

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Cabinet** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 6 December 2022 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor D Lloyd (Chairman)

Councillor Mrs R Holloway, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor P Peacock
and Councillor T Wendels

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor K Girling

45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

46 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Leader advised that the proceedings were being audio recorded and live streamed by the Council.

47 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 1 NOVEMBER 2022

The minutes from the meeting held on 1 November 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

48 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Leader and Chairman informed the Cabinet that the Council had secured Share Prosperity Fund monies of £3.1million, which was one of the highest allocations across the County.

49 UPDATE TO THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2022/23 TO 2025/26

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance and Finance presented a report which gave an update on the position of the current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022/23 to 2025/26. The report reflected on the delay in the fair funding review and the continuing uncertainty around local government funding, The agreement of the national pay award and rates of inflation and interest had also impacted on the Council's budget.

The report set out an updated position based on the increases in inflation set within the Budget Strategy, together with the assumption that changes in the local government finance system would not be brought in until 2025/26 at the earliest. Over the four-year period of the MTFP, £0.896m would need to be found in order to fund the budget. This was after the mitigations described in the report were realised

Detailed budgets were currently being produced which would give further clarification, and it was anticipated that the draft Local Government Finance

Settlement would be released during December 2022. The MTFP would then be brought back to the Cabinet in February 2023 to be recommended on to the Full Council in March 2023 for approval, alongside the budget setting report for the 2023/24 financial year.

AGREED (unanimously) that the update to the Medium-Term Financial Plan be noted.

Reasons for Decision

To update Members on the current assumptions forecast in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

50 LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLANNING (KEY DECISION)

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance and Finance presented a report which informed Members of plans for Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) across the East Midlands (East Midlands Mayoral Combined Authority geographical area) and sought approval for investing in a Local Area Energy Plan for Newark and Sherwood, as part of the wider work of the region. The Plan would enable the Council to work towards moving to its carbon reduction target to net zero by 2035. The report detailed how officers were exploring various funding sources to alleviate financial pressures for the required works for infrastructure and equipment to reduce emissions arising from energy use.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet endorse progress with the LAEP to enable a focus on district wide carbon emissions across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

Reasons for Decision

To help the Council deliver against its Carbon reduction target of net zero (direct emissions) by 2035, and to gather information to help the district determine potential pathways, technologies and scenarios, to achieving carbon net zero across the district. The Council have already made the commitment to reducing its own emissions. This is an opportunity to focus on the whole district and work towards a carbon net zero Newark and Sherwood.

Options Considered

The alternative option is to do nothing. In this situation the work will continue in partnership across the East Midlands without Newark & Sherwood District Council input, which will result in the need to gather this information independently, as required, likely for a greater cost.

51 COST OF LIVING RESPONSE

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance and Finance, presented a report which set out the Council's approach to supporting the District through cost of living challenges and sought to commission further work on potential projects to support delivery of activities to help those who are in need. The report outlined the measures the Council had taken to date in response to the cost of living challenges

and how the Council were acting as a landing site for partner organisations to feed initiatives and to ensure timely signposting and support for residents.

A potential budget of £150,000 had been identified to support residents and businesses, and where possible, supporting community partners to deliver services in their neighbourhoods rather than direct delivery. The funding would enable the Council to react quickly as needed to provide targeted support for various projects.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note how the Council has responded so far to the cost of living challenges, and approve further work on potential projects as set out, for example in paragraph 2.1.1 of the report with a view to the creation of a Cost of Living Response fund to support our community objectives of creating vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contributing to the local area and to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents;
- b) note that a further report will be brought to Cabinet with costed proposals for consideration within a cost envelope of approximately £150,000; and
- c) grant delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder – Strategy, Performance & Finance after consultation with the S151 Officer and the relevant Portfolio Holder and the other Members on the Cabinet for any urgent individual allocations required in the interim period.

Reasons for Decision

To provide practical support for residents and businesses through the cost of living challenges.

Options Considered

Not to consider further projects to address cost of living challenges, however it is considered appropriate to support residents and businesses during this period.

52 ESTABLISHMENT OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance and Finance presented a report which sought to endorse the establishment of a Newark and Sherwood Community Partnership, which would help secure funding from national government by bringing together representatives from across the private, public and voluntary and community sectors.

It was noted that the requirement to produce a District-wide Investment Plan as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund had prompted the Council to take stock of current arrangements and in particular the need for a new partnership covering the whole of Newark and Sherwood. The proposed terms of reference for the Newark & Sherwood Community Partnership were set out in the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet approve the establishment of Newark &

Sherwood Community Partnership in accordance with the proposed Terms of Reference as set out in the report.

Reasons for Decision

To satisfy Government funding requirements and to develop and sustain good relationships between partners for the benefit of local residents and local businesses.

Options Considered

Cabinet could choose not to establish the proposed partnership or could vary its role and responsibilities.

