

**COUNCIL**

**Date and Time:** Thursday 28 January 2021 at 7.00 pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

**COUNCILLORS –**

Kennett - (Chairman)

Ambler	Delaney	Quarterman
Axam	Dorn	Radley
Bailey	Drage	Smith
Blewett	Farmer	Southern
Butler	Forster	Tomlinson
Clarke	Kennett	Wheale (7.06pm)
Cockarill	Kinnell	Wildsmith
Crampton	Lamb	Worlock
Crisp	Makepeace-Browne	Wright
Crookes	Neighbour	
Davies	Oliver	

Officers Present:

Patricia Hughes	Joint Chief Executive
Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Emma Foy	Head of Corporate Services
Celia Wood	Committee Services

**61 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

It was unanimously agreed to suspend Standing Orders 9.3 (Show of Hands for Voting, 22.1 (Standing to Speak) and 22.2 (Chairman Standing).

**62 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 November 2020 were confirmed with a request for clarification on the financial details on Appendix A (pages CL37-38) and signed as a correct record.

**63 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence had been received.

**64 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

**65 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 – QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

Questions had been received from Mr David Turver, details of which are set out in Appendix A attached to these Minutes.

**66 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14 – QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

Questions had been received from Councillor Crookes, details of which are set out in Appendix B attached to these Minutes.

**67 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**68 CABINET MEMBERS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, **Councillor Radley** reported:

Hart Community Safety is now feeling well established, links have been made with key partners across the District and they are working closely both across council services and those partner agencies to tackle individual issues and wider locational issues.

Community Safety have also been supporting Environmental Health in active COVID patrols, organised whilst we remain under tight restrictions and infection rates in our area continue to be a challenge. This has involved covering areas across the district to ensure that businesses are complying with rules for their own and their customers' safety. Advice has been given and any serious concerns passed back to Environmental Health to consider enforcement action, if appropriate.

We are still receiving regular complaints regarding vehicle ASB both at the Blackbushe Business Village and up on the A33 around Riseley with cars racing, drifting and skidding. Patrols have been organised for this coming Sunday at Blackbushe Business Village with the Yateley Neighbourhood Policing Team to progress the serving of s.59 notices where possible. Work continues with the site owner regarding preventative measures.

- Members requested that the budget would be available in a format that is easy to understand before the February Council meeting.
- Members were informed that a written summary of the rules around Businesses Additional Restrictions Grant will be circulated to all members.

The Cabinet Member for Community, **Councillor Bailey**, reported:

We are in the process of setting up a community pantry which we hope will be up and running by February half term funded from the Hampshire County Council winter grant with food supplied by FareShare and Harvest. Residents have the chance to become a member and pay a small subscription and are

able to access low cost nutritious food with no strings attached. I hope to be able to circulate more information once the final details have been confirmed.

As part of our Covid recovery projects please watch out for the Your Way Forward campaign – developed by the communities team and aimed at young people, encouraging them to talk and seek help where needed for mental health issues. We have involved young people in the campaign design so hopefully it will resonate with young people.

The team are actively working with VIVID to see if we can improve the accommodation we can offer to those who are homeless and this includes looking at Heathlands Court in Yateley – to see if it can be re-designed in some way. We aim that this piece of joint work will result in some better homes for our most vulnerable.

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory, **Councillor Kinnell** – gave an update on complaint handling by Environmental Health and gave assurance that every complaint received by the Team has received a response.

## 69 JOINT CHIEF EXECUTIVES' REPORT

The Joint Chief Executives' reported that during the current national lockdown council services are operating as effectively as possible. The regular updates are keeping Members informed on decisions and other matters of information relevant to the Council and the wider community.

Elections are still being planned for May. Members were asked not to go out canvassing for the time being as during 'lockdown' canvassing was not an exempt activity.

Government has indicated that the provision for virtual meetings would not continue after May. Hart plan to go for Hybrid meetings if Government law after that time is changed and allows for that and is practical for Members to return to the Council Chamber in a safe environment. Members will be kept informed.

From next month (February) Hart will be moving to a YouTube platform for our live broadcasting and recording of Council meetings. The recording will be held for a maximum of 3 months. And then deleted. The current Hart Facebook live streaming will cease.

Modern.gov will be up and running by May and Members were requested to complete training for this simple but effective method of presenting committee agendas.

## 70 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

**Meeting**

**Date**

**Overview & Scrutiny**

**17 November 2020**

No questions asked.

**Overview & Scrutiny (draft)** **15 December 2020**

No questions asked.

