall, the Committee considered that the proposed strategy was good, restrained and modest.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (i) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2022/23 be approved.
- (ii) That the projected balanced budgets and budget gap as detailed in the report be noted.

EX/37 **INSURANCE CONTRACT**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets reported that the Council's insurance contract was due to expire on 1st April 2019.

It had been determined that the best option for a new contract would be to undertake a joint tender exercise in conjunction with a number of other local authorities, with a view to achieving financial savings and benefits from representing a larger share of the market.

The tender process would be managed by the East Sussex Procurement Hub and, in order to meet the timescales in implementing a new contract, Cabinet was recommended to delegate the authority for its award to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets.

RESOLVED

That the award of the insurance contract be delegated to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets.

REASONS

The Council is going out to joint tender with several other local authorities and therefore needs to be able to meet their tendering timescales. The councils are due to make the contract award on 14 January 2019.

It would not be possible for the Council to make the contract award in time for commencement of the contract without using the Delegated Authority route.

EX/38 **ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS**

The Cabinet Member for Community and Wellbeing reported that it was proposed to lease nine units of accommodation from Saxon Weald to be used as temporary accommodation for homeless households, which would reduce the Council's reliance on bed and breakfast, improve the outcomes for homeless families and reduce the council's expenditure on bed and breakfast accommodation.

The Council had a statutory duty to provide interim accommodation for people in urgent need of housing and currently owned and managed 70 units of accommodation, leasing a further six units from Stonewater Housing Association. Demand for short-stay accommodation had risen sharply in the past 12 months and this was anticipated to continue. The introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act (HRA) had highlighted the need to work proactively with households at risk of homelessness.

The predicted annual net cost for supplying bed and breakfast accommodation during 2018/19 was in the region of £300,000.

The units proposed for leasing were new build properties and benefited from being modern, energy efficient and in a central accessible location within the District. The proposal was to lease the units from Saxon Weald for a period of ten years and return them in a habitable and compliant condition after this period. This proposal would enable the Council to keep households owed a homeless duty closer to support networks, children's schooling and employment that might otherwise be jeopardised if bed and breakfast accommodation were secured outside the Horsham District.

The Community and Wellbeing Policy Development Advisory Group supported the proposal.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the proposal to lease nine flats at Copnall Court, Broadbridge Heath from Saxon Weald to let as temporary accommodation to homeless households as an alternative to bed and breakfast accommodation, often outside the Horsham District, be approved.
- (ii) That the signing of the lease be completed by the Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community and Wellbeing.

REASONS

- (i) To support the council to meet its statutory responsibility to provide short-stay temporary accommodation. The current level of temporary accommodation does not meet current levels of demand.
- (ii) Securing accommodation within the district will enable the council to meet its statutory housing duties at a lower cost than the current alternative of placing households in bed and breakfast accommodation. Local accommodation will also keep households closer to employment, children's schooling and social and support networks.

EX/39 **ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Cleansing reported that the Council had a wide range of powers to employ officers authorised to investigate environmental crime and undertake the appropriate enforcement action in relation to breaches of legislation and environmental criminal offences. The sanctions available varied between administering simple cautions and warnings, Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecution in the criminal courts.

The proposed Environmental Enforcement Policy had been drafted to incorporate the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006, which was a Statutory Code of Practice that set out the way in which compliance and enforcement actions must be undertaken, including the publication of an enforcement policy.

The proposed policy also covered investigatory powers related to the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Cleaner Neighbourhoods Act 2006 and took into account the Principles of Good Enforcement as outlined in the Enforcement Concordat: Good Practice Guide for England and Wales, produced by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 2003.

The Waste, Recycling and Cleansing Policy Development Advisory Group supported the introduction of the Enforcement Policy.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted and the Environmental Offences Enforcement Policy ('the Enforcement Policy') be approved.
- (ii) That authority be granted for the adoption by the Council of all relevant enforcement powers contained in the Enforcement Policy.

REASONS

The Council requires an enforcement policy to ensure that Authorised officers can investigate environmental crimes and undertake the appropriate enforcement action where subsequent evidence proves that an environmental offence has taken place.

In addition the policy outlines:

- Standards: the principles that will be used
- Openness: clear and open provision of information
- Helpfulness: helping by advising on and assisting with compliance
- Complaints about the service: having a clear complaints procedure
- Proportionality: ensuring that enforcement action is proportionate to the risks involved in the process
- Consistency: ensuring consistent enforcement practice

EX/40 **CAR PARKING CHARGES - HURST ROAD CAR PARK (THE PAVILIONS)**

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy reported that users of Hurst Road car park, located on the north side of Horsham Park, were predominately patrons of The Pavilions in the Park. The car park currently operated as pay and display and was chargeable Monday – Saturday 7am – 8pm and Sunday and Bank Holidays 9am – 5pm.

The car park was currently well known as The Pavilions car park by the majority of members of public who used the facility and the name change was therefore proposed to better link the two entities (car park and leisure complex).

The minimum purchase time of three hours did not reflect the current use of the car park as the majority of the leisure centre customers used the facilities for 1-2 hours.

To ensure the continued success of the leisure facility and the subsequent use of the car park, it was therefore proposed that the tariff be reviewed to introduce these shorter hours, but in a way that did not impact negatively on current income. It was anticipated that the introduction of the 1 and 2 hour tariff would improve turn over within the car park (especially at peak periods) and not reduce the income currently received.

The Local Economy Policy Development Advisory Group on 31 October 2018 supported the proposal.

RESOLVED

- (i) That new tariff points be introduced in Hurst Road Car Park and, to allow for this, the current latter tariff points be increased as set out in the report.

- (ii) That the name of Hurst Road Car Park be changed to 'The Pavilions Car Park'.

REASONS

The reasons for recommending the change of name:

- I. The majority of people refer to Hurst Rd CP as 'The Pavilions' CP
- II. Link the two entities together helps with finding the facilities.
- III. Very little effort for a perceived larger improvement

The reasons for recommending for the tariff changes:

- I. Currently the tariff is not comparative to other town centre car parks
- II. Requests from users to review and introduce shorter stay lengths
- III. Parking tickets being passed from one customer to another
- IV. To support The Pavilions in the Park, particularly with the introduction of two new gyms into the town

EX/41 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no matters currently outstanding for consideration.

EX/42 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan was noted.

EX/43 **TO CONSIDER MATTERS OF SPECIAL URGENCY**

There were no matters of special urgency to be considered.

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN