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AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Democratic Services

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1 August 2019

CABINET

A meeting of the **Cabinet** will be held at **6.30 pm** on **Tuesday 13 August 2019** in **The Paralympic Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF**, when your attendance is requested.

NOTE: There will be an informal session starting at 6.15 pm to give Members the opportunity to comment on issues on the Agenda. The press and public may attend as observers.

Membership: Councillors: A Macpherson (Leader), S Bowles (Deputy Leader), P Irwin, H Mordue, C Paternoster, Sir Beville Stanier Bt, P Strachan, J Ward and M Winn

Contact Officer for meeting arrangements: Bill Ashton; bashton@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk;

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. MINUTES (Pages 3 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June, 2019, copy attached as an appendix.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interests.

4. WOODLANDS AND EASTERN LINK ROAD SOUTH (Pages 7 - 10)

Councillor Mrs Paternoster

Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure

To consider the attached report.

Contact Officer: Andrew Small (01296) 585507



5. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The following matter is for consideration by Members "In Committee". It will therefore be necessary to

RESOLVE –

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Paragraph indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act:-

Item No. 6 – Proposed Transfer of Aylesbury Vale Estates asset at Haddenham

The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of organisations (including the Authority holding that information) and disclosure of commercially sensitive information would prejudice negotiations for contracts and land disposals or transactions.

6. PROPOSED TRANSFER OF AYLESBURY VALE ESTATES ASSET AT HADDENHAM

(Pages 11 - 14)

Councillor Bowles

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development

To consider the attached confidential report.

Contact Officer: Teresa Lane (01296) 585006

CABINET

18 JUNE 2019

PRESENT: Councillor A Macpherson (Leader); Councillors S Bowles (Deputy Leader), H Mordue, C Paternoster, Sir Beville Stanier Bt, P Strachan, J Ward and M Winn. Councillor Stuchbury attended also.

APOLOGY: Councillors P Irwin

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2019 be approved as a correct record.

2. FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RISK - MARCH 2019

Cabinet received a report that summarised the financial outturn for the end of March 2019 as well as the Corporate Plan report for the same period and the Risk Register. The full report could be viewed on the Council's website.

The Council had reported a surplus of £432,000 for the 2018-19 financial year, before the transfer from general fund balances. The forecast outturn was better than had been predicted by £353,000. A planned surplus of £240,000 had been assumed in the budget plans for 2018/2019. Consequently, general fund balances would be marginally higher than had been predicted as at the end of March, 2019. The Council's financial position continued to be robust. At the time the Cabinet report had been prepared, the final accounts for the financial year 2018/2019 were still subject to audit by the Council's external auditors. A detailed summary was submitted as part of the Cabinet report.

The Council's Corporate Plan set out four priorities, namely:

- Financially fit.
- Leading and shaping services.
- Customer and innovation.
- Community and Environment.

There were 17 themes under the four priorities and key projects and performance measures had been identified to enable progress with the priorities to be monitored. Cabinet received a report on these high level themes in order to assess whether or not they were on target. Of the 48 projects and measures, 31 were rated as green, 6 amber and 9 red. The Cabinet report summarised the position in relation to those in the red sector. It had been recognised that one of the principal risks to the Council was around recruitment and retention during the transition to unitary local government in Buckinghamshire. The situation was being monitored and Members would be kept apprised of the position.

Cabinet reviewed the position concerning the key risks shown on the Corporate Risk Register and the mitigation actions. As referred to above, the Register had been updated to reflect the impact of the move to unitary local government and also the potential risks of Brexit, the situation concerning which was still shrouded in uncertainty.

Cabinet asked that its thanks be passed to officers for the work undertaken to ensure that the Council remained in a financially fit position as it moved towards unitary local government.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the Financial Outturn and Corporate Plan Progress Reports and the Corporate Risk Register, be noted.

3. IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Cabinet received a report which sought agreement to the establishment of additional posts within the Development Management service in order to provide improved proactive customer focussed communications for applicants and other customers.

