

Public Document Pack

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

TUESDAY, 16TH MARCH, 2021

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Please find attached supplementary papers relating to the above meeting, as follows:

Agenda No	Item
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| 7. | <u>ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES</u> (Pages 3 - 28) |
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Any Items referred from other committees will be circulated as soon as they are available.

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Agenda Item 7

Referrals from Other Committees

- 7a Referral from Cabinet Panel on the Environment: 23 February 2021 – Discussion Led by the Co-Chair (Climate Change Strategy)
- 7b Referral from Hitchin Committee: 2 March 2021 – Community Asset Transfer - Hitchin Bridge Club
- 7c Referral from Hitchin Committee: 2 March 2021 – Ward Matters and Outside Organisations - Members' Reports (Community Space in Hitchin)
- 7d Referral from Hitchin Committee: 2 March 2021 – Ward Matters and Outside Organisations - Members' Reports (Inflationary Increases in Car Parking Tariffs)
- 7e Referral from Finance, Audit and Risk Committee: 8 March 2021 – Risk Management Update
- 7f Referral from Finance, Audit and Risk Committee: 8 March 2021 – Third Quarter Revenue Monitoring 2020/21
- 7g Referral from Finance, Audit and Risk Committee: 8 March 2021 - Third Quarter Investment Strategy (Capital and Treasury) Review 2020/21
- 7h Referral from Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 9 March 2021 – Update on Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan
- 7i Referral from Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 9 March 2021 – Local Plan Implementation
- 7j Referral from Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 9 March 2021 - New Year Performance Indicators to be Monitored In 2021/22

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**7a REFERRAL FROM CABINET PANEL ON THE ENVIRONMENT: 23 FEBRUARY 2021
– DISCUSSION LED BY THE CO-CHAIR (CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY)**

NB: To be taken with Item 9

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the revised Climate Change Strategy be endorsed;
- (2) That the target date for achieving Net Zero Carbon District status be brought forward to 2042.

REASON FOR DECISION:

- (1) To promote policies which allow NHDC to take a leadership role in local efforts to address the climate emergency.
- (2) To ensure the Cabinet Panel on the Environment's feedback on the strategy is heard by Cabinet.

The Policy & Community Engagement manager gave a presentation on the revised Climate Change Strategy and highlighted points including:

- The Council was acting in partnership with organisations across the district including Herts County Council Climate Strategy Partnership, Affinity Water, the Environment Agency, and other public interest groups e.g Plastic Free Letchworth;
- NDHC climate policies had sought to reduce its carbon footprint significantly and other efficiencies in terms of water, single use plastics and emissions reduction in vehicle fleets and no-idling licensing requirements were being put in place;
- The Climate Change Strategy review proposed development under three headings of reducing the Council's carbon emissions, facilitating businesses and citizens to reduce their carbon emissions through policy development, and to guide and encourage outside bodies (citizens and businesses) to go further with their environmental impact goals;
- Specific actions included ensuring that Council estate buildings use energy efficient and zero carbon measures; putting green clauses in leases and licenses of properties; exploring on-site generation of energy; replacing Council fleet vehicles with ultra-low emission vehicles; exploring opportunities for low-emission refuse freighters; quantifying how much land would need to be planted to offset some carbon emissions; instituting a once a year cut-and-lift regime on verges; strengthening hedgerows and preserving scrubland; ensuring masterplans are designed around foot travel rather than private vehicles; bringing Passivhaus or similar standards in to design SPDs; signposting residents to retrofitting services to boost energy efficiency; working with Herts Waste Partnership; encouraging support for community tree planting initiatives.

The Executive Member for Environment and Leisure highlighted the following:

- The revised climate change strategy aimed to do three things; bringing the Council's estate up to the highest environmental standards, ensuring decisions made by the Council in areas like planning promoted environmental protections as a priority, and working with outside partners to assist and encourage environmental policies beyond the resources of the Council;

- The revised strategy would set out a road map on the Council's carbon emissions reduction journey with an accurate assessment of its starting position, a target for net zero, and goals along the way.

