

## **CABINET**

**11 July 2022**

Present: Mayor Taylor (Chair)  
Councillors J Pattinson, I Stotesbury, M Watkin and  
T Williams

Officers: Managing Director  
(Shared Services) Director of Finance  
Group Head of Democracy and Governance  
Executive Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications  
Head of Leisure and Environmental Services  
Head of Programme Management Office  
Principal Planning Officer (JG)  
Democratic Services Manager

11 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Dychton.

12 **Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

13 **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2022 were submitted and signed.

14 **Conduct of meeting**

The Mayor reported that he intended to go through the agenda as published.

15 **Ombudsman Decision**

Cabinet received a report of the Group Head of Democracy and Governance which included a final decision from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

The Mayor invited Councillor Williams to introduce the report.

Councillor Williams explained the background to the resident's complaint to the Ombudsman regarding Community Protection and how the service had dealt with the resident's complaint about noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour

arising from a nearby business. He advised that the council had fulfilled its statutory duty but it was recognised that there had been a failure in communicating this information to the resident. The Head of Service had carried out an investigation into the complaint, which had been received during the Covid 19 pandemic; a very busy time for the department. Councillor Dychton, whose portfolio covered community protection had been given assurances that this should not happen again due to the procedures that had been put in place. He added that the Community Protection team was continuing to engage with the resident, the business and others in order to resolve the problems.

In response to a question from the Mayor about whether there was confidence that this situation would not occur again, the Group Head of Democracy and Governance replied that the department had taken the Ombudsman's comments on board. However, Ombudsman's decisions took some time coming forward and there may be outstanding cases that had been received during the pandemic and prior to any new procedures being put in place.

Following a question about the actions, the Group Head of Democracy and Governance confirmed that she had seen the required letter to the complainant. She had noted that Councillor Williams had indicated that the compensation payment had also been made. She would be writing to the Ombudsman to advise the payment had been made and the case could then be closed.

Councillor Stotesbury commented that he wished to thank the council's staff for the amount of work they did during the pandemic. He hoped that if any officers felt they had too much work they would let their manager know.

RESOLVED –

1. that the decision be noted.

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### **Changing the Joint Committee Agreement for the West Herts Crematorium Joint Committee**

Cabinet received a report of the Group Head of Democracy and Governance regarding a revised Joint Committee agreement for effective management of the existing crematorium and the new one being built in Dacorum. A copy of the report to the West Herts Crematorium Joint Committee was also attached.

The Mayor invited the Managing Director, the Honorary Secretary to the Joint Committee, to set out the details of the report.

The Managing Director explained that the proposal was to move to a lead authority model, led by Three Rivers District Council, in advance of the new

crematorium being finished. In addition, the report asked that delegated authority was granted to the Group Head of Democracy and Governance to work with the Monitoring Officers from the four other authorities to develop the necessary legal agreement.

Following a question from the Mayor, the Managing Director explained that the change from the existing shared services arrangement would make the governance arrangements much clearer.

Councillor Watkin commented that he was pleased the lead authority model was being considered as this approach worked very well for the existing shared services the council had with Three Rivers.

RESOLVED –

1. That the change of the West Herts Crematorium Joint Committee agreement to that of a lead authority model with Three Rivers District Council as the lead authority be agreed.
2. That delegated authority be granted to the Group Head of Democracy and Governance working with the Monitoring Officers of the 4 other constituent councils to develop all necessary legal agreements to facilitate the change subject to final approval of the Joint Committee and the constituent councils.

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### **Financial Outturn 2021/22**

Cabinet received a report of the Director of Finance which set out the revenue and capital year end position for the financial year 2021/22. It was noted this report had also been considered by Finance Scrutiny Committee on 27 June 2022.

The Mayor commended the officers for their work. He invited Councillor Watkin to introduce the report.

Councillor Watkin commented that the report showed how well the council had managed its finances during 2021/22. He highlighted various sections of the report including the revenue outturn, which showed a favourable net effect variance of £460,000; the major variances in the revised budget; the requested carry forwards; the council's ambitious Capital Programme set out in the report and detailed in Appendix 4. He added that 2021/22 had been a challenging year due to the continuing Covid pandemic. He commended the report to Cabinet.

