

**Publication Date:  
16 February 2017**

**CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MINUTES of the CDC CABINET  
held on 7 FEBRUARY 2017**

**PRESENT** Councillors I A Darby - Leader  
M J Stannard - Deputy Leader  
G K Harris  
P E C Martin  
M R Smith  
F S Wilson

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor P M Jones

**179 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held 13 December 2016 were approved and signed by Councillor I Darby, Cabinet Leader, as a correct record.

**180 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**181 28-DAY NOTICES**

The Cabinet received a report attaching the draft 28-Day Notices for the Cabinet meeting on 4 April and the Chiltern & South Bucks Joint Committee on 11 April.

**RESOLVED –**

**That the Draft 28-Day Notices be noted.**

**182 CURRENT ISSUES**

**(i) Councillor G Harris – Youth Awards 2017**

Councillor Harris reported that the Council had received 96 nominations for this year's Youth Awards. The nominations would be considered later this week, and the awards would be presented at a ceremony on 16 March at the Kings Church, Amersham. The Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire would be present.

**(ii) Councillor P Martin – Housing White Paper: “Fixing our broken housing market”**

A Housing White Paper had just been published which set out how the Government intended to boost housing supply and create a more efficient housing market. Councillor Martin provided the following summary of the key proposals set out in the document, and advised that a full assessment would be available in due course:

- 250,000 extra homes per annum were required
- Councils will be required to produce an up-to-date plan on housing delivery
- There will be rolling targets on housing delivery
- Shortening default timescales for developers to implement permissions for housing development from three years to two years
- A Home Building Fund to support small and medium sized builders
- Encouraging offsite construction and greater innovation in building methods
- Introduction of the Lifetime ISA
- Maintain protections for Green Belt land with boundaries being amended only in exceptional circumstances
- Helping older residents move at the right time to improve their quality of life and free up housing for other buyers

Councillor I Darby felt that the White Paper didn't go far enough to address housing issues, and that the proposed reduction in default time for implementing permissions was too weak. It was felt that much more could be done, for example by allowing Councils to charge Council Tax on properties earlier following planning permission being obtained.

Councillor P Jones was invited to speak and suggested that the announcements were not good news for local government due to the suggestion that Council finances may be cut if higher numbers of housing were not delivered.

## **Councillor I Darby – Modernising Local Government**

Councillor Darby provided an update on the positive discussions at a meeting between the leaders of the four District Councils in Buckinghamshire and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government regarding the District Councils' submission on modernising local government in Buckinghamshire. The Secretary of State had received two submissions, one from the County Council, and one from the four Districts. An announcement from the Secretary for State regarding his "minded to" decision was expected by the end of March.

### **183 REVENUE BUDGET 2017/2018**

The Cabinet received a report setting out the proposed Revenue Budget for 2017/18, which would form the basis for setting the Council's proportion of Council Tax, being recommended for approval by the Council.

Whilst considering the report, the Cabinet noted that the Resources Overview Committee had considered the report at the meeting held on 31 January and were supportive of the recommendations. The Support Services Policy Advisory Group had also discussed the revenue budget and in particular how the surplus within the budget for 2017/18 should be deployed across the Council's earmarked reserves.

The report's key points were then outlined as follows:

- The Council's finance settlement, the funding received from the Government, was as expected.
- There would also be a reduction in Council income from investments due to low interest rates and use of reserves to support capital expenditure and key projects.
- There were changes to the New Homes Bonus.
- The proposed budget was based on a 2.9% increase in District Council Tax which amounted to a £5 increase for a Band D property.
- There would be a revenue surplus of £1.2M in 2017/18.
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy showed that the Council was taking a more cautious view on funding due to the likely reduction in funding from Government after 2019/20.

- The advice from the Section 151 (Chief Finance) Officer was noted which showed the budget had been properly prepared, financial risks identified and how they would be managed and that the Council would be comfortably above the prudent minimum level of reserves.

During consideration of the report the Cabinet noted the other options available to the Council:

1. That there be no increase in the Council's element of Council Tax which would result in less resource being available to fund the capital programme and funding gap in future years.
2. That the Council increase its element on Council Tax by more than the referendum threshold of 2% (£5 for a band D property), considered unrealistic, due to the risk that electors do not support the increase and the cost of holding a referendum.