The Chair led a discussion on contributions to the meeting and the revised Climate Change Strategy with Members, Officers and public participants including:

- There were differences in carbon emissions assessments and assessment of the District's emissions came from central government, whereas NHDC was able to assess its own emissions as a Council;
- Net Zero and Carbon Neutral were subtly different measures to do with whether third party emissions were considered;
- NHDC would have to rely on some degree of carbon sequestration but was able to do this in-District;
- There was a Natural Environment Readiness Fund available from central government which could provide funds to projects to allow them to attract further investment;
- The Council should aim for a more ambitious target than the national objective of 2050;
- The target date for achieving zero carbon should be ambitious but achievable;
- Too short a date could lead to a failure in finding lasting and sustainable reduction policies; long term solutions were required;
- The Climate Change Strategy and environmental policies more generally relied on the Council convincing the public and other bodies to make progress themselves;
- Explaining the reasons behind climate change related policies to the public was essential;
- The existing housing stock in the District was a significant emissions/energy efficiency problem and a way forward to bring existing houses up to standard was required;
- Building regulations were set nationally and while the Council had good working relationships with housing providers in the district, NHDC primarily had a lobbying and supporting role in bringing existing housing stock up to energy efficient standards;
- The Council would continue to work within HCCSP to encourage change county-wide and magnify its influence with outside bodies;
- NHDC should sign post and provide support for residents seeking to retrofit and to housing associations, and highlight the successes of business and groups with high environmental standards;
- The revised Climate Change Strategy was a positive step forward and the Panel was satisfied with its aims and intentions but keen to strengthen its target date.

It was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the revised Climate Change Strategy be endorsed;
- (2) That the target date for achieving Net Zero Carbon District status be brought forward to 2042.

REASON FOR DECISION:

- (1) To promote policies which allow NHDC to take a leadership role in local efforts to address the climate emergency.
- (2) To ensure the Cabinet Panel on the Environment's feedback on the strategy is heard by Cabinet.

7b REFERRAL FROM HITCHIN COMMITTEE: 2 MARCH 2021 – COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - HITCHIN BRIDGE CLUB

NB: To be taken with Item 8

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet provides its decision in principle to grant a leasehold interest in land at Cadwell Lane, Hitchin to Hitchin Bridge Club as per Recommendation 2.1 in the report due to be considered by Cabinet on 16 March 2021.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: To ensure that Hitchin Committee is able to comment on the report entitled Community Asset Transfer – Hitchin Bridge Club.

The Senior Estates Surveyor presented the report entitled “Community Asset Transfer – Hitchin Bridge Club” along with the appendices:

- Community Asset Transfer - Hitchin Bridge Club - Report due to be considered by Cabinet - NHDC CR Estates - 18th Jan 2021
- Appendix A - Site plan of NHDC’s freehold recreation ground
- Appendix B - Site plan of HBC’s proposed lease demise
- Appendix C - HBC’s expression of interest.docx
- Appendix D - Comments from HBC members on benefits of playing bridge
- Appendix E -HBC and its relationship with Hitchin, the local and wider community
- Appendix F - Membership breakdown of HBC
- Appendix G - HBC during Covid-19 lockdown
- Appendix H - NHDC’s insight on Community Asset Transfer request by HBC
- Appendix I - Equality Analysis
- Appendix J - Environmental Impact Assessment

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Sam Collins
- Councillor Martin Stears-Handscorn
- Councillor Paul Clark
- Councillor Richard Thake

Some Members who also sat on the Planning Control Committee advised that they would not participate in the debate or any vote on this item.

