

Cabinet

MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2023 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Richard Clewer (Chairman), Cllr Laura Mayes (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Phil Alford, Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Nick Botterill, Cllr Jane Davies, Cllr Nick Holder, Cllr Ashley O'Neill and Cllr Caroline Thomas

Also Present:

Cllr Richard Budden, Cllr Sven Hocking, Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Stewart Palmen, Cllr Horace Prickett, Cllr Tamara Reay, Cllr Pip Ridout, Cllr Mike Sankey, Cllr Martin Smith and Cllr Graham Wright

54 **Apologies**

There were no apologies.

55 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023 were presented.

Resolved:

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023.

56 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

57 **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader provided an update on Salisbury City Hall and clarified the Council's commitment to reopen venue for live entertainment. He explained that conversations were continuing with council officers about re-opening the venue once it was safe to do so and in a condition that was befitting for Salisbury and complemented the wider cultural offer the city provided. He urged decision makers in the city to work with Wiltshire Council on this matter.

58 **Public Participation and Questions from Councillors**

General questions were submitted from the following members of public:

- Dave Yearsley – Self-volunteering and improvements to data systems
- Colin Gale – Maintaining roads and footways

Cllr Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing explained that the questions had received written responses which were published on the Council's website prior to the meeting in the agenda supplement, which can be accessed [here](#).

Supplementary questions were received from:

- Dave Yearsley asked a further question about the potential timescales for linking a database for volunteering to the integrated management system – Cllr Caroline Thomas confirmed that a written response would be provided.
- Colin Gale asked further questions in relation to timescales for the bank retention to be replaced and confirmation of the options being considered for a permanent solution for the bank retention. Cllr Caroline Thomas reported that these matters will be monitored, although a written response will be provided.

59 **Year End Revenue Financial Outturn Position 2022/23**

Cllr Nick Botterill, Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning presented a report which provided detail about the final year end position for the financial year 2022/23 for revenue with the necessary approvals and with suggested actions.

The Cabinet noted that the report provided details of variances against budgets following the quarter three budget monitoring reported to Cabinet on 31 January 2023. That report forecast an overspend of £5.037m for the financial year although the final position has improved during the last quarter to a final overspend position of £1.839m. The report detailed a number of requests to transfer £25.836m, of which some relate to government grants, into specific earmarked reserves to support planned activity in 2023/24 and future years.

Cllr Caroline Thomas, Cabinet Member for Transport, Street Scene, and Flooding reported specifically on the allocation of funding from the Business Plan Priority Reserve to fund for two years for litter enforcement on rural and urban roads, fly posting enforcement, additional litter prevention, cleaning and collection initiatives and awareness campaigns to ensure behaviour change.

Cllr Pip Ridout, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group, confirmed that the report had been considered by the Task Group at its meeting on 7 July 2023. The Task Group were broadly satisfied that budgets were close to being balanced, pleased that reserves were increasing and proposed that a decision was required about the scrutiny of Stone Circle activities. Cllr Ridout thanked officers for their hard work in relation to the revenue outturn.

Cllr Graham Wright, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, confirmed that the report had also been considered by the Management Committee on 26 June 2023 and he complimented the Task Group for their consideration of the report.

Cllr Brian Mathew welcomed the litter initiatives, thanking officers for the suggestions and the commitment of the community litter pickers. He also commented on the sign off of the Council's accounts. In response to the comments and questions raised Cllr Botterill, supported by officers confirmed that robust discussions had recently taken place with McDonalds about the problem of litter from their premises. It was noted that McDonalds patrolled a significant perimeter around their premises, although there were instances that litter did extend further afield. Members noted that the issue of publishing accounts was an issue impacting a number of Local Authorities. The Audit Committee would be considering a report about how to resolve the issue at their next meeting on 25 July 2023.

