

CABINET**2 July 2014****Attendance:**

Councillor Humby -	<i>Leader (Chairman)</i>
Councillor Weston -	<i>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Built Environment (Vice-Chairman in the Chair) (P)</i>
Councillor Godfrey -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Finance & Organisational Development (P)</i>
Councillor Miller -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Business Services (P)</i>
Councillor Southgate -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Communities & Transport (P)</i>
Councillor Tait -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Housing Service(P)</i>
Councillor Warwick -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health & Wellbeing (P)</i>

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors J Berry, Clear, Pines and Weir

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Scott

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Godfrey declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items due to his role as a County Council employee. However, with the exception of CAB2599 (see minute below), there was no material conflict of interest and he remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Standards Committee to participate and vote in all matters which might have a County Council involvement.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET COMMITTEES

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Clear requested that the Liberal Democrat Group standing invitee on the Cabinet (Housing) Committee be changed from Councillor Rutter to Councillor Scott. This was agreed.

In addition, Cabinet noted that the Liberal Democrat Group nomination for a standing invitee to the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee was Councillor Achwal.

RESOLVED:

1. That Councillor Achwal be appointed to the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee as a Member of the Liberal Democrat Group invited to attend and offer views at meetings of this Committee.

2. That Councillor Scott replace Councillor Rutter as a Member of the Liberal Democrat Group invited to attend and offer views at meetings of the Cabinet (Housing) Committee.

3. **MINUTES**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Clear expressed the disappointment of the Liberal Democrat Group that the majority of appointments to outside bodies had been given to Councillors from the Conservative administration. She believed this did not ensure a fair distribution of work loads, particular where a Portfolio Holder might have the right to attend such organisations anyway. In particular, she highlighted that Twyford Waterworks had expressed a wish for Councillor Mason to continue as the Council's representative.

Councillor Weston noted these comments for further discussion with other Cabinet Members and a future response as appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 June 2014, less exempt items, be approved and adopted.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked/statements made.

5. **LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Godfrey reported that following the success of the Council's participation in the National Graduate Scheme two years ago, places for two new trainees were being offered this year.

Councillor Warwick provided an update on the Southern Health NHS Trust plans for its use of Avalon House as a new well-being hub within the city centre which it was intended would open January 2015. Services to be operated from the refurbished building would include young people's mental health, older people services and a community health clinic.

Councillor Miller reported that River Cottage had now formally signed the lease for Abbey Mill and it was hoped the new restaurant would be opened by the end of August 2014.

Councillor Tait provided an update on a number of Council new builds around the District. This included the official opening of five new dwellings in Baxter Close, Itchen Abbas in July and the recent granting of planning permission for Victoria House, Hyde Winchester to be re-developed with 27 units. Planning applications had also been submitted for 12 new dwellings at Westman Road, Weeke, together with 21 units on the New Queens Head site, Stanmore.

Councillor Weston reported that, following representations by the Council, the DCLG had recently agreed that the Repair and Renewal Grant Scheme for flooding be extended to include residents whose septic tanks had flooded.

6. **ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT PROGRESS REPORT**
(Report CAB2583 refers)

Cabinet welcomed to the meeting Lieutenant Colonel Lawson, Deputy Garrison Commander at Worthy Down.

In introducing the Report, Councillor Godfrey acknowledged the benefits that had already arisen from the Community Covenant since its introduction in 2013. To continue this development, it was proposed to amend the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy as outlined in Paragraph 4.17 of the Report to ensure ex-service personnel were guaranteed an interview when applying for jobs at the Council.

The Chief Executive concurred with comments regarding the benefits to date of the Covenant and also emphasised the practical benefits from increased joint working and having known points of contacts. He thanked Lieutenant Colonel Lawson for his work and assistance over the past year.

Lieutenant Colonel Lawson also acknowledged the good working relationships that had developed as a result of the Covenant.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

1. That progress made under the Armed Forces Community Covenant be noted.
2. That the Head of Organisational Development be authorised to amend the Recruitment and Selection Policy to take account of the proposal in section 4.17 of the Report.

7. **FAIRNESS COMMISSION - RESPONSE TO COUNCIL**

(Report CAB2592 refers)

During discussion, Cabinet noted that although there was a high degree of affluence within the Winchester District, this was not always distributed equally. In addition, increasing house prices made access to affordable housing of increasing importance.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor J Berry addressed Cabinet in support of her Notice of Motion to Council. Although she was encouraged by the proposal to establish an Informal Policy Group (IPG), she did not consider such a group would have the full remit and involvement of partners as a Fairness Commission. One of the key elements of a Commission was consultation and engagement with the local community and she did not consider this could be achieved through an IPG. She disputed the high level of costs quoted in the Report of establishing such a Commission and also emphasised the potential savings that could result. For example, the Islington Giving Scheme had encouraged residents to give both money and time through volunteering for local projects.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Weir also addressed Cabinet in support of the Notice of Motion and considered the suggestion to establish an IPG to make further investigations was appropriate. She emphasised that the Council should work to ensure the fair distribution of resources amongst residents.

