

Horsham District Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Thursday, 25 January 2024

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
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Part A – Items considered in public

<p>A5</p>	<p>Planning Skills Delivery Fund – Approval of Budget</p>	<p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To approve the receipt of a grant for the sum of £308,333 for Strategic Planning and Development Management (government grants received). ii) To approve an increase in the Strategic Planning 2023/24 revenue income and expenditure budgets of £250,000 to cater for the receipt and expenditure of the grant. iii) To approve an increase in the Development Management 2023/24 revenue income and expenditure budgets of £58,333 to cater for receipt and expenditure of the grant. <p>Subject to Council approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the grant monies will be spent in accordance with any conditions attached to the same; and Page 17 Agenda Item 6 ii) to delegate authority to the Head of Strategic Planning to spend the grant monies, in the sum of £250,000, to procure additional project support for the delivery of the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme. iii) to delegate authority to the Head of Development Management and Building Control to spend the grant monies, in the sum of £58,333 to procure additional support to reduce the planning application backlog. <p>REASON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) By increasing the revenue income and expenditure budget in Strategic Planning and Development Management will allow the Council to receive and spend the grant offered by DLUHC.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii) Council must approve an increase to the budget and the Cabinet must approve expenditure in excess of £250,000. iii) To provide funds to help deliver the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS). iv) To provide additional resource to reduce the planning application backlog.
A6	Local Authority Housing Fund Top Up	<p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To proceed with the application for, and receipt of, the grant allocation for the Council to provide or facilitate the provision of up to 2 large resettlement homes and up to 2 temporary accommodation homes. ii) To approve capital spend of up to £1.78m in the 2023/24 capital programme, provided that the actual required spend, which is dependent upon the value of the unknown grant allocation, is reported to full Council at its next ordinary meeting. iii) To approve the acquisition by Horsham District Council of up to 4 properties using the funds earmarked for this initiative, provided that any such acquisitions are undertaken in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, and Cabinet Member for Housing, Communities & Wellbeing. <p>REASON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To apply for, receive and use the grant to help purchase / provide more affordable homes for the district.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii) The 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.
A7	Annual Plan 2024/25	<p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To approve the Annual Plan for 2024/25 financial year for adoption. <p>REASON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Annual Plan is an operational plan which identifies projects to be undertaken during a financial year and which gives effect to the themes contained in the Council Plan 2023-2027 which constitutes the Council’s Policy Framework.
A8	Climate Action Strategy	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To adopt the Climate Action Strategy for the Horsham District as contained in the appendix attached to this report. ii) To delegate authority to the Director of Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery to update the Climate Action Strategy and make amendments provided that any such changes do not undermine the Climate Action Strategy’s core values. iii) To note the actions that have been undertaken and to approve the actions that will be required to be undertaken by the Council, as contained in, and in order to give effect to

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		<p align="center">the Climate Action Strategy.</p> <p>REASON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Climate Action Strategy provides the framework for collective action across the district on climate change, demonstrating Council leadership on this important issue, as well as what actions partnerships and the wider community should be taking to reduce carbon emissions and to adapt to the changing climate. ii) This will allow minor amendments to be made to the Strategy as opportunities arise and for the actions in the Strategy to be implemented.
A9	Capitol Theatre Refurbishment	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) That subject to the budget allocation, approve the refurbishment of the Capitol (option 4, as detailed in paragraph 3.16 of this report). ii) To approve the award of contracts (required to facilitate the recommended refurbishment) to the winning suppliers (i) named on existing framework agreements, and/or (ii) following a procurement exercise, and/or following the grant of a procurement exemption; and iii) To delegate authority to either the Director of Communities or Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Green Spaces, to finalise the terms of and enter into the required contracts above-noted. <p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL</p>

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		<p>i) To approve a capital budget of £10.7m for the refurbishment works, profiled across the capital programmes budget for the following financial years: 2023/24, 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27;</p> <p>REASON</p> <p>i) To reduce carbon emissions at The Capitol, meeting the Council’s aspiration for direct emissions to become net zero by 2030.</p> <p>ii) To ensure The Capitol remains up to date and able to provide and attract a mix of high-quality performances and entice new productions by replacing end-of-life fixtures and fittings, increasing and improving seating in the auditorium and cinemas and enhancing the overall customer experience and offer.</p> <p>iii) To reduce ongoing revenue costs of running The Capitol.</p> <p>iv) To maintain and improve the cultural and social benefits of continuing to provide a multi arts community venue.</p> <p>v) The Full Council must approve the capital budget. vi) To facilitate the refurbishment works being undertaken and to delegate authority to award associated contracts for this purpose.</p>
A10	Council Tax Premiums	<p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL</p> <p>i) From 1 April 2024, to approve that empty and substantially unfurnished properties be charged an additional 100% council tax premium (twice the current Council Tax amount) after one year.</p>