**Cabinet** **3 December 2020**

No questions asked.

**Cabinet (draft)** **7 January 2021**

No questions asked.

**Minute 88** – Council Tax Base 2021/22 (see Minute 71 below)

**Minute 94** – Corporate Vehicle for Property Holding Purposes (see Minute 74 below)

**Staffing (draft)** **17 December 2020**

No questions asked.

**Planning** **9 December 2020**

No questions asked.

**Planning (draft)** **13 January 2021**

No questions asked.

**20/01539/FUL – 28 Finns Business Park, Bowenhurst Lane, Crondall, Farnham** - Departure from the Local Plan

The Departure to the Local Plan was deemed to be **ACCEPTED**.

## **71 COUNCIL TAX BASE 2021/22**

**Cabinet Minute 88** – Council Tax Base 2021/22. To accept the Local Council Tax base for 2021/2022

Members considered the Council Tax Base recommended by Cabinet of 7 January 2021.

### **DECISION**

That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Hart District Council as its council tax base for the 2021/2022 year shall be set at 41,175.55.

## **72 OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS**

There was no feedback for Outside Bodies.

## 73 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Council considered the following resolution:

“That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting with respect to the following item (**Cabinet Minute 94 – Corporate Vehicle for Property Holding Purposes**) on the grounds that the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

Members considered the public interest test and, in all the circumstances of the case, considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.”

### DECISION

That the public be excluded for the duration of following Agenda Item (**Cabinet Minute 94 – Corporate Vehicle for Property Holding Purposes**) since it was likely that if they were present it would result in the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and it was considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

## 74 CORPORATE VEHICLE FOR PROPERTY HOLDING PURPOSES

### **Cabinet Minute 94 – Corporate Vehicle for Property Holding Purposes**

The matter related to the principle of the creation of a wholly owned company limited by shares to hold and maintain residential assets procured by the Council (exempt Cabinet report previously circulated to Members).

### DECISION

Council Agreed

- A. A Council owned housing company limited by Shares to hold and deliver housing be established.
- B. The Company to be incorporated on the following basis:
  - The Purposes of the Company is solely as a property maintenance and management company holding assets on behalf of the Council. It was to fulfil the following functions: management, letting, legal, finance and external audit.
  - The Council would be the sole shareholder of the Company
  - The Board of Directors would comprise Council Officers (a minimum of three individuals).
  - Cabinet is delegated the authority from Council to approve membership of the Board of Directors, subject to conflicts of interest checks by the Council’s S151 and the Monitoring Officer.
  - District Councillors would not be entitled to be members of the Board.

- The Board of Directors would be in day-to-day operational control of the Company and be answerable to the sole shareholder
  - The proposed company structure would be as set out in Appendix 3 of the exempt January 2021 report to Cabinet.
- C. The Joint Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Section 151 Officer be authorised to establish the housing company and complete the relevant paperwork and documents as required.
- D. Subject to availability, the company be incorporated as 'Hart Homes Limited'.

The meeting closed at 9.08pm

DRAFT

## COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

### QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

#### Mr David Turver asked:

- 1) The Local Plan shows that the average build rate over the period will be 423dpa. The Government's consultation on changing the standard method of calculating housing need created a risk that Hart's housing target would rise. However, following the Government's retraction of the proposals, Hart's housing need has fallen to 286dpa, much lower than the Local Plan. The targets for Rushmoor and Surrey Heath have also fallen. How will this new, lower target and the reduced building due to Covid affect Hart's future compliance with the Housing Delivery Test?

#### Councillor Cockarill responded:

The Hart Local Plan 2032 was adopted in April 2020. The housing figure in our Local Plan comes from the numbers needed in Hart calculated in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) plus our requirement to meet some of the unmet need from our neighbours under the Duty to Cooperate. This is our adopted plan. More on this is picked up under my response to your Question 2.

The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) compares the last three years of housing delivery with homes required over that period. Under HDT rules we will be measured using the lower of either:

- a) the local plan requirement (423 homes per annum) or
- b) the Government's local housing need figure with Surrey Heath's unmet need added on (286+41 homes = 327 homes per annum).

The issue for Hart is that come the middle of the decade expected supply from current permissions reduces, and in the long run if the HDT is to be passed additional housing supply will be needed.

The implications of Covid on housebuilding is not yet fully clear. If some sites are delayed then that could help with the HDT in future years, shifting some expected completions from early years with strong surplus supply to later years with expected deficits.

