

CABINET**Wednesday, 10 March 2021**

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
Councillor Learney	– Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management
Councillor Murphy	– Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency
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, Godfrey, Horrill, Lumby, Power, Read and Weir

Monica Gill and David Light (TACT)

[Full audio recording](#)

1. MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET BODIES ETC.

There were no changes to the membership of cabinet bodies to be made.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

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

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 February 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Six members of the public/representatives of organisations spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

Paul Sapwell (Hampshire Cultural Trust)

General support for the proposals in report CAB3281, including those for Kings Walk, which he believed built on the supplementary planning document and reaffirmed the commitment to heritage and culture. Would like to see more explicit reference to the provision of family friendly heritage and cultural centre in Winchester. Emphasised that such a centre would need to be nationally significant in order to attract both the visitor numbers to make it viable and the necessary funding.

Kim Gottlieb

Speaking regarding report CAB3281 considered that Kings Walk was the wrong place for a cultural quarter for a number of reasons, including the overall size, current condition and appearance of existing buildings. He suggested that Kings Walk should instead be sold as a development opportunity and an alternative location be created for a cultural quarter.

Patrick Davies

Spoke regarding report CAB3281 and believed the Council undermined its commitment to dealing with the climate emergency and was contrary to the agreed supplementary planning document because of the inadequate proposals for bus services within the central Winchester regeneration area. He believed that when the current restrictions due to the Covid pandemic were lifted, the council should take the opportunity to encourage the increased use of buses again.

Paul Spencer (Winchester BID)

Spoke regarding report CAB3281 and provided a summary of responses from the BID membership to the proposals. This included general levels of support for proposals to move the redevelopment forward in order to assist with economic recovering post-Covid. There was also support for the proposals regarding Kings Walk and the demolition of Friarsgate medical centre. He requested cross party support to ensure the proposals continued to progress.

Emma Back (Winchester Sport, Art and Leisure Trust)

Speaking regarding report CAB3281, asked for Cabinet's assurance that the whole area would not be sold or offered under a long lease to a single commercial entity. She was concerned about the prospect of the creation of privately owned public spaces (POPs) which could be subject to onerous restrictions on use and that the CWR area should include at least some of the leisure options put forward in the consultation. Speaking regarding report CAB3295, queried the lack of detail in the list of fees for the new leisure centre, whether a discount scheme would continue, and what steps the Council would take to ensure the fees did not increase beyond that stipulated in the business case?

James Miller (Extinction Rebellion, Winchester)

Speaking regarding report CAB3281, believed that the proposals for an on street bus interchange were ill considered, would lead to long and confusing walks for passengers between stops and would not assist with the stated aim of improving air quality. It would also make the transition to electric buses more costly and complex. Any decision on provision for buses should be delayed until the Movement Strategy was finalised.

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

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

Councillor Tod

Highlighted the recently published national recycling statistics for 19/20 in which Winchester had both achieved its highest ever recycling level and had reduced the amount of residual waste.

Councillor Murphy

Announced that a new rapid electric vehicle charger had been installed at Worthy Lane car park, available to all but primarily for the benefit of the electric taxi fleet.

Councillor Learney

Seven new council homes in Rowlings Road, Weeke were nearing completion and would be occupied soon. The development had also increased permeability between Weeke and Harestock with the introduction of new walking and cycling routes.

Councillor Porter

Reminded that the Local Plan consultation on strategic issues and priorities was currently underway, finishing 12 April 2021.

6. **CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION (CWR) DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND DELIVERY STRATEGY**
(CAB3281)

Councillor Learney introduced the report which outlined further steps in achieving the vision as set out in the Central Winchester supplementary planning document (SPD) to develop a vibrant, mixed use area. The consultation responses had been taken into account and further investigation into different types of delivery models would be undertaken.

The Head of Programme, with input from representatives of JLL and Arup, gave a presentation and responded to the points raised during the public participation session earlier in the meeting. The presentation was available on the Council's website [here](#).

Councillor Tod provided an update on proposals for the provision for buses and emphasised that it was an interim solution to meet the requirements of bus users in the short to medium term, whilst freeing up the existing bus station for

development.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Power, Lumby, Bell, Horrill and Weir addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Power

Welcomed the proposals as delivering community benefits and minimising costs at the current times of economic uncertainty. She believed that by demonstrating the ability to deliver short term benefits the Council also demonstrated the ability to deliver longer term benefits.

