

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF on Tuesday, 18th June, 2024 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tina Bhartwas.

Having given due notice Councillor Cllr Emma Fernandez substituted for Councillor Bhartwas.

2 MINUTES -12 MARCH 2024

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 12 March 2024 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, the meeting would be recorded.
- (2) 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.
- (3) The Chair advised that for the purposes of clarification clause 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution does not apply to this meeting.
- (4) The Chair advised a change in the order of the published agenda. Agenda items 15 – 18 would be considered after item 8, followed by items 11 – 14 and finally items 9 and 10. The Chair noted that a supplementary document relating to questions from Members along with the provided answers had been published regarding Agenda Items 17 and 18 of the published agenda.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at this meeting.

6 URGENT AND GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS

The Chair noted two urgent items in relation to the Leisure Investment Options and Award of the Waste Collection and Street Cleaning Contract.

The Forward Plan of Executive Key Decisions was published on Tuesday 28 May 2024, which listed both matters as being considered as Part 1 and Part 2 reports at the Cabinet meeting on 25 June 2024 and the Cabinet meeting on 9 July, respectively. However, the required 28-day private notices were not published ahead of the decision being taken.

Both matters were commercially sensitive, and the decisions could not practicably be delayed to the next Cabinet meeting in September 2024 as they were time critical.

As per the requirements, the Council obtained the agreement of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the formal notices were published on the Council's website.

7 CALLED-IN ITEMS

There were no called-in items.

8 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

No questions were submitted by Members.

9 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).

10 PART 2 MINUTES - 7 NOVEMBER, 5 DECEMBER 2023

RESOLVED: That the Part 2 Minutes of the Meetings of the Committee held on 7 November and 5 December 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

11 LEISURE INVESTMENT OPTIONS - PART 2

RECOMMENDED:

2.1 To take this Part 2 report into consideration when reaching the decisions detailed in Part 1.

12 LEISURE INVESTMENT OPTIONS - PART 1

RECOMMENDED:

That Overview and Scrutiny recommends to Cabinet:

That Cabinet takes into account the matters set out in the Part 2 report when reaching the following decisions:

2.1 That Cabinet agree in principle to terminate the Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Centrica contracts at North Herts Leisure Centre (NHLC) and Hitchin Swimming and Fitness Centre (HSFC) at the appropriate time during the PSDS project and recommend to Council as per 2.6 below regarding the termination fee.

2.2 That Cabinet expresses its profound disappointment at the position taken by Centrica over the cost of the CHP contract termination, given the company's stated position as "Energising a greener, fairer future" and requests that the Council continues to raise, and seek solutions to, the issue of long-term inflexible agreements for gas CHPs with Salix and Government, which will inevitably prevent many public sector organisations from achieving their net zero ambitions.

2.3 That Cabinet does not approve the business case for Royston Leisure Centre Learner Pool at this time due to matters identified in the part 2 report.

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- 2.4 That the Project Board keep business case under review and meaningful and legitimate work to explore all funding options is undertaken for Royston learner pool.

That Cabinet recommends to Council:

- 2.5 an increase in capital expenditure of £2.4m into the capital programme for the decarbonisation work to the three leisure centres. The overall budget will be profiled across 2024/25 and 2025/26
- 2.6 an increase in the capital budget of £250k for the Royston Leisure Centre (RLC) gym extension, to ensure the extension is built to net zero carbon standards.
- 2.7 approval of revenue expenditure of up to £757k for termination and removal fees of the gas CHPs at North Herts Leisure Centre and Hitchin Fitness and Swimming Centre. This would be funded from General Fund reserves

13 INFORMATION NOTE - FULL YEAR UPDATE ON 3Cs 23/24

RESOLVED: That the 3Cs Information provided was noted.

14 REPORT FOLLOWING CALL TO ACCOUNT - HARKNESS COURT

RESOLVED:

The content of the Vice Chair's report, attached as Appendix A, was noted and findings included within were endorsed.

15 Q4 COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE

RESOLVED:

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee request more detail as part of the next monitoring report on the process for adding new projects to the plan and ensuring that it reflects priorities.

16 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2024/25

RECOMMENDED:

- 2.1. That Overview and Scrutiny recommend to Cabinet that the performance indicators set out in paragraph 8.3 be adopted for 2024/25.
- 2.2 The additional performance measure of Staff Satisfaction measures be incorporated into future reports.

17 RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDED:

That the report entitled 'Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee' was noted.

18 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

RECOMMENDED:

- 2.1. That the Committee prioritises topics for inclusion in the Work Programme attached as Appendix A and, where appropriate, determines the high-level form and timing of scrutiny input.

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- 2.2. That the Committee, having considered the most recent iteration of the Forward Plan, as attached at Appendix B, suggests a list of items to be considered at its meetings in the coming civic year.
- 2.3 That the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan as attached at Appendix C be considered.