

**Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet
held on Monday, 6th June, 2022
from 4.00 pm - 4.44 pm**

Present: J Ash-Edwards (Chair)

J Belsey
R Cromie

R de Mierre
S Hillier

N Webster

Absent: Councillor R Salisbury

Also Present: Councillors Bates, Chapman, Dabell & Eggleston.

1. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.

No declarations were made.

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Cllr Salisbury.

3. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2022.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

4. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE LEADER AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.

The Leader confirmed that he had no urgent business.

5. PERFORMANCE OUTTURN 2021-22.

Stephen Fitzgerald, Interim Head of Corporate Resources, introduced the report which set out the Council's outturn performance for the year 2021/22.

The Leader drew attention to the Scrutiny Committee's comments and felt it was a pleasing end to the financial year in terms of performance.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parking expressed that she was pleased to see an additional indicator for fly tipping as well as the number of planning enforcement investigations.

The Cabinet Member for Community referenced Paragraph 9 of the Report and commended the Council for continuing its business as usual in addition to taking on additional responsibilities arising from the pandemic.

The Leader noted that no Member wished to speak so moved to vote on the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Cabinet:

- (i) Noted the Council's outturn performance for 2021/22 and identify any areas where further reporting or information is required;
- (ii) Noted the changes to the bundle of indicators to be monitored in 2022/23.

6. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2021-22.

Stephen Fitzgerald, Interim Head of Corporate Resources, introduced the report which informed the Cabinet of the outturn position for the 2021/22 revenue and capital budgets in the year that saw a continued financial impact due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Leader sought clarification regarding the net underspend of the leisure specific reserve. He asked whether it was a result of a lesser use of reserves instead of a greater windfall.

The Interim Head of Corporate Resources confirmed that the Council had used less of its reserves.

The Leader stated that it is a very respectable position to have ended given the challenges and costs of the pandemic.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth commended the senior officer team and stated that the finances and performance outturn show that the Council has been very well run.

The Cabinet Member for Community thanked the officer for the explanation of the underspend. He noted that the report is actually an outturn for the last ten years rather than the last year as the Council has worked hard to build up the reserves. He drew attention to the way the Council is doing business with more work moving online and referred to the savings of £18,000 from the Annual Electoral Canvass as one example of the benefits of doing so.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parking stated she was pleased that the Mid Sussex economy returned quicker than envisaged and noted the extra income from parking charges.

The Leader reiterated the need for a strong financial position to deliver the Council's objectives and highlighted that the ability of the Council to support local communities during the pandemic was due to the work over the past decade. He added that the task is to rebuild the position to give a good foundation for the coming years. The Leader then took Members to a vote on the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Cabinet noted the contents of the report and to recommended to Council:

- (i) that grant income as set out in paragraph 12 to 25 of the report be transferred to Specific Reserves;
- (ii) that requests totalling £82,000 be transferred to Specific Reserves as set out in Table 1;
- (iii) that balance of interest totalling £174,111 as set out in paragraph 27 is transferred to the General Reserve;
- (iv) that the underachievement of Dividend income totalling £19,232 as set out in paragraph 31 is met from the General Reserve;
- (v) that the 2022/23 capital programme be increased by £5,215,000 as a result of slippage of some 2021/22 capital projects as detailed in Table 2;
- (vi) that the revenue underspend in 2021/22, totalling £144,000, be transferred to General Reserve.

7. STRATEGIC RISKS 2022-23.

Stephen Fitzgerald, Interim Head of Corporate Resources, introduced the report which presented the Corporate Strategic Risk Policy Document and the Council's key strategic risks for 2022-23.

The Leader highlighted that this is a tried and test approach across the Council that considers the key corporate risks each year. He noted that no Member wished to speak he moved to vote on the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet:

- (i) Agreed the Strategic Risks for 2022-23 and management plans set out at appendix A; and,
- (ii) Agreed the MSDC Strategic Risk Management Policy, as set out at Appendix B.

8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND REVENUE CORPORATE PROJECTS UPDATE.

Stephen Fitzgerald, Interim Head of Corporate Resources, introduced the report which presented two new projects proposed to be added to the Capital Programme and Revenue Projects for 2022/23 and updates to The Orchards Improved Toilet Provision Project.

