

CABINET

Thursday, 24 October 2019 (6:30 pm – 7:00 pm)

PRESENT:

Councillor House (Chairman); Councillors Airey, Campbell, Corben, Craig, Kyrle and Pretty

Also in attendance: Councillors Broadhurst, Gomer and Tyson-Payne

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bicknell

57. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Parish Councillor Anne Winstanley spoke to Cabinet on issues concerning Bishopstoke residents: the gap in the food waste collection service, specifically those residents in flats at Bishopstoke Park retirement village; the feasibility of installing public water fountains around the Borough (having seen an example within the City of Winchester); and developing a public toilet network within pubs and cafes for use by pedestrians/passing through visitors to the Borough.

The Leader responded that these suggestions were welcome and would be relayed on for consideration. The Head of Direct Services responded that the Council would investigate the food waste collection service. The Leader welcomed the interest in water fountains, noting that one had been established within the Hedge End, West End and Botley Local Area at Greta Park and another was being considered by the Eastleigh Local Area Committee.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS (REQUIRING A DECISION)58. UPGRADE OF PAY ON FOOT CAR PARKS IN EASTLEIGH TOWN CENTREIssue

For the continuing improvement of management of the Council's parking infrastructure and addressing the priority of tackling traffic congestion; town centre economy and thereafter the environment for all to include health and well-being of the Borough's residents.

Consideration

Having identified an area of non-compliance with the industry standard on data security, there is a risk that the Council's pay on foot service being

vulnerable to third-party interrogation and release of personal payment data.

The report outlines the upgrading actions (hardware and software) required to update the Town Centre's current pay on foot car parking machines at the Swan Centre and Mitchell Road car parks, where Chip and Pin facilities are in place.

RESOLVED –

That Cabinet approves the allocation of £55,400 to upgrade the existing Pay on Foot machines at the Swan Centre and Mitchell Road multi-storey car parks (MSCP): comprised of £40,000 from the Ticket Machine Reserve and £5,300 Car Parks Revenue Budget; £4,100 from an underspend in the Swan Centre Roof Capital Scheme and £6,000 from the Eastleigh Local Area Committee Revenue Reserve.

59. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Issue

To review the draft of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and Strategy for the period 2019/2020 to 2024/2025.

Consideration

The report outlines the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2019/2020 to 2024/2025 set out at Appendix A to the Report. Its strategy is the need to preserve the minimal level of the General Fund Reserve at 10% of net revenue expenditure at approximately £1million, albeit that there are risks that may significantly impact on the Council's final budget position.

RESOLVED –

That Cabinet:

recommends to Council the Medium Term Financial Plan; and

approves the implementation of the Continuous Improvement Strategy.

The Leader thanked staff for their work to date to compile a plan that continued to protect services balanced with a real terms reduction in Council Tax.

60. WRITE OFF IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS

Issue

Delegated powers of Lead Specialist Staff in Health and Wellbeing and Economy have been exercised and Cabinet is recommended to approve the exercise of those powers. Similarly, the Council's Chief Financial Officer has exercised their delegated power.

Consideration

The report outlines the annual position of the Council and the writing off of debts for the financial year 2018/2019 and identifies the causes for those write offs to be made and concludes that further recovery action at present would be counter-productive and/or uneconomic. However, the Council reserves its position on future enforcement.

RESOLVED –

That Cabinet:

- (1) notes the write off of debts totalling £7,821.10 due to bankruptcy or liquidation proceedings, as approved by the Health and Wellbeing Lead Specialist;**
- (2) notes the write off of debts totalling £366,104.27 due to bankruptcy or liquidation proceedings as approved by the Economy Lead Specialist;**
- (3) approves the write off of debts totalling £146,054.78 relating to Housing Benefit overpayment; Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates; and**
- (4) approves the write off of debts totalling £13,656.25 of a single Sundry Debtor.**

61. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE & FINANCIAL MONITORING

Issue

To receive a report on the Council's cumulative and Quarter 2 financial and performance position that highlights the significant and emerging issues for service areas.

Consideration

Delivery of statutory and discretionary services continue throughout the Borough and their Key Performance Indicators sign-post opportunities to improve efficiency and change the experience of residents. A forecast saving of £133,000 on services for the year demonstrates the ability to continue to provide all budgeted services alongside the delivery of regeneration and housing schemes through the Community Investment Programme.

RESOLVED –

That Cabinet notes and approves the performance of the Council for first half of the year, together with its financial position; the forecast for the whole year.

[Note: That Cabinet did not have available any recommendations made by Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel that met on 22 October 2019.]

62. ANNUAL REPORT ON CORPORATE RISK - 2018/2019Issue

To receive the annual report on the Council's management of risk during 2018-2019; the continuing work of its Strategic Risk Management Group and the resulting proposal to establish a new framework within which to operate and to meet the Council's corporate objectives. The risk appetite statement summarises the Council's aspirations towards achieving the objectives of its corporate plan, alongside where it may be vulnerable.

Consideration

The report outlines the Council's management of risk over 2018-2019; the work of Staff and Councillors to develop a new framework to support the continuing work across the Council to achieve its corporate objectives and deliver the Council's priorities across the Borough. The content of the risk appetite statement attempts to evidence the potential risk exposure alongside aspiration to deliver Council priorities.

