

Cabinet
9 JUNE 2022

Present: Councillors: Tony Hogben (Deputy Leader), Toni Bradnum, Liz Kitchen, Lynn Lambert, Christian Mitchell, Roger Noel, James Wright and Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors Jonathan Chowen

Also Present: Councillors: Martin Boffey, Ruth Fletcher, Billy Greening, John Milne and Ian Stannard

EX/1 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 24 March were approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Leader.

EX/2 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

EX/3 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Roger Noel, Cabinet Member for Leisure & Culture, thanked the Council's team of officers for organising events over the Jubilee bank holiday weekend. He said that the events that took place in Horsham Town had been exceptional. Parishes across the district had held their own events with the help of the Council's grants scheme.

EX/4 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No questions had been received.

EX/5 **USING THE 2021/22 SURPLUS TO HELP SUPPORT LOCAL RESIDENTS IN NEED, TOPPING UP THE 2022/23 TRANSFORMATION FUND, AND EARMARKING AN INFLATION RESERVE. PLUS INCREASES TO THE DRILL HALL REVENUE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REVENUE BUDGETS AND HORSHAM PARK SKATE PARK CAPITAL 2022/23 BUDGETS, AND UTILISING THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING**

Councillor Tony Hogben, Cabinet Member for Finance & Parking, introduced the report, which explained the background to a £2.1m operational surplus in 2021/22 and recommended how this surplus could be used. He outlined the additional payments proposed to support residents, including younger people and those on lower incomes, measures to address the cost of inflation, and further investment in the transformation fund to support a number of projects, as set out in the report.

The report also set out details of other proposed changes to budgets in 2022/23 including: an increase in budget for the Drill Hall to enable it to remain open while the Royal British Legion finalise the new arrangements; an increase in Community Development budgets; an increase in the budget for the Horsham Park skate park to help deliver a better facility; and recommendations on the use of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

RESOLVED

- (ii) To approve the transfer of £106,499 from the General Fund reserve to the earmarked transformation reserve.
- (iii) To delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Parking, the authority to use the transformation fund as appropriate.
- (iv) To approve the transfer of £1m of the surplus into an earmarked inflation fund, for use in 2022/23 should current price and salary increases cause an overspend.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (i) That £0.3m of the 2021/22 surplus is used to further fund existing discretionary schemes in 2022/23 as set out in Appendix A of the Cabinet report.
- (v) To approve an increase in the revenue budget in Leisure services for the Drill Hall of £17,000 income and £37,000 expenditure, which is a net cost increase of £20,000 in the 2022/23 budget.
- (vi) To approve a £300,000 increase in the revenue income and expenditure budgets in Community Development in 2022/23.
- (vii) To add an additional £20,000 to the £0.25m already in the 2022/23 capital programme to help deliver a better skate park in Horsham Park.
- (viii) That £50,000 of income from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and corresponding expenditure is added to the Economic Development. 2022/23 revenue budget.
- (ix) That £120,000 is added to the 2022/23 capital programme which will be fully funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

REASON

- (i) Additional funding will help those on low incomes and / or are vulnerable as well as supporting Young People.
- (ii) & (iii) To top up of the earmarked transformation reserve for projects that will help transform the Council in the future; effectively funded from the 2021/22 budget surplus.
- (iv) Inflation is over 6% and is causing significant price rises, and this, coupled with high salary pressures, is likely to cause a deficit in the 2022/23 outturn.
- (v) The budget will enable the Council to continue to operate the Drill Hall through to the end of the calendar year whilst discussions with the Royal British Legion are finalised.
- (vi) To help the resettlement and community support of Ukrainian families across the Horsham District.
- (vii) Feedback from the consultation with users at the Horsham Park skate park requested higher ramps and an improved plaza area that would be more accessible to more users.
- (viii) To develop and then help deliver a local investment plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- (ix) To enable capital investment spending under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support local businesses, Communities and Place and people and skills.

EX/6 **THE FORUM FOUNTAIN UPGRADE**

Councillor Christian Mitchell, Cabinet Member for Horsham Town, stated that the Forum Fountain, which had served the community for nearly 20 years, needed upgrading and Cabinet sought approval for a capital budget to carry out this work.

The installation of a treatment system would support interactive play by minimising bacterial risks so that the fountain could be kept operational, rather than needing to be shut down for cleansing. Detailed design would be agreed in consultation with Cabinet, the Horsham Town Policy Development Advisory Group and stakeholders including Neighbourhood Councils.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Forum fountain should be upgraded to a splash pad.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (ii) That a capital budget be created for £120,000 in 2022/23 for this purpose.

REASON

- (i) The Forum fountain is located within a public open space without controls on its use as an interactive facility. An upgrade of the treatment system will mean that residents can enjoy the feature safely.
- (ii) The constitution states that only full Council can approve changes to the budget.