During the discussion, the rate at which the Council's level of Government funding would be reduced to zero was highlighted. The rate of change was particularly high for 2016/17 which had represented a 29% reduction. The Council was therefore praised for its financial management. The Council had worked very hard over the past five years to produce financial savings and defer the point at which significant additional savings were required despite the substantial reduction in funding from the Government. Thanks were expressed to Heads of Service in particular for their work in relation to the budget setting process. The Council had developed a proven method of managing the budget, and should be proud of the way that the Council's finances had been managed.

The Cabinet then

**RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) That the Revenue budget for 2017/18 be approved, as summarised in the table in paragraph 5.15, and**
- 2) That no support is provided to Chiltern District Council parishes in respect of the impact of Council Tax Support on their tax bases for 2017/18 as the authority no longer receives Revenue Support Grant.**

**3) That the following use of earmarked reserves for 2017/18 be agreed:**

**- Local Development Plan £268,000**

**4) That the following additions to earmarked reserves for 2017/18 be agreed:**

**- Capital – Funding replacement refuse vehicles, £394,000**

**- Capital – Funding of capital programme, £1,028,000**

**- HS2, £150,000**

**- Elections, £20,000**

**- Planning Digitalisation, £105,000**

**5) That a budget requirement of £10,747,000, which will result in a District council tax of £175.62 for a Band D property be agreed.**

**6) That the level of fees and charges for 2017/18 (Appendix C) be confirmed.**

**7) That the advice of the Director of Resources (Appendix A) be noted.**

**AND RESOLVED:**

### **Setting the Council Tax**

**8) That the report be made available to all Members of the Council in advance of the Council Tax setting meeting on 28th February, and a final report is produced for the Council meeting incorporating the information from preceptors, and the final decisions of the Cabinet on the budget.**

### **Medium Term Financial Strategy**

**9) To note the comments in the report on the Council's financial position in respect of the years following 2017/18.**

## **184 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND REPAIRS & RENEWALS PROGRAMME 2017/2018**

The Cabinet were asked to consider, and recommend to Council for approval, a report that set out the Capital Programme, which identified Council projects by Portfolio Area, and the Repairs & Renewals Programme, that outlined planned maintenance for the Council's assets, both for the period 2017/18 to 2020/21. The report also referred to the Capital Strategy which described how the Council would use and manage its capital resources to progress key Council priorities.

Members noted the inclusion of two key projects relating to Amersham Multi-Storey Car Park and the redevelopment of Chiltern Pools Leisure Centre. Both of which would require the Council to undertake a level of sustainable borrowing. There were also a number of other items relating to housing grants and the maintenance of the Council's assets and infrastructure which required funding from the existing capital reserves that had been built up. The Repairs and Renewals programme also set out regular small and medium scale maintenance of Council property and IT infrastructure.

Following the discussion, the Cabinet then

### **RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) That the Capital Programme for 2017/18 – 2020/21, as set out in Appendix A, be agreed.**
- 2) That the Repairs & Renewals Programme for 2017/18 – 2020/21, as set out in Appendix B, be agreed.**
- 3) That the Capital Strategy, as set out in Appendix C, be agreed.**
- 4) That the implications for the Financial Strategy of the proposed programme be noted.**

## 185 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2017/18

The Cabinet were asked to consider a report that recommended that the Annual Investment Strategy, which set out how the Council managed its money, be approved and adopted by the Council.

It was noted that the Resources Overview Committee had considered the report at a meeting held on 31 January 2017 and had raised no concerns on the recommendations in the report.

The report was set out in a prescribed format due to regulations and the main point to note was that the Council planned to undertake borrowing during the forthcoming financial year and would therefore no longer be a debt free Council. The implication of this was that the Council needed to demonstrate that this was affordable. It was also noted that there was an investment target, despite the borrowing required, because there may be a short term cash surplus that would be invested.

Following consideration, the Cabinet then

### **RECOMMENDED:**

**That the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix 1), including its appendices listed below, be approved:**

- **Appendix 1A - Annual Investment Strategy Policies**
- **Appendix 1B - Prudential Indicators including the borrowing limits**
- **Appendix 1C - the MRP method to be used in 2017/18.**

## **186 TREASURY MANAGEMENT Q3 2016/2017**

The Cabinet considered a report setting out the Council's Investments for the period October to December 2016. Members were pleased to note that the Council was currently on track to slightly exceed the income investment target by around £25,000.

Following consideration of the report, the Cabinet then

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the Treasury Management performance for Quarter 3 2016/17 be noted.**

## **187 SERVICE PLAN SUMMARIES 2017/2018**

The Cabinet considered the Service Plan Summaries produced by each Head of Service/Principal Officer within the Council. These provided a summary of achievements from the current year and an overview of what each service aimed to deliver for 2017/18.

