

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, 14 May 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor P Peacock (Chair)

Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Crosby, Councillor L Brazier,
Councillor K Melton, Councillor E Oldham, Councillor M Spors,
Councillor P Taylor and Councillor R Holloway

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor I Brown, Councillor S Forde, Councillor P Harris, Councillor R Jackson and Councillor P Rainbow

128 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.

129 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor R Holloway declared an Other Registerable Interest in Agenda Item No. 6 – Newark Long Term Plan for Towns Fund as a member of the Town’s Board.

130 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 26 MARCH 2024

The minutes from the meeting held on 26 March 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

131 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair invited the Deputy Leader of the Council to give an update to the Cabinet.

Councillor R Cozens confirmed that National Lottery Heritage Funding for £1.4m had been secured which would enable the Newark Castle Gatehouse project to be completed.

Councillor E Oldham also advised the Cabinet of the success of the District Council stalls at the Nottinghamshire County Show and thanked officers for their support. In addition, Councillor Brazier advised that the new Boughton Hub was due to open this weekend.

132 NEWARK LONG TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS FUND (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder – Sustainable Economic Development and Director – Planning & Growth, presented a report which outlined the next steps in progressing the Newark Long Term Plan for Towns funding opportunity, including the creation of the required Vision (alignment with the Newark Town Centre Masterplan & Design Code) and the three-year Investment Plan (TIP2) for 2024-2027.

Newark was one of fifty towns identified for an investment of £20m over 10 years to drive ambition and regeneration in towns. To secure this government funding, Newark would need to develop a 10 year Town Plan Vision and a three year Investment Plan. Both plans would be shaped by the Towns Board. It was reported that the three identified priorities for the long term Town Fund were: safety and security; high streets, heritage and regeneration; and transport and connectivity. Once approved, the government would release funding of £1.6m capital and £0.4m revenue per annum for 10 years, subject to submission of three yearly Investment Plans. The Director – Planning & Growth gave an update on Council led projects as detailed at paragraph 2.3 of the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that Cabinet:

- a) note the update on the Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund for Newark; and
- b) recommend to Newark Towns Board a number of Newark & Sherwood District Council priority projects and programs we would wish to be considered by them in the preparation of the Newark LTPfT Fund Investment Plan (TIP2), as detailed at paragraph 2.3 of the report.

Reasons for Decision:

The LTPfT opportunity will allow sufficient funding to unlock a range of outputs and allow the Council to deliver on a range of shared priorities if they are also agreed by the Newark Towns Board and are included in the proposed TIP2.

Options Considered:

The Council do have the option not to accept the opportunity of the Long-Term Town Fund. This has been discounted as an option on the basis that the funding presents another opportunity to work with partners to achieve genuine transformational change for the Newark community, aligning fully with the objectives of a range of partners and the Council's own stated objectives within the Community Plan.

The Council also has the option not to promote to the Newark Towns Board any priorities, projects, or programs. This is also discounted on the basis that the Council's priorities and Community Plan has been shaped with many partners and communities and there are a number of projects upon which the Council will lead which could deliver genuine, long-term, and legacy transformational change.

133 NEWARK TOWNS FUND UPDATE (KEY DECISION)

The Portfolio Holder – Sustainable Economic Development and Director – Planning & Growth, presented a report which provided an update and proposal for next steps in the delivery of the Newark Towns Fund Programme. The report detailed the successful delivery of four Towns Fund projects (the Air & Space Institute; Construction College of Excellence; the YMCA Community Activity Village; and the Cycle Town project) and provided an update on four Council led projects which were in various stages of development (32 Stodman Street; Castle Gatehouse; Newark Heart Project; and Newark Gateway / SisCLog).

In respect of the development of land at the Newark Gateway site, this was dependent on the relocation of the lorry park, however at the current time it was considered that this was not financially viable given the borrowing rates and current development costs. In addition, the A46 Bypass works would have an impact on site and a further report on this would be brought back to the Cabinet. Therefore, it was proposed to pause the redevelopment of Gateway site and reprofile the grant funding to the Stodman Street, phase 1 and 2 projects and to the Newark Castle Gatehouse project as set out in the report.

AGREED (unanimously) the Cabinet:

- a) note the report;
- b) for the Newark Gateway/SiSCLog Towns Fund Project:
 - i. agree to pause the Newark Gateway/SiSCLog Towns Fund project until such time as a viable solution for the relocation of Newark Lorry Park and redevelopment of the Newark Gateway site can be presented back to Cabinet;
 - ii. subject to b)i) above, agree to informing the Newark Town Board of the decision to pause the Newark Gateway/SiSCLog development, noting that the £4.294m of Towns Fund money allocated to this project will be reallocated to existing undelivered Towns Fund projects by Newark Towns Board, as delegated to its Chair and the Council's Section 151 Officer;
- c) for the Stodman Street Phase 1 (32 Stodman Street) and Phase 2 (St Marks Place)
 - i. subject to approval of the Newark Towns Board Chair and the s151 Officer (in accordance with paragraphs 2.3 of the report), that the Council reallocates the £4.294m as follows: £790,000 towards Stodman Street Phase 1; £310,000 to the Gatehouse and £3.194m of the remaining budget towards a Stodman Street Phase 2, as detailed below;
 - ii. subject to c)i) above, to delegate to the Director - Resources in consultation with the Director - Planning & Growth authorisation to submit a Project Adjustment Form to Government seeking formal authorisation to re-allocate the Newark Gateway/SiSCLog grant to the Stodman Street Phases 1 & 2 and to Newark Castle Gatehouse;
 - iii. approve, subject to c)i) an uplift of the Stodman Street and Newark Castle Gatehouse budgets within the Capital programme by £790,000 and £310,000 respectively;
 - iv. delegate to the Director - Resources and Director - Planning & Growth authority to continue negotiations to establish an appropriate purchase price and funding package for Stodman Street Phase 2 (St Marks Place), subject to c)i) and c)ii) above and subject to a further update to Cabinet on 4 June; and