The Leader said that East Grinstead Members will be pleased to see Swan Mead coming forward and believed that it was an important step for the Council to improve its temporary accommodation provision as well as improving a site that has been vacant for a while.

The Deputy Leader commented that the work at the Bedelands Gypsy and Traveller Site needs to be done and that the Swan Mead building has been very tired and needs improvement. He added that Swan Mead is in a good location and that temporary accommodation is very much needed.

The Cabinet Member for Community stated he was pleased to see Swan Mead coming forward which is ideally located in the town centre and would be convenient for those who need temporary accommodation. He hoped that good construction in the area would lead to a small regeneration in the road with the focus on Swan Mead.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services expressed delight to see improved toilet provision at The Orchards on the agenda and that the Council has committed to making Haywards Heath more accessible for residents. She said it was important to provide temporary toilets in the area while the work is completed and that she was happy to see the work will be completed by November 2022.

RESOLVED

Cabinet considered the projects and to recommended to Council for approval:

- (i) the variations to the Capital Programme and Revenue Projects 2022/23 contained in paragraph 17 in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure rule B3.

9. BURGESS HILL MARTLETS SHOPPING CENTRE PROPOSED INTERIM USES.

Judy Holmes, Assistant Chief Executive, introduced the report which sought Cabinet's consideration of proposals for an interim use of part of the Martlets Shopping Centre, Burgess Hill to improve the environment aesthetically and economically for local communities and businesses, until such time as the proposed re-development of the Centre can go ahead.

The Leader recognised that the Council is not in an ideal position, however stressed the importance of improving that area of Burgess Hill town centre. He thanked Burgess Hill Town Council for their work and stated that there is an opportunity to do something to help bring back vibrancy of this site.

The Deputy Leader echoed the importance of improving the area and providing facilities to residents whilst awaiting redevelopment. He stated that something more durable like a shelter or a kiosk would be preferred. Appreciation was shown to amenities such as table tennis, but he expressed a desire for other pop-up facilities akin to a market rather than a beach, which could not be used all year.

The Cabinet Member for Community expressed support for the proposal, recalled the history of redevelopment both in Burgess Hill and in East Grinstead and noted the challenges that have been experienced.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth highlighted the huge amount of work going on in Burgess Hill and believed it will become an amazing town. He noted Burgess Hill Town Council's proposal and suggested crazy golf could be put on the site which he believed residents would use. He requested that this be achieved as soon as possible for the residents.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services affirmed the need to ensure the site is adaptable as well as providing residents with a substantial offer which would encourage them to stay longer in the town centre and attend more often.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parking reiterated the need for the space to be adaptable and the need for work to commence as soon as possible.

The Leader moved to discuss Burgess Hill Town Council Proposals found in Appendix 2 of the Report. He sought clarification on whether the proposed decisions are for the Council to consider.

The Assistant Chief Executive confirmed that the proposals are not for Cabinet to consider, and that New River Retail are supportive of whatever Cabinet is seeking to implement as an interim use on the site. She added that New River are working with Burgess Hill Town Council over other uses.

The Leader replied that the points should be left for New River Retail to consider and Burgess Hill Town Council to progress and fund. He stated that the priority is for the town centre to be redeveloped and that viability challenges are resolved. He felt that Appendix 1 is the right way forward and will make the best of the site in the short-term.

Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council, summarised the debate and suggested the recommendation 5.1 would be to select Appendix 1 in consultation with the relevant portfolio holders and that 5.2 remains as is.

As there were no further questions or comments the Leader took the Members to vote on the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Cabinet:

- i. Considered the proposals outlined in the report and Appendix 1 and 2 and selected Appendix 1 as the preferred option.
- ii. Created an earmarked reserve of £100k from the Council's General Reserve to provide a budget to facilitate the creation of a temporary urban park on the site and to request that stakeholders be actively encouraged to contribute to or support bidding to other funding sources to deliver the works planned.

10. TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 100A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT INVOLVES THE LIKELY DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE SAID ACT.

The Leader moved a motion that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the exempt business on the agenda. This was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

The meeting moved into the exemption session at 4.42 pm.

11. TO CONFIRM EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2022.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

As there were no further questions the Leader brought the meeting back into open session at 4.43 pm on the completion of exempt business.

The meeting finished at 4.44 pm

Chairman