

CABINET**Tuesday, 18 August 2020**

Attendance:

Councillor Thompson (Chairperson)	– Leader and Cabinet Member for Communications
Councillor Cutler (Vice-Chair)	– Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk
Councillor Ferguson	– Cabinet Member for Local Economy and Climate Emergency
Councillor Learney	– Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management
Councillor Porter	– Cabinet Member for Built Environment and Wellbeing
Councillor Prince	– Cabinet Member for Sport, Leisure and Communities
Councillor Tod	– Cabinet Member for Service Quality and Transformation

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Bell, Brook, Evans, Horrill, Miller, Pearson and Read

Audio recording of the meeting

A full audio recording of this meeting is available via this link:

[Full audio recording](#)

1. MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET BODIES ETC.

There were no changes to memberships of Cabinet bodies to be made.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

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

Councillor Cutler declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of report CAB3235 and left the meeting during this item and took no part in the debate or decision.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 9 JULY 2020 AND HELD ON 22 JULY 2020 (LESS EXEMPT MINUTE).**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 July 2020 and of the previous meeting held on 22 July 2020, less exempt minute, be agreed as a correct record.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Four members of the public spoke during public participation regarding report CAB3235 (Update Strategic Land and Employment Availability Assessment – SHELAA) as summarised briefly below.

Keith Gautier

Spoke as a resident of Swanmore, noting that a number of sites within the SHELAA were situated outside the existing boundaries of the Swanmore settlement. He requested that the Council continue to protect settlement gaps from development and highlighted the importance of preserving the identity of villages.

Patrick Davies

Believed that the Council should be very cautious in its consideration of the report, having regard to the recent “Planning for the Future” White Paper and Government pressure on local authorities to increase housing provision. Concern about any perceived encouragement for developers to promote unsuitable sites. In the light of this, considered that Cabinet should not accept the report’s recommendations at this time.

Tessa Robertson (The Dever Society)

Explained that the Dever Society consisted of over 5,000 members and was formed in 1990 in response to the Eagle Star development proposals for Micheldever. The site had since been sold but a new town proposal of 8,000 homes was now included in the SHELAA. Whilst recognising the requirement for new homes, especially affordable, the Society would continue to oppose the proposed new town as inappropriate overdevelopment in one of the few remaining sections of countryside in the area.

Andrew Adams (Micheldever Parish Council)

Expressed concern about the impact of the Government proposals. Emphasised that the parish council had been proactive in working with the city council regarding the provision of new homes in the area, including affordable homes, and would continue to do so and expressed frustration that despite this, the threat of a major development at Micheldever appeared to remain. Noted that the SHELAA contained 12 sites within the parish area, some of which would not be practicably available for immediate development. Queried whether there was adequate support for parish councils opting to produce neighbourhood plans.

The Leader thanked all those speaking for their contributions which would be taken into account in consideration of report CAB3235 below.

The Leader noted that a fifth person, Bo Priestley, had also registered to speak on this matter but had been unable to join the meeting due to technical difficulties. However, her comments were relayed to Councillor Porter outside of the meeting.

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

The Leader and Cabinet members made a number of announcements as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Prince

Confirmed the transfer of operation of the River Park Leisure Centre (RPLC) and Meadowside Leisure Centre to Everyone Active, as agreed at the previous Cabinet meeting. A plan had been agreed which enabled both centres to reopen on 1 September 2020. Work on the new leisure centre was progressing, with 400 solar panels successful installed, and an intended opening date of spring 2021.

Councillor Porter

An online public inquiry regarding the AQUIND proposals had just begun.

Provided a detailed announcement regarding the implications for the Council following the publication of the Government's "Planning for the Future" White Paper. The proposals would be considered in greater detail at a number of forthcoming meetings, including the Local Plan Advisory Group, the Winchester Town Forum and a future Cabinet meeting. The proposals would result in a significant increase in the required numbers of new dwellings per annum in the district and consequently, it had been agreed that the proposed report to consider the Local Plan Strategic Issues and Options be deferred at this time.

6. **UPDATED STRATEGIC HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHELAA)** (CAB3235)

Councillor Cutler left the meeting during consideration of this item and took no part in the debate or decision thereon.

Councillor Porter noted the comments made during the public participation period as summarised above and stated that she had also spoken to Bo Priestley outside of the meeting. She was also aware of minor editing changes and corrections that were required to the SHELAA and the report's second recommendation included provision to enable this prior to publication.

In her introduction, Councillor Porter emphasised that the SHELAA was a factual list of land deemed to be available by developers and landowners etc and was not an allocation list. If the SHELAA was approved, further information would be sought in respect of the sites to ascertain the actual availability and suitability for development.

At the invitation of the Leader, six councillors addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Bell

As a Hursley parish councillor and a city councillor for Badger Farm and Olivers Battery highlighted the negative impacts of any significant level of development to the south of Winchester. Agreed that it was essential that any new development was well built with a high proportion of affordable housing but it also must be situated in a sustainable location.

Councillor Pearson

Considered that inevitably there was sometimes resistance to any development in local areas. Highlighted that two major development areas had been located in the southern parts of the district in recent years. It was important to maintain the gaps between villages. Requested that meaningful consultation be undertaken with parishes.