Councillor Lumby

Emphasised the need to progress as soon as possible. Considered that the fees spent on JLL to date did not constitute value of money. Did not support the proposed use of Kings Walk for a number of reasons, including its current appearance and condition. Concerns regarding the proposal to employ a single developer and believed a piecemeal approach with the Council employing a development manager was preferable. Requested assurance that the final approval of the development agreement would be referred for decision at full Council.

Councillor Bell

Welcomed the proposals as building on the contents of the SPD and the progress on “meanwhile uses”. Whilst Kings Walk was not a particular attractive building, a vibrant interim use was to be welcomed. Shared concerns regarding a single developer approach and the dangers of the public realm being privatised and called for strict safeguards on these points. Agreed that it was important for an appropriate bus interchange to be provided. Suggested the proposals should include a covered market.

Councillor Horrill

Queried what action had occurred since the SPD was approved in 2018 and emphasised the continued support for the SPD as demonstrated by the recent consultation. Concerned about the proposals for buses which she believed differed from that agreed in the SPD, including concern that an interim solution might become permanent. Concerned about the viability of the Kings Walk proposals and the potential impact on the future delivery of the overall site. Welcomed the opportunity for Scrutiny Committee to undertake a future review of the project but queried why the Committee had not been given the opportunity to review the proposals in this report prior to consideration by Cabinet.

Councillor Weir

Welcomed the proposals and highlighted that a cross party group had endorsed the appointment of JLL and Arup as consultants on the project and both organisations should be congratulated on their work to date. Believed that the report followed the vision and aspirations of the SPD and proposed a pragmatic approach which would bring real community benefit. She agreed that selection the right development partner on the right terms was vital and they should share the council’s aspirations and values.

In discussion of the report and the various comments made by the public and invited councillors, Cabinet Members expressed the wish that the council retain control over the public realm elements of the scheme to avoid the potential difficulties outlined. In addition, the Head of Programme confirmed that the interim bus proposals followed the wishes expressed in the SPD by providing improvements to the public realm and facilities, including the provision of proper bus shelters and real time information. The proposals for Kings Walk would include outdoor seating. In addition the Leader confirmed that consideration of the report by the Scrutiny Committee had been offered to the Chairperson of that committee before it came to Cabinet, but this offer had been declined.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the adoption of the Vision for Winchester by the Winchester Town Forum in January 2021 and the complementary themes within that work which are relevant to the regeneration of central Winchester be noted.
2. That the feedback from the consultation undertaken between 11th November 2020 and 12th January 2021 be noted and as a result the CWR Development Proposals and indicative phasing plan be approved, namely proposals pages 6-27 inclusive as detailed in appendix A of CAB3281.
3. That revenue expenditure of up to £390,000 from the £2m CWR revenue budget be approved to;
 - a. Progress further work to the CWR business case to inform the decision on delivery of the CWR development proposals for subsequent Cabinet approval to proceed to procurement in 2021.
 - b. Carry out soft market testing, finalise the business model and the procurement route to deliver medium/long term vision for the Kings Walk creative hub
 - c. Evaluate options to bring forward delivery of the interim on street bus solution.
4. That capital expenditure be approved;
 - a. Of up to £200,000 from the Kings Walk improvements budget to progress short term improvement works to Kings Walk as the pre-cursor to delivery of the Kings Walk creative hub, subject to the outcome of the condition survey;
 - b. Of up to £500,000 from the Friarsgate demolition and interim open space budget to progress the planning application to enable demolition of Friarsgate Medical Centre and provision of interim public open space.

5. That authority be delegated to Strategic Director – Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management, to finalise, tender, award and enter into contractual arrangements to deliver the short term improvement works to Kings Walk and Friarsgate Medical Centre, within approved budgets.

6. That further exploration of funding opportunities with EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership, Homes England, and other sources as appropriate be approved and authority be delegated to the Strategic Director – Place to prepare and submit funding bids.

7. That an application be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding of £2m to support delivery of the CWR project.

8. That the proposed development of governance arrangements for the next phase of the regeneration work be noted and the finalisation of these arrangements be delegated to the Strategic Director – Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management.

7. **HOUSING DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2021 - 2030**
(CAB3291)

Councillor Learney introduced the report which set out a strategy to provide at least 100 new council homes over the next 10 years. She highlighted the focus on providing good quality homes that were also as close to zero carbon emissions as possible.

Monica Gill and David Light (TACT) were both present in the virtual meeting and, at the invitation of the Leader, confirmed they did not wish to make any comments regarding the report.

