

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City on Tuesday, 18th December, 2018 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Barnard and Bernard Lovewell.

2 MINUTES - 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 September 2018 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

3 MINUTES - 25 SEPTEMBER 2018

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 25 September 2018 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

4 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

In accordance with 100B (4)(B) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with the urgent procedure rules as contained within the Council's Constitution the following matters were considered.

- a. Recommendation to Council – Chief Inspector Julie Wheatley.
- b. Information Note: North Hertfordshire Museum and Hitchin Town Hall – Acquisition of 14/15 Broad Street.

The recommendation to Council was considered at the conclusion of Agenda Item No. 8 – Royston First Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal.

The Information Note: North Hertfordshire Museum and Hitchin Town Hall – Acquisition of 14/15 Broad Street was presented at the conclusion of Agenda Item No. 13 – Corporate Business Planning – Draft Budget 2019/2020.

Prior to item (b) being discussed Councillors Julian Cunningham and Michael Weeks declared interests as Members of the Cabinet Sub-Committee (Council Charities).

RESOLVED:

- a. Chief Inspector Julie Wheatley

After 8 years serving the North Herts community in various positions, Chief Inspector Julie Wheatley has been promoted to Superintendent and will be leaving her role with us in the New Year. During the four years that Julie has been the North Herts Chief Inspector she has worked hard to build strong partnerships with the Authority and other local partners to improve community safety and reduce anti-social behavior and crime and disorder. North Herts is one of the highest performing Community Safety Partnerships in the county, is one of the safest places to live in Hertfordshire and the country and has the highest rates of victim satisfaction in the county.

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL:

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That in accordance with paragraph 4.4.1(bb) of the Council's Constitution Full Council recognises the exceptional contribution to the community made by Chief Inspector Julie Wheatley and places on record our sincere thanks and appreciation for her service in North Hertfordshire.

- b. That the Information Note to update the Cabinet on the proposed acquisition of 14/15 Brand Street, since the Cabinet meeting on 20 November 2018, be noted.

5 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chairman announced that Members of the public and the press may use their devices to film/photograph, or do a sound recording of the meeting, but she asked them to not use flash and to disable any beeps or other sound notifications that emitted from their devices. In addition, the Chairman had arranged for the sound at this particular meeting to be recorded;
- (2) The Chairman reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question;
- (3) The Chairman asked that, for the benefit of any members of the public present at the meeting, Officers announce their name and their designation to the meeting when invited to speak.

6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following presentation was made by a member of the public:-

Royston First Business Improvement (BID) Renewal – Mr John Gourd, Site Director.

7 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no items referred from other Committees.

8 ROYSTON FIRST BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) RENEWAL

Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Tony Hunter declared a declarable interest in that he was a Member of the Bid Management team as a District Council representative and in accordance with legal advice left the Chamber for the duration of the item.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Cabinet considers the Royston First BID renewal proposals appended at A.
- ii. That the Cabinet instructs the Returning Officer to hold the BID renewal ballot for Royston.
- iii. That the Service Director – Customers be authorised to cast the Council's votes in the Royston First BID renewal ballots in favour of acceptance.

REASON FOR DECISION: The Council is under a legal duty to comply with the BID arrangements under section 44 of the Local Government Act 2003 ("the Act"). This includes compliance with the Act and The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) ("the Regulations") in respect of receipt of any BID renewal.

9 STRATEGIC PLANNING MATTERS

RESOLVED:

- i. That the report on Strategic Planning Matters be noted;
- ii. That the submissions in Appendices A to F be noted and endorsed by Cabinet.
- iii. That the resolution of 30 July 2013 “That a Community Infrastructure Levy for North Hertfordshire be not pursued for the time being” be re-affirmed.

REASON FOR DECISION:

- i. To keep the Cabinet informed of recent developments on strategic planning matters and progress on the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.
- ii. To provide clarity on the Council’s corporate approach to the collection of financial and other contributions from developers and to enable the production of a revised Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

10 PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY and INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Playing Pitch Strategy and its associated Action Plan as set out in Appendix A be adopted.
- ii. That the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy and its associated Action Plan as set out in Appendix B be adopted.
- iii. That delegated authority be given to the Service Directors of Regulatory and Place to agree updates to the Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sport Facilities Strategy and their associated Action Plans as required in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning, Enterprise and Transport and the Executive Member for Leisure and Green Issues.

REASONS FOR DECISION: The Playing Pitch and Indoor Sport Facilities Strategies will ensure that North Hertfordshire continues to work in partnership with key organisations to provide accessible sport and leisure facilities to meet current and future needs across the District. The Action Plans recommend a number of projects for the District which seek to deliver the vision and aims contained in the strategies.

11 THE CONTRACTING OUT OF HOMELESSNESS REVIEW DECISIONS

RESOLVED:

- i. That the ‘contracting out’ of homelessness reviews and the subsequent issuing of decisions on the Council’s behalf, in accordance with the relevant legislation be approved.
- ii. That the allocation of the ring-fenced homelessness grant (from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) to fund the anticipated initial cost of contracting out, of between £5k-£10k for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2020 be agreed.

