

CABINET

Thursday, 14 March 2024

Attendance:

Councillors
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler
Learney
Porter

Thompson
Westwood

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Becker

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillor(s) Brook, Godfrey and Wallace

Other members in attendance:

Councillor(s) Read

Video recording of this meeting

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Becker as noted above.

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

There were no changes of membership to be made.

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**

Ian Tait spoke during public participation and referred to comments he had made at Cabinet on 23 May 2023 regarding Section 21 no-fault eviction notices. He was grateful for the Leader's comments at the time that the use of such notices was not appropriate. The particular situation related to a tenant in a council owned property which was leased to a third party housing provider which were seeking a Section 21 eviction notice. He sought assurances that a workable solution could be found.

Councillor Tod stated that Cabinet could not address the specific case in question. He noted that Mr Tait was in discussions with the Strategic Director responsible for Housing regarding the tenant concerned and officers were working to seek an appropriate solution. He gave assurances that the council remained committed to prevent homelessness as a high priority.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8 FEBRUARY 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 February 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

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

Councillor Learney reported on the success of the first tranche of the “go green faster” grant programme. On behalf of Councillor Becker she also announced that 31 district small grants and 8 district project grants had been awarded to various organisations across the district.

Councillor Westwood announced the availability of 76 new homes at Winnall flats, some of which be available to purchase through shared ownership schemes with the remainder leased through the council's housing company (Venta living ltd) as high quality market rent homes.

Councillor Thompson announced that the next grant allocations from the Rural England prosperity fund was open for applications until 17 May 2024 with a total of £350,000 available.

7. **APPROVAL OF CULTURAL STRATEGY**
(CAB3455)

Councillor Thompson introduced the report and emphasised that a wide group of organisations had been involved in the development of the strategy and that the University of Winchester had indicated they would assist in the development of a creative hub. She proposed an addition to the report's recommendations to give delegated authority to the Service Lead for Economy and Tourism to make minor amendments to the strategy including inserting a foreword. This was agreed as set out in resolution 3 below.

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

She welcomed the refresh of the Strategy but expressed disappointment that year one appeared to be dedicated to further research. She also suggested a list of all available cultural activities across the district be included and queried whether the council could work with local groups, such as the Wickham Historical Society.

Councillor Thompson and the Service Lead – Economy & Tourism responded to the comments made, including confirming that the strategy had regard to the

cultural offer across the whole district and officers were developing guidance for local communities to be able to support their own cultural events.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the co-designed Winchester District Cultural Strategy 2024-2030 be approved, which will be led and delivered by the partners operating within the sector, one of which is the council.
2. That the actions and the council's current resource commitments made within it be agreed, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
3. To approve delegated authority to the Service Lead for Economy & Tourism to insert the foreword to the Strategy and make minor amendments.

8. **TREE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK RE-PROCUREMENT**
(CAB3448)

Councillor Learney introduced the report, highlighting that it would enable the tree management work to be offered to a range of firms.

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

He emphasised the importance of trees for the district and also referred to the centre of excellence available at Sparsholt College. He urged the council to take advantage of the expertise available and to ensure that work was offered to local contractors wherever possible.

Councillor Learney supported the comments made and confirmed that the ability to use local contractors was one of the purposes of the framework.

The Principal Tree Officer responded to questions regarding the proposed operation of the framework. On behalf of Cabinet, Councillor Learney thanked him for his work and passed on their best wishes for his future retirement.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Strategic Director – Place be authorised to procure, award and enter into a contract to secure the services of tree contractors to undertake works to Winchester City Council owned and managed trees, by means of a Framework Agreement, in compliance with public procurement regulations and the Council's constitution.

9. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY 24/25**
(CAB3453)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and advised that the policy had been considered at Audit and Governance Committee on 29 February 2024 and their comments were included at paragraph 6 of the report and would be considered for future action.

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

Councillor Godfrey

He welcomed that the current policy had been amended to take account of comments made the previous year at Audit and Governance Committee. He emphasised that the agreed risk policy should be reflected in the management of major projects and individual projects' risk registers. He also requested that additional risk training be offered for councillors and officers.

Councillor Wallace

He questioned where the risk associated with the council's declaration of a nature emergency was referred to? He believed that the council was missing opportunities to go greener faster citing lack of funding as a reason. In general, he considered that the council should be delivering on the commitments it had made on tackling the climate emergency.

Councillor Cutler responded to the comments including agreeing with the importance of ongoing training in order to embed the treatment of risk within the council. He also highlighted that the risk register did have a higher level of risk in relation to climate emergency.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Risk Management Policy for 2024/25, the Risk Appetite Statement for 2024/25 and the current Corporate Risk Register be approved.

10. **Q3 FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**
(CAB3441)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report which had previously been considered at Scrutiny Committee on 6 March 2024 and a draft extract from the minutes of that meeting had been circulated to those present at Cabinet. Councillor Cutler provided responses in relation to questions raised on: a) Bishops Waltham citizens advice bureau; b) the KPI on fly-tipping; c) a review of KPIs; and d) use of Meadowside Leisure Centre. He noted that there were other questions raised relating to questions for additional information which fell outside the scope of the report and would be responded to by officers as appropriate.

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

She reported that Councillor Horrill wished to express her disappointment that a separate Performance Panel meeting had not taken place to consider this report as she believed this offered greater opportunity for detailed consideration and responses. Councillor Brook asked for additional training for councillors on scrutinising performance information.

Councillor Cutler responded to the comments made including agreeing that additional scrutiny training should be arranged. Councillor Tod also highlighted the Performance Panel was established by Scrutiny Committee and it was for that committee to determine its terms of reference and resourcing.

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

RESOLVED:

That the progress achieved during quarter 3 of 2023/24 be noted and the contents of the report CAB3441 be endorsed.

11. TO NOTE THE FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET AS SHOWN ON THE APRIL 2024 FORWARD PLAN.

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

RESOLVED:

That the progress achieved during quarter 3 of 2023/24 be noted and the contents of the report CAB3441 be endorsed.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 10.40 am

Chairperson