

CABINET – TUESDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2023

DECISION NOTICE

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 31 October 2023 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: **Wednesday 1 November 2023.**

End of the call-in period is **12 noon on Monday 6 November 2023.**

These decisions will not be implemented until after this date and time.

Present: P Peacock, R Cozens, S Crosby, K Melton, M Spoor, P Taylor and R Holloway

| <u>Agenda Item No.</u> | <u>Subject</u>                               | <u>Decision</u>   | <u>Action By</u>                                  |
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| 6.                     | Community Plan 2023 - 2027 (Key Decision)    | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>a) review the Community Plan and the accompanying comments carried forward from the Policy &amp; Performance Improvement Committee; and</p> <p>b) endorse and recommend the Community Plan to the meeting of Full Council to be held on 12 December 2023 for approval.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>Members of Cabinet, Chairs and Vice Chairs have worked together to reach a consensus and have developed the Community Plan over the course of a number of months. The Community Plan is the key direction setting document which sets out the priorities and vision for the Council.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>The report details the process by which alternative options for inclusion in the plan have been considered.</p> | John Robinson, Chief Executive                    |
| 7.                     | Localised Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 | <p>That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the uprating of the applicable amounts, premiums, state benefits and disregard criteria in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Department for Works &amp; Pensions (DWP); whilst continuing the current Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for the 2024/25 financial year.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>To ensure the Council discharges its responsibilities to agree its Council Tax Support scheme by 31 January 2024.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>An alternative option would be to increase the maximum</p>   | Phil Ward, Business Manager - Revenues & Benefits |

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|    |  | award of 80% - the cost of doing this has been considered within the financial implications section in the report.   |   |
| 8. | Update on the Council's Response to the Cost of Living Crisis (Key Decision) | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) note the progress against the Cost-of-Living Action Plan as outlined in section 2 of the report;</li> <li>b) approve the additional proposals set out in section 3.2 of the report funded from the existing budget previously approved; and</li> <li>c) approve that a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Cabinet in December 2023 outlining the proposed projects for 2024/25.</li> </ul> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>To support tenants, residents, businesses and employees with the ongoing challenges of the cost of living.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>Alternative options include not providing a cost-of-living response; however, this has not been considered viable given the pressures faced by residents, staff and business alike.</p>   | Cara Clarkson,<br>Business Manager – Regeneration and Strategic Housing |
| 9. | Digital Strategy Action Plan Update  | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) acknowledges the value of digital transformation and that the Council continues with a 'no customer left behind' approach to digital initiatives, therefore not closing any communication channels to the community;</li> <li>b) endorse the positive continuation of the final phase of the 2021-2024 Digital Strategy, that has a large focus on the digital community; and</li> <li>c) approve the commencement of work towards the 2024-2028 Digital Strategy.</li> </ul> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>To ensure that the Council provides communities with digital services and platforms that are expected, within budgets, time, and quality.</p> <p>Furthermore, ensuring the Council is more efficient and effective through the use of digital technologies including cost benefits and improvements to Council services.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>Closing of those more expensive channels including face-to-face, telephone and postal. This option is not a viable option and as a Council we work towards being inclusive</p> | Dave Richardson,<br>Business Manager- ICT and Digital Services          |

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|     |   | for all of our residents and businesses in the District. Therefore, channel shifting that includes closure of non-digital communications channels would pose risk to those digitally excluded, including the most vulnerable in our communities.  |   |
| 10. | Transfer of Section 106 Community Facility Contributions to Farnsfield Parish Council | <p>That:</p> <p>(a) the Section 106 contributions for community facilities held by the District Council for improvements to community facilities in Farnsfield be transferred to Farnsfield Parish Council; and</p> <p>(b) the Council's Capital Programme for 2023/24 is increased by £141,748.08 financed by the Section 106 receipts referenced AG977 and AG975 held for community facilities improvements in Farnsfield.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>To enable Farnsfield Parish Council to provide financial support to priority community projects in Farnsfield which will deliver positive outcomes for the local community.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>The Section 106 receipts held under these two agreements must spent on community infrastructure projects in Farnsfield, therefore it is appropriate that the District Council transfers the receipts held to Farnsfield Parish Council in order that it can determine which community projects should be supported and will deliver good community outcomes.</p> <p>The District Council could continue to determine which projects should be supported but it does not have the local contacts and connection that the Parish Council has with its local clubs and groups, and it is felt appropriate therefore to enable the Parish Council to determine such local priorities for the benefit of its community.</p> | Cara Clarkson,<br>Business Manager –<br>Regeneration and Strategic<br>Housing     |
| 11. | Newark Castle Gatehouse Project - Delivery Phase Application (Key Decision)           | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>a) approve the submission of the delivery phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund by 16 November 2023;</p> <p>b) subject to the outcome of the Heritage Fund bid and approval of the Towns Fund Full Business Case, agree that a report be brought back to Cabinet to consider the increase to the capital programme budget from the Heritage Fund and to add additional staff to the establishment, funded by the project;</p>   | Carys Coulton-Jones,<br>Business Manager-<br>Heritage,<br>Culture and<br>Visitors |