Councillor Wilson highlighted the work that the customer services team had done to implement their shared service plan. This had now moved on to the development of a customer service strategy. The revenues and benefits team were also praised for continuing to meet their performance indicator targets and maintaining an excellent collection record despite the organisational changes that had taken place at the same time.

Councillor M Smith reported that the Council's recycling rate was 52% in 2015/16, which was below the Council's target of 57%. It was noted that the reduction in the percentage of waste being sent for reuse, recycling or composting was a national trend. It was believed that this was primarily due to a reduction in the amount of packaging that was being produced. Despite this the Council was performing above the average national recycling level, and although it had not met its own target, this was due to changing circumstances arising from an overall reduction in packaging being produced.

The Cabinet then expressed thanks to Sarah Woods, Performance and Policy Officer, who would be leaving the Council later that month.



## **RESOLVED:**

**That the Service Plan Summaries be noted.**

### **188 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The Cabinet were asked to consider and approve the most recent version of the Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks Councils 2017 to 2026 so that it could go on to formal consultation with the Council's Services Overview Committee who would receive the more detailed action plan. The Strategy would also be considered by the Joint Planning Policy Member Reference Group due to links with the emerging Local Plan. If any further changes were suggested the final amended Strategy would be reconsidered by the Cabinet.

The report set out four options: 1) to agree the Economic Development Strategy, themes and Actions; 2) to agree with amendments; 3) to not agree; and, 4) to adopt another Strategy to reinforce the commitment and work towards achieving the vision contained in the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Business Plan (2015-2020) and Joint Sustainable Community Strategy 2013-2026 as well as the recommendations of the Councils' 2014 Peer review and to support the emerging Local Plan is recommended.

It was noted that the Strategy had been produced in support of both Councils' joint business plan. The document would also form part of the evidence base of the joint local plan. It originated from the joint peer review which suggested that the Councils could be more proactive in economic development. During the consultation there had been a good response from local businesses with 219 businesses participating in the online survey. Overall there had been a really good response with lots of positive feedback. A SWOT analysis had been developed with 6 strategic objectives and there were detailed actions for each of the headline points.

The Cabinet expressed thanks to the Director of Services for all her work in helping to develop the Strategy. Members felt that the Strategy was a good starting point, but stressed the importance of ensuring the Strategy resulted in the implementation of positive actions.

Being a joint Strategy Members highlighted that the document would also need to be approved by South Bucks District Council, and would be considered by their Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Some changes were also suggested in relation the geographic references on page five of the document.

Councillor P Jones was invited to speak, and welcomed the Strategy, but emphasised that actions were the most important part. It was also suggested that perhaps more could have been done sooner. There was also a need to consider the future opportunities, for example, Heathrow expansion. Further detail was therefore required. Members noted that the Council had an economic development budget and would consider how that could be used effectively.

The Cabinet highlighted that King George V House (KGVH) had become more full over time due to letting arrangements, and shared services had increased the numbers of staff working primarily from Amersham. It was suggested that any vacant office space at Capswood might offer opportunities to provide short term space to businesses in this area to support small and newly formed businesses. It was noted that South Bucks was firstly looking to lease space to a single tenant, but would look at all options that were available within the requirements of the current lease, if this proved difficult to achieve.

After a discussion, the Cabinet then

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks Councils 2017-2026 be agreed for consultation with the Chiltern Services Overview Committee and be referred to the Planning Policy Joint Member Reference Group due to links with the emerging Local Plan.**

**AND RECOMMENDED:**

**That the Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks Councils 2017-2026 be adopted, subject to no changes being suggested during consultation with the Chiltern Services Overview Committee and South Bucks Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet meeting.**

**189 TO EXTEND THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT'S DELEGATED POWERS UNDER THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS**

The Cabinet were asked to consider a report that recommended that the Head of Environment's delegated powers be extend to include the ability to grant leases or tenancies of no more than 7 years (with security excluded) or take on leases of no more than 7 years, or terminate a lease or tenancy granted by the Council. This delegation to the Head of Environment would provide greater efficiency for the property and estate management functions.

The report set out two options: 1) Do nothing and leave the Head of Environment's scheme of delegations unchanged. Each proposal would then need to be considered by Cabinet on a case by case basis. 2) Agree to this extension to the scheme of delegations for the Head of Environment.

