

CABINET

Meeting held on Tuesday, 15th November, 2022 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr D.E. Clifford, Leader of the Council
Cllr M.L. Sheehan, Deputy Leader and Operational Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr M.J. Tennant, Deputy Leader and Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder

Cllr J.B. Canty, Customer Experience, Digital and Transformation Portfolio Holder
Cllr Sue Carter, Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships Portfolio Holder
Cllr A.R. Newell, Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder
Cllr P.G. Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet considered the following matters at the above-mentioned meeting. All executive decisions of the Cabinet shall become effective, subject to the call-in procedure, from **28th November, 2022**.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Having regard to the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors, no declarations of interest were made.

31. MINUTES –

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th October, 2022 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

32. BUDGET STRATEGY 2023/24 –

(Cllr Paul Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2234, which set out the budgetary framework to support the preparation of the Council's 2023/24 budget.

The Report set out a summary of the Council's financial position and explained how Members would be kept informed of material changes in the forecast over the medium term for financial planning purposes. Members were informed that the final decision on the overall budget and Council Tax level would be made by the Council at its meeting in February, 2023. It was confirmed that the Council, along with most local authorities, faced a significant and immediate set of financial challenges, many of which would continue over the medium term. Members were informed that a number of proposals were contained within the Report as a suggested way forward in delivering the reductions in expenditure required. Included in this was a recommendation that the Council should move to a system of Outcomes Based Budgeting as the primary methodology for addressing the budget gap for 2023/24 and future years.

The Cabinet was supportive of the approaches set out in the Report, including the move to Outcomes Based Budgeting, as the most effective way for the Council to proceed in facing the financial challenges at this time.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the revised budget gap contained within this Budget Strategy update for 2023/24, as set out in paragraph 4.7 of Report No. FIN2234, be noted;
- (ii) the endorsement of the budget principles, as set out in paragraph 5.2 of the Report, be approved; and
- (iii) the intended approach to developing new savings and income proposals to close the projected gap, as set out in paragraph 5.8 of the Report, be noted.

33. COUNCIL PLAN AND RISK REGISTER QUARTERLY UPDATE JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2022/23 –

(Cllr Sue Carter, Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet received Report No. ACE2206, which set out progress in delivering the Council Business Plan projects during the second quarter of 2022/23. Members were informed that progress against key activities and projects was included in the Report, along with the Council's business performance monitoring information and the Council's Corporate Risk Register. It was reported that, at the end of the second quarter, just over 50% of projects/activities were showing an amber status. Many of these projects were showing as amber due to reporting delays of between one and three months and most were still on track to be delivered in 2022/23.

The Cabinet NOTED the progress made towards delivering the Council Business Plan, as set out in Report No. ACE2206.

34. REVIEW OF LICENSING FEES –

(Cllr Maurice Sheehan, Operational Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. OS2219, which set out a proposed revised scheme of fees for the Council's Animal Licensing and Scrap Metal Dealer Licensing fees.

Members were informed that the fees were being reviewed in the context of the financial pressures being experienced by the Council at the present time. It was reported that the new fee structure had been prepared on the basis of full cost recovery and the details of the process in each case were appended to the Report.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the new Animal Licensing and Scrap Metal Dealer Licensing fees, as set out in Report No. OS2219, be approved.

35. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS –

(Cllr Adrian Newell, Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. EPSH2234, which set out proposed Conservation Area appraisals and management plans, following a review of the St.

Michael's Abbey, Farnborough Hill / Farnborough Street and Aldershot West Conservation Areas. The Chairman welcomed Mr George Britton, who was representing local residents in the Highgate Lane and Chingford Avenue area and had requested to address the Cabinet on the proposed boundaries of the new Farnborough Street and Farnborough Hill Conservation Areas.

Members were informed that it was proposed that the former Farnborough Hill Conservation Area should be split to form the separate Farnborough Hill and Farnborough Street Conservation Areas. It was confirmed that consultation exercises had been carried out on the draft appraisals and management plans and that the responses received were summarised within the Report. It was proposed that, in the case of each of the Farnborough Conservation Areas, properties and roads that were not considered to justify conservation area designation by virtue of special architectural or historic interest should not be included within their boundaries.

