

CABINET – TUESDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2024

DECISION NOTICE

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 20 February 2024 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: **Wednesday 21 February 2024.**

End of the call-in period is **12 noon on Monday 26 February 2024.**

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

Present: P Peacock, R Cozens, S Crosby, L Brazier, K Melton, E Oldham, M Spoor and P Taylor

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Action By</u>
6.	2024/25 Proposed Revenue Budget (Key Decision)	<p>That Cabinet recommends to Full Council at its meeting on 7 March 2024 that:</p> <p>i. the following amounts be now calculated by the council for the 2024/25 financial year, in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011:</p> <p>1. £57,602,680 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for items set out in Section 31A(2)(a) to (f) of the Act, as the District Council's gross expenditure for 2024/25);</p> <p>2. £37,723,830 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) of the Act, as the District Council's gross income for 2024/25); and</p> <p>3. £19,878,850 being the amount by which the aggregate at (b)(i) above exceeds the aggregate at (b)(ii) above, calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Net Budget Requirement for the year;</p> <p>ii. the figures shown as i.1. and i.3. above to be increased only by the amount of Parish Precepts for 2024/25;</p> <p>iii. the budget amounts included in the report be the council's budget for 2024/25; and</p>	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services

		<p>iv. the fees and charges shown in Appendices C1-C22 be implemented with effect from 1 April 2024.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> To enable Cabinet to make recommendations to Council of the amounts to be calculated in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, for the purposes of setting Council Tax levels for the 2024/25 financial year.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> Not applicable, the Cabinet is required to make recommendations on the budget to the Full Council.</p>	
7.	Capital Programme Budget 2024/25 to 2027/28 (Key Decision)	<p>That Cabinet recommend to the Full Council on 7 March 2024 the General Fund schemes set out at Appendix A to the report and the Housing Services schemes set out at Appendix B to the report as committed expenditure in the Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2027/28.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> To enable the Capital Programme to be considered by Cabinet in accordance with Financial Regulation 6.2.3 prior to its submission to Council.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> If the Council did not have a Capital Programme, this would result in not being able to deliver the schemes and not achieve the objectives in the Community Plan.</p>	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services
8.	2024/25 to 2027/28 Medium Term Financial Plan (Key Decision)	<p>That Cabinet recommends to the Full Council on 7 March 2024, for approval, the 2024/25 to 2027/28 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> To provide a framework to support the Council's future spending plans.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> Not applicable, the MTFP is an essential element in the Council's financial framework.</p>	Nick Wilson, Business Manager- Financial Services
9.	Pay Policy Statement 2024/25	<p>That Cabinet recommend the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 to Full Council for approval.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> To ensure compliance with Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011.</p>	Sarah Lawrie, Business Manager - HR and Training

		<p><u>Options Considered:</u> Not applicable, the publication of the Pay Policy Statement is required by the Localism Act 2011.</p>	
10.	Update on the Council's Response to the Cost of Living Crisis (Key Decision)	<p>AGREED that Cabinet:</p> <p>a) subject to approval by Full Council of the Revenue Budget for 2024-25, allocates the budget proposed for 2024/25 over the activities as described in the tables in Section 2 of the report; and</p> <p>b) notes and endorses an additional £18,830 budget to be added to the 2025/26 financial year Revenue Budget to cover the shortfall in funding necessary.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> To support tenants, residents, businesses and employees with the ongoing cost of living challenges.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> 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.</p>	Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy
11.	Customer Experience Strategy: Pilot Opening Hours and Customer Promise Feedback Results (Key Decision)	<p>AGREED that Cabinet:</p> <p>a) approve the recommendation to resume the Council's opening hours of 9:00am - 5:00pm within the Customer Contact Centre and Housing Repairs; and</p> <p>b) note the results of customer feedback about the Customer Promise, formally adopt the Promise and embed it in the Council.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> This aim of this pilot was to understand whether the extra opening hour supported customers who may have work or personal commitments during the opening hours of the Council, to get in touch with an advisor when they would have otherwise not have been able to.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> The alternative option considered based on the results of the opening hours pilot was to adopt the extended opening hours permanently.</p>	Jill Baker Business Manager – Customer Services
12.	Portfolio Holders Attendance at the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee	That Cabinet note the proposed schedule of attendance by Portfolio Holders at future meetings of the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee.	Nigel Hill Business Manager – Elections & Democratic Services