- 2) Given the Government's White Paper on Planning for the Future suggested that Local Plans should be revisited within 18 months of the new regulations coming into force, when do you think it will be appropriate to commence an early review of the Local Plan to take advantage of the new, lower build rate target?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded:

It is too early to tell the full implications of the White Paper and associated timescales. There is a lot of speculation in the planning profession that there is likely to be some significant amendments to the content of the White Paper before it progresses further.

The Hart Local Plan 2032 was adopted on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, only 8 months ago.

Paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework states: "Policies in local plans and spatial development strategies should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary. Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of a plan and should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy. Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the near future."

As referred to earlier Hart has a strong housing land supply position and no immediate concerns over the Housing Delivery Test (HDT).

One of the reasons Hart performs well against the HDT is that planning permission has been granted and construction has commenced for the key housing site allocated in the Hart Local Plan. As a result, any review of the Local Plan would not be able to reduce the housing supply figure.

Any review of a Local Plan would need to consider the length of the Plan-period. Best practice is that a plan should have at least 15 years life at the date on which it is adopted. If we were to start a review of the Local Plan now, even with the reduced housing numbers currently published, we would still need to look for additional housing sites to the later years in a new Plan-period.

We will keep progress on Planning White Paper under review, and in light of this and other factors, continue to review when it may be necessary to start work on a new Local Plan. At the current time we have a newly adopted Local Plan which is up to date.

- 3) What is the anticipated level of spend on SHGV over each of the next 2 financial years?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded:

The original a budget approved for Shapley Heath Garden Village (SHGV) was £500K over three years based upon the grant from MHCLG grant.

The budget for 2021/22 is £406k. We do not have an established budget for 2022/23.

- 4) Many of our local businesses have struggled during the pandemic and some have sadly had to close, leading to permanent change to our high streets.

What is the action plan and budget over the next 2 financial years to help Fleet and other urban centres recover and regenerate post-Covid?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded:

The impact on businesses is a tragic outcome from this pandemic, not just in Hart but everywhere.

The Council has received funding for discretionary schemes to support local businesses which is to be spent on business support and recovery. The expenditure must be fully spent by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and in total it is £1.974m. £500K of this funding has been reserved for recovery. We have worked hard to get business grants out as quickly.

We are working to promote Hart as a place to invest in, and we are talking to our main Town and Parish Councils about how we can work together to help their town and village centres. The towns we are looking to support include Fleet, Hartley Wintney, Hook, Odiham, and Yateley.

We send out newsletters to hundreds of businesses each week providing advice, updates about grants and other useful information. We will also be talking to businesses to hear directly from them how we may best be able to help.

Our Environmental Health team have been providing a range of food business to help them trade during the lockdown, especially moving from restaurants to take aways.

And we are trying to help our residents find new training and employment opportunities which in turn can help business recruit suitable people to help them in recovery.

**Mr Turver** asked a supplementary question (summary):

Is it time to increase the budget for Fleet and other town centres so that they can become more vibrant again?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded (summary)

There's a lot that can be done to help revitalise our town centres across the district. Some of that is direct support to businesses and some about how we use our town centres moving forward. We will continue to work with our local parishes and our towns.

- 5) The latest budget monitoring statement (s4.3) considered by Cabinet in early January, shows a forecast overspend of £972K in 2020/21. The draft budget (s.9.4) considered by O&S shows a deficit of £381K for 2021/22 and a further £1,081K deficit for 2022/23. How can you justify hiring full-time staff and continuing to spend vast sums on an unnecessary Garden Community when core services are at risk of being cut?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded:

The budget for 2020/2021 was approved by Full Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 included the approval for the expenditure on the Garden Communities Project and this expenditure was then allocated into the 2020/2021 budget with Full Council approval.

**Mr Turver** asked a supplementary question (summary):

The question was really about the future. If you're looking at what appears to be significant budget deficits in the next two financial years the £406k could quite easily close the budget gap. So you haven't really justified why you're continuing to spend when you're facing such financial pressure.

**Councillor Cockarill** responded (summary):

The £406k is money that should be coming from a grant from Homes England which we applied for at the end of last year. But clearly, if the financial situation in relation to grant funding from MHCLG changes significantly, there will be an opportunity to reassess the priority level of projects.

- 6) The last plan/status report was published as part of the additional capacity funding bid in September 2020. Could you please publish an up-to-date plan and status report and commit to publishing monthly updates?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded:

The reporting mechanism for the Garden Communities Project is via the Opportunities Board and their agendas and minutes come to Cabinet and Council. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic we have not been able to hold any Board meetings since last Spring however I am anticipating meeting with the Board in March.

## COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14

### QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

#### **Councillor Crookes asked:**

Regarding Shapley Heath Garden Community Project –

- 1 I believe that notices of all meetings and agendas of the Stakeholder Forum and all other project meetings should be published to Members of this Council. Do you agree?

#### **Councillor Cockarill responded:**

The Council has never, under any administration, provided copies of agendas of working groups (and the Stakeholder Forum is such a group) nor project meetings with all Councillors as such, the Council is being entirely consistent with earlier administrations of this Council.

However, we have said that minutes will be reported to the Garden Communities Opportunities Board and will be published.

#### **Councillor Crookes asked a supplementary question (summary):**

Members of the Council are as a result unlikely to know that these meetings are taking place other than perhaps the Opportunity Board?

#### **Councillor Cockarill responded (summary)**

The stakeholder forum are for outside groups - we want to hear what the local groups, the local parish councils, the County Council, and others have to say. The forums are not intended to be an opportunity for members of this council to get involved - the opportunity for members, is to ask questions to cabinet and for Council.

- 2 Which Stakeholders have sign up to be part of the Stakeholder Group?

#### **Councillor Cockarill responded:**

Clearly the Stakeholder Group is in its formative stage and once created as stated, the minutes will be published, and membership will be a matter of public record. However, in advance of that, as we did not indicate to any interested parties that their interest in the Stakeholder Group would be published, under GDPR we do not have permission to publish this information.

#### **Councillor Crookes asked a supplementary question (summary):**

Minutes of the stakeholder meetings will be published?

#### **Councillor Cockarill responded**

That is correct.

- 3 Following the meeting of the Opportunity Board in February 2020, when will the next meeting be held?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded:

We aim to meet in March once the Stakeholder thematic groups and the Landowners Forum have met.

**Councillor Crookes** asked a supplementary question:

When will the Agenda for the Opportunities Board be published?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded (summary)

Can't say exactly but once the Landowners Forum (11 February) and the Stakeholders Forum have taken place and we have established a date for the next meeting (March) we will sort out an Agenda, hopefully within the next few weeks.

- 4 Can you tell us the outcome of the bid which Hart made In September 2020, for Garden Communities Capacity Funding?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded:

We have not heard yet but as soon as we do know, we will let you know the outcome.

**Councillor Crookes** asked a supplementary question (summary):

£406k is allocated in the 2021/22 budget for the garden communities project. That's to all members because members haven't seen any detail on the budget yet. The question is, if we don't receive the capacity funding are you mindful, to continue funding, a project out of Hart resources?

**Councillor Cockarill** responded (summary):

Clearly if we don't get the funding from MHCLG or we get significantly less than £406k, a conversation will have to be taken in the round with Cabinet colleagues about what the immediate and short-term priorities for the Council are. I cannot commit to an answer before I know the answer of the bid.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETING**

**Date and Time:** Tuesday, 19 January 2021 at 7pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

### **COUNCILLORS**

Axam, Davies, Dorn, Drage, Farmer, Lamb, Makepeace-Browne, Smith, Wildsmith, Worlock (Chairman), Wright

**In attendance:** Crookes, Oliver, Radley, Quarterman

#### **Officers:**

Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Emma Foy	Head of Corporate Services and S151 Officer
Glyn Lloyd	Commercialisation Manager
Helen Vincent	Committee Services Officer

## **86 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 15 December 2020 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **87 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Wright.

## **88 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

## **89 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that a summary of the discussions held at the mid-year Overview & Scrutiny review on 6 January 2021 to be circulated.

At the mid-year review, Members agreed:

- To reinstate presentations from external bodies.
- To encourage non committee member participation.
- Members to attend independent training in the form of a webinar by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.
- Service Plan review process.
- The lack of public participation at meetings.

The Chairman thanked Steve Bennett and his team for rolling out Modern.gov and for all their efforts getting this project up and running.

The Chairman moved agenda Item 10 to the end of the meeting.

## **90 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)**

None.

## **91 SERVICE PERFORMANCE – HEADS OF SERVICE ATTENDANCE**

The Head of Corporate, Emma Foy advised Members that the current year Service Plan had demonstrated that Corporate Services will be able to deliver all elements with the exception of three areas:

- Review of the expansion opportunities at Edenbrook Leisure Centre.
- New draft consultation on community engagement
- Roll out of updated project management governance which will now be completed in May due to a large additional burden of work due to the impact of COVID.

Completed objectives include the updated financial regulations, internal audit plan, new IT security policies and the statement of accounts, which were published and audited on time. The team continue to work hard to meet all other objectives.

