

# CABINET

Meeting held on Tuesday, 15th October, 2024 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

## **Voting Members**

Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council and Finance Portfolio Holder  
Cllr Sophie Porter, Deputy Leader and Community & Residents Portfolio Holder

Cllr Jules Crossley, Policy, Climate & Sustainability Portfolio Holder  
Cllr Christine Guinness, Regeneration & Property Portfolio Holder

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Abe Allen, Keith Dibble and Becky Williams.

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 October, 2024.

## 26. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

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

## 27. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10th September, 2024 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## 28. **CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE FEEDBACK REPORT AND ACTION PLAN –** (Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council and Finance Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. CEX2405, which set out the findings of the Corporate Peer Challenge exercise that had been carried out in June, 2024.

The Report set out feedback along with ten key recommendations on how the Council could improve how it delivered its functions. In response to the feedback report, the Council had developed an action plan to address the recommendations made. The action plan would be closely monitored by the Council's Corporate Management Team and reported to the Cabinet through the standard quarterly performance management process from 2024/25 Quarter 3 onwards.

The Cabinet welcomed the findings of the corporate peer challenge exercise and expressed appreciation to all of those who had been involved in the process.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that

- (i) the Corporate Peer Challenge report, as set out in Report No. CEX2405, be noted;

- (ii) the action plan, as set out in the Report, be approved; and
- (iii) the reporting of progress against the action plan through the standard quarterly performance management process be approved from 2024/25 Quarter 3 onwards.

29. **FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN –**  
(Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council and Finance Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. CEX2406, which set out a Financial Recovery Plan for the Council.

Members were reminded that the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which had been approved on 22nd February, 2024, had presented a cumulative £19.152 million budget deficit over the four years to 2027/28, before mitigation through a savings programme. In response to this, the high-level Financial Resilience Plan had been developed to address the deficit and the Charter Institute of Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) had been appointed to review and provide assurance on the plan. In July, 2024, the Cabinet and Council had considered the Medium Term Financial Strategy update and 2023-24 Budget Outturn report, which had included the CIPFA report. The CIPFA report had endorsed the approach being taken and had encouraged the Council to deliver a detailed plan as a priority. As a result, the Financial Recovery Plan had been developed and this included the delivery of revenue savings and capital receipts, as well as improving capability and capacity within the Finance function. The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the CIPFA report at its meeting on 12th September and the matters raised by the Committee were included in the report and considered by the Cabinet. Similarly, the Financial Recovery Working Group had considered this matter and its comments were reported by the Leader of the Council.

The Cabinet welcomed the Financial Recovery Plan and considered this to be a rapid response to the requirement to address the Council's financial position.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that

- (i) the matters raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Section 3.19 of Report No. CEX2406, be noted;
- (ii) the comments of the Financial Recovery Working Group, as reported at the meeting, be noted;
- (iii) the Financial Recovery Plan actions, as set out in Annex 2 (Revenue) and Exempt Annex 3 (Capital) of the Report, be approved;
- (iv) the actions set out and completed in the Finance Service capacity and capability workstream, as set out in Annex 1 (page 2 onwards) of the Report, be noted; and
- (v) the progress made on the delivery of actions to date, as set out in the Report, be noted.

30. **PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY –**  
(Cllr Sophie Porter, Deputy Leader and Community & Residents Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. ACE2411, which set out the Council's statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010, its compliance with those duties and proposed actions to ensure compliance.

Members were informed that a review had been carried out regarding the Council's compliance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and that this had shown that some corrective action was required. It was proposed that two new equality objectives should be introduced around promoting the use of equality impact assessments and tackling the effects of poverty and deprivation. It was further proposed that the Council should publish an equality report on its website each year in order to fulfil its duty under the Equality Act to publish equality information.

The Cabinet welcomed the proposals and considered that a strong approach to equalities was vital to progressing its future priorities. The importance of a partnership approach in addressing deprivation matters was also discussed.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that

- (i) the two new equality objectives, as set out in Section 3.2 of Report No. ACE2411, be approved; and
- (ii) the publishing of an annual equality report and other information, as set out in Sections 3.3 - 3.6 of the Report, be approved.

