

CABINET

4 OCTOBER 2021

Present: Councillors Barnett (Chair), Batsford, Chowney, Evans, Rogers and Webb

366. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillor Forward.

367. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

368. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 2021 be approved as a true record.

369. ANNUAL CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Culture, presented a report to update the cabinet on progress against the agreed priority actions on the Climate Emergency Action Plan and present the council's annual carbon emissions data.

As part of the Covid-19 response many non-statutory projects were paused and officers redeployed to assist in the pandemic response. However, much has been achieved over the past 18 months, as identified from paragraph 21 onwards in the annual report.

Work has already begun on reviewing and refreshing the council's Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan in order to keep pace with changing policy, funding streams and other opportunities.

Councillor Evans proposed approval of the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Chowney.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- 1. To acknowledge the significant progress made to date against the actions of the climate emergency action plan**
- 2. To approve the plans for the year.**
- 3. To approve the plans to report annually to Cabinet in October, providing an update about progress made and a revised action plan to reflect policy changes where needed, keeping the action plan a living, dynamic document. A 6-month progress report will be reported in February each year too.**

Reasons:

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1. In March 2020, Cabinet approved the Councils Climate Emergency Strategy and 2-year interim action plan. This report presents the initial monitoring report to show progress against the priority actions and provides an update on the Councils own and town wide emissions.
2. The interim plan sets out actions that will take us to March 2022 only.
3. The climate change strategy and action plan will be updated and developed during the second half of 2021/22 to take us further towards 2030.
4. An annual report will be presented to Cabinet each year in October providing up to date information about progress made and an up to date action plan which is dynamic and responsive to policy changes. A 6 month progress reported will be reported in February each year too.
5. This report covers the period from March 2020 – September 2021. Annual reporting was delayed due to elections and the pandemic response.

370. LAND AT HAROLD PLACE

The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, presented a report to seek approval for additional funding to redevelop the Harold Place site in the town centre.

Funding of £1.2 million was agreed in December 2019 by cabinet and Full Council to redevelop the site as a restaurant. The proposed operator advised that they were unable to proceed at that time. In October 2020 the proposed operator confirmed they wished to proceed and Heads of Terms were negotiated with the council.

Since then, the council has commissioned designs and drawings in order for the redevelopment to be properly costed. Consequently construction costs have increased partly due to the more detailed design but also due to inflation within the construction sector.

Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Rogers.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

1. To recommend to full Council that the project proceeds and the budget earmarked for this scheme be increased from £1.2m to £1.7m.

Reasons:

This is a significant regeneration project to construct a new restaurant in a highly visible location in the Town centre which will provide employment opportunities both during construction and ongoing. The agreed operator is a relatively well known and quality restaurant company.

371. 2 - 12 BATTLE ROAD - DANGEROUS STRUCTURE

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The Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, presented a report to update the Cabinet on new developments which will impact on the cost and timescale of the removal of the dangerous structure.

It was anticipated that the work would be completed this month and within the allocated budget. However, since the contractor entered the structure it has become apparent that there has been encroachment on to the roof slab of the structure from the gardens of Silverlands Road. Removing this roof slab would risk the boundary walls of the gardens above.

The proposed remediation, which will support the gardens above, involves significant additional cost. The impact of Brexit and Covid on supply chains has also been a complicating factor, making sourcing materials difficult, which has had a further impact on the expected completion date.

Councillor Barnett proposed approval of the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Batsford.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

Cabinet recommends to Council to approve:

- 1. the additional safety work to the structures above the rear retention wall of Battle Road; and**
- 2. the additional increase in the budgeted costs from £325,000 to £525,000 (to include a contingency margin of 20% for inflationary costs of materials and unforeseen minor variations to the agreed safety work) as recommended in this Report. Without this additional work, the demolition of 2-12 Battle Road cannot be completed.**

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 7pm)