

CABINET

***Tuesday, 20th September, 2016 at 7.00 p.m.
at the Council Offices, Farnborough***

Councillor D.E. Clifford (Leader of the Council)
Councillor K.H. Muschamp (Deputy Leader and Business, Safety and
Regulation Portfolio)

Councillor Sue Carter (Leisure and Youth Portfolio)
Councillor Barbara Hurst (Health and Housing Portfolio)
Councillor G.B. Lyon (Concessions and Community Support Portfolio)
Councillor P.G. Taylor (Corporate Services Portfolio)
Councillor M.J. Tennant (Environment and Service Delivery Portfolio)

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 **4th October, 2016**.

119. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23rd August, 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

120. **FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL FORECAST –** (Leader of the Council)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Financial Services' Report No. FIN1619, which set out a review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and sought endorsement of an updated Strategy for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. It was appropriate to carry out the review at this time as the Council was about to move into its next budget setting cycle.

The Cabinet was advised that the review of the Strategy had been carried out in light of the expected continuation of the challenging financial circumstances that the Council had experienced for a number of years. Members were informed that the existing Strategy had served the Council well in supporting financial planning over the medium term. It had been integral to the Corporate Plan and had supported the 8-Point Plan for the achievement of sustainability.

The Report set out the keys risks and considerations for future budget setting under the following headings:

- Central Government funding
- Business Rates Retention Scheme
- New Homes Bonus
- The multi-year settlement offer

- 2017/18 Local Government Finance Settlement – technical consultation paper
- Council Tax
- Transformational change
- Interest rates
- Level of reserves
- Devolution
- Other key risks
- Sustainability

The Cabinet was informed that, to ensure that a revised Strategy would be relevant to current decision making, it was necessary to consider this in the context of the Medium Term Financial Forecast. The Revenue Forecast indicated the anticipated funding gap for each of the years in the medium term, based on a set of assumptions about cost pressures and funding levels, and set these against cost reductions and income generation proposed in the 8-Point Plan. The Forecast showed a projected budget gap of £3.4 million by 2019/20. The Council was in the process of securing borrowing to support the Capital Programme but it was confirmed that there were very competitive inter- authority interest rates of around 0.25% widely available.

It was recommended that the Government's offer of a guaranteed four year settlement would provide the Council with some certainty for its future financial planning and should, therefore, be accepted.

During discussion, Members expressed their satisfaction with the Council's financial position and were content that the Council's 8-Point Plan had been successful in helping to deliver this. The Cabinet also acknowledged the good work carried out by the Budget Strategy Working Group and Rushmoor officers in getting to this position.

The Cabinet

- (i) **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that the Council's Financial Strategy, as set out in Appendix A of the Head of Financial Services' Report No. FIN1619, be approved; and
- (ii) **RESOLVED** that:
 - (a) the principal issues identified in the Report and the summary of risks, as set out in Appendix B, be noted;
 - (b) acceptance of the multi-year settlement offer be approved; and
 - (c) authority for the production of an efficiency plan be delegated to the Head of Financial Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.

121. **APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF –**
(Concessions and Community Support)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Financial Services' Report No. FIN1617 which set out details of three applications for rate relief from the Batten Disease Family Association (Office No. 1, The Old Library, Boundary Road, Farnborough), Parkside (Aldershot and District Learning Disability) Fab Café (Farnborough Library, Pinehurst, Farnborough) and Fabrica NCV Limited (No. 16 Camp Road, Farnborough).

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the application for discretionary rate relief from the Batten Disease Family Association be refused on the grounds that the national charity could not currently demonstrate a sufficient local benefit;
- (ii) 20% top-up discretionary relief be awarded to Parkside (Aldershot and District Learning Disability) Fab Café for year 2016/17; and
- (iii) authority to determine the application by Fabrica NCV Limited be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Concessions and Community Support, to allow for a visit to be made to the premises.