The Chair invited Margaret Eddleston, Hitchin Bridge Club, to address the Committee. Margaret Eddleston gave a presentation including:

- The report presented by the officer contains three proposals, and Hitchin Bridge Club was seeking to recommend that the first of these proposals was actioned;
- A long leasehold on premises for the Bridge Club was the desired option and the limited availability of property on lease was hampering the development of the club;
- If an agreement in principle in support of proposal 1 was given by the Council the Bridge Club could take immediate steps to instruct an architect, apply for planning permission, draft a lease agreement, make funding applications, in line with a detailed business plan;
- The Bridge Club intended to commence a Members’ Loan Scheme to raise capital and many of the other services involved in the plan would be provided by club members on a pro bono basis;

- External funding for projects that alleviate loneliness, benefit mental health and promote social cohesion would be forthcoming for a project like this;
- It was unclear why the Community Asset Transfer Policy had been engaged instead of the general power of disposal under S123 Local Government Act 1972 which would have been a preferable option for the Bridge Club;
- The update submitted to the Committee on life as a virtual bridge club have shown increased participation and demand for the club, and also highlight the necessity of physical meetings;
- Other presentations to the Committee had shown the need for premises in Hitchin and the role that co-operation with the Council plays in providing valuable services to the community.

The Chair thanked Margaret Eddleston for her presentation.

The following Members asked questions and took part in the debate:

- Councillor Simon Harwood
- Councillor Richard Thake
- Councillor Keith Hoskins
- Councillor Martin Stears-Handscorn
- Councillor Ian Albert

In response to questions Margaret Eddleston advised:

- The Bridge Club required purpose built accommodations, as did the Band and other community groups; they could not reasonably share a space. Clubs with different activities only routinely shared facilities in a limited fashion;
- The Bridge Club had been looking for accommodation for over 10 years and generating funds for the project every year, with a significant figure in reserve to use meaning fundraising was not starting from nowhere;
- Delaying this project would not benefit the club or the community.

It was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet provides its decision in principle to grant a leasehold interest in land at Cadwell Lane, Hitchin to Hitchin Bridge Club as per Recommendation 2.1 in the report due to be considered by Cabinet on 16 March 2021.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: To ensure that Hitchin Committee is able to comment on the report entitled Community Asset Transfer – Hitchin Bridge Club.

NB: The report considered by Hitchin Committee at the meeting held on 2 March 2021 can be viewed at Minute 53 here:

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=147&MId=2449&Ver=4>

7c REFERRAL FROM HITCHIN COMMITTEE: 2 MARCH 2021 – WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS (COMMUNITY SPACE IN HITCHIN)

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That consideration be given to the need for community space in Hitchin for a number of organisations, including Hitchin Band, Citizens Advice North Herts and Hitchin Bridge Club;
- (2) That Officers be encouraged to engage with these groups in order to make initial enquiries regarding need and future options that may be available.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: To promote the development of local organisations which provide benefits to the Hitchin community.

Mr Keith Birch – Hitchin Band presented their paper entitled “A permanent home for Hitchin Band” and highlighted the following:

- Hitchin Band had been established and representing the town for 155 years at competitions and concerts;
- 35% of its members were women and it had an average age of 42 with a growing number of young members;
- They had a successful Championship section which competed on the national and international stage in competitive brass band events;
- The Hitchin Youth Brass Band was formed in 2009 providing tuition to children, outreach in schools, with a subscription of very low subscription fee to maximise accessibility;
- Youth Band members have progressed on to the senior band section or have joined the Community Brass section which provides a forum for members to play music without the pressure of a competitive environment;
- Hitchin Band represents the town, provides entertainment, and has a worldwide reach online, and raises money for other charities as well as providing education and skills development for members;
- The Band required suitable premises that could accommodate their storage needs and sound proofing requirements;
- With adequate space the Band could expand to have two youth groups and an intermediate contest band to bridge the gap between the youth section and the senior band which many members find difficult;
- Hitchin Band has been in dialogue with other brass bands of a similar kind which have had success in finding suitable premises to address these issues;
- The Band had been based at Hitchin Rugby Club for over 13 years which was more comfortable than some previous accommodations – with heating and toilets – but was not perfect for their needs;
- The Rugby Club was also planning to move;
- The Band needed a home to accommodate use 3 to 4 nights a week with storage, rehearsal space, and noise dampening;
- Rental options were not felt to be viable; lack of certainty for the future of the band was hampering progress;
- The options which had been considered in detail were purpose building a site or conversion of an existing building;

- Amersham Brass Band, a similar organisation to Hitchin Band, had success raising around £1 million in 5 years to purpose build their premises, and it was felt that Hitchin Band could achieve similar results;
- Key to fundraising would be finding a building available for long term lease as an option on a site would form the focus of fundraising;
- The Band requested the Council to consider whether a suitable plot of land or an existing site was available.