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

Generally welcomed the report but believed that, given its importance, there should have been the wider opportunity for Member involvement prior to consideration at Cabinet. Requested further information regarding the establishment of a housing company and whether the council would continue to strive for lower, social rents. Also queried the provision for both internet connectivity and sewage provision in new homes and the future use of passivhaus type homes.

Councillor Learney, the Strategic Director: Services and the Service Lead: New Homes responded to the comments made, including confirming that a report on the new housing company would be submitted to the next Business and Housing Policy Committee and also confirming the commitment to low, social rents.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Housing Development Strategy 2021-2030 be adopted as the framework for delivering the council's new homes programme.
2. That the Service Lead – New Homes be authorised to make non-material amendments to the Housing Development Strategy from time to time, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management.

8. **MAKING HOMES CARBON NEUTRAL**
(CAB3293)

Councillors Learney and Murphy introduced the report which set out proposals to reduce the carbon impact of homes across the council stock. It proposed that an annual programme focus initially on improving energy efficiency through additional insulation measures, with solutions for replacement heating and renewable energy generation considered further over the next two years.

At the invitation of the Leader, David Light (TACT) welcomed the proposed improvements to the energy efficiency of council housing and the consequential reduction in heating bills for tenants.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Pearson and Weir addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Pearson

Spoke in support of the proposals and asked a number of detailed questions, including requesting assurances regarding the fire safety of any new insulation or cladding to be used. The proposals could offer an additional benefit in terms of reducing NOx emissions. He also queried whether there were proposals to replace double-glazed windows and the practical implications were a council owned home had a privately owned adjoined neighbouring property.

Councillor Weir

Reiterated requests made at a previous Business and Housing Policy Committee that the Council seek to achieve additional capacity building across the various trades required to deliver the improvements. She hoped that the new Energy Officer resource would be encouraged to seek alliances and partnerships to achieve this capacity building and ensure more homes across the district could benefit from this investment.

Councillor Learney and the Service Lead: Property Services responded to the comments made, including confirming that the fire safety of the insulation or cladding would be ensured. It was anticipated that the proposal for the council to join the "Net Zero Collective" partnership would assist with capacity building.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the 2021/22 budget of £1.587m provision for additional energy efficiency works to Council dwellings be committed and approved for expenditure as follows:

b) £1,250m to fund additional insulation (mainly wall and floor insulation) to 100 properties currently subject to an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or below and that the programme focus mainly on void properties where possible.

c) £150,000 set aside to support “match funding” bids for major retrofit programmes (such as the existing project to improve “Swedish timber” homes in Bramdean).

d) That £187,000 to address energy efficiency of communal areas in sheltered/communal housing schemes, including the installation of solar photovoltaic panels where appropriate.

2. That a member/tenant/officer panel/forum be established to assess progress with national trials, review funding options and bring forward proposals for a long term programme to replace gas heating systems in Council homes, subject to consultation with tenants and the Business and Housing Policy Committee.

3. That the Council join the “Net Zero Collective” partnership to support the work of the above Panel.

9. **FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR ROOF REPLACEMENT WORKS TO COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK**
(CAB3288)

Councillor Learney introduced the report and stated it would result in increased efficiency in commissioning works and benefit small and medium sized businesses in the district.

At the invitation of the Leader, Monica Gill (TACT) stated that the proposals had been previously presented to a TACT service delivery group and had been supported.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Strategic Director – Services be authorised to procure, negotiate, award and enter into a contract to secure the services of contractors to undertake roof replacement works to Winchester City Council owned housing properties, by means of a Framework Agreement.

10. **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUTURE FUNDING PRIORITIES AND MONITORING UPDATE**
(CAB3292)

Councillor Porter introduced the report which included details of how the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for council projects would be undertaken and reported on the progress of current schemes included in the agreed CIL programme.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Power and Read addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Power

Highlighted that the vast majority of projects related to highways and queried what steps the council could take to expedite their delivery. What measures were being undertaken to ensure parish councils spent CIL monies allocated to them?

Councillor Read

Believed that the popularity of the CIL scheme had resulted in it being over-subscribed and monies available had not been increased to reflect this. Considered that town areas of the district had benefited far more from CIL funds than rural areas. The report should also include information regarding the sources of CIL funds.