The development management service at AVDC continued to deal with the challenges of a national shortage of skilled planners and a very high workload associated with the Vale being an area of significant housing growth. The planners were working exceptionally hard and spent the majority of their time on site or writing up the reports necessary to issue decisions on applications.

This had meant that sometimes they were not available to take calls from applicants which could give the erroneous impression that an application was not being progressed, or that their enquiries were being ignored. This had led to applicants becoming frustrated with the Council and had triggered complaints, helping to respond to which could divert a planner's time from deciding applications, thus compounding the problem.

It had become noticeable that where developers used the Council's account manager service, they were better informed about the progress of their applications and were more likely to understand the reasons why their application had not been decided, or the reasons why consultees had concerns about their proposals. With this in mind it was proposed to establish a small team of staff who would undertake proactive communications with applicants in a similar way. This would improve customer service and provide reassurance to applicants.

The Cabinet report set out the costings of the proposal, which could be met from existing planning reserves.

RESOLVED –

That the proposals outlined in the Cabinet report be approved.

4. UPDATE ON CONCESSIONARY TRANSPORT REVIEW

A review of concessionary transport had been undertaken in 2018 and reported to Cabinet on 16 October 2018. A copy of that report was attached as Appendix 1 to the agenda. Part of the review had included mapping all known transport schemes in the Vale together with their criteria and locality served. (The Cabinet report in full including the earlier report was available for viewing on the Council's web site).

Following the cessation of the discretionary taxi token scheme, Cabinet had agreed to retain some of the ring-fenced concessionary transport budget for a limited time for the purpose of funding or pump priming new or existing community based transport schemes, which could service residents within the town of Aylesbury (who were the main recipients of the taxi token scheme).

Since the last report to Cabinet work had been pursued on trying to identify an alternative scheme to which the funds available for taxi tokens might be directed and details of these investigations were submitted. Unfortunately, it had not been possible to identify a suitable scheme towards which the funding might be made available and accordingly it was,

RESOLVED –

That the ring fenced remaining balance (£30,155) and the concessionary transport budget for 2019/20 (£33,500) be released into the wider Council budget.

5. CABINET - REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members were informed that the current Cabinet appointments on Outside Bodies had been approved in 2015 for the four year life of the Council. However, the life of the Council, which included the Cabinet, had been extended for a further 12 months to enable the transition to the new Buckinghamshire Council. As such, it was therefore necessary to agree the continuance of the current Cabinet appointments on Outside Bodies for a further year.

RESOLVED –

That the life of the current Cabinet appointments to Outside Bodies be extended for a further 12 months to enable the transition to the new Buckinghamshire Council.

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Cabinet
13 August 2019

WOODLANDS AND EASTERN LINK ROAD SOUTH
Councillor Paternoster
Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to secure £350k of funding (matched with £350k of BCC funding) to allow Buckinghamshire Advantage (BA) and Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) to continue with its work as promoter of the Woodlands Site. The funding will enable BCC to continue with the design and planning requirements of the Eastern Link Road.
- 1.2 There is a total funding ask of £700k that will allow BA to continue its role as the Promoter of the Woodlands site and to allow BCC to continue with design of the Eastern Link Road and conclude a comprehensive financial and due diligence exercise. This funding is intended to cover work until the outcome of the HiF allocation is known (at the end of 2019) and includes;
- Commence the design of the carriageway for the whole of ELRs.
 - Progress the detailed design for A41 roundabout (Phase 1a).
 - Progress the infrastructure delivery plan including site wide drainage strategy.
 - A comprehensive legal and financial due diligence exercise to be conducted by BCC that will include red book valuations, financial modelling, governance structure including direct delivery, key risk validation and consideration of ownership matters. The purpose of the due diligence work is to ascertain the viability of such an investment and the appropriate governance structure to manage or oversee the disposal.