The following Members asked questions and took part in the discussion:

- Councillor Simon Harwood
- Councillor Judi Billing
- Councillor Keith Hoskins
- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Paul Clark

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That consideration be given to the need for community space in Hitchin for a number of organisations, including Hitchin Band, Citizens Advice North Herts and Hitchin Bridge Club;
- (2) That Officers be encouraged to engage with these groups in order to make initial enquiries regarding need and future options that may be available.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: To promote the development of local organisations which provide benefits to the Hitchin community.

NB: The documents considered by Hitchin Committee at the meeting held on 2 March 2021 can be viewed at Minute 48 here:

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=147&MIId=2449&Ver=4>

7d REFERRAL FROM HITCHIN COMMITTEE: 2 MARCH 2021 – WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS (INCREASES IN CAR PARKING TARIFFS)

NB: To be considered with Item 16

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the Proposed 2021/2022 Inflationary Tariff Increases for NHDC Off-Street Managed Car Parks be implemented;
- (2) That Officers be encouraged to review the balance of short, mid-term and long stay spaces in the car parking estate in Hitchin;
- (3) That Officers be encouraged to explore options for pay-on-exit or other alternative payment collection systems to facilitate ease of use and accurate charges.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: To protect and support the economic vitality of Hitchin town centre while respecting the need to meet revenue needs in the car parking estate.

The Chair led a discussion on the proposed 2021/2022 Inflationary Tariff Increases for NHDC Off-Street Managed Car Parks.

The following Members took part in the discussion:

- Councillor Paul Clark
- Councillor Richard Thake
- Councillor Keith Hoskins
- Councillor Simon Harwood
- Councillor Martin Stears-Handscorn

Issues raised included:

- Charges were not raised last year and if they are not raised this year revenues would struggle to break even in view of increased costs;
- Members were conscious that raising charges during a post-pandemic recovery period could have an impact on businesses;
- The 1 hour charge had remained static;
- Rounding up to the nearest 5 pence was related to the prevalence of app/telephone based payments
- There was the option to delay the increase in charges to June/July/September to accommodate a pandemic recovery period;
- There was widespread disruption when responsibility for parking charges and enforcement came in to NHDC control without notice;
- The balance of car parking available in the estate should be re-evaluated to feature less expensive short to medium term parking with high charges for very long stays to encourage access to the town and shops;
- Price increases should be based on the rate of inflation;

- Raising parking charges always led to ill feeling and should be counterbalanced by improvements in alternative payment methods, more accurate time recording, discounts for electric vehicles;
- It was important that cash- or card- at terminal payment options continued for accessibility reasons;
- Other methods of payment should be explored for convenience and accuracy.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the Proposed 2021/2022 Inflationary Tariff Increases for NHDC Off-Street Managed Car Parks be implemented;
- (2) That Officers be encouraged to review the balance of short, mid-term and long stay spaces in the car parking estate in Hitchin;
- (3) That Officers be encouraged to explore options for pay-on-exit or other alternative payment collection systems to facilitate ease of use and accurate charges.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS: To protect and support the economic vitality of Hitchin town centre while respecting the need to meet revenue needs in the car parking estate.