The Cabinet heard from Mr Britton, who was speaking on behalf of local residents from Highgate Lane and Chingford Avenue. Mr Britton considered that the appraisal process had been flawed and that no satisfactory definition of 'historic or architectural significance or character' had been provided. It was the view of the residents that areas and many of the properties proposed to be removed from the new Conservation Areas were of such significance and that properties built in the 20th Century should be recognised as worthy of protection. It was not felt that residents had been sufficiently involved in the review process.

The Cabinet considered the representations made and discussed the role and advice of Historic England in the process. It was confirmed that Historic England had responded to consultation on the proposed appraisals and reviews of Conservation Areas but had not offered a view on the merits of the inclusion or otherwise of the individual houses or groups of houses under discussion. Historic England had commented that it is outside its remit to provide an opinion on what should or should not be in a conservation area as this is legally identified as the role of the Local Planning Authority.

The Cabinet was advised that the process and recommendations had been informed by advice within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Historic England's Advice Note 1 on Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that no tree worthy of preservation would go unprotected as a result of being removed from a Conservation Area and that new Tree Preservation Orders were in preparation to ensure this. Members felt that, when considering all of the available information, it was right to make the changes proposed in the Report to demonstrate a consistent approach to Conservation Areas across the Borough.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the adoption of the St. Michael's Abbey Conservation Area appraisal and management plan, as set out in Appendix 1 of Report No. EPSH2234, be approved;

- (ii) the adoption of the Farnborough Hill Conservation Area appraisal and management plan, as set out in Appendix 2 of the Report, be approved;
- (iii) the undertaking of an exercise to reconsult on the revised appraisal for the Farnborough Street Conservation Area, solely to seek views on whether it should be extended to include the Station Master's House, as set out in Appendix 3 of the Report, be approved, with the Head of Economy, Planning and Strategic Housing, in consultation with the Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder, being authorised to make any necessary final amendments to the boundary in the light of consultee comments received before being finally adopted;
- (iv) the undertaking of an exercise to consult on a draft Aldershot West Conservation Area appraisal and management plan, as set out in Appendix 4 of the Report, be approved, with the Head of Economy, Planning and Strategic Housing, in consultation with the Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder, being authorised to make any minor revisions to the text of the appraisal in the light of consultee comments received before being finally adopted.

36. **SAVINGS AND TRANSFORMATION AND DELIVERING COUNCIL PRIORITIES - ORGANISATIONAL REDESIGN –**
(Mr Paul Shackley, Chief Executive)

The Cabinet considered Report No. CEX2202, which set out the Chief Executive's update on progress in relation to the Council's Transformation and Savings Programme and proposed changes to the Council's staffing structures, arising as a result of a consequential review of organisational design.

Members heard that a number of measures were being proposed, including the deletion of two Head of Service posts, the acceptance of two resignations under the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) and the redundancy of the Council's existing Technical Services Manager. The Report set out full details of these and the other changes that were being proposed. It was reported that the changes would result in ongoing annual savings to the Council's revenue budget of between £167,000 and £179,000, with a net transition cost in 2022/23 of £41,000, which would be met from existing budgets.

The Cabinet was supportive of the suggested approach, as part of the Council's response to the financial challenges currently being faced.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the progress to date of the ICE Transformation Programme and the establishment of the Saving and Transformation Programme (STP), as set out in Report No. CEX2202, be noted;
- (ii) the new senior management arrangements, as set out in the Report, be noted;

- (iii) the proposed changes to the staffing establishment to enable the delivery of key priorities, as set out in the Report, be noted;
- (iv) the taking forward of further staffing and other service changes through the Saving and Transformation Programme, by the Chief Executive, in line with the requirement outlined in the new Medium Term Financial Strategy, the 2023/24 budget and as a result of any further joint working with Hart District Council, be noted;
- (v) the revised Chief Officers Pay Scales in line with the new senior management arrangements, as set out in paragraph 5.12 of the Report, be approved;
- (vi) an interim amendment to the current pay policy to allow a market supplement of up to £10,000 per annum for specific hard to recruit roles, for the duration of a review of recruitment and retention, as set out in the Report, be approved; and
- (vii) the Interim Executive Head of Finance be authorised to amend in year budgets as required, in line with the financial implications set out in the Report.

The Meeting closed at 8.18 pm.

CLLR D.E. CLIFFORD, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