Councillor Weston noted comments made and welcomed the support, but also emphasised it was important the Council did not duplicate the work already being undertaken by partner organisations. Cabinet noted a proposed amendment to the first recommendation which was agreed as set out below.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

1. That a Fairness and Equality Informal Policy Group be appointed to consider levels of inequality in the District and how the matter should be taken forward.
2. That Councillor Southgate, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Transport, be appointed as Chairman, with nominations for the remaining members to be advised by Group Managers.
3. That consideration be given to appointing one of more of the Council's partners as a 'standing invitee' on to the Group.

8. **CAPITAL EXPENDITURE OUTTURN 2013/14**

(Report CAB2594 refers)

Councillor Godfrey highlighted that the Council's improved programme management had supported the significant delivery against plans and congratulated all those involved in this achievement. He drew Members' attention to the proposals regarding support for a Hampshire Community Bank as outlined in Paragraph 5.5 of the Report, which would be considered further by Cabinet in due course.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Pines queried whether additional funds could be allocated to enable more Councillors to have access to the Council's Covalent performance monitoring system.

Councillor Godfrey noted this request for further consideration, but emphasised that allowing individual access to Covalent might not be the most cost-effective solution and of limited benefit to most Councillors.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT THE CARRY FORWARD OF CAPITAL BUDGET TOTALLING £2.705M FROM 2013/14 (AS DETAILED IN APPENDIX A OF THE REPORT) BE APPROVED, IN ACCORDANCE WITH FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULE 7.9.

RESOLVED:

1. That the capital expenditure and financing for 2013/14 and the implications on the future capital programme be noted.

2. That, subject to the matter not being called in by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a supplementary capital estimate of £250,000, funded by useable capital receipts is approved, in accordance with financial procedure rule 7.2, for the purposes of supporting the Hampshire Community Bank.

9. **GENERAL FUND REVENUE OUTTURN 2013/14**

(Report CAB2595 refers)

Cabinet noted that the Report had not been made available for publication within the statutory deadline. The Chairman agreed to accept the item onto the agenda as a matter requiring urgent consideration, to enable the contents to be considered by Cabinet prior

to The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 July and Council on 16 July 2014.

Councillor Godfrey highlighted that the Council's cautious approach to budgeting and prudent management had resulted in underspends across budget headings, in addition to income generally exceeding expectations. This included an increase in income from car parking charges (although the levels of parking fees had not increased for three years) and an increase in Business Rates income. Both of these were believed to be indicative of a growing economy.

The Chief Executive emphasised the significant budget pressures continued to be faced by local authorities generally, but considered that the Report demonstrated that the Council had adopted a good approach to achieving efficiency savings to date and was in a strong position moving forward.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT THE REQUESTS FOR GENERAL FUND CARRY FORWARD OF ONE-OFF EXPENDITURE BUDGET TO 2014/15 BE APPROVED FOR THE PURPOSES SPECIFIED IN APPENDIX B OF THE REPORT, AND THE AMOUNTS TO BE SUPPORTED FOR CARRY FORWARD BE CONFIRMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULE 7.9 (NOTING THAT THESE ARE IN ADDITION TO THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CARRY FORWARD REQUESTS DETAILED IN CAB2597(HSG), 9 JULY 2014).

RESOLVED:

1. That the General Fund Revenue outturn position be noted as set out in the Report.
2. That the transfers to/from the Major Investment Reserve and other earmarked reserves be noted and the reserves and closing balances at 31 March 2014 be approved (as set out in Appendix D).

10. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT SERVICE**
(Report CAB2599 refers)

Councillor Godfrey declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of this agenda items due to his role as a County Council employee. There was a potential conflict of interest and he therefore left the room

during consideration of this item and took no part in the debate or decision.

In response to questions, the Chief Finance Officer advised that the proposal was for the County Council to provide the service on a cost basis only and this potentially might offer some savings. However, the primary reason for the proposals was to increase the resilience of the service.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Weir addressed Cabinet and noted that although the Report had not been submitted to the Audit Committee, the Chief Finance Officer had discussed the proposals with the Committee Chairman. In addition, the Liberal Democrat Group supported the Report.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progression of the proposals as set out in the report be approved.

2. That the final terms for an Agreement with Hampshire County Council for the delegation or discharge of Treasury Management functions in accordance with Winchester City Council's Treasury Management Strategy be determined by the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Business Services and the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

11. **SUBMISSION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE SIZE OF THE COUNCIL**
(Report CAB2593 refers)

Councillor Godfrey reported that the Electoral Review/Governance Informal Policy Group had not reached consensus on whether the recommended number of Councillors should be 45 or 48. However, as the Portfolio Holder, he was putting forward the suggestion that the Council size be reduced to 45 as a significant reduction with the aim of increasing the Council's efficiency. It was acknowledged there should also be a reduction in the workload of individual Councillors to facilitate this and also to ensure a cross-section of representation, including from those in full-time employment.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Clear reiterated the Liberal Democrat Group view that the preferred Council size should be 48 Councillors to ensure the level of representation for local people was not adversely affected and that individual Councillor's workloads did not become unmanageable.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

1. THAT A SUBMISSION BE MADE TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THAT THE FUTURE COUNCIL SIZE BE 45 MEMBERS.