Following consideration, the Cabinet expressed support for the recommendation as a sensible approach, and then

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Cabinet agree to extend the Head of Environment's delegated powers to include authority to grant leases or tenancies of no more than 7 years (with security excluded) or take on leases of no more than 7 years or to terminate a lease or tenancy granted by the Council.**

**190 ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT UPDATE**

The Cabinet were asked to consider a report on the Buckinghamshire Armed Forces Covenant and associated 2016/17 action plan. The principal aim of the agreement and action plan was to bring armed forces personnel and their families closer to the community and improve their access to local services. Councillor C Ford provided external representation as the Council's Armed Forces Champion. At a district level support was provided to Town and Parish Councils, the Council promoted awareness of World War 1 and displayed jobs for services on the website. There was also a housing fast track service to provide easier access to housing. An event had also been held in the Council chamber involving 40 community organisations which aimed to help improve awareness and understanding of the council's services.

The Cabinet were pleased that the Council was involved in this work and the benefits of working with the armed forces were acknowledged, particularly with regards to the sharing of information and cooperation.

The Cabinet noted that as the Covenant had already been adopted by the Council in July 2012, the recommendation had been amended, and Cabinet were now being asked to continue to support the Buckinghamshire Armed Forces Covenant and agree the Buckinghamshire Armed Forces Covenant's associated 2016/17 action plan.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Cabinet continues to support the Buckinghamshire Armed Forces Covenant and agrees the Buckinghamshire Armed Forces Covenant's associated 2016/17 action plan.**

**191 INFORMATION ITEM: AFFORDABLE RENTED HOUSING CONTRIBUTION - SPRINGETT PLACE (CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S POWER OF URGENCY)**

The Cabinet received a report informing them that the Chief Executive had used powers of urgency, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, to authorise payment of a contribution of £40,000 per unit (totalling £280,000 for 7 properties) to Paradigm from the Council, subject to conditions, to support the delivery of affordable rented properties.

The Cabinet welcomed the opportunity to increase the number of affordable rented properties available, and strongly supported the recommendations. Members were also pleased to note the joint working being carried out with other organisations to bring about more affordable housing accommodation in the area. Members were also pleased that the Government was now looking at affordable rents.

**RESOLVED:**

1) That it be noted that the Chief Executive has exercised his powers of urgency under the Scheme of Delegation (in consultation with the Cabinet Leader) to authorise payment of a contribution of £40,000 per unit (total £280,000) to Paradigm Housing Group from the Council, subject to incorporating provisions in the funding/nomination agreement that could provide for a repayment of grant to the Council in the event of any property subsequently being sold within 10 years.

2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Healthy Communities, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to negotiate and conclude any agreement required to give effect to the decision to provide funding, including provisions for repayment on any future sales to sitting tenants.

**192 MINUTES OF JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES**

The Cabinet, after reviewing the Minutes of the most recent meeting of the Chiltern & Wycombe Joint Waste Collection Committee, then

**RESOLVED:**

1) That the Minutes of the Chiltern & Wycombe Joint Waste Collection Committee meeting held on 8 December 2016 be noted.

**193 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

That under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

## **194 ENVIRONMENT PAG NOTES - 30 NOVEMBER 2016**

*Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)*

The Cabinet, after considering the Notes of the most recent meeting of the Environment Policy Advisory Group, then

### **RESOLVED:**

**1) That the Notes of the Environment Policy Advisory Group meeting held on 30 November 2016 be noted.**

## **195 AMERSHAM MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK UPDATE**

*Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)*

The Cabinet considered a report that sought to provide clarification on the decision making process to date regarding the Amersham Multi-Storey Car Park Project (AMSCP). In response to a question it was clarified that the current proposals being put forward, which would be subject to Cabinet approval of the business case at the next meeting on 4 April, still involved a level of protection being provided for the existing structure. The earlier proposals, considered by the Cabinet, had been amended due to the impact on the number of car parking spaces that could be provided, and the advice of the professional advisers to the construction project.

Following consideration, the Cabinet then

### **RESOLVED:**

**1) That the contents of the report be noted.**

**2) That the scope of the Amersham Multi Storey Car Park (AMSCP) project does not include an over roof, additional Photo Voltaic systems or new guttering for the existing multi storey car park, as detailed within the report.**

**3) Agree that any further weatherproof protective coating works for the top deck of the existing AMSCP or ancillary works to the existing AMSCP will be dealt as part of the project for the new multi-storey car park as required and will be included within the overall project costs.**

**4) The final business case for the new AMSCP project will be reported to the Council's relevant internal consultees then to the Cabinet meeting on 4 April 2017.**

## **196 COUNCIL WIFI REPLACEMENT**

*Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)*

The Cabinet considered a report that recommended, following a joint procurement process with South Bucks District Council, that O2 be selected as the preferred supplier to provide WiFi services to the Council as a replacement to the current WiFi arrangements. It was noted that the current system was outside its operational life and that technical support was no longer available for it.

