

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH  
ON THURSDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 2019 AT 7.30 PM**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** *Councillors Martin Stears-Handscomb (Chairman), Councillor Paul Clark (Vice-Chairman), Ian Albert, Judi Billing, Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg, Gary Grindal, Keith Hoskins and Ruth Brown*

**In Attendance:** *Anthony Roche (Deputy Chief Executive), Ian Fullstone (Service Director - Regulatory), Jeanette Thompson (Service Director - Legal and Community), Antonio Ciampa (Accountancy Manager), Reuben Ayavoo (Policy and Community Engagement Manager), Martin Lawrence (Strategic Housing Manager), Christopher Robson (Senior Estates Surveyor), Peter Lapham (Interim Property Consultant) and Hilary Dineen (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager)*

**Also Present:** *At the commencement of the meeting Councillor Claire Strong.*

**49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

*Audio recording – 22 seconds*

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Steve Jarvis, Ian Mantle, Helen Oliver and Carol Stanier.

**50 MINUTES - 24 SEPTEMBER 2019**

*Audio Recording – 48 seconds*

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 24 September 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**51 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

*Audio recording – 1 minute 1 second*

There was no other business notified.

**52 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Audio recording – 1 minute 4 seconds*

- (1) The Chairman welcomed those present at the meeting;
- (2) The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;

- (3) The Chairman 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;
- (4) The Chairman reminded those present that the Council had declared a Climate Emergency and had not only set up a Cabinet Panel on the Environment, but were also beginning to work on issues within the organisation.

### **53 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 45 seconds*

There were no presentations by members of the public.

### **54 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 48 seconds*

There were no referrals from other Committees.

### **55 STRATEGIC PLANNING MATTERS**

*Audio Recording – 2 minutes 52 seconds*

The Executive Member for Planning and Transport presented the report entitled Strategic Planning Matters together with the following appendices:

- Appendix A – Letter from NHDC to Local Plan Inspector;
- Appendix B – Consultation response to Hertfordshire Local Industrial Strategy;
- Appendix C – Consultation response to HCC Draft Developer Contributions Guide;
- Appendix D – Hertfordshire Growth Board MoU.

The Executive Members for Planning and Transport drew attention to the following:

- A Local Plan Project Board meeting would take place on 5 November 2019;
- A report regarding Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 would be presented to the Cabinet meeting due to be held on 17 December 2019;
- In respect of the declared Climate Emergency:
  - Improved design of housing would be considered in the Design SPD;
  - All Planning reports would contain an environmental impact assessment;
- The consultation regarding London Luton Airport had commenced.

The Service Director – Regulatory advised Members of the issues relating to Central Bedfordshire's Local Plan.

The Leader of the Council drew attention to the Hertfordshire Growth Board Memorandum of Understanding and explained that this was needed to enable all Hertfordshire Councils to speak as a whole.

The following Member asked questions and took part in the debate:

- Councillor Ian Albert.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the report entitled Strategic Planning Matters be noted;

- (2) That the submissions in Appendices A, B and C be noted and endorsed;
- (3) That the use of Conservation Area Character Statements for Charlton, Gosmore, Great Offley, Preston and St Ippolyts as listed in Paragraph 8.4.3 of the report as material considerations in decision making for planning applications and in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans be endorsed.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** That Cabinet supports the proposed Memorandum of Understanding relating to the Hertfordshire Growth Board, attached as Appendix D, and recommends to Council the signing of the agreement.

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

## 56 COUNCIL PLAN 2020-2025 AND COUNCIL OBJECTIVES 2020-2025

*Audio recording – 15 minutes*

The Leader of the Council presented the report entitled Council Plan 2020-2025 and Council Objectives 2020-2015 together with the following appendices:

- Appendix A - Draft Council Plan 2020-2025;
- Appendix B – Proposed actions for 2020-2025;
- Appendix C – Achievements of the Council in 2018/19.

