

Council
13 OCTOBER 2021

Present: Councillors: David Skipp (Chairman), Kate Rowbottom (Vice-Chairman), Matthew Allen, Andrew Baldwin, Tony Bevis, John Blackall, Martin Boffey, Toni Bradnum, Chris Brown, Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess, Jonathan Chowen, Philip Circus, Paul Clarke (Leader), Michael Croker, Ray Dawe, Ruth Fletcher, Billy Greening, Tony Hogben (Deputy Leader), Nigel Jupp, Liz Kitchen, Lynn Lambert, Gordon Lindsay, Tim Lloyd, John Milne, Colin Minto, Christian Mitchell, Roger Noel, Bob Platt, Louise Potter, Stuart Ritchie, Jack Saheid, Ian Stannard, Diana van der Klugt, Claire Vickers, Belinda Walters, Tricia Youtan and James Wright

Apologies: Councillors: Christine Costin, Brian Donnelly, Frances Haigh, Richard Landeryou, Mike Morgan, Josh Potts and Jim Sanson

Absent: Councillors: Alan Britten

CO/38 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 1 September were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CO/39 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Item 6(c) The Drill Hall: Councillor Martin Boffey declared a personal interest because he is a member of the Royal British Legion, as well as a Local Member for Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council.

CO/40 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor David Skipp, Chairman of the Council, invited Members to join him at the Civic Service on Sunday 17 October. It was an opportunity to acknowledge the Council and to meet socially after a period when this has not been possible.

Councillor Paul Clarke, Leader of the Council, paid tribute to Roy Cornell who had passed away on 23 September. As a Councillor, he had been patient, helpful and honest, and always did his best for his constituents. Other Councillors joined the Leader in honouring his memory.

Councillor Claire Vickers, Cabinet Member for Community & Wellbeing, announced that she had written to GP practices regarding the difficulty some residents had in making appointments, and confirmed that GPs were doing their utmost to help patients. The ongoing Covid booster jab programme meant that they continued to be exceptionally busy. In order to ensure residents understood the pressure the surgeries were under and the measures put in place to manage the demand on their services, she will be working with GPs on an awareness campaign in the local media.

Councillor Chris Brown, Cabinet Member for the Local Economy, gave an update on the recovery of businesses following the unprecedented challenges of recent times. He outlined some of the initiatives the Economic Development Team were working on, which were largely made possible by funding from government, including the ARGs (Additional Restrictions Grants) and the Welcome Back Fund, which supported the safe return to high streets. He thanked the Economic Development Team and those involved in partnerships across the district for their work in supporting local businesses.

Councillor Philip Circus, Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste, Recycling & Cleansing, announced that the Director of Waste Services at WSCC had attended a WSCC Climate Change Board meeting where he gave assurance that DEFRA had confirmed there would be financial support for local authorities for introducing food waste collections.

The Chairman of the Council advised that the Council was taking legal advice on the water neutrality issue raised by Natural England and further information would be given to Members once available.

CO/41 **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No questions relevant to the business of the meeting had been received.

CO/42 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET (1)**

(a) Horsham District Council Housing and Homeless Strategy 2021-2036

Councillor Tricia Youtan, Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection, stated that the proposed Housing and Homeless Strategy would build on the Council's excellent record on delivering affordable homes, and support local residents in housing need in a number of ways.

The strategy would be delivered in a phased way, setting out a clear pathway to achieving its objectives. The first phase would be a review of the key service areas, followed by detailed action plans with measurable outcomes, and then the implementation of these proposed actions.

The Cabinet Member was asked what percentage of affordable rented homes provided in recent years had been for social rent, and she agreed to provide this information after the meeting.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Kate Rowbottom, who congratulated the Cabinet Member and officers on the proposal.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2021-2026 be adopted.

REASON

- i) To ensure the Council fulfils its statutory responsibility of having a current Housing and Homelessness Strategy.
- ii) To give the Housing and Homelessness Service clear direction and objectives that will guide decision-making, projects and priorities over the next five years.

(b) Local Enforcement Plan and CIL Enforcement Policy

Councillor Lynn Lambert, Cabinet Member for Planning & Development, outlined the reasons why the Council needed to update its Local Enforcement Plan and introduce a new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Enforcement Policy. The motion to adopt the polices was seconded by Councillor Tim Lloyd.

The proposed Local Enforcement Plan took into account current legislation and the recent review of the Council's Planning Compliance Service. It set out how the Council monitors the implementation of planning permissions, investigates alleged cases of unauthorised development and takes action where appropriate. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Plan had been updated to reflect comments made at the Cabinet meeting on 23 September.