NB: The documents considered by Hitchin Committee at the meeting held on 2 March 2021 can be viewed at Minute 56 here:

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=147&MId=2449&Ver=4>

7e REFERRAL FROM FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE: 8 MARCH 2021 – RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That there be no change to the risk score for Corporate Planning risks, subject to the note 'representation prepared with regard the speculative expansion of London Luton Airport to four runways' being archived as deemed no longer relevant.
- (2) That there be an increase in the risk score from 5 to 7 and a target risk score of 6 for the Increased Homelessness Corporate risk;
- (3) That there be no change to the risk score for the review of the Waste Corporate risks subject to the risk score being agreed and signed off by the Executive Member for Waste and Recycling.
- (4) That that the Workforce Planning Corporate Risk be archived. Original Risk score 5, final risk score 5.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) The responsibility for ensuring the management of risks is that of Cabinet.
- (2) This Committee has responsibility to monitor the effective development and operation of Risk Management.

The Service Director – Resources presented the report entitled Risk Management Update, including:

- The Council were waiting a response from the Inspector in regards to the Local Plan. The Local Plan Risk would be affected by that response and decisions to be made by Cabinet ;
- The increase in the Homelessness Corporate Risk reflected the increased levels of homelessness, and use of temporary accommodation;
- It was agreed at the Risk Management Group to archive the Workforce Planning Corporate as there were actions and HR policies in place to manage the risk; and
- There was a potential risk of flooding in the village of Kimpton. At present, this risk was a service risk.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Sam Collins;
- Councillor Michael Weeks;
- Councillor Sam North;

The Service Director – Resources responded to questions raised as follows:

- It was his understanding that there was a subsequent plan to increase the size of Luton Airport. However, the full details were not known to him. The Service Director – Regulatory could provide more on this;

- The budget for the likely need to continue accommodating homeless people in hotels was not yet accounted for. However, the minimum general fund balance had been increased to factor in expenditure such as the increased homelessness cost; and
- The Corporate Risk matrix was not concerning despite it being top heavy. The matrix did contain more Corporate Risks than usual but this reflected the nature and pressures that the Council were currently in. Various risks may reduce in due course.

Councillor Sam North requested an amendment to recommendation 2.1 – point 3 in order that the Waste Corporate Risk be reviewed by the Executive Member for Waste and Recycling as he stated that he was uncomfortable with the assumption that Central Government would fund a mandatory garden waste service. The amendment was supported by Councillor Helen Oliver.

In response to this point, the Service Director – Resources advised that he was not certain but usually Executive Members would be briefed on risks within their portfolio by the appropriate Service Director. The Service Director – Resources further added in regards to the garden waste service, that under the New Burdens Doctrine guidance, if the Government were to introduce a service that would cost the Council money to implement, they were required to fund it.

Councillor Ian Albert, Executive Member - IT & Finance, responded to Councillor Sam Collin's point relating to Luton Airport that an Architect had put forward a four runway solution 8 years ago. However, the Council had objected to the latest expansion regarding one runway and a 32 million passenger expansion.

Councillor Sam Collins requested an amendment to recommendation 2.1 point 1.

The Chair requested that each recommendation be taken separately on the vote.

The Chair clarified to Members the wording of the recommendations.

Councillor Kate Aspinwall proposed, Councillor Sam North seconded and upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the reviews of the Corporate Risks for the quarter, be noted.

And

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That there be no change to the risk score for Corporate Planning risks, subject to the note 'representation prepared with regard the speculative expansion of London Luton Airport to four runways' being archived as deemed no longer relevant.
- (2) That there be an increase in the risk score from 5 to 7 and a target risk score of 6 for the Increased Homelessness Corporate risk;
- (3) That there be no change to the risk score for the review of the Waste Corporate risks subject to the risk score being agreed and signed off by the Executive Member for Waste and Recycling.
- (4) That that the Workforce Planning Corporate Risk be archived. Original Risk score 5, final risk score 5.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) The responsibility for ensuring the management of risks is that of Cabinet.
- (2) This Committee has responsibility to monitor the effective development and operation of Risk Management.