During the discussion it was noted that the total expenditure being requested for approval totalling £27,600 would be apportioned accordingly between the parties involved. The Chiltern expenditure was already identified within the capital programme and the costs were less than what had been estimated a few years ago. The preferred supplier also offered greater capacity, reliability, experience and lower costs.

In response to a question it was noted that the WiFi service was also being provided at the Crematorium as a public service to meet the expectations of customers. The Crematorium operation would also benefit from the facility. It was also noted that the difference in the annual management costs between South Bucks office and the other sites reflected the different configuration requirements at that building.

Following consideration, the Cabinet then

### **RESOLVED:**

**1) That the selection of O2 as preferred supplier to provide WiFi services be approved.**

**2) That the expenditure of £27,600 to implement the O2 proposal be approved.**

**3) That it be noted that, if approval is given, the relevant amount will be recovered from each of the other parties to the agreement.**

## **197 CHILTERN POOLS FEASIBILITY STUDY**

*Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)*

Following agreement from the Cabinet, at the meeting held on 1 November 2016, the Council had carried out an informed public consultation on proposals to develop a new state of the art leisure and community facility to replace the existing Chiltern Pools, community centre, library and youth centre. The Cabinet therefore considered a report which set out the key findings of the consultation, opinion on the proposed development and proposed facility mix.

The report set out the following options:

- 1) Stop the project and look at an alternative site.
- 2) Progress with the proposal in its current location.
- 3) Re-evaluate the site development option including the King George V site.
- 4) Continue to operate the current Chiltern Pools.

Members were particularly pleased to note that there had been nearly 2500 responses to the consultation. Responses were received from a range of demographics across the community and the majority overwhelming supported the proposals. There was also a lot of support for the current facility and the proposed use of the existing site. The proposal for squash courts was less popular, but was still supported overall. There were some issues raised relating to the barns, parking, growth of the site, and access to the current site during construction, as well as the construction process itself. Other key comments included ensuring that the new development was accessible for older residents in particular.

The Services Overview Committee had also considered the report and supported the project.



The Cabinet expressed thanks to the huge team of people who went out in all weather to engage with the community and generate such a high level of response to the consultation in a short space of time. The range of responses from across the community was a fantastic achievement and thanks were expressed to everyone involved. Meetings held also been held with other interested parties and these had also been very positive and supportive of the project. The Council had developed significant expertise from other projects and it was noted that these skills and knowledge were being utilised to take this project forward.

The Leader then expressed thanks to Councillor Stannard in particular for his personal involvement in the project. It was noted that not all responses to the consultation had been positive, but that these concerns had been noted, and would be looked at so that they could be addressed. The consultation was a genuine example of asking the community for its views and then taking these on board to shape the proposals.

After consideration, the Cabinet then

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the Director of Services be authorised to hold stakeholder negotiations to secure in principle agreement over developing the proposed community and leisure facility on the site off King George V Road/Avenue.**
- 2) That the detailed design and feasibility study be completed to consider the business case for the introduction of a spa and or flumes in the facility mix and the needs of the nursery, gateway disability club, youth club, community centre and library.**
- 3) That a further report be received on the options available to the Council in relation to the transitional arrangements that may be required during the development of the centre.**
- 4) That the OJEU compliant process to appoint the specialist design, project management and construction trades required for the project be noted.**

- 5) That a Project Board be established to oversee the overall management of the project to ensure that key milestones are achieved on time, within budget and in accordance with national standards and best practice.
- 6) That the Head of Healthy Communities be authorised to prepare and submit a grant application to Sport England's Strategic Facility Fund to support the project.
- 7) That an external consultation forum consisting of key stakeholders (including but not exclusively Amersham Community Association, Lindfield Nursery, Amersham Swimming Club, Amersham Town Council, Amersham Action Group, Chiltern U3A, and Buckinghamshire County Council) be established to support and guide the Project Board move the project forward.
- 8) That the outcome of the consultation be made publicly available to advise the community on the next steps.

**The meeting ended at 5.40 pm**