Councillor Stotesbury noted the large capital programme. Given the current state of inflation he was proud how the council had managed its finances and was still able to have a Capital Programme. The council was leading the way as a bold administration. He acknowledged the council also had to be pragmatic and additional support from the Government would be welcomed.

The Mayor responded that the council had submitted a strong Levelling Up bid. It was hoped the council would receive extra funding as a result of the bid.

RESOLVED –

1. that Cabinet has considered the 2021/22 revenue year end position as summarised at Paragraph 4.1 of the report, the supplementary notes at Appendices 1 to 5 and notes the year end position, which includes carry forwards into budgets for 2022/23.
2. that the 2021/22 budget carry forwards into 2022/23 as recommended by the Leadership Board totalling £1.393 million as detailed at Appendix 2 be approved. This will change the approved 2022/23 total revenue services budget from £13.743 million to £15.136 million.
3. that Cabinet has considered the 2021/22 capital year end position as summarised at Paragraph 5.1 and shown in detail in Appendix 4. Cabinet confirms the rephasing of £37.669 million into 2022/23.

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### **South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan Statement of Community Involvement**

Cabinet received a report of the Spatial Planning Manager which contained the SW Herts Joint Strategic Plan Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation document which required approval by each of the partner authorities.

The Mayor introduced the report. He said this was a key opportunity for the five South West Hertfordshire councils, supported by the County Council, to work together on a long-term integrated strategic planning framework, covering major issues for the area including housing, climate change and sustainability. The Joint Strategic Plan was not the equivalent of a local plan and would not affect the council's own Local Plan. The Joint Strategic Plan would enable the authorities to work collaboratively and understand how many homes were realistic across South West Hertfordshire. The consultation would seek views on strategic cross-boundary issues. There would be a further two rounds of public consultation before the plan was finalised. A detailed report was included in the agenda pack.

Councillor Stotesbury stated that he was pleased that climate change and transport had been included. He noted that water usage was significantly higher in Watford than the national average. The council was shortly going to provide information about how to reduce water usage. He was pleased to see the list of statutory consultees. His main concern was transport and advised that funding had not been granted for the Abbey Line.

The Mayor acknowledged that transport was a big concern. He invited the Spatial Planning Manager to add any further comments.

The Spatial Planning Manager agreed transport was a concern and that it was integral to sustainable development. He commented that residents primarily relied on cars for transport. There needed to be a shift in society, for example more working from home and people choosing to use modes of transport other than the private car. Sustainable transport included increasing cycling and walking. It would be a challenging issue moving forward with steps taken now being the precursor to achieving long-term objectives set out by the council.

In response to a question from Councillor Pattinson about health and equalities impact assessments, the Spatial Planning Manager explained that this would be considered prior to the draft policy being presented for approval. The current document was too high level for the impact assessments to be meaningful.

RESOLVED –

1. that, the South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan Statement of Community Involvement attached at appendix 1 is adopted.
2. that, the Issues and Options (Regulation 18) Consultation Document titled ‘The JSP: South West Hertfordshire 2050, Realising our Potential’ and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal attached at appendix 4 is approved for public consultation.
3. that, any amendments required to be approved to the Regulation 18 consultation document and the Statement of Community Involvement be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Partnerships and Planning.

## 19 **Exclusion of press & public**

RESOLVED –

that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as it was

likely, in view of the nature of the discussions, that if members of the public were present during consideration of the items there would have been disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100(1), Schedule 12A of the Act for the reasons stated in the agenda.

There was a short adjournment whilst the webcasting was stopped.

**20 Leisure Contract Extension**

Cabinet received a report of the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services requesting a two-year extension to the existing leisure management contract.

Councillor Williams, the relevant Portfolio Holder, introduced the report.

RESOLVED –

that the SLM/Everyone Active Management Fee proposal with a 2 Year extension to the existing leisure centre management contract term is approved and the contract will now expire in June 2035.

**21 Town Hall and Colosseum Refurbishment - recommendation to appoint a main contractor**

Cabinet received a report of the Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office seeking Cabinet's approval to appoint the selected proposed principal contractor for the Town Hall and Colosseum refurbishment.

The Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office presented the report and responded to questions.

RESOLVED –

1. that the progress to date and the procurement route implemented to select a principal contractor for the main works contract is noted.
2. that Morgan Sindall is appointed as the principal contractor for the refurbishment of the Town Hall and Colosseum.

Mayor

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm  
and finished at 7.40 pm