

CABINET**23 October 2013****Attendance:**

Councillor Wood -	<i>Leader (Chairman) (P)</i>
Councillor Humby -	<i>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development (P)</i>
Councillor Coates -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Housing (P)</i>
Councillor Godfrey -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Finance & Organisational Development (P)</i>
Councillor Miller -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Business Services (P)</i>
Councillor Warwick -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods & Environment (P)</i>
Councillor Weston -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Built Environment (P)</i>

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Learney and Weir

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors J Berry, Byrnes, Evans, Pines and Tait
Mr D Chafe - TACT

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Humby declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items due to his role as a County Councillor. Councillor Godfrey declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items due to his role as a County Council employee. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, they 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. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minute of the previous meeting held on 11 September 2013, be approved and adopted.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no questions asked or statements made.

4. **LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Wood welcomed to the meeting two representatives from the Standards Committee.

Councillor Warwick congratulated the Council's Animal Welfare Officer on receiving an award from the RSPCA in recognition of her work.

Councillor Weston announced that the Old Hyde House and Barn redevelopment had been recognised by the City of Winchester Trust design awards. The repaving of the High Street and The Square had received a landscape award.

Councillor Wood made three further announcements, as summarised below:

- i) Future of the Council's City Offices
The existing City Offices in Colebrook Street were over 40 years old and surveys indicated significant expenditure was required for essential repairs. The Council had three options: to repair; to use existing buildings across the City or to extend the Guildhall. No decisions had yet been taken, and officers had been requested to provide detailed advice, including costings, with Councillor Godfrey designated as the Portfolio Holder overseeing the project. The project's aim would be to retain the Council's headquarters within Winchester, preferably close to the Guildhall, and to take full advantage of modern technology and working practices. There were no plans to sell off Colebrook Street car park.
- ii) Winchester New Homes
Plans for developing the New Queens Head site in Stanmore were progressing, with demolition of the existing building proposed shortly. The proposals were to provide 18-20 affordable homes on the site, in addition to incorporating significant improvements to open space and access to the Somers Close recreation ground. The aim was for a planning application to be submitted early in 2014.
Detailed designs had also been produced for Victoria House, Winchester with an exhibition of proposals planned for 11 November 2013.
Proposals for an Extra Care Housing Scheme in Winchester would be submitted to Cabinet on 4 December 2013.
Key recommendations for these three schemes were to be brought direct to Cabinet, rather than be considered at other Cabinet committees.

iii) Future of River Park Leisure Centre

Councillor Wood clarified that none of the potential options under consideration would prevent the annual bonfire taking place or impact on the rugby field. Initial work had indicated that there were four possible options:

- New build at Bar End;
- New build at North Walls, either:
 - a) using the tennis courts, artificial turf pitch and a strip of land alongside;
 - b) using the tennis courts, artificial turf pitch and a significant part of the existing leisure centre site;
- Refurbish the existing Centre.

Further details on these options, including advantages and disadvantages, would shortly be displayed in the Leisure Centre, the Guildhall and on-line, for comments.

5. **GENERAL FUND BUDGET CONSULTATION 2014/15**

(Report CAB2523 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 inform the budget consultation process.

In introducing the Report, Councillor Godfrey emphasised that no final decision on the budget had yet been taken and any additional suggestions from Members or other interested parties were welcomed. In particular, further ideas for savings and/or increased income to meet the predicted budget shortfall over the five year period. It was noted that the Report would be considered by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28 October 2013.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Godfrey and Officers for their work to date in producing a balanced budget without cutting Council services.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Learney drew Members' attention to Section 5 of the Report which discussed possible capital expenditure by the Council. In particular, any future decision to redevelop River Park Leisure Centre could result in the Council borrowing significant sums of money, with a consequential significant impact on the revenue position in terms of repayments required. Councillor Learney also expressed some concern about the proposal to increase pest control charges by approximately 40% as this could prevent some people from being able to afford the service.