2 Recommendations

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| <p>2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet approve the £350,000 funding so that Buckinghamshire Advantage can continue its work as promoter of the Woodlands Site and BCC can continue with the design and planning requirements of the Eastern Link Road, and conclude a business case in relation to Woodlands.</p> |
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3 Supporting Information

- 3.1 Aylesbury Woodlands Development would provide high quality commercial floorspace (102,080m²), 1,100 market and affordable dwellings, additional 60 residential extra care units, mixed use local centre, new primary school and the Eastern Link Road South (ELRS).
- 3.2 A diagram of the Woodlands Masterplan is set out below;



- 3.3 There is a joint planning promotion partnership between BCC and AVDC via the Aylesbury Vale Advantage Legacy Board (AVALB) - now Buckinghamshire Advantage (BA).
- 3.4 Both councils originally committed to promoting this scheme as private sector developers were unwilling to promote the scheme because of the high costs of development and the associated infrastructure requirements associated with the South East link road.
- 3.5 Working through BA via AVALB, both Councils have spent the past 3 years promoting and producing a scheme that delivers the objectives and meets the infrastructure requirements.
- 3.6 Both AVDC and BCC have been funding BA for the Woodlands related activities for some time. Costs incurred to date on taking Woodlands forward total c£3.5m (£750k BCC, £750k AVDC, £550k LGF, £60k Enterprise Zone and £1.390m AVA legacy funds).
- 3.7 This funding has been contributed on the basis that it will be fully recouped from the project but there are risks associated with this and it will ultimately depend on the total cost versus income derived from the scheme. If the scheme does not achieve minimum expected returns the councils may achieve a reduced, or potentially no reimbursement.
- 3.8 A Housing Infrastructure Fund Forward Funding (HIF FF) and Gap Funding bid totalling £54.15m has been submitted to Homes England to support the development infrastructure and assist with land assembly for Woodlands and the Aylesbury Garden Town.
- 3.9 If successful, the HIF bid will provide funding to continue some of the planning and preparatory work, but a total of £700,000 is required between now and November in order to minimise any delays on the 2 schemes and to make sure all information is available to support the HIF bid submission.
- 3.10 A total of £550,000 is required to progress the design of the A41 roundabout and the design and planning application for Eastern Link Road South and £150,000 is required to develop the full business case options and returns for the Woodlands scheme in time for the November HIF funding decision.

- 3.11 The project is now at a critical point in the delivery phase and BA are close to securing a planning consent. However, all allocated funding has now been committed and without further contributions the project is in imminent danger of stalling.
- 3.12 The project remains a priority for the Shadow Unitary authority, and it considered a report on 23 July 2019 which supported Bucks County Council's and Aylesbury Vale's ongoing financial commitment to this project.
- 3.13 Bucks County Council has already obtained the necessary consent to commit its share of the funds required to keep work continuing on the project.
- 3.14 BCC are conducting due diligence which will be shared with AVDC and include how the governance of Woodlands might look and how the project will be delivered.

4 Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The Woodlands development is largely regarded as the exemplar development in the emerging Aylesbury Garden Town Masterplan. The current planning consent will deliver 1,100 new homes, 1 million sq ft of Employment space and a key part of the Aylesbury Link Road.
- 4.2 Because of the complexity surrounding this development, reaching planning consent and formulating a clear set of delivery options has taken longer than originally envisaged.
- 4.3 A future tranche of funding is therefore required to ensure the development continues to progress and so that a series of delivery options can be presented to council. This information is also partially required to support the HIF bid submission.
- 4.4 The funding required (£700,000) will be jointly contributed by Bucks County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council. As the funding exceeds the threshold set out in the Spending Protocol, this report was considered and endorsed by Shadow Executive on 23 July 2019.

5 Resource implications

- 5.1 As at the end of March 2019, the Council had £1.548 million in unallocated New Homes Bonus sat in a reserve. It is proposed that £350,000 of this reserve is allocated to fund this contribution, in anticipation that it is reimbursed to this or the new Buckinghamshire Council at a future date.

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