

Cabinet Minutes

Date: 4 February 2019

Time: 7.00 - 8.13 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Ms K S Wood (Executive Leader of the Council - in the Chair)

Councillor Mrs J A Adey	- Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor D H G Barnes	- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Communications
Councillor S Broadbent	- Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor D J Carroll	- Cabinet Member for Youth and External Partnerships
Councillor D A Johncock	- Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor Mrs J D Langley	- Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor D M Watson	- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

By Invitation

Councillor Z Ahmed	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Strategy and Communications
Councillor C Etholen	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Digital Development and Customer Service
Councillor A R Green	- Chairman of the Council
Councillor G C Hall	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor D Knights	- Chairman of the Improvement and Review Commission
Councillor R Raja	- Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor A Turner	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning

Also present: Councillors M Clarke, A D Collingwood, S K Raja and P R Turner

76 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Adoh (Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing), M Harris (Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration), M Knight (Leader of the East Wycombe Independent Party), G Peart (Cabinet Member for Community), S Saddique (Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) and L Wood (Cabinet Member for Digital Development & Customer Services).

77 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 17 December and 9 January 2019 be approved as true records and signed by the Chairman.

78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ms K Wood declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of Minute 83 'Ashwells' and withdrew from the Chamber during that item. (The Deputy Leader took the Chair for this item).

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That pursuant to Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Minute Nos 79 to 83 and 86 to 87, because of their reference to matters which contain exempt information as defined as follows:

Minute 79 Budget Monitoring Report for Period Ending 31 December 2018 – Appendices B and C

Minute 80 Capital Strategy – Appendices 2C and 2D

Minute 81 Revenue Budgets and Council Tax Setting 2019/20 – Appendix D

Minute 82 Disposal of Bassetsbury Triangle – Appendices A, B & C

Minute 83 Ashwells Infrastructure and Disposal as Serviced Sites – Appendices A & B

Minute 86 Disposal of part and Development of Part of Hughenden Quarter Upper Site

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations)

Minute 87 - File on Action taken under Exempt Delegated Powers

Community sheet no: C/1/19

Economic Development & Regeneration sheet nos: EDR/54/18 - EDR/63/18 & EDR/01/19

Environment sheet nos: E/03/18 & E/01/19

Planning & Sustainability sheet no: PS/01/19

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any

particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations)

79 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR PERIOD 9 ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2018

Cabinet were asked to consider the report which set out the position for all revenue accounts and capital spending for the first nine months of 2018/19. Cabinet considered the actions set out in the report and whether any further action was necessary.

The Cabinet expressed their thanks to the Cabinet Member for Finance for all his hard work.

The following decisions were made as the Cabinet approved a budget each year within the context of a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to achieve the Council's priorities. The report updated Cabinet members on the 2018/19 forecast position as at Period 9.

RESOLVED: That (i) the forecast outturn position for the financial year 2018/19 as at end of December 2018 be considered;

(i) the transfers to earmarked reserves detailed in paragraph 2.4 of the report be approved; and

(ii) the amendments to the capital programme for 2018/19 as set out in paragraph 5.1 table 2 and virements as detailed in paragraph 5.5 table 4 of the report be approved.

80 CAPITAL STRATEGY

The Capital Strategy before Cabinet outlined the Council's Capital Programme, together with new capital proposals for 2018-19 to 2023-24, and the Treasury Management Annual Strategy report for 2019-20. The aforementioned reports had previously been presented separately to Cabinet, but were now being presented together as the Capital Strategy to meet the new requirement under the revised CIPFA Prudential Code 2018. The Capital Strategy set out the Council's approach to the identification of capital expenditure needs.

An amendment was requested to move the portfolio grouping of the Wycombe Community Hub and Surgery Development from Environment to Community within exempt appendix 2C of the report, this was noted by the S151 officer. It was also noted that the references within the report to Homer Green Secondary School should be amended to Homer Green Senior School.

The following recommendations were made as the Cabinet approved a Capital Budget each year to invest in the Council's key priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Recommended: That (i) the Capital Strategy at Appendix 1 of the report be approved;

(ii) the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement at Appendix 1a of the report be approved;

(iii) the Capital Programme for 2018/19 to 2023/24 totalling £134.3m as summarised in Table 1 of the report be approved;

(iv) the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential and Treasury Indicators in Appendix 3 of the report be approved; and

(v) the Treasury Management Practice at Appendix 3A of the report be approved.