NB: The report considered by Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at the meeting held on 8 March 2021 can be viewed here:

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=2457&Ver=4>

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7f REFERRAL FROM FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE: 8 MARCH 2021 – THIRD QUARTER REVENUE MONITORING 2020/21

NB: To be considered with Item 17

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the report entitled Third Quarter Revenue Monitoring 2020/21 be noted;
- (2) That the changes to the 2020/21 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a £624k increase in net expenditure, be approved. (Noting that this net movement is expected to be covered by an increase in the Sales, Fees and Charges compensation from Government that has been applied);
- (3) That the changes to the 2021/22 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a total £17k decrease in net expenditure, be approved.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: Members are able to monitor, make adjustments within the overall budgetary framework and request appropriate action of Services who do not meet the budget targets set as part of the Corporate Business Planning process.

The Service Director – Resources presented the report entitled Third Quarter Revenue Monitoring 2020/2, including:

- Directed Members to Table 6 on page 163 within the report titled General Fund Balance and provided further information;
- Paragraph 8.4 on page 157 detailed the budgets that were requested to be carried forward in to 2021/22;
- There were 4 key corporate 'financial health' indicators identified in relation to key sources of income for the Council. Table 4 showed the performance for the year;
- All of the indicators were red as would be expected given the impacts of the pandemic, and had been reported accordingly throughout the year; and
- As part of the Government's economic support for Covid-19, the Council had been required to distribute a number of business grants. These are detailed in table 8 on page 164.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Sam Collins; and
- Councillor Sam North.

In response to questions raised, the Service Director – Resources advised that:

- In terms of the income guarantee for parking, the Council were required to fund around a third of the loss; and
- An additional column would be added to Table 5 to show the amount covered by the Council and the amount covered by the income guarantee.

Councillor Sam North asked that a recommendation be added to thank staff for their work in administering grants to those in need as a result of the pandemic.

Councillor Kate Aspinwall proposed, Councillor Sam North seconded the recommendations and it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Service Director – Resources be requested to add an additional column into 'Table 5 – COVID Financial Impact on General Fund' relating to the heading 'Expected to be covered by Income guarantee'. Members requested that figures should be provided in the additional column in order to show the amount covered by the Council and the amount covered by the income guarantee. This amendment to Table 5 to be provided as an Addendum to the Cabinet report.
- (2) That Officers be thanked by the Committee for their work in administering grants to those in need as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the report entitled Third Quarter Revenue Monitoring 2020/21 be noted;
- (2) That the changes to the 2020/21 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a £624k increase in net expenditure, be approved. (Noting that this net movement is expected to be covered by an increase in the Sales, Fees and Charges compensation from Government that has been applied);
- (3) That the changes to the 2021/22 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a total £17k decrease in net expenditure, be approved.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: Members are able to monitor, make adjustments within the overall budgetary framework and request appropriate action of Services who do not meet the budget targets set as part of the Corporate Business Planning process.

NB: The report considered by Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at the meeting held on 8 March 2021 can be viewed here:

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=2457&Ver=4>

7g REFERRAL FROM FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE: 8 MARCH 2021 - THIRD QUARTER INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) REVIEW 2020/21

NB: To be considered with Item 18

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the forecast expenditure of £2.354million in 2020/21 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.3 refers, be noted;
- (2) That the adjustments to the capital programme for 2020/21 onwards as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2, increasing the estimated spend in 2021/22 by £1.102million, be approved;
- (3) That the position of the availability of capital resources, as detailed in table 3 paragraph 8.6 and the requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability, be noted;
- (4) That the £0.050million budget to refurbish the Gym Floor at the North Herts Leisure Centre be reprofiled into 2020/21, be approved. (The budget has been approved to spend in 2021/22 but with the Leisure Centre closed due to Covid-19 there's an opportunity to bring this work forward and avoid closing the gym once Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted).

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) Cabinet is required to approve adjustments to the capital programme and ensure the capital programme is fully funded.
- (2) To ensure the Council's continued compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management and the Local Government Act 2003 and that the Council manages its exposure to interest and capital risk.

The Service Director – Resources presented the report entitled Third Quarter Investment Strategy (Capital And Treasury) Review 2020/21, including:

- There was a reasonable amount of capital slippage, as detailed at Table 2 on page 171 within the report;
- The approved investment limits within the Investment Strategy were breached during the quarter ended 31 December 2020. The limit on investments placed with Building Societies was exceeded by £2.0 million for 19 days in October. Measures had been put in place to ensure limits were not exceeded again;
- Interest rates continued to be very low;
- The DMO was the most secure place to hold money, but at the time of the investment detailed in the report was paying a -0.01% Interest Rate.

