

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City
on Tuesday, 29th June, 2021 at 7.30 pm

1 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Cabinet meeting that was being held in the Council Chamber and advised that the meeting was being streamed live on the Council's YouTube channel and some Officers were joining online.

The Chair invited the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer to explain how proceedings would work.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer undertook a roll call of those officers joining the meeting online to ensure that they could hear and be heard and gave advice regarding the following:

- Voting; and
- Covid Risk Assessment Measures.

The Chair, Councillor Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg, started the meeting proper.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Executive Members: Ruth Brown, Adem-Ruggiero-Cakir, Sean Prendergast and Carol Stanier.

Councillor Keith Hoskins, Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee also sent his apologies for absence.

3 MINUTES - 16 MARCH 2021

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16 March 2021 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

4 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

5 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) Members were reminded that this Council had declared a Climate Emergency. This was a serious decision and meant that, as this was an emergency, all of us, officers and Members had that in mind as we carried out our various roles and tasks for the benefit of our District.

- (4) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and 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.
- (5) The Chair advised that Item 8 regarding the Community Lottery Policies would be presented before Item 7 and Item 16 (the Part 2 Item) regarding the Grounds Maintenance Contract would be presented before Item 14 (the part 1 report on the same subject).

6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

7 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

7a. Referral from Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 22 June 2021 – North Hertfordshire Community Lottery - New Policies

The Chair advised that this referral would be considered with item 8.

7b. Referral from Finance, Audit and Risk Committee: 23 June 2021 – Risk Management Update

The Chair advised that this referral would be considered with item 13.

7c. Referral from Finance, Audit And Risk Committee: 23 June 2021 – Revenue Budget Outturn

The Chair advised that this referral would be considered with item 11.

7d. Referral From Finance, Audit and Risk Committee: 23 June 2021 – Investment Strategy End Of Year

The Chair advised that this referral would be considered with item 12.

8 NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY LOTTERY - NEW POLICIES

RESOLVED: That the implementation of the new policies associated with launching and delivering the North Hertfordshire Community Lottery be postponed until the next Cabinet meeting (20 July 2021).

REASON FOR DECISION: To allow for appropriate consideration by Cabinet and Members Cross-Party.

9 STRATEGIC PLANNING MATTERS

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report on Strategic Planning Matters be noted
- (2) That the correspondence in Appendices A to C be noted and endorsed by Cabinet.
- (3) That the use of the reserve from the additional planning income in 2017/18 be extended to include the delivery of the Local Plan as per paragraph 10.4

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To keep Cabinet informed of recent developments on strategic planning matters and progress on the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

10 BALDOCK, BYGRAVE AND CLOTHALL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the result of the referendum for the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan is noted.
- (2) That the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan be made as part of the statutory Development Plan for North Hertfordshire.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) As previously reported to Cabinet, the Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan has successfully been examined by an independent examiner and the referendum held on May 6th 2021 voted in favour of “making” the neighbourhood plan becoming part of the statutory development plan for North Hertfordshire.
- (2) Neighbourhood plans have normally been “made” by delegated authority, as approved by Cabinet in July 2018 (Minute 21). However, the designated neighbourhood planning area for Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall covers more than two wards and “making” the neighbourhood plan is therefore a key decision which must be taken by Cabinet.

11 REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2020/21

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report entitled Revenue Budget Outturn 2020/21 be noted;
- (2) That a decrease of £866k in the 2020/21 net General Fund expenditure, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.1, to a total of £19.379million, be approved;
- (3) That the changes to the 2021/22 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3, paragraph 8.2 and paragraph 8.3, a total £377k increase in net expenditure be approved.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That the net transfer to earmarked reserves, as identified in table 8, of £11.464million, be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) 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.
- (2) Changes to the Council’s balances are monitored and approved.

12 INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) END OF YEAR REVIEW 2020/21

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the expenditure of £1.883million in 2020/21 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.3 refers, and in particular the changes detailed in table 3 which resulted in a net increase on the working estimate of £0.001million, be noted;
- (2) That the adjustments to the capital programme for 2020/21 as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2, increasing the estimated spend in 2021/22 by £0.522million (£0.527million re-profiled from 2020/21 and £0.005million from 2021/22 re-profiled into 2020/21), be approved.
- (3) That the position of the availability of capital resources, as detailed in table 4 paragraph 8.8 and the requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability, be noted.
- (4) That the application of £1.224million of capital receipts towards the 2020/21 capital programme and the drawdown of £0.417million from set aside receipts, paragraph 8.8 refers, be approved;
- (5) That the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of March 2021, be noted.
- (6) That the report entitled Investment Strategy (Capital and Treasury) End of Year Review 2020/21 be recommended to Council.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

- (1) That the actual 2020/21 prudential and treasury indicators be approved;
- (2) That the annual Treasury Report for 2020/21 be noted.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) 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.
- (2) Changes to the Council's balances are monitored and approved.

13 RISK MANAGEMENT QUARTERLY UPDATE AND ANNUAL REPORT

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the reviews of the Corporate Risks for the quarter, namely the review of the Cyber risks with no change to the Current risk score of 8 and a Target Risk score of 6 and the review of the Brexit (EU Transition) Risk with a decrease in the Current risk score from a 7 to a 5, and a Target risk score of 3, be noted;
- (2) That the Annual report on Risk Management be noted and referred to Full Council.

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.

14 **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT REVIEW**

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the existing contract with John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance Ltd is not retendered and that the specification is varied to accommodate 2.1.2 below, be approved
- (2) That the contract review process has identified an annual saving, as detailed in the Part 2 report, which is implemented from the 1st April 2022 for a period of 10 years with a mutual break clause after 5 years. This will extend the current arrangements with John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance Ltd by a further 5 years up to 2032, be approved;
- (3) That the future Greenspace Management Strategy from April 2022 - 2027 reflects the proposals that make up the savings value as identified in 2.1.2 above, be approved;
- (4) That the proposed approach to the structure of the Greenspace Team as discussed in section 15 of the report and detailed within the Part 2 report be approved and adopted.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: A contract review process has been undertaken in the lead up to an agreed possible break point (31st March 2022) within the existing contract with John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance Ltd (JOC). The review was via a series of Project Board Meetings undertaken between January 2021 and May 2021. Additionally, this is the ideal opportunity to adjust the existing contract standards to accommodate the "Wilding" agenda and the economic impacts of Covid 19 upon the authority's finances.

15 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following report will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

16 **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT REVIEW**

RESOLVED: That the Part 2 report entitled Grounds Maintenance Contract Review be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: A contract review process has been undertaken in the lead up to an agreed possible break point (31st March 2022) within the existing contract with John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance Ltd (JOC). The review was via a series of Project Board Meetings undertaken between January 2021 and May 2021. Additionally, this is the ideal opportunity to adjust the existing contract standards to accommodate the "Wilding" agenda and the economic impacts of Covid 19 upon the authority's finances.