2. THAT THE SUBMISSION BE BASED UPON THE DOCUMENT ANNEXED TO THIS REPORT AS APPENDIX A, AND THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER BE GIVEN DELEGATED AUTHORITY, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TO MAKE ANY CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE COUNCIL DECISION ON COUNCIL SIZE , AND ANY OTHER MINOR EDITING ADJUSTMENTS.

3. THAT A FURTHER REPORT BE BROUGHT TO FULL COUNCIL ON DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR STAGE 2 (WARDING ARRANGEMENTS) ONCE THE COMMISSION HAS DETERMINED THE FUTURE SIZE OF THE COUNCIL.

4. THAT CABINET AND THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE CHANGES IN THE COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS, OUTLINED IN APPENDIX A, AS FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OCCUR.

12. **GOLD STANDARD FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION**

(Report CAB2596 refers)

Under the Council Constitution Access to Information Procedure Rules (Rule 15.1 – General Exception), this was a key decision which was not included in the Forward Plan as the Government grant announcement had only recently be made. Under this procedure the Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been informed. Cabinet also noted that the Report would be considered by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 July 2014 under its powers of call-in as it involved a supplementary estimate of over £100,000.

Councillor Tait welcomed the Report as recognition of the good work of the Council's Housing Services Team.

At the invitation of the Chairman, both Councillors Weir and Pines spoke in support of the Report's proposals. In addition, Councillor Pines queried whether performance information on service improvements could be made available.

The Assistant Director (Chief Housing Officer) confirmed that the Council did monitor relevant performance and report accordingly to the Department of Communities and Local Government. This information could also be shared with Members.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT A GENERAL FUND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE OF £582,218 BE APPROVED, IN ACCORDANCE WITH FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULE 7.3, TO BE FUNDED BY A MATCHING S31 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003 GOVERNMENT GRANT AND TO BE USED TO FUND THE DELIVERY OF THE GOLD STANDARD PROGRAMME AS SET OUT IN THE REPORT.

13. **RESPONSE TO WINCHESTER 2013/2014 FLOODING INCIDENT**
(Report CAB2591 refers)

Cabinet praised the Council Officers and personnel from other organisations involved in the work of the Tactical Control Group, which had been staffed for extended working days over a period of a number of weeks.

In response to questions, the Chief Executive explained that discussions were ongoing with the Government over the extent of the Repairs and Renewal Grant Scheme, as mentioned in Paragraph 5.3 of the Report. The Corporate Director advised that the County Council was the lead authority in relation to flooding and as such had responsibility to decide what future works were required. However, the Report proposed a supplementary estimate of £50,000 to enable the City Council to investigate potential infrastructure improvements that could be suggested to the County Council.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Clear and Weir addressed Cabinet and their comments are summarised below.

Councillor Clear highlighted the severe sewerage difficulties experienced in Wickham as a result of the recent flooding. She urged the Council to encourage Southern Water to discuss its proposals to

deal with the further issues arising from extra housing in the area with local residents, Ward Councillors and the Strategic Planning Team.

The Chief Executive noted these comments for further discussion with Southern Water. He advised that he had recently met with the Local MP and Southern Water. The County Council would also be involved in future discussions about a potential alleviation scheme.

Councillor Weir spoke on behalf of Councillor Learney who was unable to attend. Councillor Learney wished to thank Cabinet and Officers for taking a lead regarding the recent flooding in the Littleton area. However, the flood had resulted in on-going difficulties for affected homes (for example, in insuring their property) and she requested that resources be made available to undertake works to prevent future flooding.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the content of the report relating to the Council's response to the recent flooding incident be noted.
2. That a supplementary estimate of £50,000 in the General Fund Revenue budget be approved for feasibility or other work to investigate infrastructure works to improve future flood resilience.

14. **COUNCIL TAX FLOODING DISCOUNT**
(Report CAB2590 refers)

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT UNDER SECTION 13A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1992 THE COUNCIL TAX FLOODING DISCOUNT SCHEME CRITERIA BE AMENDED AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 1 TO THE REPORT.

15. **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY 2014**
(Report AUD95 refers)

Cabinet noted that the Policy had been supported by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 26 June 2014. However, assurances had been sought about the Council's capacity to manage the number of major projects currently ongoing.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the Risk Management Policy 2014 be approved.

16. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items, as set out in the Forward Plan for July 2014, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.30am

Chairman