The Leader and Councillor Porter responded to the questions raised including clarifying that schemes within the town area accessed a separate CIL fund of monies collected from the town area. In addition to the delays caused by the Covid pandemic, a number of projects across the district had been delayed waiting for input from the County Council.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That an allocation of £250,000 for a further round of community bids in 2022/23 be approved, as part of an ongoing programme of community schemes, with future arrangements beyond 2022/23 to be reviewed annually.
2. That the CIL spending protocol (CAB3071) which sets out how CIL spending will be assessed, prioritised and decisions made as to which schemes receive CIL funding allocations, be amended by replacing the former Regulation 123 List, with the Infrastructure Funding Statement that is published annually on the City Council's website and identifies priorities and projects which may be funded in whole or in part by CIL income.
3. That the need to keep under review priorities for CIL funding for emerging infrastructure projects and up-date the Infrastructure Funding

Statement accordingly be noted and to further note the list of emerging schemes set out in table 4 of the report CAB3292 which may be considered for CIL funding in future.

11. **CIL FUNDING - TWYFORD FLOOD MITIGATION SCHEME**
(CAB3296)

Councillor Porter introduced the report which requested the allocation of CIL funds to go towards a flood mitigation scheme in Twyford requested by the parish council. The proposals would be carried out in conjunction with the South Downs National Park and would enable a number of improvements to the centre of Twyford.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the allocation and expenditure of £65,000 towards a flood alleviation scheme in Twyford be approved, subject to match funding being secured from the South Downs National Park Authority and adoption of Twyford neighbourhood Plan prior to project delivery.

2. That funding of £65,000 for the car park extension in Twyford be removed from the agreed CIL spending programme (CAB3257).

12. **FEES AND CHARGES 2021/22**
(CAB3295)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and explained that there were different types of fees and charges, with only some that the council had any discretion as to the amount charged. He explained that the report had been delayed due to other priorities of the Finance team in dealing with the Covid pandemic, but confirmed that in future years the fees and charges would be presented alongside the draft budget proposals in December.

Councillor Cutler proposed a correction to the fees for planning pre-application advice which was agreed, as set out in the resolution below.

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

Councillor Godfrey

Commented regarding the timing of the report coming to Cabinet after the overall budget had been approved. Queried how the proposed increase in charges would meet the stated £40,000 per year revenue increase? Queried the introduction of charges for bulky waste collection and when the council would be considering the promised introduction of a discount scheme for garden waste collection for residents on low income.

Councillor Lumby

Queried how the stated average of 3% increase would be achieved when a number of fees were excluded and/or no increase was proposed. Queried the increase in annual fees for park homes and for council garage rents, with the concern that the latter might result in an increase in garage voids. Believed that the proposed increases for charges at the new leisure centre were excessive and should be questioned with Everyone Active.

Councillors Cutler and Tod responded to the comments made, including clarifying that the 3% stated increase was on non-statutory set fees only and that the bulky waste fee was not a new charge, having been in place for a number of years. The Strategic Director: Place also responded to comments made, including confirmed that the proposed prices proposed by Everyone Active for the new leisure centre had been benchmarked and offered good value for money. In addition, a saver card offering concessions for those on lower incomes would be available.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the fees and charges for 2021/22 be approved, as set out in appendix 1 of CAB3295, subject to the planning pre-application fees (minor 1/new dwellings 1) being set at £285.50 for 21/22 (not £234 as stated in the appendix).
2. That the core Leisure Centre charges be approved, as set out in in appendix 2 of CAB3295.

13. **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY 2021/22**
(CAB3245)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report which provided an update to the council's risk strategy and risk appetite. The report had been considered by Audit and Governance Committee on 4 March 2021 where no additional comments had been raised for Cabinet.

Councillor Cutler proposed a minor amendment to the Policy which was agreed as set out in the resolution below.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Power and Lumby addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Power

Welcomed the report and in particular the commitment to monitor risk with regard to the various costs and benefits resulting. She considered that relatively minor changes to the policy equated to significant changes in how the council managed risk.

Councillor Lumby

Requested that in the future, any proposed changes to a policy be clearly set out. Stated that the policy adopted a more cautious approach to any new expenditure, other than on housing. Requested further information regarding the “lessons learned” document referred to.

Councillor Cutler and the Strategic Director Resources responded to comments made, including explaining that many of the recommendations of the “lessons learned” document had already been implemented as part of the council’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic to date.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Risk Management Policy for 2021/22, its Risk Appetite Statement for 2021/22 and the updated Corporate Risk Register be approved subject to a minor amendment to the Policy, section 8 (risk appetite) to change the words “satisfactory outcomes” to “positive outcomes”.

14. **TO NOTE THE FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET AS SHOWN ON THE APRIL 2021 FORWARD PLAN.**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items, as set out in the Forward Plan for April 2021, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 1.15 pm

Chairperson