

CABINET

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

Attendance:

Councillors
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler
Becker
Learney

Porter
Thompson

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Westwood

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Lee, Wallace, Bolton and Horrill

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received as noted above.

2. **MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET BODIES ETC.**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Rutter replace Councillor Scott as a non-voting member of the Cabinet Committee: Housing for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year.

3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Porter and Tod declared personal (but not prejudicial) interests in respect of various agenda items due to their role as County Councillors.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Three members of the public/representatives of local groups spoke during public participation and their comments are summarised under the relevant minutes below.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 18 July 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

6. **LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Thompson announced that a second district wide jobs and opportunities fair would take place on 23 November 2023.

Councillor Porter announced that the council's Animal Welfare Team had been awarded the prestigious RSPCA platinum pawprint award. On behalf of the Cabinet, Councillor Tod offered his congratulations for this achievement.

Councillor Becker announced that the annual Paralympic Personal Bests event would take place on 14 September 2023 at the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park and the University of Winchester sports stadium. She also reported on the positive response to the Ukraine support fund.

Councillor Tod announced that the demolition of Friarsgate surgery in Winchester had commenced.

7. **LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND – ADDITIONAL FUNDING**
(CAB3420)

Councillor Tod introduced the report on behalf of Councillor Westwood.

David Chafe (TACT) and Ian Tait spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

David Chafe

He stated that the proposals had been discussed at the TACT Support meeting and the Council Plan priority to allow further homes to be acquired was supported. TACT had supported round 1A of the LAHF and continued to endorse the proposals.

Ian Tait

He supported the programme but queried why funds were being allocated from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) as opposed to the General Fund. He suggested it was possible that some of the new homes would not be available through the Home Choice allocation scheme for many years and therefore funding through the HRA was not appropriate.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillor Horrill addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

She welcomed the opportunity to secure additional funds and in general supported the proposals. She requested assurances that in addition to

the larger family homes, provision would be made for refugees seeking smaller units of accommodation.

The Strategic Director responded to the points raised by the public and councillors above, including giving the assurances regarding housing for refugees requiring smaller units of accommodation.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That a revised Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) be entered into to secure an additional £3,300,000 Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) funding from Round 1b to fund the provision of an additional 22 homes under the programme.

2. Further to the LAHF grant used to acquire 15 properties already budgeted for (CAB3304 refers), additional capital expenditure of up to £4,375,000 be agreed to acquire and refurbish the remaining 7 properties required, subject to viability under Financial Procedural Rule 7.4, using the approved 2024/25 HRA unallocated new build budget, to be funded by LAHF grant with the balance of £2,401,000 match funded by the HRA.

3. That an MoU with DLUHC be entered into to secure £1,239,600 of LAHF Round 2 funding for the provision of 6 additional homes under the programme.

4. That capital expenditure of up to £2,917,500 be agreed to acquire and refurbish 6 properties subject to viability under Financial Procedural Rule 7.4, using the approved 2024/25 HRA unallocated new build budget, to be funded by £1,239,000 LAHF grant with the balance of £1,679,400 to be match funded by the HRA.

5. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head – Asset Management and the Director with the responsibility for housing to purchase 13 properties.

8. **PRIDE IN PLACE - PUBLIC TOILETS IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY**
(CAB3411)

Councillor Learney introduced the report and outlined the key elements together with work and consultation undertaken to date in the development of the strategy.

Ian Tait spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

He endorsed the work of the British Toilet Association and supported the proposed capital programme outlined in the report. He highlighted the importance of ongoing maintenance as an area where there had been

failures previously. He also asked when the water fountain outside the Market Lane toilets would be fixed.

Councillor Learney and Councillor Tod responded to the points raised by Mr Tait, including confirming that there would be an improved ongoing maintenance programme.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Lee and Bolton addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Lee

He suggested that the wording of the strategy be strengthened to seek to achieve as close as possible to carbon net zero. He also asked whether the possibility of subscribing to the "Toilet Twinning" initiative had been considered.

Councillor Bolton

He highlighted the extensive cost of the proposed renovations and queried why there was significant higher expenditure for within Winchester city centre as opposed to the market towns. He suggested that the current poor quality of the maintenance and cleaning of toilets warranted bringing forward a new maintenance contract as soon as possible.

Councillor Learney and the Strategic Director responded to the comments made, including explaining that the proposed expenditure corresponded to the different levels of usage of the different toilet facilities.