Councillor Michael Weeks attempted to ask a question but lost connection mid-flow.

NB: Councillor Michael Weeks lost connection to the meeting at 21:43. Councillor Weeks did not re-join the meeting. The meeting remained quorate.

There were no further questions raised therefore, Councillor Kate Aspinwall proposed and Councillor Sam North seconded the recommendations and it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the forecast expenditure of £2.354million in 2020/21 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.3 refers, be noted;
- (2) That the adjustments to the capital programme for 2020/21 onwards as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2, increasing the estimated spend in 2021/22 by £1.102million, be approved;
- (3) That the position of the availability of capital resources, as detailed in table 3 paragraph 8.6 and the requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability, be noted;
- (4) That the £0.050million budget to refurbish the Gym Floor at the North Herts Leisure Centre be reprofiled into 2020/21, be approved. (The budget has been approved to spend in 2021/22 but with the Leisure Centre closed due to Covid-19 there's an opportunity to bring this work forward and avoid closing the gym once Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted).

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) Cabinet is required to approve adjustments to the capital programme and ensure the capital programme is fully funded.
- (2) To ensure the Council's continued compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management and the Local Government Act 2003 and that the Council manages its exposure to interest and capital risk.

NB: The report considered by Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at the meeting held on 8 March 2021 can be viewed here:

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=2457&Ver=4>

7h REFERRAL FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 9 MARCH 2021 – UPDATE ON CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

NB: To be considered with Item 12

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the progress made on the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan as set out at Appendix A be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comment on the report entitled Update on Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan prior to consideration by Cabinet.

The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council presented the report entitled Update on Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan together with the following appendix:

- Appendix A – Updated Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan.

The Leader of the Council advised that:

- The Corporate Peer Challenge had taken place in January 2020;
- At that time and as a new administration the advice was welcomed.

The Deputy Leader of the Council advised that:

- A lot had changed since the Peer Challenge had happened, but the recommendations within that report remained valid for the Council and the Community;
- There were huge demands on staff, which meant that some recommendations had not yet been progressed;
- It was now possible to add realistic timescales to those recommendations;
- Good progress had been made regarding some of the recommendations;
- 17 of the 60 recommendations were marked as complete
- Two of the recommendations regarding the timing and length of meetings would not be taken forward.

The Managing Director advised that the recommendations regarding Overview and Scrutiny would be updated on the main action plan.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor David Levett.

Councillor David Levett proposed and it was:

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the progress made on the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan as set out at Appendix A be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comment on the report entitled Update on Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan prior to consideration by Cabinet.

NB: The report considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on 9 March 2021 can be viewed here:

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=2437&Ver=4>

7i REFERRAL FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 9 MARCH 2021 – LOCAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

NB: To be considered with Item 13

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the North Hertfordshire Masterplanning Guidance, attached as Appendix A, be approved and recognised as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications with the following amendment;
 - (i) That Paragraph 3.2 be amended to include references to Neighbourhood Planning Groups and the Design SPD.
- (2) That officers be authorised to commence work on a revised and updated programme of Supplementary Planning Documents and supporting evidence as set out in this report.
- (3) That to support recommendation 2.2, Cabinet:
 - a. Resolve not to pursue the preparation of a Community Infrastructure Levy for the District at this time; and
 - b. Authorise the reprofiling of existing, approved revenue budgets for Community Infrastructure Levy (£87,000) and the potential Single Issue Review of the Local Plan (£80,000) to deliver this work;
- (4) That Member working group be arranged to discuss the Design and Sustainability SPDs prior to consideration of these by Cabinet.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that resources are used most effectively to support the implementation of the new Local Plan for North Hertfordshire and to improve delivery upon corporate priorities relating to place leadership and the declared climate change emergency.