- d) for the A46 Bypass and the existing Newark Lorry Park, a further report will be brought to Cabinet on the implications of the A46 Bypass including the specific short and long term impact to the existing Newark Lorry Park as a result of the Bypass.

Reasons for Decision:

Stodman Street Phase 1 (32 Stodman Street) remains a key priority for this Council (as reflected in successive Community Plans), the Newark Towns Board, and Government and the reallocation of £790,000 of the £4.294m to deliver due to unforeseen market price rises is considered appropriate. The same is true for the Newark Castle Gatehouse project, for which an additional ask of £310,000 is also required.

Stodman Street Phase 2 (St Marks Place) is a key emerging priority for intervention through the emerging Newark Town Masterplan & Design Code and emerging Newark Town Investment Plan 2 (TIP2), as detailed elsewhere on this agenda. It is therefore considered appropriate to reallocate the remaining balance of £3.194m of Towns Fund 1 towards the cost of acquisition.

Options Considered:

The Gateway/SiSCLog scheme is not financially viable at present. A lesser scheme cannot be grant-funded without the relocation of the lorry park. The £4.294m of Towns Fund monies allocated to this Towns Fund project will therefore be retained by government unless recycled by agreement to other Towns Fund projects.

134 SOUTHWELL LEISURE CENTRE UPDATE

The Director – Resources / Deputy Chief Executive presented a report which provided an update to the Cabinet following the previous decision to build a new swimming facility at Southwell Leisure Centre. The decision taken on 19 December 2023 to approve, in principle, the option of developing a new swimming facility on land adjacent to the current leisure centre, was conditional on reaching an agreement with the current landowners to transfer the ownership of the land to the District Council.

It was reported that securing agreement from the Southwell Leisure Centre Trust had been delayed and complicated by two main factors. Firstly, the Trust's persistence in wanting the District Council to meet the cost of repairing the existing pool as well as providing a new one, and secondly the exclusion of the six District Council representatives on the Trust from participating in decision-making, so unable to decide to progress the freehold transfer of its land.

The report set out the recent indication of support from the Trust, but this had arrived extremely late and with some resistance and reluctance. Given that reluctance and the ongoing community opposition, the report recommended the removal of the £5.5m allocated in the Capital Programme for developing a new swimming facility at Southwell Leisure Centre be reallocated to other projects in the District.

In addition, the report referred to the quote of £247,000 obtained by the Trust to repair the existing main pool. Therefore, it was also proposed that the District Council pay this sum to the Trust in order to carry out the repairs. There was also a proposal to pay an additional £250,000 to the Trust as a contribution to the essential works which were required to the dry side.

AGREED (with 8 votes for and 1 abstention) that Cabinet:

- a) remove the capital allocation of £5.5m to build a new swimming facility at Southwell Leisure Centre;
- b) retain the £5.5m in the Council's Capital Programme to be re-allocated to other health and wellbeing schemes in the District;
- c) give delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, the Assistant Director - Legal & Democratic Services and the Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Performance & Finance to negotiate the surrender of the current lease with Southwell Leisure Centre Trust;
- d) as consideration for the surrender of the lease, approve a capital budget of £247,000 to be paid to Southwell Leisure Centre Trust for repairs to the current main pool and a further £250,000 as a contribution to essential works to the dry side at the Leisure Centre. The total of £497,000 to be funded from the existing remedial works scheme currently in the Capital Programme, with the remaining balance of £75,855 to be removed from the Capital Programme. Any negotiated terms outside of these financial parameters be brought back to Cabinet for approval;
- e) note the £25,000 budget, for design and feasibility of a new leisure facility, approved by Cabinet on 19 December has not been expended to date and will be returned to the Capital Feasibility reserve on termination of the lease; and
- f) note that the £12,300 to be funded from the Change Management Reserve for the engineered solution to safeguard the structure of the current main pool has not been expended and will be retained in the Change Management Reserve on termination of the lease.

Reasons for Decision:

The £5.5m allocated to the capital programme on 19 December 2023 to develop a new swimming facility at Southwell Leisure Centre was conditional on the Council agreeing the transfer of land to the Council from the Trust and the Town Council. Nearly 5 months on from the decision, the transfer of land has not been resolved.

To re-instate the budgets in the Capital Programme, the Capital Feasibility Reserve and the Change Management Reserve.

Options Considered:

One alternative is to progress the scheme by preparing a submission for the Charity Commission; the reasons for not doing this are set out at paragraph 2.6 of the report.

Another alternative is to continue with the current lease arrangement, either leaving the pool closed for the long-term or repairing it; the reason for not doing this is set out in the report at paragraph 2.7 of the report.

A final alternative of last resort would be to close the leisure centre, but this is not considered to be in the best interests of the residents and users of the leisure centre, or the staff working there.

Meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Chair