81 REVENUE BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2019/20

Cabinet were asked to consider and formally recommend the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2019/20 to enable the Council to set the Council Tax for the forthcoming year.

The report provided an update on the draft revenue budget report that had been presented to Cabinet in December, including the movements that had taken place since then. The report before Cabinet set out the final revenue budget proposals for 2019/20 following extensive work carried out by Budget Holders and Cabinet Members.

The report outlined details of the main changes to the 2019/20 provisional Local Government Finance Settlement from Central Government and importantly the Revenue Support Grant and Baseline Funding (the guaranteed element of Business Rates) contained therein.

It was noted that the final budget recommended a nil increase in Council Tax resulting in the average Band D property remaining the same as 2018/19 at £136.99.

The responses to the recommendations of the Budget Task and Finish Group had been circulated as an appendix to the budget item. Councillor A Collingwood, the Chairman of the Budget Task and Finish Group commented on the findings of the Budget Task and Finish Group's review of the budget position.

The Cabinet Member for Planning thanked the public for the correspondence that he had received in relation to the River Wye. In relation to recommendation 2 of the Budget Task and Finish Group recommendations, he explained that for Phase 7 of the Masterplan to be delivered from the specified Strategic Land Acquisition/Infrastructure funding source an updated business case, including costs and key milestones would need to be considered by Cabinet. In summing up, he confirmed that there was still a significant amount of work that needed to be undertaken and that opening if the river was not a given.

During consideration of the Budget Task and Finish Group's recommendations, Cabinet had agreed nine of the recommendations, with the remaining recommendations having been noted as set out in the report.

Cabinet thanked the Task and Finish Group and officers for all their hard work. The Chairman of the Budget Task and Finish Group then thanked officers and Cabinet Members for their help and co-operation during the process. The Cabinet Member for Finance also expressed his thanks to the Head of Finance and his team for all their hard work.

The following recommendations were made as the Council had a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget for 2019/20 and the report formed a key part of the budget setting process by setting out the likely Revenue expenditure for that year recommending to Council the proposed budget for 2019/20 and the associated Council Tax level.

Recommended: That (i) the Council Tax requirement for the Council of £9,467k for 2019/20 be set;

(ii) the base estimates for 2019/20 as shown in Table 2, with further details in Appendices A & B of the report be approved;

(iii) the Fees and Charges schedules for 2019/20 in Appendices C & D (Part 2) be approved;

(iv) the Repairs and Renewals fund programme for 2019/20 of £633k in Appendix E of the report be approved;

(v) the Higginson Park Trust budget for 2019/20 of £193k in Appendix F of the report be approved;

(vi) the Special Expenses revenue budgets for High Wycombe Town Committee for 2019/20 totalling £365k which will be funded from precept of £275k and reserves of £90k detailed in Appendix G of the report be approved. It was noted that the precept of £275k would generate a Band D equivalent charge of £11.82;

(vii) the Special Expenses estimate for West Wycombe closed churchyard for 2019/20 totalling £7,000, in Appendix H of the report be approved;

(viii) it be noted that the budget paper, when approved by Council, would form part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2019/20 to 2022/23, see Appendix I of the report;

(ix) the statement by the Chief Finance Officer in Appendix J of the report on the robustness of the budget estimates and level of reserves be approved;

(x) the Cabinet responses to the referral from IRC on the recommendations of the Budget Task and Finish Group be noted; and

Council Tax

(xi) Council Tax be maintained for a Band D property, so it would remain at £136.99 for 2019/20. All the five options for Council Tax changes in Section 6 of the report were considered before making the decision.

82 DISPOSAL OF BASSETSBURY TRIANGLE

Cabinet approval was sought to dispose of the former Bassetsbury allotments site to enable 40 park homes to be developed on the site.

The following decisions were made as the former allotments were closed due to contamination. The Secretary of State's approval had been obtained to release them for development. Underlying ground conditions prevent conventional housing and therefore lightweight park homes were proposed. The estimated disposal value of the site exceeded delegation. Freehold disposal may prove to be unfundable by the market because of latent contamination risk. In which case, disposal would be by way of leasehold joint venture.