122. **WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT LOCAL PLAN PART 1 – STRATEGY AND SITES CONSULTATION –**
(Environment and Service Delivery)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Planning's Report No. PLN1631, which sought agreement to submit comments on Waverley Borough Council's Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Part 1: Strategy and Sites document, which was open to consultation until 3rd October, 2016.

The Report set out the context of this consultation in terms of National Planning Policy and explained how Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Councils together formed a Housing Market Area. It was explained that Waverley, Guildford and Woking Councils were working together in a similar way. It was predicted in the document that Waverley would meet its objectively assessed housing need within its administrative area. The document also expressed a commitment to preserving the strategic gap between Aldershot and Farnham, although proposed changes to the gap would be included in Part 2 of the Local Plan and Rushmoor would work closely with Waverley in this respect at that time.

The Cabinet discussed several elements of the consultation, including the risks associated with Waverley relying on developments at Dunsfold Aerodrome to meet a large proportion of its housing need. It was also stressed that local infrastructure should be improved sufficiently to cope with

the increase in the local population.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the Council make representations on the Waverley Borough Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Part 1: Strategy and Sites consultation document, based on the comments set out in the Head of Planning's Report No. PLN1631.

123. **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT – CONSULTATION ON THE CONNAUGHT SCHOOL –**
(Leisure and Youth)

The Cabinet considered the Corporate Director's Report No. CD1604, which sought agreement to submit comments on Hampshire County Council's consultation on the future of the Connaught School, Aldershot, which was open until 30th September, 2016.

A comprehensive briefing paper was attached to the Report and this set out the background to the consultation and a detailed explanation of the proposed options. In addition to this, Members had had a meeting on 19th September, 2016 when presentations had been given by Hampshire County Council and the head teacher at Westgate School in Winchester, which was an example of an 'all through' school, having pupils aged from four to sixteen years. Members were informed that Connaught School's governing body now supported Hampshire County Council's preferred option of the merger with Belle Vue Infant School and Newport Junior School to form an 'all through' school across the three existing sites.

The Cabinet discussed several elements of the consultation, including the likely timescale for the changes if agreed. Members were content that there was now a level of agreement as to the best way forward and expressed gratitude to Connaught's Chair of Governors for what had been achieved at the Connaught School.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) a response be made, on behalf of the Council, to the consultation on the future of the Connaught School, as set out in the Corporate Director's Report No. CD1604 and discussed at the Meeting, to include:
 - welcoming the opportunity to continue to work with Hampshire County Council on the future of the Connaught School and improving educational attainment across Rushmoor;
 - supporting the preferred option of an all through school but not wanting to rule out the possibility of moving to an academy in the future;

- being keen to engage with Hampshire County Council on the possibility in the future of a new building for the new school on a single site; and
- (ii) the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Youth, be authorised to finalise the detailed response.

NOTE: Cr. D.E. Clifford declared a prejudicial interest in this item in respect of his company supplying goods to schools in the Borough and, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, left the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

124. **CONNAUGHT LEISURE CENTRE, ALDERSHOT – CHANGES TO WEEKDAY OPENING TIMES –**
(Leisure and Youth)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Community and Environmental Services' Report No. COMM1612, which sought approval to change the weekday opening times at the Connaught Leisure Centre, Aldershot.

Members were informed that the existing weekday opening times were 8.30 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.. It was proposed that these should change to 5.00 p.m. – 10.00 p.m., with weekends remaining unchanged. It was explained that the revised hours would significantly reduce the Centre's operating costs and would alleviate safeguarding concerns raised by the school around adult customers mixing with school pupils. A full explanation of each of the reasons was given in the Report. It was reported that arrangements had been made to provide existing Connaught customers with access to daytime fitness facilities at the nearby Aldershot Indoor Pools.

The Cabinet expressed support for this proposal and the need to make the facility sustainable by achieving an operating surplus.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the changes to the opening times at Connaught Leisure Centre, as set out in the Head of Community and Environmental Services' Report No. COMM1612, be approved.