The CIL Enforcement Policy would publicise the penalties for non-payment of the CIL charges and help to ensure the collection of funds runs smoothly by making it clear to those liable to pay the levy the likely consequences for non-payment or late payment. The Chief Executive confirmed that there wasn't a large outstanding debt as the policy was being introduced when collections are about to start.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Local Enforcement Plan be adopted.
- ii) That the CIL Enforcement Policy be adopted.

REASON

- i) Local Enforcement Plan

It is necessary to update the adopted March 2016 Local Enforcement Plan to take account of current legislation and the review of the Planning Compliance service which was undertaken by the Planning Advisory Service in 2019.

ii) CIL Enforcement Policy

In order to publicise the penalties for non-payment of the CIL charges and to ensure that the Council does not lose out financially by non-payment and having to carry out additional tasks as a result of non-payment.

(c) The Drill Hall

A representative of the Royal British Legion (RBL) addressed the Council on the proposal to lease the Drill Hall from the Council. He clarified which other military organisations would also have use of the hall, in addition to the continued use by community groups.

Councillor Roger Noel, Cabinet Member for Leisure & Culture, gave a brief summary of the background to the proposal. Cabinet had considered the future of the Drill Hall in January 2020 because of concerns regarding the building's condition, its poor thermal performance and running costs.

He acknowledged the strong community response that had shown a preference for a community based solution and Cabinet had agreed to ask for bids from organisations or community groups to run the building. The Horsham Branch of RBL put forward the only viable proposal to create a home for Horsham's various military and service organisations. The proposal also included making the hall available for hire to the broader community, and upgrading and improving the building, including its thermal performance. It was confirmed that the cost of renovating and improving the building would be borne but the RBL, who would leave the hall for up to 30 years at a peppercorn rent

The Cabinet Member confirmed that there had been overwhelming support for the proposal from members of his Policy Development Advisory Group. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Tony Hogben.

Members spoke warmly in support of the proposal, which secured the long-term future of the fabric of the building and its continued use as a valued resource for the local community. It also reflected the military history of the building in this centenary year of the RBL.

Members were supportive of the proposal. Council Peter Burgess, the Council's Armed Forces Champion acknowledged the hard work that the RBL had put into preparing their proposal and those who had taken it through to completion.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Drill Hall is leased to the Horsham Branch, Royal British Legion from 1 April 2022 for a period of up to 30 years.
- ii) To delegate authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Head of Legal & Democratic to finalise the legal documentation and enter into a lease, subject to applicable consents, with the Horsham Branch, Royal British Legion for the Drill Hall.

- iii) To delegate authority to the Director of Place to agree and finalise a schedule of works with the Horsham Branch, Royal British Legion to improve the Drill Hall.

REASON

The Horsham Branch, Royal British Legion (RBL) have expressed an interest in running the Drill Hall. This will have the following benefits:

- i) The Drill Hall will continue to be available for community activities and events. The RBL have also expressed an ambition to grow and develop the role of the Drill Hall for the community.
- ii) The fabric of the Drill Hall will be improved and become more energy efficient.
- iii) The Council will make an annual revenue saving.
- iv) It will provide a focal point for the Armed Forces in the District.

CO/43 **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Councillor Diana van der Klugt, the Council's representative on the South Down National Park, reported on three items:

- The SDNP had produced an Area Action Plan regarding the future of the Shoreham Cement works. They were producing an Area Action Plan that proposed the site as an exemplar of sustainable mixed-use development. There would be public consultation at a later stage.
- A nature recovery campaign had been launched in July called ReNature. The SDNP were working with partners with a view to increasing the amount of the National Park that was managed for nature from 25% to 33%.
- Councillor van der Klugt outlined the implications of the position statement by Natural England on water neutrality for Pulborough Brooks and the Arun valley.

CO/44 **TO NOTE IN-YEAR CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIPS OF COMMITTEES / POLICY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUPS**

The changes were noted.

CO/45 **NOTICE OF MOTION**

The Chairman of the Council stated that three notices of motion had been received in accordance with Rule 4a.26 of the Council's Constitution. In order to dispose of each motion, Council agreed that the time allocated to this item be extended beyond the 30 minutes allowed in the Constitution.

The following Motion was moved by Councillor Liz Kitchen, Cabinet Member for Planning & Development, and seconded by Councillor Mike Croker:

'I move that this Council repeats its previous decision to object to the use of the emergency runway at Gatwick as a second runway, on the grounds of more noise and pollution not only from the extra flights but added congestion on the already struggling infrastructure.'