RESOLVED: That (i) the disposal of 'Bassetsbury Triangle' (former allotments) with the benefit of planning permission for 40 park homes be approved;

(ii) either a freehold disposal or a leasehold joint venture be approved, the decision on sale price or detailed financial terms be delegated to the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Major Projects and Estates Executive, Head of Finance & Commercial, and their respective Cabinet Members; and

(iii) delegated authority be granted to the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Major Projects and Estates Executive, Head of Finance & Commercial, and their respective Cabinet Members, to enter into construction contracts for on-site enabling works and off-site infrastructure works.

Councillor D Barnes took the Chair

83 ASHWELLS INFRASTRUCTURE AND DISPOSAL AS SERVICED SITES

The report before Cabinet sought approval to proceed with the development of the Ashwells site, subject to appropriate planning permission. In December 2017, Cabinet had recommended to approve funding for infrastructure works with a view to selling the Ashwells site as serviced building plots. The report confirmed that subsequent to this, further work had been undertaken to determine the current estimated infrastructure costs and end values, in order to produce a full business case. Therefore, Cabinet approval was sought for the release of funding from the Capital Programme to enable the implementation of the on-site and off-site infrastructure, subject to planning.

The following decisions were made as approval was required to enter into a Grant Agreement with Homes England; to release the allocation in the Capital Programme to fund infrastructure works; and to provide delegation to enter into infrastructure construction contracts.

RESOLVED: That (i) the Local Authority Accelerated Construction ('LAAC') grant offer from Homes England be accepted;

(ii) on-site infrastructure be implemented;

(iii) it be agreed to dispose of serviced sites, including custom-build and self-build plots;

(iv) it be agreed to undertake off-site road improvements; and

(v) it be agreed to procure and enter into construction contracts for (ii) and (iv); and

(vi) delegated authority be granted to the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Major Projects Executive, to agree terms for and enter into contracts for (iii), (iv) and (v) above.

(Councillor Mrs J Adey and D Johncock abstained from voting on this item.)

Councillor Ms K Wood took the Chair

84 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Cabinet received the following files on actions taken under delegated powers:

Community	C/57/18 – C/58/18 C/01/19 – C/09/19
Environment	E/02/18
Finance	F/01/19 – F/02/19
Leader	L/01/19 – L/02/19

85 INFORMATION SHEETS

Cabinet received the following Information Sheet issued since the last meeting:

1/2019 Frogmoor – Minor Improvements

86 DISPOSAL OF PART AND DEVELOPMENT OF PART OF HUGHENDEN QUARTER UPPER SITE

Cabinet considered the report which proposed the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the southern half of Hughenden Quarter Upper Site at below market value, to enable a housing association to provide 100% affordable housing, subject to planning permission. Cabinet approval was also sought to release funding from the Capital Programme for the development of small workspaces (HQube) at the northern half of the site, which was also subject to planning permission.

The following decisions were made as both the proposed disposal and the proposed development were linked to the Council's proposed Ashwells development.

RESOLVED: That (i) It be agreed to dispose of the freehold interest in the southern half of the Hughenden Quarter Upper Site ('HQUS'), with the benefit of planning permission for 68 apartments, to a registered provider (housing association) at below market value, to provide 100% affordable housing;

(ii) the Homes England offer of Local Authority Accelerated Constitution grant, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report be accepted;

(iii) the allocation in the Capital Programme for the direct development of the northern half of the site as 'HQube' small workspace be released;

(iv) a construction contract for HQube and a construction contract for the repair and renewal of the HQUS access road, including new utilities be entered into; and

(v) delegated authority be granted to the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Head of Finance & Commercial, the Major Projects Executive, and their respective Cabinet Members, to agree the final terms of (i), (ii) and (iv) above.

(Councillor Mrs J Adey and D Johncock abstained from voting on this item.)

87 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER EXEMPT DELEGATED POWERS

Cabinet received the following files on exempt actions taken under delegated powers:

Community Sheet No: C/1/19

Economic Development & Regeneration Sheet Nos: EDR/54/18 – EDR/63/18

EDR/01/19

Environment Sheet No: E/03/18 and E/01/19

Planning and Sustainability: PS/01/19

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

- Karen Satterford - Chief Executive
- Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager
- Catherine MacKenzie - Principal Democratic Services Officer
- David Skinner - Head of Finance & Commercial
- Catherine Spalton - Communications and Improvement Manager