EX/7

VEHICLE REPLACEMENT / REFURBISHMENT; TWO COMPACT AND TWO HIGHWAY SWEEPERS AND ONE REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLE

Councillor Toni Bradnum, Cabinet Member for Recycling & Waste, summarised the proposals for the purchase and refurbishment of vehicles in the Council's fleet of cleaning and refuse collection vehicles.

Maintenance costs for the sweepers had risen because of their age. The compact sweepers would be replaced with two electric sweepers, leading to a reduction in carbon emissions. The highway sweepers would be refurbished and continue to run on HVO with a view to replacing them with electric or hydrogen powered vehicles in five years' time.

The Cabinet Member stated that the current fleet of refuse collection vehicles would continue to be used and refurbished as required, on the assumption that electric and hydrogen technology will advance and costs fall over the next five to six years.

RESOLVED

- i) The purchase and contract award of two electric compact sweepers for the town centre and install electric charge points in Black Horse Way Car Park at a cost of £400,000.
- ii) The refurbishment and contract award of one of the refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) at an estimated cost of £80,000.
- iii) To approve the refurbishment of the two highway sweepers at a cost of £101,000.

REASON

- i) The two town centre sweepers have reached the end of their useable life. We need to replace as they have become unreliable and

expensive to repair. Electric vehicles are best suited for this purpose as the majority of vehicles/sweepers cover short journeys, they are also quieter for early morning use. Some infrastructure work is required to install charge points within Black Horse Way Car Park which is Council property. We are awaiting quotes for this work. The town centre cleansing team will become emission free with 2 x Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) compact sweepers. This will be in line with our climate change action plan and will be highly visible to the general public in the town centre.

- ii) To refurbish one 26 tonne refuse collection vehicle. This will enable the vehicle to be used for a further 5-6 years to allow alternative fuel options to be more available at a reasonable cost and refuelling infrastructure to be in place.
- iii) Highways sweepers – these are reaching the end of their useable life. To refurbish them means we are reducing our maintenance costs and ensuring we don't have increased downtime.

EX/8 **TYRE PROCUREMENT - CONTRACT AWARD**

Councillor Toni Bradnum advised that the Council does not currently have a contract in place for the supply and fitting of vehicle tyres, and neighbouring local authorities were in a similar position. The Council became the lead authority with four neighbouring authorities in undertaking a procurement process. The proposed contract would start in August 2022 for a three-year period with the option to extend for a further two years.

RESOLVED

- i) To approve the award of the contract for Fit and Supply of Tyres to the highest scoring bidder, on the terms recommended, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report (exempt).
- ii) To delegate authority to the Director of Community Services in consultation with the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to finalise terms and conditions and to enter into contract with the highest scoring bidder for the Tyres contract.

REASON

- i) Under the current Public Contracts Regulations (2015) the Council is legally required to competitively tender if the value of the goods or services exceeds the current threshold of £213,477 (inclusive of VAT). Horsham District Council currently spends £45,000 per annum on tyres and associated services, which therefore exceeds this threshold over the contract term.

- ii) The Council has not competitively procured this contract previously but does have a long-standing agreement in place with the current supplier. The contract is therefore to be brought into compliance, and to formalise the relevant contract management arrangements.

EX/9 **WEEE & TEXTILES CONTINUATION OF SERVICE AND INTRODUCTION OF PODBACK**

Councillor Toni Bradnum stated that the service for the collection of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) and textiles, which the Council had run since May 2021, had been funded by WSCC's Improvement Fund until June 2022. The report to Cabinet sought to continue this successful service, in line with the Council's Corporate Plan objectives as well as Government requirements. The option to continue the service and introduce Podback, a new coffee pod recycling service, would offset approximately one-third of the running costs.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that collections were monitored and a publicity drive was being arranged to advertise the service to residents.

RESOLVED

- (i) To approve the introduction of the Podback scheme and continue the WEEE & Textiles Service in its current format.
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal & Democratic Services, to finalise terms and conditions and to enter into the contract with Podback.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (iii) To approve a revenue income budget of £14,440 from Podback for the recycling and waste service in 2022/23.

REASON

- (i) Podback funding will reduce the costs of the scheme and increase recycling rates.
- (ii) Under the constitution, only full Council can approve budget changes.

EX/10 **DEVELOPMENT OF A DISTRICT WIDE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN**

Councillor James Wright, Cabinet Member for Environment & Rural Affairs, reminded Cabinet that the Council's Carbon Reduction Action Plan had been approved at the previous meeting. The report to Cabinet recommended the establishment of a Climate Change Panel consisting of experts on a range of subjects associated with reducing carbon emissions and preparing for a changed climate. The Panel would be backed up by a comprehensive

communications plan to help residents make choices to reduce their own emissions.

