

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 31st January, 2019 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

## Voting Members

Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr J.B. Canty (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr M.S. Choudhary  
Cllr R.M. Cooper  
Cllr K. Dibble  
Cllr Veronica Graham-Green  
Cllr B. Jones  
Cllr Nadia Martin

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr T.D. Bridgeman and Cllr B.A. Thomas

## 23. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th December, 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

## 24. 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>
25	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

## 25. CALL-IN - ALDERSHOT REGENERATION SITE ASSEMBLY

The Committee was advised of the submission of a request to call-in the resolution made by the Cabinet on 8th January, 2019 in relation the Aldershot Regeneration Site Assembly. The request for call-in had been submitted by Cllrs. Alex Crawford, Terry Bridgeman, Keith Dibble, Sue Dibble, Jennifer Evans, Barry Jones, Nadia Martin and Mike Roberts.

The Committee was advised that should the call-in request be rejected the decision made by the Cabinet on 8th January, 2019 would take effect as of 1st February, 2019. If the call-in request was accepted, a report would be made to Cabinet at its next meeting on 5th February, 2019.

Cllr. Crawford attended the meeting to present the call-in request and the reasons behind it. The Members who had submitted the call-in felt that the information given to the Cabinet at the time had been inadequate and had not provided a full picture of the current situation with the particular property referred to in Exempt Report No. RP1901. It was suggested that there was an absence of knowledge regarding the quality of work carried out in the past two years at the property and it was felt that the Council were unlikely to see a financial return and would subsequently have to write off the purchase price to allow the scheme to move ahead. It was felt that the Council was taking a reputational risk in paying an inflated price for the property to save time and the information provided did not provide the necessary justification for the decision.

Cllr. Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder, addressed the meeting on behalf of the Cabinet. Cllr. Tennant advised that the Cabinet had received both Exempt Report No. 1901 and a verbal report from the Chief Executive on the evening of 8th January, 2019. It was noted that the purchase of the particular property would allow the redevelopment of the site as a whole. Other options would be to carry out a Compulsory Purchase Order, which could complicate/delay the process or not acquire the site and work around the property, this could have implications if the development was considered substandard and may affect the viability of the overall project. In addition, Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) secured for the regeneration of Aldershot to the value of £8 million, could be put at risk as the funding terms stated that the monies should be spent within a strict timeframe. He felt strongly that the council had considered the options thoroughly and based its decision on sound and comprehensive information.

The Chief Executive, Mr. Paul Shackley advised that the Council had previously agreed to give powers of delegation to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder, to negotiate and acquire properties. In this case, the Chief Executive had referred the decision back to the Cabinet for consideration. The Committee also noted that due diligence was being carried out on the property and this was expected to take a few more days. The Chief Executive advised that the Rushmoor Development Partnership (RDP) felt that the acquisition of the property was important to the viability of the whole site.

In response to a question, it was advised that if the value of the property was found to be less than predicted after due diligence had been carried out, a further report would need to be made to the Cabinet for consideration.

After further discussion, it was noted that the £8 million HIF funding had a three year time limit and was dependant on the privately owned Galleries site as well the Union Street East site. Cllr. Crawford stressed the importance of an outline business case for the Union Street East site to ensure viability. It was noted that a commitment had been made to regenerate Aldershot and through the partnership with Hill Investment

the risk was shared equally with the Council to provide a town centre for the people of Aldershot.

Having considered the issues, Members **AGREED** that there was insufficient evidence to support the call-in request.

In confirming the rejection of the call-in request, the chairman advised the decision made by the Cabinet at the meeting on 8th January, 2019 which would take effect as of 1st February, 2019.

## 26. **CABINET CHAMPIONS - WORK PROGRAMMES**

The Chairman welcomed Cllr. Ken Muschamp, Deputy Leader of the Council, and Cllrs Sue Carter, Liz Corps and Jacqui Vosper who were in attendance at the meeting to give an overview of their role as Cabinet Champions.

The Deputy Leader gave an introduction to the Cabinet Champion roles and explained how they had been created under the new governance structure. The purpose of the roles was to focus on specific themes or priorities not sitting within a portfolio. For 2018/19 three areas, had been established:

- Education and Youth
- Events and Civic Pride
- Armed Forces

Cllr Muschamp explained that the Champions' focus was to influence areas where the Cabinet had no allocated resources, statutory right or other way to engage with. It was hoped that the Champions could liaise with, befriend and influence partners to build good working relationships.

The Committee then received an update from each Champion:

**Education and Youth** – Cllr Carter considered the Champion role was important to building relations with schools and local youth organisations and leading the Council's work.