Councillor Learney and the Strategic Director also responded to questions from Cabinet Members, including suggestions for future development of the strategy.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That a strategy and approach for improving and managing public toilets in the district be agreed as set out in Appendix 1 of the report and that authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Head of Programme to make any non-material amendments as required.
2. That a detailed action plan to fully deliver the strategy will be brought forward following further discussion and data gathering.
3. (a) that a supplementary capital estimate of £10,000, funded by the car parks reserve be approved, increasing the budget allocated in CAB3384 Parking and Access Improvement Programme from £200,000 to £210,000;
(b) capital expenditure of £210,000 be approved to improve toilets in Chesil and Worthy Lane car parks, and St Catherine's and South Winchester park and ride car parks.

4. That, subject to Cabinet approval of CIL funding in October (CAB3426):

- (a) a capital budget of £360,000 be approved; and
- (b) capital expenditure of £210,000 of CIL funds for the works outlined in paragraphs 2.5 and 11.4.7 of the report be approved.

5. That the refurbishment of public conveniences in Wickham, Bishops Waltham, New Alresford and Denmead will be subject to outcome of further discussions with Town and Parish Councils.

6. That additional cleaning will be undertaken at the most heavily used public toilets utilising some of the reserve funding which was put aside for Pride in Place enhancements (as set out in paragraph 11.4.6 of the report).

9. **ADOPTION OF THE CARBON NEUTRALITY ACTION PLAN**
(CAB3423)

Councillor Learney introduced the report emphasising that carbon neutrality remained a key priority for the district. She confirmed that the Plan (CNAP) would be amended to take account of additional data for 2021 recently received from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero. In addition, other minor amendments were proposed to improve the clarity and consistency of language used.

Jo Crocker (WinACC) spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

She fully supported the stated aim to “go greener faster” and welcomed the CNAP as progress towards this aim. She applauded the principles and processes proposed, particularly the use of working groups. She offered WinACCs assistance in ensuring the figures used in the CNAP were accurate, clearly stated and explained. In addition she requested that targets each year between now and 2030 be included with each of the pathways and that the wording on renewals be amended to make clear that 50MW was a minimum. In particular, she emphasised the importance of the proposed new task and finish group on renewable energy and that the CNAP should reflect the government’s stated target to decarbonise the national grid by 2035.

Councillor Learney thanked WinACC for their support and confirmed that all the points raised would be addressed by minor amendments to the CNAP prior to publication.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Wallace, Lee and Bolton addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Wallace

He emphasised the critical importance of the CNAP and queried the lack of opportunity for review and input from members prior to consideration by Cabinet. He requested that the adoption of the CNAP be deferred to enable this wider member consultation to take place.

Councillor Lee

He welcomed the commitment to net zero but highlighted that a significant percentage of the CNAPs top three priority interventions were in areas beyond the council's control. He noted that various mitigation measures were suggested but considered these were either too small or too far in the future to provide the necessary mitigation. He queried whether the investment strategy had been produced. He suggested that the council consider a collaborative approach to campaigning for the Hampshire pension fund to move away from fossil fuel investments. He asked whether there had been a full analysis of the list of stakeholders.

Councillor Bolton

He queried the effectiveness of the annual reporting of the carbon emission KPI in terms of monitoring delivery towards the net zero aim. He highlighted the inclusion of Extinction Rebellion in the list of stakeholders and queried how interactions with stakeholders would be structured. He expressed concern that the report had not been considered by members at the Scrutiny Committee. He also expressed concern about the proposals to invest in schemes to build renewable energy providers and the use of carbon credits.

Councillor Learney and the Strategic Director responded to the comments raised by members, including emphasising that the CNAP would be revised again prior to 2030 to take account of the changing national situation. In addition, the Carbon Reduction roadmap had previously been considered at Scrutiny Committee and various other projects within the CNAP had been considered at Policy Committees.

Councillor Learney proposed amendments to the report's recommendations and these were agreed as set out in the revised resolution 2 and new resolution 3 below.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the revised Carbon Neutrality Action Plan for 2023-2030 be adopted.
2. That the Corporate Head of Service: Economy & Community be given delegated authority to make minor changes to the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan with regard to design and text amendments and to update data prior to publication.
3. That the council work with stakeholders to further develop performance monitoring and set out task and finish groups to accelerate work on priority actions.

10. **GENERAL FUND OUTTURN 22/23**
(CAB3416)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and stated that it had been considered at Scrutiny Committee on 6 September where a number of questions from members responded to. There was one outstanding query for officers relating to the Bishops Waltham footpath/cycle way. Cabinet Members had all received a draft of the Scrutiny Committee minutes prior to the Cabinet meeting.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Wallace and Horrill addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Wallace

He noted that £2m had been allocated for proposals towards the “going green faster” aim but the report indicated that a large percentage of this figure remained unspent due to the number of underspends. He acknowledged that some of these underspends were due to improved efficiencies but queried whether others showed a lack of commitment in practice.