## **92 CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP**

Councillor Oliver updated members on the progress made by the Climate Change Working Group and the three ways where this cross party working group can work together with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

1. To encourage its members and contacts to provide information, through their political group structures, to their representatives on the Climate Change Working Group. As this is a cross party working group there should be no barriers to discussion on priorities or opportunities to achieve the Councils ambition of Net Carbon Neutrality by 2040.
2. To scrutinise the progress on the agreed Climate Change Action Plan prior to its submission to Cabinet. This was timetabled for Oct 2020 but due to resource constraints and due to the pandemic, it is now hoped for this to come forward in March/April 2021.
3. To scrutinise projects that come forward for funding in support of the Climate Change Action Plan. Current and proposed budgets only allow for operational costs of developing and investigating opportunities for the Council to reduce its carbon footprint. Investment and implementation will be agreed through the Councils normal funding process and agreed by Cabinet.

The next meeting of the Climate Change Working Group's next meeting is 25 January 2021.

Peter Summersell was acknowledged for his commendable work and presentation to Members on 15 December 2020.

### **93 CAR PARKING CHARGES**

Members were updated on the current situation on the car parking charges review, which concluded in November 2019, and the proposals sent to all Parishes who have an HDC Public Car Park, on the proposals HDC intended to implement in May 2020. Due to the pandemic these were not implemented but are now scheduled for May 2021. The fees structures proposed are included in this year budgets. Members were advised that a review was carried out to introduce 1 hour free parking across all Hart DC owned car parks. Other options offered to support residents and businesses which would be more affordable is a 30 minutes free parking but to increase parking charges over 3 hours.

Parish decisions:

- Fleet preferred to keep charges as they are.
- Blackwater declined any changes in rates.
- Odiham declined free parking in their small car park and are looking at various schemes for token parking along the high street.
- Hook are extending 30 minutes free parking to 1 hour which will come into effect from May 2021.
- Hartley Wintney already pay and subsidise 90 minutes free parking in red bays. There is the possibility of introducing 1 hour free parking across all parking bays. Responses are required in the next 2 months.

It has been agreed to reconcile any estimates and impact on revenue projections with Parishes at the end of the year. The new free parking regime will require the user to log in to park for free for easier enforcement.

### **94 CIVIC REGENERATION WORKING GROUP**

The Portfolio Holder for Commercialisation and the Commercialisation Manager updated Members on the progress made with the Civic Quarter regeneration project, work undertaken, findings and recommendations for next steps.

Members were advised:

- Good progress is being made.
- The Council has engaged with external consultations on various options.
- There will be a consultation strategy as advised by Create Streets to engage with the wider community and currently working through example questions.
- Budget for research on commercial opportunities is drawn from the commercialisation strategy budget up to £500k.

- The Council is making positive steps and cooperating well with HCC and the library services.
- The Working Group is confident with multiple task timescales of the project.
- Engagement to be made with residents from the whole of the Hart District and it was advised that research questions aren't overwhelming.

Members considered and confirmed that the Working Group will continue to investigate possible opportunities for potential redevelopment alongside its position with the town and any potential impact on Fleet town as a whole and are happy with the balance of questions and level of detail.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee noted the advice provided by Create Streets regarding the proposed public engagement strategy and potential questions.

## **95 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

Members were presented with the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2021/22 which incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy and Prudential and Treasury Indicators.

Members were informed;

- That the key change in this report and the previous report is an update in interest rates which remain low.
- Policy changes in investments have been amended to allow longer term investments.
- Officers have recently sought permission for a temporary increase in the Counterparty limit for Barclays to cover funds to pay business rate grants.

Members discussed assessing the credit risk of other Councils which currently includes looking at budget monitoring and audit reports.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2021/22 be recommended to Cabinet.

## **96 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet Work Programme was considered, and the Chairman requested clarification in costs associated with the Harlington roof repairs. The Monitoring Officer told Members a written response will be circulated accordingly.

## 97 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was considered and suggested as follows:

- Climate Change Working Group update to the Committee in advance of Cabinet in April.
- To move items listed at the top to the back of the work programme after discussions have taken place to create a rolling document.

## 98 DRAFT BUDGET 2021/2022

This report provided a summary of the revenue and capital budget proposals for 2021/2022 and the Committee was invited to forward its comments on the proposed draft budget and Council Tax levels to Cabinet. This draft budget referenced numbers included in the provisional finance settlement for 2021/2022 which was published on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The final settlement is expected in late January or early February 2021.