31. **CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS –**  
(Cllr Keith Dibble, Development & Economic Growth Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. PG2427, which set out the background of reviews of the Aldershot West, Farnborough Street and South Farnborough Conservation Areas.

Members were reminded that the Council had been carrying out reviews of all of the Borough's conservation areas over the previous few years. It was reported that this represented the final tranche of these reviews. In the case of Aldershot West, it was proposed to carry out another consultation exercise as a result of changes that had been made to the proposal following the first consultation exercise. It was proposed that delegated authority be granted for the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the portfolio holder, to agree the final scheme, subject to only minor amendments being required following the consultation exercise. Regarding Farnborough Street and South Farnborough, the Report set out proposed changes and the reasons for this. It was not proposed to carry out further consultation exercises in these cases.

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. It was further felt that the public had had ample opportunity to affect these changes due to the comprehensive consultation exercises that had been, and were due to be, carried out.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED that**

- (i) the re-consultation on the revised appraisal and management plan for the Aldershot West Conservation Area, as set out in Appendix 1 of Report No. PG2427, be approved, with the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Development & Economic Growth Portfolio Holder, being authorised to adopt the appraisal and management plan, subject to any necessary, non-substantive final amendments in the light of consultee comments received;
- (ii) the adoption of the Farnborough Street Conservation Area appraisal and management plan, as set out in Appendix 2 of Report No. PG2427, be approved, with the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Development & Economic Growth Portfolio Holder, being authorised to make any necessary minor amendments prior to publication; and
- (iii) the adoption of the South Farnborough Conservation Area appraisal and management plan, as set out in Appendix 3 of Report No. PG2427, be approved, with the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Development & Economic Growth Portfolio Holder, being authorised to make any necessary minor amendments prior to publication.

**32. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC –**

**RESOLVED:** That, taking into account the public interest test, the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the under mentioned items to avoid the disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 indicated against the items:

<b>Minute Nos.</b>	<b>Schedule 12A Para. No.</b>	<b>Category</b>
33 and 34	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE CONSIDERED  
IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC**

**33. FRIMLEY 4 BUSINESS PARK – DISPOSAL OF PLOTS 4.2 & 4.3 –**  
(Cllr Christine Guinness, Regeneration & Property Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report No. REG2428, which sought delegated approval to dispose of the freehold interests in plots 4.2 and 4.3 at Frimley Business Park, in accordance with the agreed Heads of Terms.

Members were informed that this disposal would contribute towards the capital receipts target of £40 million that had been agreed at the Council meeting in February, 2024. The Exempt Report set out all of the terms of the disposal and how this would contribute to the delivery of the Financial Recovery Plan.

The Cabinet expressed strong support for the proposed approach as an important strand towards delivering stability to the Council's financial position.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Regeneration & Property Portfolio Holder and the Executive Head of Finance, be authorised to dispose of the freehold interest in plots 4.2 and 4.3 at Frimley Business Park, in accordance with the Heads of Terms and at a value within the range set out in paragraph 3.7 of Exempt Report No. REG2428, subject to final legal due diligence.

34. **LETTING OF NO. 8 UNION YARD, ALDERSHOT –**  
(Cllr Christine Guinness, Regeneration & Property Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report No. PG2429, which set out a proposal to grant a capital contribution to a new tenant that would be coming to the Union Yard development in Aldershot.

Members were informed that the grant would assist the new tenant by contributing towards the cost of fitting out the new commercial unit. The Report set out the amount of the capital contribution and the terms applicable.

Members expressed support for the proposed approach and felt that this would be helpful to the overall launch of the Union Yard development.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that the capital contribution towards the tenant fit out of No. 8 Union Yard, Aldershot, on the terms set out in Exempt Report No. PG2429, be approved.

The Meeting closed at 7.49 pm.

CLLR GARETH WILLIAMS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND FINANCE  
PORTFOLIO HOLDER

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