Resolved:

To approve:

- a) the transfer in total of £22.638m to earmarked reserves as detailed in the report and Appendix B;**
- b) the additional transfers to reserves of:**
 - i. £2m to a pay award reserve;**
 - ii. £0.6m to a feasibility reserve; and**
 - iii. £0.598m to the Business Plan Priority Reserve;**
- c) that £0.510m be allocated from the Business Plan Priority reserve for the next two years to fund litter enforcement activity.**

To note:

- d) the general fund revenue budget outturn position for the financial year 2022/23;**
- e) the Dedicated Schools revenue budget outturn position for the financial year 2022/23;**
- f) the Housing Revenue Account outturn position for the financial year 2022/23;**
- g) the contributions to and from earmarked reserves as planned;**
- h) the final year end position of savings delivery.**

Reason for Decision:

To inform effective decision making and ensure sound financial management as part of the Councils overall control environment.

To inform Cabinet on the financial year end revenue outturn position for the Council for the financial year 2022/23, including delivery of approved savings.

To improve the Councils financial resilience by increasing the balance on the General Fund reserve and setting aside funds in earmarked reserves to prudently assist in managing the Councils financial risks and future pressures.

60 **Year End Capital Investment Programme Financial Outturn Position 2022/23**

Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning presented a report which provided detail about the final year end position for the financial year 2022/23 for the capital programme.

The Cabinet noted that the report included the movements from the original budget, final scheme slippage and funding of the programme. The report also provided an update on the significant programmes that have been delivered and those that have been reprogrammed to future years. Cllr Botterill thanked the Financial Planning Task Group for their input and contributions to new approaches coming forward for future years.

Cllr Pip Ridout, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group, confirmed that the report had been considered by the Task Group at its meeting on 7 July 2023. Cllr Ridout explained that the system to monitor the Programme had been evolving throughout the financial year and although not ideal, slippages in the Programme reduced the need for additional funding.

Cllr Graham Wright, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee confirmed that the report had been considered by the Management Committee on 26 June 2023 and robust scrutiny had taken place.

In response to a question from Cllr Tony Jackson about the reprofiling of commitments for the Maltings in Salisbury towards the repair of squash courts in Warminster, Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets agreed to discuss the matter further after the Cabinet meeting.

Resolved:

To Note:

- a) the additional capital budgets of £5.369m (£3.820m in 2022/23) that have been added to the capital programme under Chief Finance Officer delegated powers.**
- b) that £5.067m budget that has been brought forward from future years to the 2022/23 programme to support the delivery of accelerated projects, or project in year overspend under Chief Finance Officer delegated powers.**
- c) the removal of £8.784m budget (£4.585m in 2022/23) for Homes England Funded capital grant for the West Ashton Urban Extension**

project in line with grant conditions as the project is no longer proceeding.

- d) the removal of £7.584m budget from 2022/23 for Housing Infrastructure Fund for the Future Chippenham programme as a result of the mutually agreed withdrawal from the Grant Determination agreement with Homes England.
- e) the programme underspend for phase 1 and 2 and subsequent removal of £2.305m (£0.737m in 2022/23) for Wiltshire Online due to the completion of the project.
- f) the removal of £0.053m underspend on CIL Funded schemes budget, this was allocated for feasibility studies which have now all completed. This budget is funded by Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) the removal will allow CIL to be reallocated to other projects.
- g) the capital programme end of year spend position of £128.380m for financial year 2022/23.

To approve:

- h) the £39.438m of capital programme slippage to be rolled forward into future financial years.

To recommend to Full Council to approve:

- i) the allocation of £0.800m CIL funding to finance £0.400m per year for 2023/24 and 2024/25 budgets for Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Groups.

Reason for Decision:

To inform effective decision making and ensure sound financial management as part of the Councils overall control environment.

To inform Cabinet on the final year end capital outturn position for the Council for the financial year 2022/23.

61 **Housing Acquisitions**

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Military-Civilian Integration, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Health and Wellbeing presented a report which provided an update on the recent and future intended activity of house acquisitions by the Council to deliver on a wide range of service needs.