Members were updated on:

- Impact of new homes bonus budget predictions
- Lower tier settlement grants.
- No changes to the Council Tax local support scheme.
- Loss in recycle income.
- Fees and charges with parking charges to be rectified.
- Increased costs of £140K spent following in-sourcing decisions.
- Adjustments to income have been made.
- Budget deficit of £381K for 2021/22 and future pressures are even more challenging.

Members debated:

- Legacy payments stopping.
- Commercial income in 2021/22 of £196K is rental income from the scheme at Edenbrook.
- Net service budget has risen due to increase in staff salaries, contractual inflation and also indexation provisions for long term contracts.
- Net service budget breakdown to be provided to Members in order for the Committee to update findings to Council.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Committee agreed to forward to Cabinet its comments and approach adopted to preparing the draft budget after it has been forwarded to Council.

*(Appendix 2 of this report was Exempt from Public Publication)*

In order to discuss this Appendix, Members agreed to exclude the public.

## **99 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

Members agreed that the public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

It is suggested that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

## **CABINET**

**Date and Time:** Thursday, 4 February 2021 at 7pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

## **COUNCILLORS**

Ambler, Bailey, Cockarill, Kinnell (from 7.06pm), Neighbour (Chairman), Oliver, Quarterman, Radley

**In attendance:** Axam, Farmer, Forster, Kennett, Smith, Worlock

### **Officers:**

Patricia Hughes	Joint Chief Executive
Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Emma Foy	Head of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer
Joanne Rayne	Finance Manager
Glyn Lloyd	Commercialisation Manager
Helen Vincent	Committee Services

## **95 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of 7 January 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **96 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

## **97 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

## **98 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman asked Joint Chief Executive to update Cabinet on any recent emergency decisions taken to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Joint Chief Executive announced recent emergency decisions made:

1. In consultation with Cabinet, local discretionary grant payments will be made to a small number of business who pay business rates to their landowner, but as they do not pay business rates directly to the council, are unable to make valid claims under other schemes.

2. Further to a competitive quotation process, the appointment of specialist professional support to help make informed decisions regarding our Leisure Centre contract, at a cost of £4,000 over a 5 month period.
3. Hart District Council has offered Hampshire County Council the use of the Hart Council Offices, as a location for the delivery of the Community Lateral Flow Testing Scheme. Details will be announced, once confirmed.
4. With ongoing work for a vaccination centre opening in Fleet, Hart has entered into a licence agreement with Richmond Surgery to enable their use of the Harlington, whilst also providing visitors an allocation of free car parking spaces.

**99 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)**

None.

**100 MINUTES FROM CIVIC REGENERATION WORKING GROUP**

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2021 were noted.

**101 CIVIC REGENERATION WORKING GROUP**

Members were updated on the progress of the Civic Quarter regeneration project to date (with reference to previous updates), work undertaken, findings and recommendation for next steps. Overview & Scrutiny considered this report at its January meeting.

Members were advised that the community engagement strategy was done through a competitive procurement process which went to tender. Updates were documented in the minutes and a tender summary was delivered. Documentation of this would be provided.

**DECISION**

1. Cabinet noted the advice provided by Create Streets, regarding the proposed public engagement strategy and that Officers are working to refine the potential questions and provide context for the public as to the reasons why the Working Group wish to engage.
2. Members were happy that any potential redevelopment will be considered alongside its position with the town and any potential impact on Fleet Town as a whole.

## 102 DRAFT BUDGET 2021/2022

Members were presented with a summary of the revenue and capital budget proposals for 2021/2022 to enable Cabinet to recommend to Council its proposed draft budget and Council Tax levels. The report included the statutory statement of the Head of Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer) to Council on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves.

The proposed budget referenced numbers included in the provisional finance settlement for 2021/2022 which was published on December 17<sup>th</sup> 2020. Members were asked to note that the Government's multi-year Spending Review, due in 2019 was once again replaced by a short-term Spending Round, meaning, in substance, any budget to be proposed will only be for one-year only. No figures have been made available for local government funding beyond 2021/22, either nationally or locally. This report therefore cannot give any realistic projection for 2022/2023, however indicative budget requirements have been entered. Overview & Scrutiny Committee were thanked for their structured debate on this draft budget at the meeting held in January.

Members were advised that this time next year will be more challenging and serious decisions would need to be made once the full impact of COVID can be assessed with the addition to budget pressures from the reduction in the new homes bonus settlement. It was confirmed that there was no significant change in the final settlement figure received from the Government and the shortfall would be covered from reserves for this year.