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		<p>ii) From 1 April 2025, to approve that dwellings with no resident and which are substantially furnished are charged 100% council tax premium (twice the current Council Tax amount).</p> <p>REASON</p> <p>i) & ii) To reduce the number of empty homes within the District and to encourage the use of premises as main residences by local residents rather than second homes.</p>
A11	2024/25 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2027/28	<p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL</p> <p>i) That the level of Council Tax for 2024/25 increases from £166.94 by £3.34 (2%) to £170.28 at Band D.</p> <p>ii) That the net revenue budget set out in Appendix A for 2024/25 of £14.538m is approved.</p> <p>iii) That £0.6m of the £3.55m Funding Guarantee grant received in 2024/25 is used in Revenue to balance the budget, £0.55m to be used to fund up to £195 for working age and pension age claimants on Council Tax Support, with the remainder earmarked against potential overspend in 2024/25 and as a reserve to help resolve future budget deficits in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p> <p>iv) That Special Expenses of £456,865 set out in Appendix C and a Band D charge of £37.21 are agreed in respect of the unparished area for 2024/25</p> <p>v) That the capital programme for 2024/25 set out in Appendix D be approved and that the indicative capital budgets in the programme for future years be noted.</p>

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		<p>vi) That the projected future budgets on the revenue account in 2025/26 to 2029/30 are noted and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy continues to be reviewed and refined to ensure that decisions are taken in 2024 to set a balanced budget in 2025/26.</p> <p>vii) That the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement set out in Appendix E is approved.</p> <p>viii) That the Capital Strategy, Treasury Strategy, Investment Strategy and prudential indicators and limits for 2024/25 to 2027/28 set out in Appendix F are approved.</p> <p>ix) To note the statement on the robustness of the level of reserves in Appendix G.</p> <p>x) That the increases to fees and charges set out in Appendices H to H (iii) are approved.</p> <p>REASON</p> <p>To meet the Council’s statutory requirement to approve the budget and the prudential indicators before the start of a new financial year.</p>
A12	2024/25 Business Rates Discretionary Charitable Relief	<p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL</p> <p>i) To refer the Discretionary rate relief scheme for 2024/25 (“the Scheme”) as detailed in the appendix to full Council for approval and adoption; and</p> <p>ii) To delegate the award of discretionary relief, in accordance with the Scheme, to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources.</p> <p>REASON</p>

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		<p>i) Discretionary rate relief is an annual scheme and therefore require an annual review and approval.</p>
A13	Electoral Print Tender	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>i) To approve the award of the contract for electoral print to the highest scoring bidder, on the terms recommended, as detailed in Appendix 1 (exempt);</p> <p>ii) To delegate authority to the Chief Executive/Electoral Registration Officer/Returning Officer, in consultation with the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to finalise terms and conditions of and enter into a contract with the highest scoring bidder for the electoral print contract</p> <p>REASON</p> <p>i) The Council must competitively tender if the value of the goods or services exceeds the current threshold of £213,477 (inclusive of VAT). The current annual spend on electoral print exceeds this threshold.</p> <p>ii) To obtain authority to award the subject contract to the winning bidder pursuant to a legally compliant procurement process.</p>
A14	West Chiltington Lanes Conservation Area	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>i) To approve the designation of the West Chiltington Lanes, (as shown on the Conservation Area designation map (Map 1) included in this report) as a conservation area.</p> <p>ii) To approve and adopt the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for the West Chiltington Lanes as set out in Appendix 2.</p>

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		<p>iii) To delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Planning & Infrastructure to approve minor changes prior to final publication of the Conservation Area designation map and Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.</p> <p>REASON</p> <p>i) To formally designate the new conservation area boundary.</p> <p>ii) To provide updated conservation area guidance for residents, occupiers, developers and Members in determining applications.</p> <p>iii) To give the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure delegated authority to approve minor changes to the Conservation Area designation map and Conservation Appraisal and Management Plan, without the need for it to be referred back to Cabinet.</p>
A18	2024/25 Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Housing Benefit Modified Scheme	<p>RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL</p> <p>i) That there are no changes in the Council Tax Reduction scheme for 2024/25, other than the updates prescribed by Government as detailed in paragraph 1 of this paper and the Appendix to this supplementary paper.</p> <p>ii) The adoption of, with no changes to, the existing modified schemes under Housing Benefit subsidy for 2024/25 whereby the Council locally and voluntarily disregards war disablement pensions or war widow pensions in the housing benefit calculation.</p> <p>REASON</p> <p>i) & ii) The Council Tax Reduction and locally modified schemes are annual schemes requiring an annual review and approval, even when no changes to the scheme are being proposed.</p>

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		Review work on the scheme showed the schemes remains affordable for Horsham District Council and provides a good level of support to our less well-off residents.