The Chairman commented that a number of the possible capital projects proposed had been put on hold for a number of years already and it might not be possible to delay further. Councillor Warwick stated that comparisons with other local authorities had indicated that the Council's pest control services were competitively priced.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Revised Estimate for 2013/14 be approved.

2. That it be confirmed that this report should be considered in the context of the emerging service priorities following consultation on the refresh of the Winchester District Sustainable Community Strategy and be adopted as the basis of budget consultation.

3. That views be sought from within Council and from partner organisations on the opportunities for closing the forecast revenue funding gap in 2014/15 and beyond.

6. **THE FUTURE OF THE MUSEUMS SERVICE: ESTABLISHING A HAMPSHIRE SOLENT CULTURAL TRUST**
(Report CAB2518 refers)

Councillor Humby welcomed the proposals outlined in the Report and emphasised they had resulted from a number of years work by the various parties involved. The changes had been driven by a desire to give the service a more sustainable future, in part by allowing more people access to the various collections currently held by both the City and County Councils. It was predicted that the proposals would result in an additional 15,000 or more visitors over a five year period. He stated that the Council would retain ownership of its collections and buildings, but these would be loaned or leased to the Trust.

The Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) advised that a briefing for all Members had been held the previous evening. One concern raised by Members was the potential loss of control for the Council. She stated that in order to maintain influence, the Council would nominate a trustee on the Board. In addition, the Portfolio Holder would be an Observer on the Board and regular Advisory Board meetings would be held at officer level.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Weir welcomed the Report and in particular the proposal's aim to increase access to the service through partnership working. She acknowledged some concerns regarding the need to ensure future robust governance arrangements. The Council still needed to keep a close involvement, whilst recognising the independent status of the new Trust. She believed it was also essential that key posts

at the Trust, such as the Chief Executive, be adequately remunerated in order to attract the appropriate calibre of candidate.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Weir for her support.

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

RECOMMENDED:

1. THAT THE PROPOSAL TO PROCEED WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HAMPSHIRE SOLENT CULTURAL TRUST (*WORKING TITLE*), IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, AS OUTLINED IN THE BUSINESS CASE (APPENDIX 1 OF CAB2518) BE APPROVED.

2. THAT A NET COST OF UP TO £53,000 OVER THE FIVE YEARS TO 2018/19 (DETAILED IN APPENDIX 2 OF CAB2518) BE APPROVED.

3. THAT AS THE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS ALREADY MAKE PROVISION FOR THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER ROLE (TO BE TAKEN BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT), FULL COUNCIL BE ASKED TO MAKE THE WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL APPOINTMENT TO THE INTERIM TRUSTEE BOARD.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Assistant Director (Economy and Communities), be authorised to agree terms and enter into a Partnering Agreement with Hampshire County Council on terms in accordance with those outlined in Appendix 4 to the Report.

2. That the transfer of the services and funding for the Council's Museums Service to the new Trust be agreed in principle, subject to detailed arrangements to be set out in the Partnering Agreement.

3. That the loan of Winchester City Council's museum collections to the new Trust for a minimum period of 25 years be agreed in principle.

4. That any future acquisitions made by the Trust which align with collecting policies for Winchester current at the time of this Report be held by the Trust on behalf of Winchester City Council;

5. That the leasing, sub-leasing or licensing as appropriate of individual museum properties and stores from the Council to the Trust, under long-term arrangements where feasible (with the minimum unexpired term at any time being 25 years where practicable) be agreed in principle, on terms to be agreed by the Head of Estates, with the Council being responsible for repairs, maintenance and insurance in accordance with current practice, and that it be noted that the City Council will be responsible for securing appropriate storage arrangements for the City Council collections at the expiry of the lease at its current F2 facility;

6. That the Council continue to insure the collections and premises against loss, damage and theft in accordance with current practice.