		<p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> Portfolio Holders attendance has been requested by the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee. This will provide them with the opportunity to scrutinise the actions listed in the Council's Community Plan and highlight activities within their respective portfolio areas.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> None, it was considered important to establish a schedule of briefings by Portfolio Holders to the Council's overview and scrutiny body.</p>	
13.	Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy (Key Decision)	<p>That Cabinet approve the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-2029 (as at Appendix 1 which has been published separately to the main agenda).</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> Newark and Sherwood District Council has a statutory requirement to deliver a Homelessness Strategy every five years as a minimum.</p> <p>The delivery of this strategy also supports key community plan objectives: To improve health and wellbeing and to increase the supply, choice and standard of housing.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> Under the Homelessness Act 2002, local housing authorities have a statutory duty to have a Homelessness Strategy. Alternative options therefore relate only to the actions within the strategy and not the decision to have a strategy.</p> <p>Priorities for Newark and Sherwood and actions to be delivered under the strategy have been developed following a robust review of local and national evidence.</p>	Maria Cook, Assistant Business Manager - Housing and Estates Management
14.	Proposed Operating Model for Alexander Lodge, Newark (Key Decision)	<p>AGREED that Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) note the progress of the scheme and the allocated budgets for 2024-25; b) approve the transfer of £17,033 from the Homelessness Reserve to revenue for the one-off items listed in the table at 4.3 (summarised at 5.2.3) of the report; c) approve budgetary provision a caretaker post, funded through service charges; d) note that costs of the caretaker role of £28,195 will be funded from the existing budget set for 2024/25; and 	Maria Cook, Assistant Business Manager - Housing & Estates Management

		<p>e) approve additional budget of £30,000 for the purchase of a vehicle (subject to caretaker role approval) and inclusion into vehicle replacement programme.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> To provide a strong homelessness support service that complements the investment in temporary accommodation in the District; improving the standard of housing available and extending the services available within and from Alexander Lodge.</p> <p>Aligning to 24/27 Community Plan objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the supply, choice, and standard of housing; • Raise peoples' skills levels and create employment opportunities for the to fulfil their potential; and • To be a top performing, modern and accessible Council. <p><u>Options Considered:</u> Alternative lesser service models could be an option, but this would have an impact on the service and its deliverables, management of the site and could lead to damage to the structure and wasted community space.</p>	
15.	Solar Panel Installation at The Broadleaves and Gladstone House	<p>AGREED that Cabinet approve funding of £217,000 for the installation of solar panels at The Broadleaves and Gladstone House, to be included in the Capital Budget 24/25 financed by the Major Repairs Reserve.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> To assist the Council in achieving its objectives as set out in the Community Plan. The lower utility costs at the schemes will directly benefit tenants as this will reduce the service charges and reduce impact of cost of living.</p> <p>Community Plan 24/27 alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the supply, choice, and standard of housing; • Reduce the impact of climate change; and • To be a top performing, modern and accessible Council <p><u>Options Considered:</u> Undertaking other identified energy saving measures alone without the installation of solar panels would limit both the benefits to tenants and the wider Council objectives.</p>	Julie Davidson, Business Manager-Housing and Estates
16.	Surveyor - Damp & Mould - New Post	<p>That Cabinet approves the recommendation to make the necessary budgetary allowance as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report, to increase establishment by 1x FTE to</p>	Caroline Wagstaff Business

		<p>create a surveyor role with a focus on damp and mould, subject to the HRA revenue budget being approved by the Full Council on 13 February which includes the funding for this role from 2024-25.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> To ensure that the Council can respond proactively and promptly to reports of damp and mould and provide additional technical knowledge to the Assets and Repairs functions.</p> <p>This aligns to Community Plan Objective 1 – improving health and well-being and Objective 2 - Increasing the supply, choice, and standard of housing.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> To add these additional activities to existing posts which would not provide the resource needed to prioritise responses to damp and mould.</p>	<p>Manager - Housing Maintenance & Asset Management</p>
<p>17.</p>	<p>Public Spaces Protection Orders within Newark & Sherwood (Key Decision)</p>	<p>AGREED that Cabinet:</p> <p>a) approve the draft Public Spaces Protection Orders, as set out in the report, to be issued for the first stage public consultation for a period of 6 weeks; and</p> <p>b) delegated authority be given to the Director of Communities and Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection & Community Relations, to approve amendments from the first stage consultation to be made to the final draft order to be issued for the final 4 week consultation period.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> The implementation of PSPOs within Newark and Sherwood aligns with the Community Plan objective to Reduce Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do nothing – a number of orders that are due to end in 2024 would not be renewed in time and would lapse. This would mean there would be no controls in place and no enforcement action could be taken. • Reduce the number of orders – This would reduce the ability for enforcement action to be taken in certain areas where ASB is causing an issue. • Increase the number of orders – PSPOs can only be placed where there is a justification and evidence to support. They must also be enforceable. 	<p>Jenny Walker, Business Manager- Public Protection</p>