Members considered:

- Budgets to allow for claiming compensation due to COVID.
- Policy positions made on assumptions of returning to business as normal.
- Income is equal to expenditure with pre-sets and adjustments added for funding element.
- Approved budgets by Council in February 2020 to be reallocated due to COVID.
- 0.5% being the rate of inflation used to reflect charges and a full list of fees and charges will go to Council.
- Collection fund surplus is not in the budget for 2021/2022.
- Level of support given on the council tax base will be provided at next month's Council.
- Planning preapplication charges increase is higher than the inflation rate.
- Increase in household parking permits for a second car.
- Forecasts expected on track of terms of budget and structural deficit are broadly in line with forecasts predicted.
- Cost reduction and the impact this will have on services to residents.

Members acknowledged the support and hard work of the financial team and commended the work done to put the budget together to manage the deficit caused by the impact of the COVID crises. The Chairman stated that Members need to be prepared to defend residents against the financial pressures the Council faces.

#### **RECOMMENDATION to Council**

1. That the level of Council Tax for 2021/22 be increased by £5 (2.9%) and set at £181.84 for a band D property.
2. That the summary revenue budget for 2021/22 as set out (in paragraph 12 of the report) be approved.
3. That the revised capital programme for 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix 2 be approved.
4. No changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021/22 but that a full review of this takes place and is reported to Council in September.

### **103 CAPITAL STRATEGY, TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Members received the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2020/21, which incorporated the Annual Investment Strategy and Prudential and Treasury Indicators and the Asset Management Plan. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement had been considered at the January meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Asset Management Plan and Capital Strategy remain the same in policy but have been updated for the latest reported figures. Cabinet was asked to accept the Local Council Tax base for 2021/2022 for onward recommendation to Council.

Members acknowledged the possibility of the Bank of England introducing a negative bank rate and decided a strategy would need to be agreed for undermanaged money.

Members considered the issues and agreed the recommendation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION to Council**

1. The Capital Strategy be approved.
2. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement be approved, noting the change to allow the Council to invest in Medium-Term Notes and Long-Term Multi Asset Diverse Funds.
3. The Asset Management Plan be approved.

## 104 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet Work Programme was considered and amended:

1. Inclusion of the Business Case for the Housing Company next month after this has been to Overview & Scrutiny Committee next week.
2. Clarification required for the omission of the Climate Change action plan.
3. Inclusion of COVID Emergency Decisions in the forthcoming months.

The meeting closed at 8.02pm

DRAFT

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Date and Time:** Wednesday, 10 February 2021 at 7pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

### **COUNCILLORS**

Ambler, Axam, Blewett, Cockarill, Delaney, Forster (substitute for Worlock)  
Kennett, Oliver (Chairman), Quarterman, Southern, Wheale (8.15pm)

Mark Philcox            Hampshire County Council

### **Officers**

Emma Whittaker	Planning Manager
Miguel Martinez	Principal Planner Officer
Peter Lee	Planning Team Leader
Tola Otukedo	Shared Legal Services
Celia Wood	Committee Services Officer

## **45 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **46 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Councillor Worlock substituted by Councillor Forster.

## **47 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman advised that the Farnham Lodge report had been deferred to the March Planning meeting.

At the request of the Chairman the Planning Manager updated the Committee on the Determination of the Lees Cottage Planning Appeal.

## **48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Radley and Forster declared that they would approach the Report on Watery Lane Item 101 with an open mind based on the evidence presented this evening.

**49 UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE**

The Committee were asked to consider the report to provide an overview of the Planning Development Management function between the periods April to December 2020 (Quarters 1- 3).

Members discussed:

- That another set of KPIs indicators be shared with the Committee for performance measured against the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) requirements and how Hart compare to other Authorities. The Indicators to be sent via a data link.
- The Committee also discussed the KPIs within Hart District Council to measure performance.
- A report on Enforcement performance will be presented at the March Planning Meeting.

**DECISION**

The Planning Committee noted the overview of the Development Management function.

**50 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

Members accepted updates via the Addendum and considered the planning report from the Head of Place.

The meeting closed at 8.59pm

## HART DISTRICT COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

### Decisions/Recommendations – 10 February 2021

#### **Item number 101 - 20/02827/AMCON - Land at Watery Lane, Church Crookham, Fleet.**

Variation of Condition 37 attached to Planning Permission 14/00504/MAJOR dated 26/06/2015 to allow the roundabout to be completed and fully operational prior to the 50th occupation of the development.