125. **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REVIEW OF AGENCY AGREEMENTS – TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, HIGHWAYS DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AND ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS –**
(Environment and Service Delivery)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Community and Environmental Services' Report No. COMM1617, which provided an update on changes to the County Agency Agreements and sought approval for the Council to continue with an agency arrangement and deliver a range of services, with some adjustments.

The Cabinet was informed that, due to funding pressures, the County Council had had to reduce service levels and funding of agency arrangements where Rushmoor provided services on behalf of the County Council. The Report set out where these reductions would take place within the areas of traffic management, highways development control and environmental works.

The Cabinet discussed the proposals and acknowledged that the County Council had little choice but to implement these changes. Members were keen, however, to supplement these important local services wherever possible, such as in providing additional weed control operations. It was confirmed that the Council would continue to discuss with the County Council how this might be achieved.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) given the high priority for traffic management, environmental works and highways development control and in order to maintain influence and deliver improvements, the continuation of the delivery of an agency agreement for Hampshire County Council, as set out in the the Head of Community and Environmental Services' Report No. COMM1617, be approved; and
- (ii) the financial implications, as set out in the Report, be approved.

126. RUSHMOOR MARKETS AND CAR BOOT SALES – UPDATE –
(Environment and Service Delivery)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Community and Environmental Services' Report No. COMM1619, which sought approval to delegate responsibility for some operational issues and the setting of rent and to apply for planning approval to change the days of operation.

The Cabinet was reminded that the operation of Rushmoor's markets and car boot sales had been brought in house in early 2015. Since that time, in Farnborough the Tuesday market had thrived in its new location in Queensmead but the Sunday market had done less well. The Sunday car boot sale had remained busy. In Aldershot, the Thursday market had remained stable but both the Saturday market and Sunday car boot had struggled in recent times. The Report set out a number of proposals to increase footfall and income generation:

- Aldershot market rents to be reduced by £10 per pitch
- Farnborough rents to be increased by £2.50 per pitch
- Farnborough Sunday market to be moved to a Friday, subject to planning consent

- Aldershot Saturday market to be moved to a Monday, subject to planning consent
- Aldershot Sunday car boot to be moved to a Saturday

The Cabinet was supportive of these proposals and was keen for any other opportunities to be fully explored, such as Italian and Farmers' markets and activities involving Rushmoor's twin towns. It was agreed that the delegation of the responsibility for the setting of rents and other operational issues would make the service more responsive and likely to deliver improvements.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the delegation of responsibility for operational issues and the setting of rents, as set out in the Head of Community and Environmental Services' Report No. COMM1619, be approved; and
- (ii) the Head of Community and Environmental Services be authorised to implement the other proposals set out in the Report, including the applications for planning approval for a Friday market in Farnborough and a Monday market in Aldershot.

127. CAR PARKING SERVICE – REPLACEMENT OF PAY AND DISPLAY MACHINES AND RELATED MATTERS –
(Environment and Service Delivery)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Community and Environmental Services' Report No. COMM1618, which sought approval for a proposed approach to the replacement of the Council's pay and display machines and a number of related matters.

The Cabinet was informed that the Council's existing machines were now at the end of their life. The proposed new machines would be equipped to take the new £1 coins as well as a number of other methods of payment, such as debit card and pay by phone. It was explained that the use of Rushmoor's Parking Smartcards had tailed off significantly in recent years and it was, therefore, proposed that these should be phased out. Furthermore, in the event of the phasing out of Parking Smartcards, it was recommended that the existing Smartcard 65 Plus concession, where residents over the age of 65 currently received £50 credit for a payment of £25, should not be carried forward to any alternative method of payment, such as permits or pay by phone. It was explained that there was no evidence to suggest that those aged 65 and over were any more economically disadvantaged than other customers.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the proposed approach for replacing the pay and display machines, as set out in the Head of Community and Environmental Services' Report No. COMM1618, be approved;
- (ii) the phasing out of Parking Smartcards, as set out in the Report, be approved; and
- (iii) the 65 Plus concession be withdrawn.