Key projects for 2018/19 had included:

- **Farnborough College of Technology Shadowing Programme** – the project had been designed to encourage young people's interest in local democracy. To date students had participated in an introduction to local government and a councillor/student engagement event. The next stage in the programme would be to pair students with councillors for shadowing purposes.
- **Raising Aspirations** – The Council was supporting this project being run by Hampshire County Council. The Council had funded ten local primary schools to participate in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) projects, which would bring engineering and engineers into the classroom to inspire children and teachers through professional development and training, classwork and competitions. This project would commence in January, 2019.

The Council was also working alongside Enterprise M3 to engage with secondary schools Robotics Challenge.

- **Youth Service Provider Forum** – The Forum aimed to work locally to pull together providers of youth services to encourage multi agency joined up work. The first meeting of the Forum would take place on 11th February, to which 22 organisations had agreed to attend.
- **Youth Influence Group** – The Champion had set up an all-inclusive group of young people to debate issues specific to them. Ultimately the Champion would like to create a Mayor's Youth Council.

Cllr Carter also referred to a range of other activities that she was driving forward and answered members questions.

**Events and Civic Pride** – It was explained that the purpose of the role was to promote events and civic pride and complement other work in this area undertaken by the Council.

Cllr Corps then reported on the key projects being undertaken in 2018/19:

- **Aftermath Event** – the Champion had supported the work to set up an event in November to mark the 100-year anniversary of the end of World War 1. Four local historians had presented a local perspective on the area at this time. An exhibition of pictures and artefacts had accompanied the presentation and these were now being displayed in the museum and libraries in the Borough.
- **North Camp Methodist Church** – The Champion had supported the fundraising initiatives co-ordinated by the Royal British Legion to provide a stained glass window at the Church to mark the centenary of the end of World War 1. The window would provide a lasting legacy.
- **Joint Working with the Libraries** – visits had been made to each of the local libraries and meetings had been held to help develop community links and help foster civic pride amongst residents and users. Areas had been discussed on how the Council and the Libraries could work together through joint promotion of events, shared use of facilities, helping to develop basic skills and joint work to support disadvantaged residents.
- **Other activities** – other work being undertaken included a Tableaux Vivant, a living picture to be displayed in the town centres during 2019 in conjunction with the Aldershot Military Museum. The Champion had been collaborating with the development of the Rushmoor Community Food Festival and liaising with different food providers from different cultures who it was hoped would attend. The event would take place on 14th September, 2019 in the Municipal Gardens, Aldershot. The Champion has also been forging links with different Faith Groups and hoped to work with schools and other organisations on projects going forward.

Cllr Corps then answered members questions on her work and the projects.

**Armed Forces** – The Champion was taking forward the Council’s work to meet the objectives of the Military Community Covenant agreed by the Council in 2012 and was building relations with the military authorities. The role was also involved in co-ordinating activities.

Cllr Vosper then explained the key projects for 2018/19, which included:

- **Core Infrastructure and Delivery Process** – A guide to delivering the Covenant provided to local authorities contained a toolkit for action. The Council was largely compliant but was seeking to fill any gaps. Activities included, being part of the Rushmoor and Hart partnership with the military authorities and working with unit leads and the Garrison community engagement team on projects for serving personnel, their dependents and veterans.
- **Resigning of the Covenant** – An event was likely to be held in 2019 to resign the Military Community Covenant at a joint event with Hart District Council. In addition, the Council was looking to sign the Armed Forces Covenant, which would help focus activity and support the application for the Defence Employers’ Recognition Scheme Silver Award.
- **Defence Employers’ Recognition Scheme** – The Council would be seeking to achieve the silver Award after securing the bronze Award in 2017. Over the past few months, the Council had been making changes to some of its HR and other policies to help achieve this award. A sponsor had been secured for the application which would be submitted in April, 2019.
- **Events** – Cllr Vosper indicated that she had supported and was involved in the planning and delivery of a number of events during the year. These included:
  - Armed Forces day
  - Remembrance Sunday events – including the Beacon of Light and all-night vigil
  - Community Carol Concert
  - 4 Armoured Medical Corps Freedom March Past – 11th May, 2019
  - Parachute Regiment anniversary unveiling of statue and event – 6th July, 2019
  - 80th anniversary for the Parachute Regiment – 2019

In addition, a presentation would be made to Members by the Garrison Commander in Spring 2019. A health fair, within the Garrison was also being planned.

The Committee discussed the work of the Cabinet Champions. It was suggested that consideration be given to changing the designation to Council Champion which might allow the role to be open to more Members. It was also suggested that other

Members would add value to the work of the Champions and this was acknowledged.

The Committee **ENDORSED** the work of the Champions and requested a short report at the end of their term.

27. **DECISION MAKING STRUCTURE**

This item was postponed until the following meeting.

28. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee noted the current work programme.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

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