Councillor Horrill

She highlighted the significant amount of government grants that the council had been successful in applying for, acknowledging the officer work involved in the applications. She requested clarification of three points, namely future plans for the Guildhall, variances in the homelessness budget and the possibility of additional assistance to councillors in terms of IT equipment currently provided and support.

Councillor Cutler, Councillor Tod, the Strategic Director and the Chief Finance Officer responded to the points raised above. Councillor Cutler asked that further detail be provided to Councillor Wallace outside the meeting on the reasons for the underspends highlighted by him.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the General Fund Revenue Outturn and Capital Programme Outturn be noted as set out in the report.
2. That the transfers to and from the Major Investment Reserve as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report be approved and the reserves and closing balances at 31 March 2023 be noted (as set out in Appendix 2 of the report).
3. That the revised 2023/24 capital programme be approved as set out in Appendix 5 of the report.
4. That the revised 2023-2033 capital programme be noted as set out in Appendix 6 of the report.

11. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) OUTTURN 22/23**
(CAB3417)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report on behalf of Councillor Westwood and stated that the report had been considered at Scrutiny Committee on 6 September 2023 where a number of questions from members had been responded to. Cabinet Members had all received a draft of the Scrutiny Committee minutes prior to the Cabinet meeting. There were two outstanding queries relating to the funding allocated for overheating mitigation measures and the expected number of new homes to be delivered in 2023/24.

The Strategic Director provided answers to both of the outstanding queries outlined above.

David Chafe (TACT) spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

He stated that the proposals had been considered at the TACT support group and he had attended the Scrutiny Committee to listen to discussions. In general, TACT found the contents of the report very technical and difficult to understand and he therefore welcomed the opportunity for the full TACT meeting to be briefed at their meeting in November. He supported the recommendations as set out.

The Corporate Head of Housing confirmed that a summary paper would be provided for the TACT meeting and officers would be in attendance to respond to questions.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Wallace and Horrill addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Wallace

He expressed concern about the lack of actual expenditure on the retrofit programme, despite the significant amount of budget provision. He requested confirmation that the 23/24 programme was on track.

Councillor Horrill

She raised a number of specific questions regarding any provision for disrepair compensation, staff recruitment in key posts, commitment to the new homes programme and the refund to the HRA for the Tower Street new build project which was not being progressed.

The Strategic Director responded to comments raised, including confirming that, as had been reported to Business and Housing Committee on 12 July 2023 the retrofit programme for 2023/24 was on track. The Leader and other cabinet members confirmed that they remained committed to the new homes programme.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the HRA Outturn figures for 2022/23 be noted as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.
2. That the carry forward of £0.018m of HRA revenue funding from 2022-23 be approved as detailed in paragraph 11.4 of the report.
3. That the Housing capital programme outturn for Major Works and New Build be noted as detailed in paragraphs 11.5 to 11.8 and Appendices 3 & 4 of the report.
4. That the funding of the 2022/23 HRA capital programme be noted as detailed in paragraphs 11.10 & 11.11 and Appendix 5 of the report.
5. That the revised capital programme budget of £35.653m for 2023/24 be approved as detailed in paragraphs 11.12 & 11.13 and Appendices 6 & 7 of the report that takes account of potential programme slippage and the re-profiling of expected spend.

12. **Q1 FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING** (CAB3415)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and stated that it had been considered at Scrutiny Committee on 6 September 2023 where a number of questions from members had been asked and responded to. The Committee had requested Cabinet consider two points, the first regarding some KPIs not being populated yet and the other suggesting changes to the performance indicator regarding fly tipping. Possible improvement to the fly tipping reporting app were also suggested. Cabinet Members had all received a draft of the Scrutiny Committee minutes prior to the Cabinet meeting.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillor Horrill addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

She reiterated the comment regarding some KPIs remaining unpopulated and also mentioned discussion regarding the RAG status articulation. She also referred to discussion earlier in the meeting where an assurance was given that as a Tier 1 project, the progress under the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) would be included in quarterly monitoring reports.

Cabinet Members and the Strategic Director responded to the comments made including emphasising that the work on the performance and financial monitoring for quarter 2 was advanced so it might not be possible to introduce all changes requested in time for the next report.

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

RESOLVED:

That the progress achieved during Q1 of 2023/24 be noted and the contents of the report be endorsed.

13. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items as set out in the October 2023 forward plan be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 12.30 pm

Chairperson