RESOLVED –

That Cabinet, having reviewed the annual report on risk management, approves the revised risk management framework and risk appetite statement as at October 2019.

63. DRAFT CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT STRATEGYIssue

To put in place an over-arching set of principles for enforcement by the Council in order for the Council to discharge its regulatory and good practice obligations and activities throughout the Borough and towards Central Government.

Consideration

This report responds to an absent over-arching enforcement strategy identified by the Council's Internal Audit function and the identification that

what was in force was out of date and insufficient to support a robust legal approach.

However, in consideration of those needs, Cabinet also considered the potential adverse impact on the Borough's older people and vulnerable populations. To that end, Cabinet agreed to insert at section 7 of the Strategy's Appendix as paragraph 2:

The Council will give due consideration to issues of incapacity or vulnerability, and seek appropriate solutions. Each case is dependent upon its own particular facts. Where there is no substantiated evidence of vulnerability or incapacity, the Council will pursue enforcement action in the usual way.

RESOLVED –

That Cabinet approves the draft Strategy for consultation with the insertion of the additional text at paragraph 2 of Section 7 – Equality and Diversity Issues and Protection of Human Rights.

[Note that Councillor Campbell, supported by Councillor Craig, suggested the additional wording for the purpose of protecting vulnerable groups, whilst also supporting the fair and focussed approach of the draft Strategy.]

64. COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME SCHEMES APPROVAL

Issue

To consider a number of CIP Schemes.

Consideration

The report set out matters relating to a number of CIP schemes.

RESOLVED –

That Cabinet

(1) approves £62,000 additional funding for the delivery of the cycleway, footpath and bridge on the extension land at Lakeside Country Park to be funded from income received from the Stoneham Housing Development;

(2) approves £115,000 additional funding for the completion of Wildern swimming pool roof, to be financed by New Homes Bonus;

(3) approves £120,000 additional funding for the completion of works to Highwood Barn at Itchen Valley Country Park, to be financed from New Homes Bonus;

(4) notes the completion of the temporary increase to both the Council's operational boundary for external debt and the authorised limit for external debt by £300m as approved by Cabinet in June 2019; and

(5) approves the Council's Prudential Indicators for 2019/20.

65. EASTLEIGH BOROUGH COUNCIL'S PROPERTY ASSETS REPAIR & RENEWAL PLAN

Issue

The report sets out the financial investment and programme plan for maintenance to achieve operational and commercial effectiveness of the Council's operational and investment property portfolios over the five year period, 2019/2020 – 2023/2024.

Consideration

Cabinet received a report that set out the planned maintenance of the Council's property portfolio which aims to maintain its condition and achieve regulatory compliance, where it is required, for the dual purpose of operational and commercial effectiveness.

RESOLVED –

That Cabinet approved the:

(1) expenditure of £2.9million between 2019/2020 and 2023/2024 for the Council's Repairs and Renewals programme relating to its operational properties to be financed, initially, through borrowing with related revenue costs financed from revenue.

(2) the expenditure of £2.4million between 2019/2020 and 2023/2024 for the Council's Repairs and Renewals programme relating to commercial properties to be funded initially through borrowing with related revenue costs financed from commercial property income.

(3) the delegation of authority to the Lead Asset Manager in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer to adjust the financing method should the use of reserves provide better value for money in the financing of the Repair and Renewal Plan 2019/2020 – 2023/2024.

(4) the delegation of authority to the Lead Building Surveyor in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer to adjust the profile of spend across the five years of the Plan.

66. DEFINITION OF ANTI-SEMITISM

Issue

To respond to the request of the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government that the Council formally adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. Described as an urgent action following the identified rising trend of religiously motivated hatred by the Home Office and The Community Security Trust.

Consideration

The report to Cabinet summarised the Council's approach to hate crime, having adopted a motion of zero-tolerance at its meeting in July 2016 and the subsequent working of the Eastleigh Community Safety Partnership and with other agencies to address crime, antisocial behaviour and the support of victims. Cabinet noted that under the Equality Act 2010, Jewish people are considered as having the protected characteristic of religion, belief and race. The reported rising trend in religiously motivated hate crime – year on year – prompts Central Government to request urgent action from all local authorities in the adoption of the definition.

RESOLVED

Cabinet approves the adoption of the working definition of Antisemitism compiled by the IHRA:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

67. CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY STRATEGY AND INTERIM ACTION PLAN

Issue

Having made its Declaration of a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency on 18 July 2019 – Council established a Working Group (CCEEWG) to compile a new Strategy and Interim Action Plan. Both re-affirm Council's commitment towards achieving the objectives of the present Strategy and to take further actions for the achievement of carbon neutrality by 2025 by the Council and around the Borough by 2030.

Similarly, to identify and implement actions in each of its decisions that mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Consideration

The report outlines the Council's progress to date on the compilation and implementation of an initial Action Plan and new Strategy in response to Council's Declaration. The Council will work (together with its Partners and commercial relationships) to implement the interim action plan and new Climate Change Strategy.

Resolved –

That Cabinet notes the content of the report and makes recommendations, as appropriate, to Council.

RESOLVED ITEMS (SUBJECT TO QUESTIONS ONLY)

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in relation to the items of business on the agenda.

69. MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

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