'Until most aeroplanes are zero carbon, which is many years away, any extra flights from Gatwick would set back our efforts to reduce carbon emissions, which are already at exceptionally high levels in some areas of our District. HDC is already committed to tackling climate change.'

'Whilst acknowledging the undoubted economic benefits the existing airport brings to the area and the extra 20,000 jobs it promises, it will cause yet more strain on our already overstretched housing numbers.'

'To support the expansion of Gatwick Airport would be a contradiction to the climate change objectives of this Council.'

The Cabinet Member for Planning & Development echoed the proposer's comment that any economic benefits had to be weighed against the resulting strain on infrastructure and the need to improve the district's environment.

Members debated the motion with comments of support and, on being put the motion was declared CARRIED.

The following Motion was moved by Councillor Mike Croker, and seconded by Councillor Philip Circus, Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste, Recycling & Cleansing:

'In 2018, at COP24, the UK Government signed up to having 'domestic institutional arrangements, public participation and engagement with local communities' so localities can play their part in delivering the UKs 'Nationally Determined Contributions' in the Paris Climate Agreement.'

'In May 2021 Alok Sharma MP, President of COP26 said Collaboration would be a key objective of the climate summit: "Governments, business and civil society (sometimes called 'non-state actors' and including local government)

need to work together to transform the ways we power our homes and businesses, grow our food, develop infrastructure and move ourselves and goods around"

'Despite these agreements and statements there is still no formal relationship allowing a joint partnership working between Local and National Government on climate action.

'This Council therefore resolves to:

- add our voice in this year of COP26 to calls by the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport & others for a joint local & national government Task Force to plan action to reach 'net zero' emissions. Such a partnership could propose appropriate regulations, establish benchmarks and targets and propose the much needed long-term funding mechanisms to enable local communities and economies to decarbonise whilst remaining resilient and sustainable.

- write to Alok Sharma MP, President for COP26 , the Prime Minister and the Leadership Board of the LGA informing them of our support for a joint Local/National Government Climate Change Partnership Taskforce and asking for one to be established as soon as possible..'

Members debated the motion with comments of support and, on being put the motion was declared CARRIED.

The following Motion was moved by Councillor John Milne and seconded by Councillor Ruth Fletcher:

'We move that this Council wishes to reconsider the latest proposals for the provision of housing for social rent under Strategic Policy 16 of the new Local Plan.

'In its current form, the Policy does not specify any minimum requirement for social housing. This may result in low or even zero delivery on some sites.

'Homes for social rent are the most necessary type of housing for Horsham District. They will have by far the biggest impact on affordability, which is the only way to ultimately reduce our excessive housing targets.

'We therefore propose that of the affordable housing provided in each new development, at least 35% should be reserved for social rent.'

Councillor Tricia Youtan, Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection, proposed an amendment to the motion, in order to ensure that an evidence base would be provided. She proposed that the final paragraph be replaced with:

'That the Director of Place, in conjunction with the Director of Community Services and the Cabinet Members for Planning & Development and Housing & Public Protection, prepare a report to be presented to a joint PDAG, which identifies how best to deliver Affordable Housing that ensures each new development maximises Social Rented homes on new sites to achieve at least 35%.'

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Tim Lloyd.

Councillor Milne agreed to this amendment and, on being put the motion, as amended, was declared CARRIED.

CO/46 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

No questions had been received.

CO/47 **RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET (2)**

The Chairman advised that this item had been considered as an urgent by Cabinet because of the tight timescales involved.

Councillor Paul Clarke, Leader of the Council, introduced this item on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Finance & Assets. The consultation by Gatwick Airport Ltd on the Development Consent Order (DCO) to bring the standby runway into routine use would end on 1 December. In order to work within the legislative timescales there was a need to prepare a comprehensive consultation response quickly. Given the complexity and scale of the consultation, a budget to pay for consultants with specialist skills and knowledge was required. Councillor Clarke advised that other local authorities were taking similar action.

The proposal for a reserve budget was seconded by Councillor Stuart Ritchie.

RESOLVED

- i) To set up an earmarked reserve of £100,000 for use on consultants for the Council's response to the Development Consent Order;
- ii) To delegate to the Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Development the uses of this budget/reserve.

REASON

- i) A budget is needed to ensure the Council gains the advice it needs to ensure optimal outcomes for the Development Consent Order.
- ii) The delegation is needed because we do not yet know the full detail of the work involved and the Consultation process has a tight set legislative timeframe to work within.

The meeting closed at 8.26 pm having commenced at 6.00 pm

CHAIRMAN