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|     |   | <p>and</p> <p>c) approve the preferred charging model.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>The Heritage Fund is vital to securing the match funding for this project, and any delay to the delivery phase submission risks the timescales for delivery of the Towns Fund element.</p> <p>This project supports the community plan objectives of enhancing and protecting the District’s natural environment through a more biodiverse planting scheme and landscaping development, preserving the green space within this historic site. It will deliver sustainable economic growth through delivery of a destination attraction for the town, and will support residents and local communities through co-creation, participation activities and opportunities to support improved wellbeing.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>No alternatives are considered appropriate at this time. Without the project, the District Council would still have the responsibility to preserve and conserve the fabric of the building which is an ancient scheduled monument and requires significant investment, but without the wider benefits this project will offer. The Gatehouse Project is significant in the redevelopment of the town’s visitor offer and as a key driver for the visitor economy, and further offers residents improved access to their heritage and to the gardens, supporting improved wellbeing and health and offering numerous opportunities to participate in cultural activity. The proposed charging model reflects the best option for the economic sustainability of the project whilst providing residents with this significantly improved offer.</p> |   |
| 12. | Housing Revenue Account - Housing Outturn 2022/23 and Future Delivery of New Homes (Key Decision) | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>a) notes the progress and expected completion of the current HRA Development Programme;</p> <p>b) allocates £234,747.64 from Section 106 contributions (as detailed in section 2.16 of the report) to development sites at South Crescent, Clipstone; Firview, Ollerton; and Gaitskell Crescent, Edwinstowe as part of Phase 5 of the HRA Development Programme therefore reducing the required borrowing by an equivalent amount;</p> <p>c) supports the creation of £10.7m budget for the development of a discreet programme of HRA</p>  | <p>Cara Clarkson,<br/>Business Manager –<br/>Regeneration and Strategic Housing</p> |

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|     |  | <p>Development up to 50 units within the HRA Capital Programme in 2024/25 financed by the surplus identified at paragraph 2.19 of the report of £2.445m and with the remaining £8.255m financed initially from borrowing whilst other funding is sourced; and</p> <p>d) commits the total of £1.292m from the Section 106 agreements listed at section 2.21 of the report to the new development programme within the obligations of the S106 agreements.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>To provide confidence in the ongoing delivery of the HRA Development Programme, securing value for money secured through the programme and the outcomes delivered to against the community plan objectives to create more and better-quality homes through our roles as landlord, developer and planning authority.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>The completion of the HRA development programme, without the introduction of a future programme, was considered but discounted in recognition of the impact that a net loss of housing (through annual right to buy numbers) would have on the ongoing viability of the HRA 30 Year Business Plan.</p> <p>A pause in the programme was also discounted as this would risk losing the in-house skills and experience that have been built up over the last five years.</p> |   |
| 13. | Devolution Funding Decision) Retrofit (Key Decision) | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>(a) endorse the project plan and accept receipt of grant funding of £583,500 from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC), which will be drawn down in arrears; and</p> <p>(b) approve an increase in the Capital Programme of £583,500 in 2023/24 fully funded by DLUHC grant.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>The DLUHC grant will provide 100% funding to assist the Council in its decarbonisation programme for its own social housing stock. It meets both Community Plan objectives to create better homes as a landlord and improve tenants wellbeing by reducing fuel poverty and contributing to reducing carbon emissions.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>As noted in section 3 of the report, there were no viable</p>   | Caroline Wagstaff, Business Manager- Housing Maintenance and Asset Management |

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|     |  | alternatives and taking no action would mean returning grant funding back to government and make it harder for the Council to meet the government requirements on energy efficiency and move towards decarbonisation of social housing stock.  |  |
| 14. | Southwell Leisure Centre Works (Key Decision)          | <p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>(a) approves an additional transfer of £161,800 funded from the Change Management Reserve, giving a total Capital budget of £740,000 to carry out the essential works to the dry side facility as set out in this report;</p> <p>(b) note that whilst every effort will be made to phase the works to keep the Leisure Centre operational at all times, there is a possibility that the Leisure Centre may have to close for a period of time in order for the works to be carried out safely, effectively and efficiently; and</p> <p>(c) note that in the event of closure, Active4Today will endeavour to accommodate customers at the Newark and Dukeries facilities, and that the Leisure Centre members affected will have their direct debits reduced to a nil payment where appropriate.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>To mitigate the risk of failure of the main pool and carry out the essential fire safety and general repair works to the building.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>An alternative option would be to do nothing. This is not a feasible option as there are significant compliance and maintenance works that need to be carried out. In addition, the condition of the main pool at the centre poses a risk of significant water leakage and impact on wider operations to the site.</p> | Mark Eyre,<br>Business Manager-<br>Corporate Property                      |
| 15. | Revisions to the Community Scheme Grant (Key Decision) | <p>That Cabinet approve the revised criteria for grant allocations as set out at sections 2.3 and 2.4 of the report.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u><br/>To ensure that funding can be allocated to community groups – supporting communities to be sustainable and thrive.</p> <p><u>Options considered:</u><br/>Maintaining the existing grant criteria was considered,</p>  | Cara Clarkson,<br>Business Manager –<br>Regeneration and Strategic Housing |

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|  |  | however the changes proposed allow for greater targeting of funds in line with Community Plan priorities. |  |
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