53 INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Visitors presented a report which updated Cabinet on matters set out in the 2021/22 Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) and which sought to approve the process for spend of Section 106 developer contributions.

The 2021 IFS had been finalised and the report detailed the headline figures for Members. The IFS also included details of the Council's governance arrangements in relation to managing monies secured as part of Section 106 Agreements. It was a requirement to publish the IFS by 31 December 2022.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) approve the publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement, which has been produced in accordance with the legislative requirements, before the end of the calendar year; and
- b) approve the proposed process for spend of Section 106 Developer Contributions set out at paragraph 2.3 of the report.

Reasons for Decision

To ensure that the District Council is operating in accordance with the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Regulations.

To set out clearly the governance arrangements for spend of Section 106 contributions.

Options Considered

None, there is a requirement to publish the Infrastructure Funding Statement by the end of the calendar year.

54 A46 NORTHERN TOWN BYPASS AND NEWARK TOWNS FUND

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Visitors presented a report which

provided an update on the A46 Newark Northern Bypass, including inter-dependencies with the Newark Towns Fund program. The report set out the latest progress in respect of the Newark Towns Fund projects, including the start ion site for the Air and Space Institute, and an update on the A46 Newark Northern Bypass statutory consultation which was now live with the deadline for consultation responses being 12 December 2022. It was noted that the Council’s response had been delegated to the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Visitors, subject to strong support for the scheme being maintained, alongside the Council ensuring that its aspirations of the Towns Fund and retaining its lorry park provision for the Town were met.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet note the update provided in the report.

Reasons for Decision

To keep Members updated on the A46 Northern Town Bypass and the Newark Towns Fund Program.

Options Considered

No alternatives are considered appropriate at this time. The A46 Newark Northern Bypass proposals have long been an important aspiration of this Council, an aspiration supported by a raft of partners including Midlands Connect, Nottinghamshire County Council, Lincolnshire County Council, and a number of highway, LEP, and Local Planning Authorities from the Humber Ports to Tewkesbury.

The development of the Newark Town Investment Plan and selection of priority Towns Fund projects was equally part of a significant assessment process undertaken by the Newark Towns Board, in consultation with a range of partners and industry, including this Council. The redevelopment of the Gateway site and relocation of the existing Newark Lorry Park remain an important part of this program.

55 HERITAGE AND CULTURE NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ORGANISATION STATUS AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Visitors presented a report which updated the Cabinet on Heritage & Culture’s successful application to become an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, provided an update on the Business Unit’s recovery post-covid, and in light of the cost of living challenges, reflected on the continuing challenges in the heritage sector and its effect on the museum service.

Given the success of the National Portfolio Organisation process and the funding this would release, it was proposed to set up a working group of the Cabinet to oversee the development of a refreshed strategy for Heritage and Culture, setting out the strategic objectives and identifying opportunities and options for future service delivery.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) recognises the success of the National Portfolio Organisation application and that the agreed grant amount of £309,000 annually be added to the budget for the

- three years of the funding agreement from April 2023, to be drawn down from the Arts Council in stages, in line with their funding agreement;
- b) approve the addition of three new funded roles to the establishment for the three years of the funding agreement from April 2023;
 - c) approve the establishment of an Independent Board, as previously agreed through Policy & Finance Committee in March 2022, to meet the requirements of the National Portfolio Organisation status;
 - d) approve a Cabinet Working Group to be set up to oversee the development of a refreshed strategy for Heritage & Culture as outlined in the report;
 - e) approve that a budget of £20,000 be set aside in 2023-24 to undertake an options appraisal to support delivery of an agreed future strategy for Heritage & Culture; and
 - f) support the National Civil War Centre continuing to offer free entry to residents during school holidays and for key, targeted activity and events, supporting residents to access welcoming, engaging and warm spaces over the winter period through the cost of living crisis and to interact with our heritage and cultural offer.

Reasons for Decision

These recommendations align to the Community Plan by clearly defining and evaluating Heritage & Culture's remit and scope to:

Deliver inclusive and sustainable economic growth through skills, educational development and the visitor economy;

Improve the health and wellbeing of residents by responding to their needs through cultural engagement and outreach; and

Create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents actively contribute to their local area through co-creation via the NPO investment principles and activity.

Options Considered

Do nothing, service delivery would continue, but this option does not acknowledge the challenge currently being seen in town centres and with visitor admissions and will therefore not enable a pro-active response to ensure our service remains relevant and fit for purpose and reflects value for money for the Council.

56 NEWARK & SHERWOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2022 - 2026 (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Homes & Health presented a report which sought approval to adopt the Newark & Sherwood Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026. The Council had previously adopted a Health & Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2019-2022 which outlined its commitment to delivering the aims and objectives of Nottinghamshire's Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2022.

The County Council had recently agreed and shared their new Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26, so in line with this, the Council have developed a new strategy which sets out how the Council proposed to 'Improve the health and wellbeing of our local residents', one of the Community Plan objectives. The proposed Newark & Sherwood Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026 was attached as an appendix to the report.