The Executive Member for Planning and Transport introduced the revised report entitled Local Plan Implementation together with the following appendix

- Appendix A - North Hertfordshire Masterplanning Principles.

The Strategic Planning Manager drew attention to the following:

- This was a wide ranging report that set out a programme of work to support the Local Plan;
- Modifications had not yet been received by the Inspector;
- There had been a lot of changes both Nationally and locally;
- Section 7 of the report set out the policies;
- Section 8 set out a way to move forward;
- There was a significant risk in moving forward with CIL at the current time, as the Government were planning to undertake a review of CIL;

The following Members asked questions and took part in the debate:

- Councillor Sam Collins;
- Councillor David Levett;
- Councillor Tom Tyson.

The Strategic Planning Manager and Principal Strategic Planning Officer responded to questions including:

- That the revised Design SPD could be considered by the Committee alternatively a Member workshop could be organised for this purpose;
- The Master Planning guidance was guidance on the process, whereas the Design and Sustainability SPDs were the detail;
- The Government was being quite prescriptive regarding what could be included in design SPDs and work was a need to ensure that our guidance complied;
- This report would be considered by Cabinet on 16 March 2021 and it was hoped that it would be able to be considered by full Council at the end of the year;
- That there was an very important community led aspect, which included Neighbourhood Plans.

The Executive Member for Planning and transport advised:

- Acknowledged the work previously undertaken by Councillors Collins and Levett regarding the draft Design SPD and noted that as the Local Plan had been delayed, it had been necessary to change elements;
- Consideration of CIL was not appropriate at this time, but it would be considered at a later date

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the North Hertfordshire Masterplanning Guidance, attached as Appendix A, be approved and recognised as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications with the following amendment;
 - (i) That Paragraph 3.2 be amended to include references to Neighbourhood Planning Groups and the Design SPD.
- (2) That officers be authorised to commence work on a revised and updated programme of Supplementary Planning Documents and supporting evidence as set out in this report.
- (3) That to support recommendation 2.2, Cabinet:
 - a. Resolve not to pursue the preparation of a Community Infrastructure Levy for the District at this time; and
 - b. Authorise the reprofiling of existing, approved revenue budgets for Community Infrastructure Levy (£87,000) and the potential Single Issue Review of the Local Plan (£80,000) to deliver this work;
- (4) That Member working group be arranged to discuss the Design and Sustainability SPDs prior to consideration of these by Cabinet.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that resources are used most effectively to support the implementation of the new Local Plan for North Hertfordshire and to improve delivery upon corporate priorities relating to place leadership and the declared climate change emergency.

NB: The report considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on 9 March 2021 can be viewed here:

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7j REFERRAL FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 9 MARCH 2021 - NEW YEAR PERFORMANCE INDICATORS TO BE MONITORED IN 2021/22

NB: To be considered with Item 15

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet considers and formally approves the PIs and any associated targets that will be monitored throughout 2021/2022 by Overview & Scrutiny

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comment on the report entitled New Year Performance Indicators to be Monitored in 2021/22 prior to consideration by Cabinet.

The Leader of the Council introduced report entitled New Year Performance Indicators to be Monitored in 2021/22

The Controls, Risk and Performance Manager drew attention to the following:

- There were no new or deleted performance indicators proposed for 2021/22;
- Council Tax and NNDR collection rates had been temporarily adjusted down for the new year due to customers and businesses being given extended instalments for the 20/21 payment;
- The Electricity, Gas and Energy target had been revised to 95% of the 20/21 target to take into account energy saving measures which had been taken and were proposed;
- The number of visits to leisure centres had been adjusted in line with the recovery plan. Figures were based on April re-opening dates in line with current government guidance;
- All other PIs and targets remained unchanged.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet considers and formally approves the PIs and any associated targets that will be monitored throughout 2021/2022 by Overview & Scrutiny

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comment on the report entitled New Year Performance Indicators to be Monitored in 2021/22 prior to consideration by Cabinet.

NB: The report considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on 9 March 2021 can be viewed here:

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