Members sought clarification on the following:

- How the traffic modelling was carried out and if the behaviour of the drivers had been taken into account coming to that junction.
- Why after 5 years after the Appeal the Section 278 is not in place and were advised that the new junction level is higher and a more complex design.
- If the application was granted at this meeting, when would the building of the junction start.
- Who is responsible for the delay in building the junction.
- Whether the County Council have taken into consideration recent road traffic incidents at that junction and the impact of the site-related traffic on the junction.
- What would stop the Developer putting in for another amendment at a later stage and were advised there is nothing to prevent them applying for a variation but there would have to be a robust justification for any delay.

Members were asked to consider whether delaying the build of the junction to the 50<sup>th</sup> house being occupied would have a negative or severe impact on the highway network.

Members discussed:

- This junction has always caused concern and has been in need of improvement since 1989.
- The only justification for the delay that the Developer has put forward is the outdated traffic survey data that does not take into account the current traffic flow and therefore Members considered it incomplete.
- Local residents, Hampshire County Council, Hart District Council and the Developers all want a junction and it needs to be built sooner rather than later.

Members were minded to refuse the application and after a vote agreed that the application be **REFUSED**.

Reason for Refusal:

In the absence of any detailed information to the contrary, the proposed delivery of the mitigation (roundabout) at the A287/Redfields Lane intersection before the occupation of the 50<sup>th</sup> dwelling, could be likely to result in a severe impact on the existing operation of the intersection and consequently on the local highway network and safety of highway users, all contrary to policy INF3 of the adopted Hart Local Plan and Sites 2016-2032, saved policy GEN1(viii) of the Hart District Local Plan – Replacement (1996-2006), paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and policy TM02 of the emerging Crookham Village Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2032.

Councillor Wheale joined the meeting during this item.

Councillor David Jackson (Crookham Village Parish Council)

**and**

Dr Louise Perrin

**spoke against the Application.**

## **STAFFING COMMITTEE**

**Date and Time:** Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 7pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

Butler, Crampton, Drage, Kennett, Kinnell, Neighbour, Radley, Wildsmith (Chairman), Worlock

**Officers:**

Patricia Hughes  
Brijesh Mehta  
Gill Chapman

Joint Chief Executive  
HR and Customer Service Client Officer  
Committee Services

### **8 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received.

### **10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

### **11 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Wildsmith asked that the staff be thanked for their hard work over the last year. He appreciated the work of the staff in difficult times, and especially as many were working outside of their usual role, eg delivering food to vulnerable residents. Members supported his sentiments.

### **12 REVIEW OF CHIEF EXECUTIVES' PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND OBJECTIVE SETTING**

The Committee considered the 2020/21 performance objectives for the Joint Chief Executives and the performance objectives for the Joint Chief Executives for 2021/22. The objectives would be used as a basis of evaluation of the Joint Chief Executives' performance.

Members acknowledged the different roles that the Joint Chief Executives had had to undertake this year, as well as ensuring the Council continued to meet its statutory duties, and the work that would need to be done in moving forward in the recovery from the pandemic.

A discussion on staff welfare included different working conditions, enabling staff to work effectively from home with the right tools, social isolation, team activities and staff surveys. Feedback on staff surveys had been circulated, and the Joint Chief Executive agreed that this information would be resent to Members.

## **DECISION**

The performance objectives as set out be confirmed for the Joint Chief Executives for the coming year.

### **13 PAY POLICY STATEMENT FINANCIAL YEAR 2021-22 INCLUDING OVERVIEW OF OVERTIME RATES, CURRENT VACANCIES AND PROGRESS WITH MARKET SUPPLEMENT REVIEW**

Approval was sought for the Council's Pay Policy for 2021/22. Further to the request at Staffing Committee in February 2020, a benchmarking comparison of over time rates against other Councils had been included.

Members considered:

- National pay negotiation and the possibility of rises. It was agreed this was a sensitive topic in light of the issues with the economy as a result of the pandemic.
- 'Insourcings' and the forecast reduction in the staffing bill
- The median remuneration

A vote was taken, and the recommendation was carried.

## **RECOMMENDATION to Council**

- 1 That the Pay Policy 2021/2022, be approved.
- 2 That no change be made to the current overtime system; however, it is recommended that staff are reminded that they must always receive prior-written authorisation from their line manager, for any overtime worked.
- 3 That the delay of the review of Market Supplements be noted, due to the pandemic. The outcome of this review will be reported to the next Staffing Committee.
- 4 That the staff numbers and vacancies provided are noted.

The meeting closed at 7.27 pm