

## CABINET

5 June 2023

Present: Mayor Taylor (Chair)  
Councillors A Dychton (Deputy Mayor), J Pattinson, G Saffery,  
I Stotesbury, M Watkin and T Williams

Also present: Councillor N Bell, Leader of the Labour Group

Officers: Chief Executive  
Group Head of Democracy and Governance  
(Shared Services) Director of Finance  
Director of Performance  
Associate Director of Planning, Infrastructure and Economy  
Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead  
Urban Design and Conservation Manager  
Democratic Services Manager

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the Cabinet meeting.

1 **Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

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

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2023 were submitted and signed.

4 **Conduct of meeting**

The Mayor confirmed that Cabinet would consider the items as published in the agenda.

5 **Contract Procedure Rule Exemption: OCS CCTV Services**

Cabinet received a report of the Associate Director of Planning, Infrastructure and Economy which set out details of a Contract Procedure Rule Exemption.

The Mayor commented that CCTV was an important service provided by the council. He referred to the intention to move the control room and it therefore made sense to extend the contract. He invited Councillor Dychton to introduce the report.

Councillor Dychton said that the council had an important role in the safety of its residents. One of these roles was the operation of CCTV. She informed members that the report asked Cabinet to note the contract exemption for a nine-month extension to the current contract with OCS. OCS operated the council's CCTV control room. The contract extension enabled OCS to continue to operate the CCTV whilst the control room was awaiting relocation to its most suitable location.

Councillor Williams was invited to give an update on the three mobile CCTV units currently in operation. He advised that the units had been brought into the control room feed about a year ago. They had been introduced as a deterrent to fly tipping. There had been some delay in their implementation whilst officers had liaised with partner organisations to get the mobile units into operation. However, all three units were in operation and images obtained had led to successful fly tipping enforcement action. A full analysis of the mobile units would be coming before Cabinet at a later date.

Councillor Bell advised that he had wanted to enquire about the mobile CCTV units. He had not realised they were operational. Originally, he had questioned the introduction of only three as he was aware of other locations that would benefit. He asked whether the units could be moved to other locations or additional units would be purchased. He also wanted to know if the control room monitored the CCTV across the whole borough or just the Town Centre.

The Mayor responded that he understood that cameras across the whole town were included and not just the Town Centre, about 300 cameras. The mobile camera trial would be reviewed at a later date.

Councillor Williams added that the mobile cameras were less than 1% of all camera units across the town. He explained how the mobile camera locations were selected. Consultation was carried out with various groups including councillors and residents for suggestions. The suggested sites were surveyed, to ascertain things like the adequacy of the power supply and suitability of structures. The trial period was in progress and the results would be analysed and a report presented members.

RESOLVED –

that the exemption be noted.

## 6 **Business Intelligence Strategy**

Cabinet received a report of the Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead which included the proposed Business Intelligence Strategy.

The Mayor thanked the officers for the incredible amount of work they had put in to developing the strategy. He invited Councillor Watkin to explain the report in more detail.

Councillor Watkin added his thanks to the Associate Director of Customer and Corporate Services and Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead. The strategy was a fundamental building block for the council to ensure it continued to progress and react to the changing environment. The council would become information rich, enabling it to capture data correctly and efficiently. It would drive improvement and make decision-making transparent. It was important to understand the community the council served, the changing needs and the quality of the service delivered. The strategy would have trackable activities. It would aid the council to remain a high performing organisation, delivering great services and positive change for the community. He commended the report to Cabinet.

The Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead added that the strategy is designed to be short and easy to connect to it. It had evolved as it had been developed to reach the current iteration. It was focussed on delivery. Examples had been added to help bring the strategy to life.

The Mayor commented that it had been a very collaborative approach, including discussions throughout with members. At a time the council was under financial pressure, this type of strategy that was driving performance was critical. There had been some discussion about the strategy's name. He hoped that this could be reviewed and that officers could consult with him and the Portfolio Holder. He requested this was added as a further recommendation for Cabinet to consider.

Councillor Bell noted that there was reference to an Equalities Impact Analysis being undertaken; he questioned whether this should not have already been completed. He mentioned the dashboards and commented that he had stated before that not all residents had access to email. He understood that much of the strategy related to business, but it was important to consider residents who did not have email.

The Mayor responded that it was essential to remember that the strategy was about sharing information internally to drive improvement rather than sharing the data externally.

The Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead advised that the Equalities Impact Analysis had been developed but had been circulated to various officers for feedback. It was a live document although it would initially be signed off. She would circulate it once all feedback had been received.

The Director of Performance informed members that the Business Intelligence Strategy formed part of a suite of strategies, which also included the Customer Experience Strategy. This strategy focussed on how individuals contacted the council including those who were not digitally enabled.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Business Intelligence Strategy and Delivery Plan be approved and formally adopted.
2. That officers review the title of the Business Intelligence Strategy in consultation with the Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Resources. That delegated authority be granted to the Mayor to change the title of the strategy following the review.

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### **Conservation Areas Management Plan - Actions 2023-26**

Cabinet received a report of the Urban Design and Conservation Manager setting out the action plan for the Conservation Areas Management Plan.

The Mayor again thanked officers for their work. He invited Councillor Saffery to introduce the report.

Councillor Saffery agreed that this had been the culmination of a lot of work by officers, which had included consultations with residents and members. The report set out a clear action plan to deliver the strategy. The aim as the custodian of the town and its heritage was to have a clear action plan. It would empower residents and enable them to understand the impact on them plus the benefits.

Councillor Saffery proposed an additional recommendation that would ensure progress on the adopted action plan was monitored through the established Enterprise Project Management Office reporting process.

The Mayor invited the Urban Design and Conservation Manager to provide additional information.

The Urban Design and Conservation Manager advised that there had been very beneficial engagement with residents in a variety of different ways. There were many in person events that had been very helpful and given officers a clearer idea of residents' priorities. The action plan had been designed as a response to the feedback.

The Mayor commented that he was aware of how conservations areas could be controversial at times. The process had been really good and involved a lot of discussion. He agreed with the addition of Councillor Saffery's extra recommendation and would support it.

Councillor Watkin stated that he had a conservation area within his ward. He was also working with another councillor on the reducing traffic speeds on Grove Mill Lane. He would welcome support in getting the bridge repaired.

The Associate Director for Planning, Infrastructure and Economy, in addition to thanking the Urban Design and Conservation Manager for her work on the plan, added his thanks to the Planning Technician who was currently being supported by the council through an apprenticeship. This work had been very beneficial to him.

Councillor Bell advised that he had attended the meeting in The Square. Residents had been unsure what they could do to their property within a conservation area. He appreciated this being made clearer. He also referred to residents' comments about St Mary's Churchyard, who felt the church should be responsible for the maintenance. However, as this was one of the oldest parts of the town, he did feel the council should be responsible or at least take the lead in the upkeep.

The Urban Design and Conservation Manager informed members that the area around the church was maintained by the council as part of the green parks initiative. It was a joint project with the church who maintained the church itself.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Conservation Management Plan – Actions 2023- 2026 as an action plan for 2023-26 as attached at Appendix 1 to the report be adopted.

2. that progress on the adopted Conservation Area Management Plan – Actions 2023-2026 be monitored by Cabinet through the council’s established Enterprise Project Management Office reporting process.

## 8 **Watford Commercial Service Business Plan update**

Cabinet received a report of the Head of Finance which updated members on the Watford Commercial Services (WCS) five-year Business Plan from 2023/24 to 2027/28. It was noted that the Business Plan at Appendix 1 of the report was exempt due to the commercial sensitivity of the data.

The Mayor invited Councillor Pattinson, as Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Housing, to introduce the report.

Councillor Pattinson informed members that the Business Plan solidified the purpose of Hart Homes for the next four years. Hart Homes was a joint venture between the council and Watford Community Housing. The plan would ensure that residents would benefit from an increase of affordable housing in the borough. There was potential to generate profit for both organisations. Affordable housing was needed in the borough and had been a key pledge in the manifesto. As a member of Development Management Committee, it was becoming more prevalent for developers to use the viability assessment to avoid delivering affordable housing. The affordable homes referenced in the plan would be developed and managed by Hart Homes directly.

In addition, Councillor Pattinson advised members that the budget had been approved by Council. The plan would be regularly monitored, including by Shareholder Board.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Watford Commercial Services Business Plan for 2023/24 to 2027/28 attached as Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
2. that Cabinet notes the business plan reflects an indicative timeline for the progression of development schemes within the Hart Homes Development LLP. The WCS Board note that due to market conditions schemes are likely to slip from projected timelines, with the implication that investment and returns will happen later than those projected.

Mayor

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm  
and finished at 7.30 pm