One of the key emphasis within the Strategy was the difference in life expectancy across the District. The Strategy set out how the Council would work to address this with a variety of agencies and key partners.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) approve and adopt the Newark & Sherwood Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026; and
- b) approve the detailed Health Improvement Action Plan to be endorsed by the Strategic Health Partnership and the Portfolio Holder for Homes & Health.

Reasons for Decision

To ensure that the Council and its partners have a strategy that drives health and wellbeing improvements across the district.

57 RESPONSIVE AND PROGRAMMED WORKS - ADDITIONAL PROGRAMME

The Portfolio Holder for Homes & Health presented a report detailing information on the current number of Responsive and Programmed repairs works in the system and set out recommendations to complete these, and the future management of works going forward. The report advised that through the pandemic, the Council had restricted repairs service to cover emergencies and some external planned works until restrictions and risk assessments allowed a return to normal arrangements. This resulted in around 800 repairs in the system which had been caught up within existing resources. However, combined with an increase in demand and a reduced resource to service them due to challenges with recruitment, there was now a further high number of newer repairs outstanding.

It was estimated that no more than £300k was required to clear the repairs on the system in full. In order to commence works, an additional £100k was required within the current financial year. The works would be distributed to several contractors currently working for the Council.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) approve an additional £100k be added to this year's budget funding from the HRA Newark and Sherwood Homes Merger Transfer reserves; and
- b) note that any additional funding will be included in 2023/24 budget setting process.

Reasons for Decision

To support the Repairs Team to ensure tenants homes are well maintained whilst we make improvements to our service delivery.

Options Considered

To continue to use existing resources to gradually reduce repairs workload.

58 ADOPTION OF A NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL TREE STRATEGY (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Cleaner, Safer, Greener presented a report which sought the adoption of a Tree Strategy for the District. The proposed Tree Strategy for Newark & Sherwood had been developed by the Environmental Services Team in conjunction with the Planning Development and Planning Policy and Infrastructure teams to establish the Council's objectives towards trees in the District, and to provide an action plan setting out the pathway to achieve those objectives. The objectives for the strategy and the actions to achieve those were detailed in the report. It was noted that the proposed strategy had been considered and supported by the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee at their meeting held on 28 November 2022.

It was noted that officers were working with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to encourage landowners to put forwards areas of land for mass planting and wetland habitat creation.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the draft Tree Strategy be shared with key partners (Sherwood Forest Trust, RSPB, Woodland Trust & Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust) and reviewed before being released for public consultation via the Council's website; the outcome of the consultation to be reported back to Cabinet for consideration prior to formal adoption of the final draft Strategy; and
- (b) the proposal to fund the increase in budget as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report for essential tree survey and maintenance work be approved.

Reasons for Decision

To support the Council's green ambitions to 'Enhance and protect the district's natural environment', as stated in the community plan.

Options Considered

Not to progress the Strategy at all, or to progress the Strategy but with a greater or lesser allocation of budget. On balance the recommendation is to progress a Strategy, subject to the outcome of consultation, in order to contribute to the Council's carbon reduction plan, and that the budget proposed is proportionate.

59 NEWARK SAFER STREETS 4 SCHEME AND THE RURAL CRIME AND PREVENTION PROGRAMME (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder for Cleaner, Safer, Greener presented a report which updated Cabinet on the Safer Streets 4 initiative and the Rural Crime and Prevention Programme, and sought to agree funding for the projects. The success of the Safer Streets 4 bid builds on the previous work that had been undertaken from the successful completion of previous Safer Streets funded projects. Over the past 4 years there had been investment of over £1 million in schemes to reduce crime. In addition to the Home Office funded Safer Streets 4 project, the Community Safety Partnership had also been successful in securing funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Target Hardening Safer4All Grant fund for a Rural Crime and Prevention Programme for Bassetlaw and Newark & Sherwood. The project would use the same governance structure as Safer Streets 4 with the police as the responsible accounting body administering any grant monies.

In July it was announced by the Home Office that the Nottinghamshire bid for the Safer Streets 4 Programme had been successful and an award of £750,000 had been made to deliver the actions set out in the bid. The District Council share if this was £374,000. The project had to be completed by 30 September 2023 and the report provided an update on all the projects which would be funded, which included increased CCTV and environmental improvements.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- (a) note the progress in the implementation of the Safer Streets 4 project and Rural Crime and Prevention Programme;
- (b) approve the use of the overage for match funding the schemes;
- (c) approve the addition of £305,000 to the Capital Programme for Safer Streets 4;
- (d) approve the addition of £49,500 to revenue budgets for Safer Streets 4; and
- (e) approve the addition of £39,000 to the Capital Programme for the Rural Crime and Prevention Programme.

Reasons for Decision

By delivering the Safer Streets and rural crime initiative the Council will contribute to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

Options Considered

The alternative option is to find alternative to the match funding identified in the report.

Meeting closed at 7.10 pm.

Chairman