7. That the creation of an 18-month interim Executive Officer post for the Trust, initially seconded from one of the two Councils, be agreed, to commence from 1 January 2014 in order to manage establishment of the Trust.

8. That the Head of Human Resources be authorised to consult formally with affected staff and Union(s) regarding the details of the proposed transfer to the Trust;

9. That a final report regarding staffing matters be brought to Personnel Committee, following formal consultation with staff and Union(s).

10. That a final report regarding arrangements for the transfer of services to the Trust be brought to Cabinet in March 2014.

11. That the Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) be authorised to take any other steps that are reasonable and necessary in order to implement the above recommendations, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development.

7. **HOCKLEY VIADUCT – LONG TERM FUTURE**
(Report CAB2519 refers)

In response to questions, Councillor Weston stated that ensuring regular inspections of the Viaduct were undertaken would minimise the risk of major defects occurring. However, should this happen, Sustrans was better placed than the Council in its ability to access Government funding.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Heads of Estates and Legal Services be authorised to finalise and enter into a Lease of Hockley Viaduct arrangement, as set out in the Report.

2. That the capital programme be reduced by £83,000, in order to enable the General Fund revenue budget to be increased by £83,000 to £120,000 as part of the proposed revised budget 2013/14 within CAB2523. The source of funding will remain unchanged.

8. **NEW BUILD EMPTY PROPERTY RATE RELIEF**
(Report CAB2517 refers)

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council awards rate relief in respect of empty newly built commercial property in accordance with guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

2. That the Scheme of Delegation to Officers (as set out in Part 3, Section 6 of the Council's Constitution) be amended to enable the award of rate relief in respect of empty newly built commercial property, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, to be delegated to the Head of Revenues in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Organisational Development.

9. **FINAL REPORT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP (ISG) ON STATUTORY SERVICES – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CABINET**
(Report CAB2520 refers)

The Chairman stated that since the ISG had completed its work, the Local Government Boundary Commission had announced that it would be undertaking an electoral review of the District's Wards. The results of the review would be implemented for the 2016 elections and was considered necessary because of an imbalance in the current number of electors to each Councillor.

The Chairman continued that he would shortly meet with representatives of the Commission and as part of the review process, the Council would have to inform them as to the preferred approach on number of Members and any change to all-out elections. These were decisions for full Council and the work already undertaken by the ISG would provide useful background information to inform this decision.

The Chairman supported the recommendations of the ISG that further consideration be given to the electoral cycle and the number of Members. He stated that he personally recognised the case for all-out elections every four years as this would give an Administration time to implement its proposals, and having regard to restricted budgets, he also supported a

reduction in the number of Members - though more work would be necessary as to what the appropriate number should be.

In response to questions, the Chairman clarified that it was not essential that the electoral cycle was changed at the same time as the Review was implemented, but it made practical sense to introduce changes at the same time. In addition, he noted comments regarding consulting the public on their preferences in terms of electoral cycle.

Cabinet also referred to the ISG's recommendation with regard to the Pest Control service and noted the comments made regarding proposed changes to charges had been taken into account in the proposals included in CAB2523 above.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet together with the Leaders of other parties on the Council:

i) consider potential changes to the electoral cycle to move to all-out elections every four years, having regard to a potential average annual saving of £45,000 per annum, and the appropriate timing for possible implementation

ii) consider a significant reduction in the number of Members of Winchester City Council from 57 to say, 40, having regard to the likely savings of associated base costs of approximately £100,000 per annum plus potential for further cost savings accrued from across the organisation.

2. That having regard to the high gross costs to the Council from providing a Pest Control Service, Cabinet consider the appropriateness, or otherwise, of each the following:

(i) increase the level of charges to further offset the costs to the Council from providing the service.

(ii) reduce the number of staff responsible for delivering the service.

(iii) undertake a service review to look at options to reduce costs further.

3. That in light of the recent legislative changes, with regard to Public Health, Cabinet review the Council's position with regard to supporting the County Council in delivering its new responsibilities.