The Leader of the Council advised that through workshops, all Councillors had been given the opportunity to have an input into the Plan. He referred to the changes discussed at the All-Member Workshop. Two changes had been suggested to the Objectives. One suggested removing the word “more” from the first objective. He recommended that this was not accepted. as while being a welcoming council, is at the centre of what we should be, our aspiration is to be more welcoming. The word “homes” rather than “housing” in the fifth objective should be accepted. Other recommendations had been included in Appendix B.

The Policy and Community Engagement Manager displayed a draft layout of the Plan on the screens in the Chamber.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Judi Billing;
- Councillor Paul Clark;
- Councillor Gary Grindal.

Councillor Billing indicated that whilst some of parts of the Plan had been drafted by herself and Councillor Brown, use of the word ‘street’ and some of the grammar needed to be changed and then proof read. There was also discussion around the changes of the use of the word ‘homes’ as opposed to ‘housing’, with specific reference to the diagram by Councillor Grindal.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the draft complete Council Plan, which provides a summary of objectives and of activity to support the progression of the following Council Objectives be approved:
  - Be a more welcoming and inclusive **council**;
  - Build a thriving and resilient **communities**;
  - Respond to challenges to the **environment**;
  - Enable an enterprising and co-operative **economy**;
  - Support the delivery of good quality and affordable **homes**.

- (2) That the following documents be recommended for approval, with the minor amendments and corrections as discussed:
- Appendix A - Council Plan 2020-2025;
  - Appendix B – Proposed Actions;
  - Appendix C – Achievements.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** That the following documents be adopted with the amendments as discussed:

- Appendix A – Council Plan 2020 -2025;
- Appendix B – Proposed Actions;
- Appendix C – Achievements.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** The Council plan is a key element of the corporate business planning process, as a high level strategic document it sets out the Council's priorities for the next year. As an overarching policy framework document it guides and influences the use of Council resources; providing a focus for activities, plans and services the Council provide.

## 57 THE GOVERNMENT'S REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT SCHEME

*Audio recording – 22 minutes 54 seconds*

The Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health presented the report entitled the Government's Refugee Resettlement Scheme and drew attention to the following:

- 10 Syrian families had been resettled successfully and integrated well into their communities;
- Appropriate support had been provided to these families;
- Syrian refugees were being sought for this resettlement as the infrastructure was already in place.

The following Members asked questions and took part in the debate:

- Councillor Judi Billing;
- Councillor Paul Clark;
- Councillor Ian Albert;
- Councillor Martin Stears-Handscorn.

In response to questions the Strategic Housing Manager advised that:

- The families previously resettled were 5 strong;
- North Herts was well served with 3 bedroomed housing;
- Links would be made between families wherever possible;
- North Herts resettled approximately 20 percent of the families previously resettled in Hertfordshire;
- Getting the housing early was key to success;
- Refugees could have complex needs.

### **RESOLVED:**

That, subject to the successful appointment of a specialist refugee support provider:

- (1) the Government's extended refugee resettlement programme be supported;
- (2) ten Syrian refugees be resettled in North Hertfordshire in the first year of the new global resettlement scheme and authorises officers to make the necessary arrangements to deliver this commitment.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To enable the Council to continue to support the Government's refugee resettlement programme.

**58 LAND AT WINDMILL CLOSE, BARKWAY**

*Audio recording – 32 minutes 3 seconds*

The Executive Member for Enterprise and Co-Operative Development presented the report entitle Land at Windmill Close, Barkway together with the following appendices:

- Appendix A - Location Plan of Land to be Declared Surplus;
- Appendix B – S.123 Local Press Advertisement;
- Appendix C – Amended BK2 Local Plan Allocation;
- Appendix D – Correspondence from Councillor Morris;
- Appendix E – Correspondence from Barkway Parish Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the land at Windmill Close, Barkway be declared surplus to the District Council's requirements and placed on the open market for sale on a subject to planning basis for residential development;
- (2) Following receipt of offers for the 2.23 acres of land identified at Appendix A, the decision to accept an offer be delegated to the Service Director for Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

- (1) To provide a financial receipt to help fund the District Council's capital programme;
- (2) Marketing the land on the open market will maximise interest from developers and satisfy the requirements to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm

Chairman