128. REDAN ROAD, ALDERSHOT – COMPULSORY PURCHASE –
(Health and Housing / Corporate Services)

The Cabinet considered the Solicitor to the Council's Report No. LEG1611, which sought approval to move towards the compulsory acquisition of the former Territorial Army Centre at Redan Road, Aldershot. The Chairman welcomed the owner of the site, Mr. M.K. Choudhary, to the meeting and it was explained that Mr. Choudhary would be allowed to address the Cabinet.

The Solicitor to the Council explained that the site had been acquired by Mr. Choudhary in August 2000 and had been subject to a number of planning applications. Most recently, planning had been granted in March 2015 for 22 dwellings, subject to the payment of Section 106 contributions totalling £196,451. Building had commenced in February 2016 when the foundations for block 1 – 7 had been laid. This had represented the commencement of the planning permission and was the point at which the Section 106 obligations had become payable. This sum had been invoiced but not paid. A request had been received from the owner's agent for payment of this amount to be made in instalments but this had been refused by the Development Management Committee in June 2016.

Mr. Choudhary addressed the meeting and offered his explanation for the delay in developing the site. He explained that there was, currently, a shortage of labour in the building sector and that this was presenting problems to developers. He was confident that he could complete the development by the end of 2018 and was ready to start imminently. He asked the Cabinet to allow him to keep the site and to consider allowing him to pay the outstanding Section 106 contributions in instalments.

The Solicitor to the Council explained that the site had been identified in the Rushmoor Borough Council 2015 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as a site that would deliver 22 dwellings before 2019. In the Solicitor's opinion, the only way this could be guaranteed was to seek a development partner that would be prepared to step in and deliver the development, if needed. It was emphasised, however, that, in the first instance, Mr. Choudhary would be given the opportunity to pay the Section 106 monies and build out the development by the end of 2018, as planned.

In discussing the proposal, it was the Cabinet's view that it was a priority to ensure that development of this key strategic site was completed by the end of 2018 to provide much needed housing.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that, subject to the Council having entered into an agreement with a development partner to indemnify the Council for the acquisition cost of the site, the Solicitor to the Council be authorised to:

- make an offer to acquire the site up to the value set out in the confidential Appendix 2 to the Solicitor to the Council's Report No. LEG1611, under Section 227 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; and
- agree a period during which the offer should remain open for acceptance.

129. **UNION STREET EAST REGENERATION –**
(Environment and Service Delivery)

The Cabinet considered the Solicitor to the Council's Report No. LEG1612, which sought approval to take forward the regeneration of the Union Street East and former Marks and Spencer building site, as identified in the Aldershot Town Centre Prospectus Supplementary Planning Document.

Members were informed that the site comprised Nos. 36 – 62 Union Street and Nos. 51 – 57 High Street. The Report set out the background information and the development options. It went on to highlight a number of acquisition issues around the assembly of the land which would be required to secure a development partner. It was proposed that the Council should continue to intervene at this site to acquire the properties required to allow the area to be regenerated. A number of funding options had been explored, including bids to the Local Growth Fund, which was overseen by the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Trust and these options were set out in the Report. Members heard that, given the complexity of ownerships, the Council would need to work up a scheme as to how the key site could be regenerated to encourage interest from residential developers.