The Cabinet Member was questioned on why the setting up of a Citizens' Assembly had not been chosen over the Panel of experts to ensure an effective level of community engagement. The Cabinet Member reiterated that community engagement would be an important part of the process. Using an expert Panel would lead to faster action at a lower cost. This was not the Council telling people how to live their lives, but the Council working with experts to help develop an action plan with residents.

With regards to engagement with Councillors, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the brief for the Panel would be discussed at his Policy Development Advisory Group. It was also noted that all Members were invited to a workshop on environmental policies within the emerging Local Plan.

RESOLVED

- (i) To approve the establishment of a Climate Change Panel which will input to the development of a District wide climate change action plan.
- (iii) To approve the procurement of a consultant to facilitate a workshop with Council officers, as well as the meetings of the Climate Change Panel, and assist with the production of a District wide climate change action plan

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (ii) To approve a revenue budget of £70k in 2022/23 to support the development of the plan.

REASON

- (i) A new Panel of experts will give external input to the development of a District wide strategy and plan to generate new ideas and increase the legitimacy of the plan.
- (ii) Budget is required to secure a consultant to facilitate the meetings of the Climate Change Panel, support the drafting of the action plan and the follow up engagement to gain support from partners and the wider community to deliver the action plan.
- (iii) Ensure that the Councils procurement process are followed.

EX/11 **EVIDENCE RESOURCING - BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN IN DEVELOPMENT**

Councillor Lynn Lambert, Cabinet Member for Planning & Development, stated that a statutory requirement was being introduced for new development to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain. In order for the Council to deliver its environmental priorities, there was an aspiration to exceed the biodiversity net gain target above this national standard.

The Cabinet Member advised that further evidence was required to enable a requirement for biodiversity net gain above the national standard to be supported by a Local Plan inspector. The report to Cabinet sought an additional budget of up to £20,000 to fund the additional specialist ecological work required.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (i) That a revenue expenditure budget of £20,000 in Strategic Planning in 2022/2023 be approved to enable the commissioning of consultants to assess the deliverability of a higher percentage threshold than the statutory 10% biodiversity net gain target.

REASON

- (i) Additional resourcing is required to provide robust evidence to enable the Council to justify setting a higher biodiversity net gain target in the Local Plan than the statutory 10%. This will ensure that the Council delivers against its high environmental aspirations as set out in the Corporate Strategy.

EX/12 **ALLOCATION OF SECTION 106 COMMUTED SUM FUNDING FOR SAXON WEALD**

Councillor Tricia Youtan, Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection, presented the report that sought approval for the development of 12 affordable rented homes. The proposed funding would enable Saxon Weald to provide 100% affordable homes on the Slinfold site, rather than the required 20%.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the four ground floor units would have wet rooms to provide accommodation to those with mobility issues. She confirmed that Saxon Weald and HDC had worked closely on the proposal and the provision of affordable rented homes was considered the best scheme for this site.

RESOLVED

- (i) To approve the expenditure of £360,000, which is funded from Section 106 receipts secured for new affordable housing. This funding

will enable the development to deliver all 12 units as affordable rented homes.

REASON

- (i) To assist the Council in achieving its target of delivering 240 affordable homes a year.
- (ii) To assist Saxon Weald to deliver much needed affordable accommodation for households in housing need on the Council's housing register.

EX/13 **PROPOSED UPDATE TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE COUNCIL OWNED AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMPANIES**

Councillor Tricia Youtan stated that a change in the Board of Directors of the Council's two Housing Companies was required because Adam Chalmers, Director of Community Services, was leaving the Council.

The directorship would be taken up by the new Director of Communities in due course, after they have been appointed. She fully supported the recommendation for Rob Jarvis, Head of Housing & Community Services, to become interim Director in the meantime.

RESOLVED

- (i) To note the resignation of Adam Chalmers from the Board of Directors of HDH and HDH(H).
- (ii) To delegate, to the Chief Executive, the approval of the appointment of the new Director of Community Services to the Board of Directors of HDH and HDH(H).
- (iii) To approve the appointment of Rob Jarvis, Head of Housing and Community, to the Board of HDH Limited in the interim.

REASON

- (i) Clause 6.1 of the shareholders agreement states that there shall be a minimum of three Directors and no more than six, all of whom shall be appointed by the Council through giving notice in writing.
- (ii) Clause 6.2 of the shareholders agreement states the Company shall review its Board every year to ensure that the composition and membership of the Board is such that the ability to sufficiently understand the Company's obligations and make sufficiently robust decisions in relation to those obligations.

EX/14 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no matters currently outstanding for consideration.

EX/15 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan was noted.

EX/16 **TO CONSIDER MATTERS OF SPECIAL URGENCY**

There were no matters of special urgency to be considered.

Councillor Hogben closed the meeting by thanking Adam Chalmers, Director of Community Services, for his contribution to the Council. Councillor Tricia Youtan, Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection, said that it had been a pleasure working with him over the years and wished him every success with his future career.

The meeting closed at 6.32 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN