

Public Document Pack CABINET

4 JANUARY 2021

Present: Councillors Fitzgerald (Chair), Barnett, Batsford, Chowney, Evans, O'Callaghan and Rogers.

In opening the meeting Councillor Fitzgerald acknowledged the difficulties faced by Hastings residents in 2020 and in particular over the Christmas period. Councillor Fitzgerald said that the council will continue to work with, and support, residents until the current crisis is over.

295. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillor Forward.

296. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute	Interest
Rogers	299. Hastings Draft Local plan – Regulation 18 Consultation	Personal – Works in sport
Chowney	300. Housing Renewal Enforcement Policy	Personal – Partner owns a property which is subject to the selective licensing scheme

297. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7th December 2020 be approved as a true record.

298. TREASURY MANAGEMENT - MID-YEAR REPORT 2020/21

The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, introduced a report to advise the Cabinet of the Treasury Management activities and performance during the current year.

The mid-year report provides the opportunity to review the Treasury Management Strategy and make appropriate recommendations to Council to take account of any issues or concerns that have arisen since approving it in February 2020.

Acknowledging the difficult year that has just passed the Assistant Director informed the meeting that the Treasury Management strategy has proven to be invaluable in meeting the challenges of Covid-19. The strategy and supporting policies for the next financial year will be presented to the February meeting of Cabinet and the January meeting of the Audit Committee. No amendments to the strategy were recommended.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director and the Finance Team for their work on the strategy.

CABINET

4 JANUARY 2021

Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the recommendation, seconded by Councillor Fitzgerald.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

Cabinet agree the Mid-Year report.

Reason:

The Code of Practice on Treasury Management requires, as a minimum, a mid-year review of the Treasury Management Strategy and performance. This is intended to highlight any areas of concern that have arisen since the original strategy was approved (February 2020). It is a requirement of the Code of Practice that the Mid year review is considered by Cabinet, Audit Committee and full Council.

299. HASTINGS DRAFT LOCAL PLAN – REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Culture, presented a report to advise Cabinet of the necessity of publishing a draft Local Plan for consultation purposes and the arrangements in place to promote public engagement.

The existing Local Plan requires updating and the new plan will identify future land use needs and requirements relating to housing, economic growth and physical and social infrastructure needs in the town. The first draft has been completed in line with regulatory requirements and the council is now required to undertake public consultation on the draft Local Plan.

The Planning Policy Manager gave an overview of the draft Local Plan and explained that there is a significant evidence base underpinning the draft but public consultation will further this and help shape the final document.

Councillor Davies was present and spoke as ward councillor for Baird ward. Councillor Davies welcomed the draft document and said that he thought there was another important strand which should be included, namely creating an environment which supports healthy lifestyles and opportunities. Councillor Davies said the key objective of the document is to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities, however this isn't fed through into any actions. The community in Broomgrove, in Baird ward, have been left behind in this regard. This community is seeking to build beautiful homes against the odds and the Local Plan provides an instrument for intervention. The Local Plan can be a structure for redistributing wealth and economic opportunities, as explored in the NHS report Putting Health into Place. Councillor Davies called on the Cabinet to consider how this could be implemented strategically into the draft Local Plan so that it is a clear strand in the document before it goes out to consultation.

Councillor Fitzgerald briefly left the meeting at 6.50pm and returned at 6.52pm.

CABINET

4 JANUARY 2021

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

RESOLVED (unanimously):

1. That the Hastings Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation document is published for an eight-week consultation period between January 2021 and March 2021.

2. That the Managing Director has delegated authority in consultation with the Leader to agree any necessary minor editorial changes to the draft Local Plan before it is published for consultation purposes.

Reasons:

1. It is a regulatory requirement to invite the public and stakeholders to participate in the preparation of the new Local Plan for Hastings.

2. In order to ensure the draft document is as up-to-date and accurate as possible at the time of publication

1. That the Hastings Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation document is published for an eight-week consultation period between January 2021 and March 2021.

2. That the Managing Director has delegated authority in consultation with the Leader to agree any necessary minor editorial changes to the draft Local Plan before it is published for consultation purposes.

300. HOUSING RENEWAL ENFORCEMENT POLICY (INCLUDING MINIMUM ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS ENFORCEMENT)

The Managing Director introduced a report to agree substantive amendments to the Housing Renewal Enforcement Policy in order to undertake enforcement in respect of the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 (known as the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Regulations – “MEES”). In March 2020 the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy approached Hastings Borough Council to express an interest in piloting an enforcement toolkit for MEES. Officers submitted an expression of interest and were successful in being selected as one of 10 local authorities to pilot the enforcement toolkit. As part of this pilot Hastings Borough Council were awarded £100,000 of funding.

Due to the way MEES is enforced a review of the Housing Renewal Enforcement Policy has taken place to include the provisions required to robustly enforce the regulations.

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

CABINET

4 JANUARY 2021

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- 1. The revised Housing Renewal Enforcement Policy (Version 3.0) is approved**
- 2. Cabinet are recommended to delegate future minor amendments to the Assistant Director Housing and Built Environment and Chief Legal Officer in consultation with the Lead Member**

Reasons:

Due to the substantive changes proposed to the previously approved Housing Renewal Enforcement Policy Cabinet approval is required.

301. HASTINGS COUNTRY PARK VISITOR CENTRE PART 1

The Assistant Director, Environment and Place, introduced a report to update Cabinet on progress with the project, and to seek authority to increase the capital and revenue budget associated with it.

The Assistant Director informed the Cabinet that although the project to provide a state of the art, environmentally sustainable, visitor centre is nearing completion the last year has been extremely challenging and consequently an overspend is being projected. Changes to working practices due to Covid-19 and a breakdown in the relationship between the principal contractor and the council have contributed to the overspend. An additional factor has been the impact of Covid-19 on the availability of UK grant funding to bodies such the council's partner Groundworks South.

However, despite these difficulties when the project is completed, and Covid-19 restrictions lifted, Hastings residents will have a new environmentally sustainable community facility which is likely to become a major attraction for people from across Kent, Sussex and beyond.

Councillor Evans proposed approval of the recommendation, seconded by Councillor O'Callaghan.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

It is recommended that Cabinet consider the content of this report in conjunction with the associated part two report, and that Cabinet agree that the works on the visitor centre should be completed subject to the recommendations in the Part 2 report being approved.

Reasons:

Due to matters set out in this report and the associated part two report, additional funding is needed to complete the project, and this requires Cabinet approval.

CABINET

4 JANUARY 2021

Councillor Fitzgerald proposed a motion for the exclusion of the public from the meeting, seconded by Councillor Rogers.

RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business listed below because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of “exempt” information as defined in the paragraphs of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 referred to in the relevant report.

The live stream was ended and the meeting proceeded in private session.

302. HASTINGS COUNTRY PARK VISITOR CENTRE (PART 2)

The Assistant Director, Environment and Place, introduced a report to update cabinet on progress with the project, and to seek authority to increase the capital and revenue budget associated with it.

Councillor Evans proposed approval of the recommendations, seconded by Councillor O’Callaghan.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

It is recommended that Cabinet authorises the Assistant Director Financial Services and Revenues to:-

- 1. Increase the capital budget for completion of this project as set out in the report.**
- 2. Increase the revenue budget for completion of this project and to cover basic ongoing annual premises costs as set out in the report.**

Reasons:

Due to matters set out in this report and the associated part one report, additional funding is needed to complete the project, and this requires Cabinet approval.

303. CORNWALLIS STREET CAR PARK - POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues presented a report considering revised terms for the potential development of a hotel on Cornwallis Street Car park (Council owned land).

Councillor Barnett proposed an additional recommendation (as set it out recommendation 2 below), seconded by Councillor Chowney. The additional recommendation was agreed unanimously.

CABINET

4 JANUARY 2021

Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the recommendations, subject to the addition of recommendation 2, seconded by Councillor Rogers.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

- 1. Agree in principle to proceed on the basis of revised terms.**
- 2. Delegated authority is given to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Management and Estates, to agree to the revised terms.**

Reason:

The hotel chain agreed at their meeting on the 10 December 2020 revised terms on which to proceed with the development of a hotel at Cornwallis Street in Hastings. The scheme remains a viable option should the Council wish to proceed.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.22pm)