10. **THE GUILDHALL AS A COMMERCIAL VENUE ISG – FINAL REPORT**
(Report OS84refers)

Councillor Miller stated that the Guildhall continued to be successful in attracting new external bookings. The Chairman thanked the Guildhall Team for their work and the ISG Members for their Report. The Head of Estates requested that the recommendations be amended to include an optional one-year extension to the contract period for the external catering contract.

The Chairman expressed some concern about any proposals to seek to increase the use of the Wintonian Room and Bar as a public bar as he considered there were already too many alternative venues nearby. The Head of Estates explained that it was intended that the Wintonian Room be refurbished to improve its attractiveness as a letting room and noted comments regarding the feasibility of any wider use as a public bar.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Guildhall Yard Car Park be offered exclusively to users attending major events held in the Guildhall for a limited number of major events including those held at weekends.
2. The arrangements entered into with parking services to enable Guildhall users to park on the top deck of the Chesil MSCP when attending conferences be continued with.
3. That the Council continues to operate the Guildhall catering service for the next three years, with a review in December 2016.
4. That the Guildhall operate its own banqueting offer alongside that of external catering contractors and that the outside catering contract is re-tendered for a further period of three years to expire in June 2017, with an option to extend for a further year.
5. That tenders be sought by the Head of Estates to secure a range of additional banquet caterers to complement the in-house catering team and to ensure that a varied range of quality and pricing structures are available to serve the banquet catering needs of Guildhall customers.
6. That the Guildhall be allowed to erect temporary banners outside the building on the day of or during the week of events to advertise events and to make internal arrangements for more flexible use of Council display boards for advertising upcoming events.

7. That the proposal of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to establish an ISG to examine the potential for increased use of Abbey House (whilst retaining it as a Council and Mayoral asset) be noted.

8. That the refurbishment of the Wintonian Room and Bar is considered and that its use as a public bar at lunchtimes is investigated;

9. That the commercial potential of the Guildhall can be further developed by pursuing the future development opportunities identified in paragraph 3.24.

11. **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON THE FINDINGS OF THE INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP (ISG) ON HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

(Report CAB2516 refers)

Councillor Coates thanked the Chairman of the ISG, Councillor Scott, and other members for their work in bringing forward these recommendations. He recommended that Recommendations a), d), e),f) and h) of Report OS69 be adopted. However, the remaining recommendations should not be followed due to the resource implications. This was supported by Cabinet.

In response to questions, the Assistant Director (Housing) advised that there appeared to be some evidence of a reduction of demand for HMOs that would usually be let to students, probably due to an increase in student accommodation being provided by the University.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That Recommendations a) d) e) f) & h) of Report OS69 be adopted as deliverable within existing resources and powers.

2. That Recommendations b) c) and g) of OS69 be not followed in light of the resource implications identified in Section 3 of this report, recognising that the implementation of these recommendations will require significant resources, particularly in terms of officer time and staffing levels.

12. **MINUTES OF THE CABINET (HOUSING) COMMITTEE HELD 18 SEPTEMBER 2013 (LESS EXEMPT ITEM)**

(Report CAB2524 refers)

Cabinet considered the minutes of the Cabinet (Housing) Committee held 18 September 2013.

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

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Cabinet (Housing) Committee held 18 September 2013 be received, less exempt minutes (as attached as Appendix A to the Minutes).

13. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items, as set out in the Forward Plan for November/December 2013, be noted.

14. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
##	Minutes of the Cabinet (Housing) Committee held 18 September 2013) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)

15. **EXEMPT MINUTE OF THE CABINET (HOUSING) COMMITTEE HELD 18 SEPTEMBER 2013**
(Report CAB2501 refers)

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

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minute of the Cabinet (Housing) Committee held 18 September 2013 be received (as attached as Appendix A to the Minutes).

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.15am

Chairman