

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF
on Tuesday, 19th September, 2023 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Amy Allen.

2 MINUTES - 27 JUNE 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 27 June 2023 be 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 this meeting was being audio recorded as well as filmed. The audio recording would be available on the NHDC website and the film recording via the NHDC YouTube channel.
- (2) The Chair reminded Members that the Council had 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) The Chair reminded Members to make declarations of interest before an item, the detailed reminder about this and speaking rights was set out under Chair's Announcements on the agenda.
- (4) The Chair advised for the purposes of clarification that 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution did not apply to this meeting.
- (5) The Chair advised of a change in the order of the agenda and Item 11 'Chesfield Conservation Area' would be taken before Item 7 'DLUHC'S Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP)'.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair advised that Dr Hilary Napier was also present to provide a presentation for Members regarding Item 11 'Chesfield Conservation Area'.

6 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

The Chair advised that the items referred from the Overview and Scrutiny and the Finance, Audit and Risk Committees would be taken with the respective items on the agenda.

11 CHESFIELD CONSERVATION AREA

RESOLVED: That the Chesfield Conservation Area item be **DEFERRED** to clarify the proposed conservation area and to conduct further consultation with residents to ensure the People First priority of the Council was being met.

7 DLUHC'S SINGLE HOMELESSNESS ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet noted the content of the report and subject to a site being identified approved the submission of a bid under the SHAP programme.
- (2) That Cabinet delegated to the Service Director of Housing & Environmental Health and the Service Director Resources the preparation and submission of the bid in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing & Environmental Health and the Executive Member for Finance & IT.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: There is an urgent need for high quality, accommodation-based support services for single homeless people in the district. Adopting the recommendations at 2.1 and 2.2 would allow the Council to pursue a funding opportunity which if successful, would enable the delivery of a valuable additional resource for the district, benefiting vulnerable young people at risk of rough sleeping.

8 REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AND HOME OFFICE FUNDING UPDATE

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet noted the local position regarding the resettlement of refugees and it supports more focused resettlement efforts for this client group as part of the Council's wider housing role;
- (2) That Cabinet delegated to the Service Director – Housing and Environmental Health and the Service Director – Resources in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health and the Executive Member for Finance & IT, the authority to decide the allocation of Home Office funding to support the resettlement of refugees (for matters that are not reserved for Cabinet).

REASON FOR DECISIONS: There is likely to be increased demand for housing services from refugees in the foreseeable future and the recommendations in this report seek to manage this efficiently, whilst ensuring appropriate support services are in place.

9 PROPOSED OFF-STREET CAR PARKING TARIFFS FOR 2023/24

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet agreed to adopt the proposed off-street car park tariffs for 2023/24 as set out in Tables 1 to 5 at Appendix A
- (2) That Cabinet agreed not to increase the charges for Season Tickets for each of its long stay car parks or business permits for its car park at St. Martins Road in Knebworth for 2023/24.
- (3) That Cabinet agreed not to increase the charges for resident permits, visitor permits, business permits or visitor tickets for resident permit zones for 2023/24.
- (4) That Cabinet agreed that the proposed tariff changes, as recommended and approved in paragraphs 2.1 above, are implemented as soon as practicable, and that officers in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport proceed with the implementation as required.
- (5) That Cabinet agreed to the policy of customers paying for parking sessions whilst parked within electric vehicle charging bays.

Tuesday, 19th September, 2023

- (6) That Officers proceeded with the necessary amendments to the Off-Street Parking Traffic Regulation Orders as required to implement changes recommended and approved above, and that officers in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport proceed with the implementation as required.
- (7) That Cabinet agreed for officers in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport to implement subsidy and incentive parking schemes on a break even approach on request.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To implement an increase in car parking tariffs in order to effectively manage their use and in accordance with the Council's fees and charges policy as set out in its Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). To set car parking tariffs that support the achievement of modal shift away from private car use and to help support the vitality of town centres.

10 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT - ADOPTION

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the consultation responses were noted.
- (2) That subject to recommendation 2.1, the amendments to the draft SCI are approved and that the SCI, attached as Appendix A was adopted.
- (3) That any minor amendments to the SCI, such as typographical errors, additional statutory consultees, legislation changes, were delegated to the Service Director – Regulatory in consultation with the relevant Executive Members.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: The SCI sets out how the Council consults with the local community in preparing, masterplans for the strategic sites, strategic planning documents and in determining planning applications. It also sets out guidelines for those communities involved in neighbourhood planning.

12 HITCHIN, LETCHWORTH AND ROYSTON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) RENEWALS

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet considered the BID renewal proposals for Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston, appended in A, B and C and instructs the Returning Officer to hold the BID renewal Ballots;
- (2) That Cabinet delegated the Council's voting rights in the BID renewal process to the Service Director – Customers.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: 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.

13 FIRST QUARTER INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) REVIEW 2023/24

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet noted the forecast expenditure of £10.438M in 2023/24 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.3 refers.

Tuesday, 19th September, 2023

- (2) That Cabinet approved the adjustments to the capital programme for 2023/24 onwards, as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2 and 3, increasing the overall estimated spend in 2024/25 and beyond by £1.271M.
- (3) That Cabinet noted the position of the availability of capital resources, as detailed in table 4 paragraph 8.6 and the requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability.
- (4) Cabinet noted the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of June 2023.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (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.

14 FIRST QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet noted this report.
- (2) That Cabinet approved the changes to the 2023/24 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a £1.119million decrease in net expenditure.
- (3) That Cabinet noted the changes to the 2024/25 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a total £270k increase in net expenditure. These will be incorporated in the draft revenue budget for 2024/25.
- (4) That Cabinet delegated to the Service Director: Resources (in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT) authority to enter into a Business Rate Pooling arrangement (if available) if it is estimated that it will be in the financial interests of the Council.

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.

15 Q1 23-24 UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet noted the progress against Council projects as set out in the Council Delivery Plan (Appendix A) including changes to milestones, performance indicators and risks.
- (2) That Cabinet commented on the presentation of the report for future meetings, especially in relation to milestones and project status.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide Cabinet with an opportunity to monitor progress against the key Council projects, and understand any new issues, risks or opportunities.

16 NEW FINANCIAL SYSTEM

RESOLVED:

(1) That Cabinet noted the expected benefits from the new finance software system.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

(1) That Council approve a capital budget allocation in 2023/24 of £200k for the initial work to develop and implement the new finance software system.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: A new finance system is expected to lead to more efficient processes and a better customer experience. A new finance system will incur up-front installation and development costs. These costs can be charged to capital but require a capital budget. Additions to the capital programme above £50k require approval by Full Council.