REASONS FOR DECISION: The outsourcing of homelessness review decisions to a specialist organisation should provide an efficient and cost effective solution, releasing management capacity that can be directed at further supporting the front-line response to the new provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA).

12 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2019-2023

RESOLVED:

- i. That the North Hertfordshire District Council Communications Strategy 2019 – 2023 be adopted.
- ii. That the delegation for creating the Action Plan and the annual review of the Action Plan contained in the Communications Strategy, to the Communications Manager in consultation with the Leader of the Council be agreed.

REASONS FOR DECISION: To allow the Council's communications team to carry out a programme of relevant communications activities, in line with an agreed strategic approach, ensuring residents and other stakeholders are well informed about the work of the Council and about relevant activities in the District.

13 CORPORATE BUSINESS PLANNING - DRAFT BUDGET 2019/20

RESOLVED:

- i. That the significant uncertainty around Central Government funding levels in 2019/20 and beyond, and that the estimates provided could be subject to significant change be noted.
- ii. That the estimated position on the Collection Fund and how this will be funded be noted.
- iii. That Cabinet confirms that Council Tax increases for 2019/20 should be in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy be noted.
- iv. That the comments on the inclusion of the savings and investment proposals in the draft budget to include any additional savings or investments be noted.
- v. That the comments on the inclusion of the capital investment proposals to include any additional capital investments be noted.
- vi. That the Cabinet requests for amendments to the budget, as discussed, to be considered again in January 2019.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- i. To ensure that all relevant factors are taken into consideration when arriving at the proposed Council Tax precept for 2019/20.
- ii. To ensure that the Cabinet recommends a balanced budget to Council on 7 February 2019.

14 SECOND QUARTER REVENUE MONITORING 2018/19

RESOLVED:

- i. That the report be noted.
- ii. That the changes to the 2018/19 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a £17k decrease in net expenditure be approved.
- iii. That the changes to the 2019/20 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a £213k decrease in net expenditure be noted and incorporated in the draft revenue budget for 2019/20.

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REASONS FOR DECISION: 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.

15 SECOND QUARTER CAPITAL MONITORING 2018/19

RESOLVED:

- i. That Cabinet notes the forecast expenditure of **£7.211million** in 2018/19 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.2 refers, and approves the adjustments detailed in table 3 which resulted in a net decrease on the working estimate of **£2.468million**.
- ii. That Cabinet approves the adjustments to the capital programme for 2018/19 onwards as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2, increasing the estimated spend in future years 2019/20 by **£7.387million**.
- iii. That Cabinet notes the position of the availability of capital resources, as detailed in table 4, and the requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability.

REASONS FOR DECISION: Cabinet is required to approve revisions to the capital programme. Cabinet is required to ensure that the capital programme is fully funded.

16 TREASURY MANAGEMENT SECOND QUARTER 2018/19

RESOLVED: That Cabinet note the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of September 2018.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That Cabinet recommends to Council to note the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of September 2018.

REASONS FOR DECISION: 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.

17 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2019/2020

RESOLVED:

- i. That Cabinet notes the CTRS position relating to this and previous financial years.
- ii. That there be no changes to the CTRS for 2019/2020 and that this is recommended to Council at its meeting on 17 January 2019.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That Cabinet recommends to the Council that the level of Scheme funding to be allocated to the Parish, Town and Community Councils will be the same as 2018/2019 and will be reviewed for 2020/2021.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- i. To keep the Scheme aligned as far as possible with Housing Benefit.
- ii. To ensure that the Council complies with the requirement to ensure that a Scheme is in place by 11 March 2019.

18 BUSINESS RATES RETAIL DISCOUNT SCHEME

RESOLVED:

- i. That the high level implications of the proposed scheme be noted.
- ii. That the Cabinet delegates the final detail of the scheme to the Service Director - Customers in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- i. To comply with the proposals announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Budget on 29 October 2018.
- ii. To provide additional financial assistance to retail businesses in line with the Budget announcement.
- iii. To ensure that the scheme will be finalised in time for implementation from 1 April 2019.

19 CORPORATE STATEMENT OF ENFORCEMENT POLICY REVIEW

RESOLVED: That the amended Policy contained at Appendix A be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION: To bring the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy up to date.

20 OUTBOUND MAIL CONTRACT

RESOLVED:

- i. That Cabinet approves the Variation of Contract with Northgate Public Services for the provision of an Inbound Mail Contract to also include an Outbound Mail service, initially until December 2020 with an option to extend to December 2023.
- ii. That the position relating to the on-going operation of the Document Centre be noted.
- iii. That the intention to extend the Inbound Mail Contract for three years be noted.

REASONS FOR DECISION: To achieve revenue savings of around £78,000 per annum and the variation is necessary to achieve new ways of working to ensure the Council meets its priority to deliver cost effective services.

21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

22 OUTBOUND MAIL CONTRACT

RESOLVED: That the position relating to the out-going operation of the Document Centre and the intention to extend the inbound Main Contract be noted.

REASONS FOR DECISION: To achieve revenue savings of around £78,000 per annum and the variation is necessary to achieve new ways of working to ensure the Council meets its priority to deliver cost effective services.