The Cabinet confirmed its support for intervening where required to facilitate the regeneration of Rushmoor's town centres and acquiring relevant sites as they became available.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the redevelopment of the Union Street East and former Marks and Spencer Key Site, as identified in Appendix 1 of the Solicitor to the Council's Report No. LEG1612, be approved;
- (ii) the details of the project be taken to the Aldershot Regeneration Group;

- (iii) the capital cost for the acquisition of the four Union Street properties stated in the Report, as set out in the confidential Appendix 2 of the Report, be approved;
- (iv) the full year revenue costs associated with the property acquisitions, as set out in the confidential Appendix 2 of the Report, be approved;
- (v) the urgency decision to acquire Nos. 60 – 62 Union Street, Aldershot be noted;
- (vi) the Head of Financial Services be authorised to:
 - accept any grant funding towards the costs of the redevelopment and to enter into any prudential borrowing arrangement, subject to appropriate safeguards, to increase the viability of the scheme;
 - submit expressions of interest and to enter into any loan or grant agreements with the Local Enterprise Partnership or the Homes and Communities Agency necessary in respect of the redevelopment of the key site;
- (vii) the Solicitor to the Council be authorised to:
 - negotiate and acquire by agreement Nos. 60 - 62 Union Street, Nos. 54 – 56 Union Street / Nos. 53 – 55 High Street, No. 52 Union Street, No. 50 Union Street and No. 36 Union Street within the key site area, at the price set out in the confidential Appendix 2 of the Report and subject to confirmation from the Council's valuer or the Council's external Compulsory Purchase Order adviser that the price represents the appropriate open market value;
 - enter into any legal documentation necessary in respect of the purchase or acquisition of rights and to undertake any ancillary action in connection therewith;
 - procure and appoint architects to develop a scheme for the redevelopment of the key site; and
 - appoint external advisers to advise upon Compulsory Purchase Order acquisition costs.

130. 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 item to avoid the disclosure of exempt information within the

paragraph of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 indicated against the item:

Report Para. Nos.	Schedule 12A Para. No.	Category
131 and 132	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

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

131. APPLICATIONS FOR SECTION 49 REMISSION OF NON-DOMESTIC RATES –
(Concessions and Community Support)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Financial Services' Exempt Report No. FIN1618, which set out two applications for the remission of non-domestic rates on the grounds of hardship.

Members assessed the applications from Ms. Ranjita Malia trading as Shreyaz Fashion, No. 18 Union Street, Aldershot and Sovereign Snooker Limited, Snooker Hall Sovereign House, No. 1A Camp Road, Farnborough, taking into account the evidence of financial hardship supplied and whether it was in the interests of local taxpayers to subsidise the businesses. The Cabinet took into account the nature and circumstances of the businesses and, where appropriate, the availability of alternative facilities in the area.

The Cabinet Member for Concessions and Community Support had visited each of the premises and recommended that both applications should be approved.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) 50% hardship relief be granted to Ms. Ranjita Malia trading as Shreyaz Fashion for 2016/17; and
- (ii) 25% hardship relief be granted to Sovereign Snooker Limited for 2016/17.

132. FIRST WESSEX COVENANT ISSUES AND DISPOSALS –
(Corporate Services)

The Cabinet considered the Solicitor to the Council's Exempt Report No. LEG1613, which sought approval for three separate issues relating to First Wessex Housing Association.

Members heard how First Wessex had requested whether amenity land and former highway land at Phases 1 – 4 of its development in North Town, Aldershot could be released to them for nil consideration. The Association had

also requested whether former highways land at their development at Lyndhurst Avenue, Aldershot could be released, also for nil consideration. In this case, in exchange for transferring the land for nil consideration, the Council would receive nomination rights to the new properties in perpetuity. The details and circumstances of each application were set out in the Report.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the request for a waiver of the consideration for the proposed release of the covenant relating to the amenity land at Phases 1 – 4 of First Wessex’s North Town development be refused;
- (ii) the request to transfer, for nil consideration, the former highway land at Phases 1 – 4 of First Wessex’s North Town development be refused; and
- (iii) the request to transfer, for nil consideration, the former highway land at Lyndhurst Avenue, Aldershot be approved.

The Meeting closed at 9.12 p.m.

D.E. CLIFFORD
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
