

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chambers, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF
on Tuesday, 31st January, 2023 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 MINUTES - 13 DECEMBER 2022

RESOLVED: That the Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 December 2022 were approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy that the meeting was being audio recorded as well as filmed. The audio recording would be available on Mod Gov or via the Council's YouTube Channel.
- (2) The Chair reminded Member that the Council has declared a Climate Emergency. This was a serious decision and means 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. More details were included on the agenda front sheet.
- (3) Members were reminded to make declarations of interest before an item, the detailed reminder about this and speaking rights was set out under the Chair's Announcements in the Agenda.
- (4) The Chair advised for purposes of clarification that 4.8.23(a) of the constitution did not apply to this meeting.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair advised that Bernard Lovewell and Martin Stears-Hanscomb from the Black Squirrel Credit Union were present to provide a presentation. This would be given before the presentation of Item 9 'The Allocation of the DLUHC Grant'.

6 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

6a) Referral from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee on 25 January 2023 – Final Revenue Budget 2023/24

The Chair advised that this referral would be taken with Item 10 'Revenue Budget 2023/24'.

6b) Referral from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee on 25 January 2023 – Investment Strategy

The Chair advised that this referral would be taken with Item 11 'Investment Strategy – Integrated Capital and Treasury'.

7 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS SPD

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Adopted the Development Contributions SPD and Appendix A.
- (2) Revoked the 2006 Planning Obligations SPD.
- (3) Delegated authority to the Service Director – Regulatory in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport to make any minor non-material corrections (including but not limited to cosmetic additions of presentational alterations) to the adopted Developer Contributions SPD as considered necessary for publication and publicity in accordance with the relevant regulations.

REASON FOR DECISIONS

- (1) To allow the Developer Contributions SPD to be adopted so that it can support the delivery of the policies in the recently adopted Local Plan and ensure an efficient process of securing developer contributions across the District.

8 STRATEGIC PLANNING MATTERS

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the report.
- (2) Noted and endorsed the Officer responses attached as Appendices A to C.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To keep Cabinet informed of recent developments on strategic planning matters.

9 THE ALLOCATION OF DLUHC HOMELESSNESS GRANT

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the allocation of HPG funding (2022/23) of £40k to cover the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) subsidy loss on the Keystage Housing service for the most recent period (Until the end of December 2022) and authorised HPG usage for the projected cost of a further £15k to end of the current financial year.
- (2) Approved the allocation of future HPG allocations to cover DWP subsidy loss created by the accommodation of homeless people in future years, to be included as part of the quarterly budget monitoring process.
- (3) Noted the corporate Financial Risk concerning the cost of measures to address homelessness will be broadened to include DWP subsidy loss.
- (4) Approved allocations of HPG for 2022/23 to the Black Squirrel Credit Union (£63.2k), Herts County Council Crashpad Service (£6.8k) and Beam (£80k).
- (5) Agreed that any remaining HPG for 2022/23 be allocated by the Director of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health.
- (6) Noted the DLHUC's single Homelessness Accommodation Programme and its Local Authority Housing Fund.

- (7) Noted the update on the Local Authority Housing Fund and wished to support the scheme if it can. Therefore as Settle has indicated that it was able to provide one larger property and two smaller properties, if that was at a social rent the Council would submit the validation form seeking to pursue that opportunity.
- (8) Requested that Officers feedback to government the difficulties with the scheme, which have prevented the Council taking the full allocation.
- (9) Delegated to the Service Director Regulatory and the Service Director Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health and Executive Member for Finance and IT, the final decision on submission of the validation form.

REASON FOR DECISIONS

- (1) The Council's Housing Strategy 2019-2024 outlines the Council's support for residents with housing challenges and the collective measures outlined in paragraph 2 will benefit homeless people locally, providing support for targeted interventions that will prevent and relieve homelessness.

10 REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That Council

- (1) Notes the position on the Collection fund and how it will be funded.
- (2) Notes the position relating to the General Fund balance and that due to the risk identified a minimum balance of £2.5million was recommended.
- (3) Notes the net revenue savings that are likely to be required in future years, combined with the Chief Finance Officer's commentary on the reliability of estimates and the resilience index.
- (4) Approves the revenue savings and investments as detailed in Appendix B.
- (5) Approves a net expenditure budget of £18.123m, as detailed in Appendix C.
- (6) Approves a Council Tax increase of 2.99%, which was in line with the provisions in the Medium term Financial Strategy.
- (7) Approves that the revenue investment for leisure centre condition surveys (as detailed in Appendix B, reference R13) was brought forward so that it can be spent in 2022/23.
- (8) Approves an additional revenue investment (for 2023/24 only) to create a Community Wealth Fund of £100k to support the local community in delivering projects that have wider community benefits.

REASON FOR REFERRALS:

- (1) To ensure that all relevant factors are considered in arriving at a budget and Council Tax level for 2023/24 as set out in the Council Plan.

11 INVESTMENT STRATEGY (INTEGRATED CAPITAL AND TREASURY)

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That Council:

- (1) Approves the adoption of the Investment Strategy (as attached at Appendix A), including the capital programme and prudential indicators.
- (2) Approves the adoption of the four clauses in relation to the Code of Practice on Treasury Management (as detailed in Paragraphs 8.11 to 8.16).

REASON FOR REFERRALS:

- (1) To ensure that the capital programme meets the Council's objectives and officers can plan the implementation of the approved schemes.
- (2) To ensure the Council's compliance with the CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management, the Local Government Act 2003, statutory guidance from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the CIPFA Prudential Code. As well as determining and managing the Councils risk appetite in respect of investments.