Councillor Read

Considered there had been a lack of consultation with parish councils and highlighted that Denmead had already had substantial numbers of housing development in the area. Queried the impact of the White Paper on the current local plan and emphasised that every community in the district should have the same opportunity for growth.

Councillor Brook

Highlighted that in previous years, the parish councils had been consulted prior to publication of the SHELAA in order to deal with any questions or concerns at an early stage. Believed that the lack of such consultation could create a backlash for the council to deal with.

Councillor Horrill

Believed that there had been unnecessary delays in the local plan timetable which had occurred prior to the recent publication of the Government white paper. Publishing the SHELAA without the Strategic Issues and Options report led to a lack of clarity about the council's intentions and caused concerns for local communities.

Councillor Evans

Highlighted that factors outside the council's control, such as the COVID pandemic, had impacted on the local plan timetable. Requested confirmation of the new housing numbers required if the proposals in the Government White paper were implemented.

Councillor Porter and other Cabinet members responded to comments made, including emphasising that parish councils had been kept up to date via parish local council liaison meetings, newsletters and the next parish briefing was scheduled for 21 September. The potential significant increase of approximately 400 dwellings per annum required in the Winchester district as a result of the Government proposals was emphasised and members of the public were encouraged to respond to the Government consultation. The Local Plan Issues

and Options report had therefore been necessarily delayed to allow proposals to be taken into account.

The Strategic Planning Manager confirmed that it was a Government requirement to produce a SHELAA and it was published in the interests of transparency. However, it was a list of sites put forward by developers and land promoters and no decisions had been taken as to the suitability of any sites.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) which is attached at Appendix 1 be approved and it is published as part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan; and
2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Planning Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment & Well Being, to make any necessary edits and minor alterations prior to the publication of the SHELAA.

7. **PROVISION OF A DECKED PARK AND RIDE CAR PARK AT THE VAULTEX SITE, WINCHESTER**
(CAB3258)

Councillor Tod introduced the report and highlighted that the provision of the car park in line with the Winchester Movement Strategy. The project was a good example of partnership working and the provisions of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funding required the project be completed by January 2022.

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

Spoke in support of the project and congratulated all the officers involved in acquiring the Vaultex site and successfully securing the LEP bid.

In response to questions, Councillor Tod and the Chief Executive stated that the preferred supplier had a strong commitment to supporting local employment and adding social value. The importance of the appearance of the new car park was noted with various options being considered.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the procurement of the relevant contractor for the design and build of the Vaultex decked Park and Ride car park using the Procurement Hub Major Projects Framework (MPF) be approved.

2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director: Place and Service Lead – Legal to procure, award and appoint an appropriate supplier, Willmott Dixon via the MPF framework to assess the feasibility of the project.

3. That approval be delegated to the Service Lead – Legal to prepare and enter into the Access Agreement and associated deeds, and to negotiate and agree terms and conditions relevant to such agreements and the Procurement Hub Major Projects Framework.

4. That it be agreed not to progress the surface car park and it be approved that the remaining budget be utilised for the decked Park and Ride in addition to the supplementary estimate below.

5. That the preparation of advanced study and infrastructure work to be funded from the surface car park approved budget up to £150,000 be approved, noting that this is at risk should full expenditure approval not be granted in October.

6. That a request for a supplementary estimate of £5.65m in respect of a decked car park at the former Vaultex site will be included in the September budget report bringing the total budget excluding site acquisition to £6.295m. This additional budget will be fully funded by the grant from the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

7. That a further report will be brought to Cabinet in October which will include a financial appraisal of the estimated impact on the council's budget.

8. **COMMERCIAL RENTS - DEFERRALS AND ABATEMENTS (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**
(CAB3260)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and detailed the level of support provided to commercial council tenants during the pandemic. He explained that the proposed write off of rent and associated ending of the tenancy related to a commercial tenant that was no longer trading and was necessary to secure the re-letting of the property.

The Chief Executive advised that, as the council continues to support its commercial tenants during the coming months as stated in paragraph 2.5 of the report, it was proposed that the deferred payment option be the primary support offered, subject to the individual circumstances of the tenant.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the policy to support tenants within council's portfolio subject to certain conditions be extended for the period to March 2021.

2. That the decision to defer or write off any rent be delegated to the Section 151 officer following recommendation by the Rent Abatement Panel comprising the Cabinet Member: Housing & Assets, Cabinet Member: Finance Strategic Director Place and Corporate Head Asset Management

3. That the write off proposed in the exempt appendix of report CAB3260, totalling £52,432 be approved.

9. **TO NOTE THE FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET AS SHOWN ON THE SEPTEMBER 2020 FORWARD PLAN.**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items, as set out in the Forward Plan for September 2020, be noted.

10. **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>
11	Exempt minute of the previous meeting held on 22 July 2020) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)
12	Commercial rents – deferrals & abatements (exempt appendix))

11. **EXEMPT MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 22 JULY 2020**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minute of the previous meeting held 22 July 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

12. **COMMERCIAL RENTS - DEFERRALS AND ABATEMENTS (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

Cabinet considered the content of the exempt appendix which gave further details regarding the proposed write off.

RESOLVED:

That the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30am and concluded at 11.05am

Chairperson