The Cabinet noted that the Council are in the process of acquiring homes through a number of Government programmes. With funding of £10m being set

aside in reserves for the acquisitions it was expected that the programme would deliver in the region of 250 homes to support long term service need for Wiltshire residents as well as delivering the Counties ongoing commitment to homing Ukrainian and Afghan families.

Cllr Phil Alford, Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfers welcomed the report and the ability to support service needs.

Cllr Pip Ridout, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group, confirmed that the report had been considered by the Task Group at its meeting on 7 July 2023. The Task Group were content with the responses received to questions asked, and also noted that there were a number of unknown areas. The Leader commented on the work of the Cabinet Shareholder Group in asking questions of Stone Circle at public meetings that Councillors were welcome to attend. Cllr Graham Wright, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee highlighted the possible need for the Management Committee to consider the level of scrutiny provided by Cabinet via regular reports from the Shareholder Group and this could be added to the Management Committee Forward Work Plan.

Cllr Brian Mathew welcomed the proposals set out in the report. In addition, he highlighted the plight of refugees arriving at the UK borders and their accommodation needs. The Leader advised Members against combining the needs of different people groups when providing for their accommodation needs, especially as could be alternative funding streams available from the Government.

Resolved:

- a) To note the activity being undertaken by the Council to date in acquiring houses through the LAHF programme, and the addition of the £4.012m Government Grant to the HRA Build Programme under the Section 151 officer's delegated powers.**
- b) To approve that the governance of housing acquisitions will be through individual business cases approved by the Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance.**
- c) To recommend to Full Council to approve the addition to the capital programme of £40m, funded through £10m reserves and £30m debt, to enable the Council to acquire housing for long term investment to deliver service solutions.**

Reasons for Decision:

To report on the Councils recent and future activity of housing acquisition funded through Government Grant and to seek the recommend to Full Council the necessary approvals to add those funds and the leveraged funds to the Capital Programme.

62 **Wiltshire Local Plan Review - Publication of draft Plan for consultation**

Cllr Nick Botterill, Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning presented the report seeking Cabinet's endorsement to recommend to Full Council that the pre-submission Draft Wiltshire Local Plan Review be formally published for a final stage of consultation; and set out the arrangements for the consultation and next steps.

Cllr Botterill reported that the Plan is one of the most significant strategic documents for the council and will pave the way for sustainable growth up to 2038. Updating the Plan is a key priority and will ensure that Wiltshire benefits from plan-led development that best meets the growing needs of Wiltshire communities. He emphasised that the Plan is evidence based, with significant engagement with the local community and statutory consultees and has responded to changes in national planning policy. The Plan addresses Wiltshire's need for new homes, jobs and infrastructure between 2020 and 2038 and noted that it is based on 36,740 homes, a reduction of 8,890 compared to the 45,630 number of homes consulted on in 2021.

The Cabinet noted that the council has reached the final consultation stage, where representations are invited on soundness and legal compliance, which is known as the Regulation 19 stage. Publication of the Pre-Submission Draft Plan for consultation is proposed to start towards the end of September 2023 for a period of at least 6 weeks in line with legislation and the council's adopted statement of community involvement. Following the consultation, once the outcomes have been considered a further report will be brought back to Cabinet and Council, so that the Plan can be approved for submission to an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State and examined in public.

Questions were received on time from the following:

- Richard Curr
- Nick Parry
- Hannah Anderson-Jones
- Richard Walker
- Andrew Nicolson

The Leader acknowledged that the questions had received written responses which had been published on the Council's website as a [supplementary agenda](#) prior to the meeting.

Mr R Smith, a member of the public, spoke in relation to this item. Mr Smith spoke positively about progress with the Local Plan but asked that Cabinet treats the published Local Plan as a 'Regulation 18' Plan to give the local community the opportunity for a further round of consultation, before the Council eventually moves to Regulation 19 stage. In response, Cllr Botterill stated that the Plan had already been subject to extensive consultation and that further delays at this stage would not be appropriate. He confirmed that the Local Plan would be subject to further consultation in the autumn at Regulation 19 stage

and that the local community would have the opportunity to participate in the examination next year.