18.	Newark & Sherwood's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy 2023-2033 (Key Decision)	<p>AGREED that Cabinet approve the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy, as at Appendix A to the report.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> The adoption of this strategy supports delivery across a wide range of community plan objectives, provides an evidence base for planning policy and future funding, and sets out priorities for investment to ensure that playing pitches and outdoor sports meet the needs of the growing population of Newark and Sherwood.</p> <p>In particular, the adoption of the strategy supports the following community plan objectives: Objective 1: Improve health and wellbeing; Objective 5: Protect and enhance the district’s natural environment and green spaces; and Objective 7: Celebrate and invigorate community spirit, pride of place and a sense of belonging.</p> <p><u>Options Considered:</u> The alternative option is to not adopt a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy.</p> <p>Neither the strategy itself, nor direct investment in playing pitches/ outdoor sports facilities, are a statutory responsibility of the District Council. However, as articulated in section 1.2 and 1.3 of the report, the evidence to support the District Council contributing to the delivery of facilities through its role as Local Planning Authority and in its role supporting healthy, active and sustainable communities, is strong.</p>	Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy
19.	Newark & Sherwood's Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy 2023-2033 (Key Decision)	<p>AGREED that Cabinet approve Newark & Sherwood’s Sport & Recreation Facilities Strategy 2023-2033, as at Appendix A to the report.</p> <p><u>Reasons for Decision:</u> The adoption of this strategy directly supports delivery across a number of community plan objectives, provides an evidence base for planning policy and future funding, and sets out the strategic approach to identify priorities for investment to ensure that sports and recreation facilities provided across the District meet the needs of Newark & Sherwood’s growing population.</p> <p>Specifically, the adoption of the strategy supports the following community plan objectives: Objective 1: ‘Improve health and wellbeing’; and Objective 7: ‘Celebrate and invigorate community spirit, pride of place and a sense of belonging’ and will contribute to Objective 4 ‘Reduce Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour’.</p>	Cara Clarkson, Business Manager - Regeneration and Housing Strategy

		<p><u>Options Considered:</u></p> <p>The alternative option is to not adopt a Sport & Recreation Facilities Strategy.</p> <p>Neither the strategy itself, nor direct investment in sport and recreation facilities, are a statutory responsibility of the District Council. However, as articulated in section 1.2 of the report and within the strategy itself, the evidence to support the District Council contributing to the delivery of facilities through its role as Local Planning Authority and in its role supporting healthy, active and sustainable communities, is strong.</p>	
20.	Southwell Leisure Centre	<p>AGREED that Cabinet:</p> <p>a) expresses its disappointment with the lack of progress, since 19 December, to transfer the land from Southwell Leisure Centre Trust to the Council;</p> <p>b) confirms its continued commitment to invest £5.5m in the development of a new swimming facility and not to repair the current pool;</p> <p>c) confirms that the investment referred to in recommendation (b) above is subject to the freehold transfer of all land currently in the ownership of Southwell Leisure Centre Trust, it being noted that this would be subject to the agreement of the Charity Commission and for the legal agreement to include a covenant to restrict the use of the land transferred for the provision of leisure services;</p> <p>d) requests Southwell Leisure Centre Trust to agree to make a joint submission to the Charity Commission to propose the freehold disposal of all designated land in its ownership in return for the Council's £5.5m investment in a new pool and an estimated £740,000 investment in the "dry side", on the grounds that this is in the best interests of the beneficiaries of the charity and to enable the charity to meet its charitable objectives; and</p> <p>e) in order to avoid abortive work and costs, officers freeze any further work on the provision of a new pool until Southwell Leisure Centre Trust provide written agreement to (d) above. If and when agreement is reached the Council will commit to a 24 month project programme which will be shared with relevant stakeholders.</p>	Sanjiv Kohli Director – Resources/ s151 Officer

Reasons for Decision:

To progress and expedite the provision of a replacement swimming facility at Southwell.

Options Considered:

Three other options have already been discounted and covered in the report to Cabinet dated 19 December 2023; "Do nothing" and leave Southwell without a swimming facility, sleeve the pipework which was considered not to be viable and line the pool at a cost of £645,435.