In addition to the above questions, a large number of statements and questions were received after the deadline from the following residents of Salisbury, which included concerns about the allocations at Harnham (Sites 8 and 9), loss of greenfield land, inadequate road infrastructure and traffic generation arising from proposals:

- Geraint Dingley
- Dean Hillier
- Rupert Parson
- Carla Moors
- Anne Whiting
- Ellie Butcher
- Phil and Ann Ray
- Melanie Galpin
- Kirsten Webster
- Tim Guy
- Lynn and Andrew McLachlan
- Judith Burns
- Alastair and Frances Barrett
- Andy Galpin
- Jeremy Court
- Simon and Fiona Thomas
- Annabelle Hepburn
- Dr Polly Jacobs and Neal Jacobs
- Sally and Graham Exton
- Andrew and Sarah Robertson
- Lynette Walsh-Evans
- Andrew Chadwick
- Trevor Wilson
- Jo Throp
- Will Throp
- Andy Chisholm
- Susan Simmonite
- Henk Leerink
- Dr Katie Pearce
- Matt Ravenhill
- Geoff Goodwin
- Kate Higson
- Richard and Julie Mackie
- Katie Cash
- Colette White
- Keith and Frances Williamson
- Frank Perks
- Jonathan and Stephanie Snow
- Kelvin and Melanie Farmaner

Responses to these questions are attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Cabinet members drew attention to the Design Guide and the importance of good design that is appropriate to a local area and how this compliments policy within the Plan, highlighted the public health issues included throughout the Plan, the need for villages to flourish, the need for affordable housing and the safeguarding of local employment land.

Cllr Graham Wright, Chair of the Climate Emergency Task Group confirmed that the Task Group received a briefing on 29 June 2023, and considered the areas of the Plan connected with the work of the Task Group. They welcomed the Plan and were pleased with the progress in developing policies associated with climate change and sustainable development.

A number of comments were received from Members about: supporting the development of affordable housing in villages; welcoming policies associated with tackling climate change; greater engagement with Members and residents through Area Board meetings; general development of settlements including large and small villages and reason for 20% of housing growth at these; the support required to review and update Neighbourhood Plans; Policy 96 in relation to water resources and its justification; the impact of the allocation at Laverstock on iconic views; lack of reference to agricultural run off for water pollution; and engaging with local groups in relation to rights of way management.

In response to the above points raised by Members, Cabinet Members and officers: highlighted that the Plan has vision and pushes the boundaries; the sustainability of expanding existing settlements where infrastructure exists rather than developing entirely new settlements, referred to recent member briefings on the Plan; planning in rural areas, the need for an evidence-based process, confirmed that resources would be available to support Neighbourhood Plans; the impact of developments can be mitigated to some extent, referred members to supporting documents including the Revised Spatial Strategy; agriculture is outside scope of the Plan and a function of the Government; and engaging local groups for rights of way management issues is supported.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

- (i) Endorses the Wiltshire Local Plan Review - Pre-Submission Draft Plan at Appendix 1 subject to amendment in (iii).**
- (ii) Recommends to Full Council on 18 July 2023 that the Wiltshire Local Plan Review - Pre-Submission Draft Plan at Appendix 1 (subject to modification in (iii)) be approved for publication in line with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), for a period of at least six weeks public consultation.**

- (iii) **Authorises the Director for Planning, in consultation with the Director for Legal and Governance and Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning, to: make any necessary minor changes to the Pre-Submission Draft Plan before it is published; and to enable the finalising of the associated evidence documents for publication alongside the Plan; and to make arrangements for, and undertake statutory consultation.**

Reason for Decision:

To ensure the council continues to make progress in updating its Local Plan, in line with the timescale set out in the recently approved Local Development Scheme and statutory requirements.

63 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.40 pm)

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